



North Zone Complex Daily Update

Sunday March 24, 2024

InciWeb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident-information/vavaf-2024-north-zone-complex>

Contact Information

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Fire Update

The North Zone Complex covers six wildfires burning in the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests and on state and private land in West Virginia and Virginia. They are:

- 1. Waterfall Mountain/Shenandoah Forest/211 Fire (6,206 acres, 20% contained)** – Firefighters have tied the west side of the fire into a previous burn area. They will monitor and mop up fireline today. Crews will continue to construct containment lines on the south and east sides, cold trail, and put in line where possible to secure those edges. They will also scout for green pockets. Helicopter operations could continue along the northeast portion of the fire. The Virginia Department of Forestry is managing the east side of the fire, north and south of U.S. 211.
- 2. Waites Run Fire (3,760 acres, 0% contained)** – Firefighters have completed work on the southwest side of the fire. Crews will look for opportunities on the east side to tie those lines into existing roads. That could open up a possible green area that may need to be burned out in the next few days. Aircraft will continue to work there today. Hemlocks remain a concern. Expert fellers are arriving to cut down hazard trees.
- 3. Capon/Brush Run Fire (2,559 acres, 45% contained)** – Heavy fuels continue to smolder in the fire’s interior. Firefighters today will check the dozer line on the north side of the fire, as well as look for green pockets. Crews could potentially burnout those areas in the next few days once they dry out. They will also put in dozer line on the west side, check and verify the status of the east edge, and tie in with the state.
- 4. Edith Gap/Serenity Ridge Fire (1,148 acres, 8% contained)** – Firefighters will put dozer and hand line along the northeast edge. Containment is expected to be higher tomorrow once crews have checked and secured existing lines.
- 5. Cove Mountain Fire (75 acres, 70% contained)** – The fire is completely surrounded by handline. Firefighters continue to monitor the fire.
- 6. New Start at Runions Creek (9 acres)** – Firefighters will scout the fire today and work to contain it.

Air attack will begin flying around 2 p.m. today to check the overall situation on the fires.

The cause of the fires is undetermined but under investigation.

Resources

2 Type 1 crews 2 Type 2IA crews 3 Type 1 and 3 Type 3 helicopters 21 engines 5 dozers 282 personnel.

Weather

Today will start with below-freezing temperatures and gusty northeasterly winds which could reach 25 mph. The day will be sunny but cool as a high-pressure system covers the region. Breezy winds will gradually slacken throughout the day. With drier air moving in, relative humidity will slip into the 30% range in the afternoon. Tonight, winds will be lighter. Monday will also be sunny and dry with mainly terrain-driven winds on the slopes and light east winds on the ridges. Temperatures will warm into the 50s.

Fire Behavior

Full sunshine will dry fuels somewhat today. However, fire danger and potential remain low. Fuels may dry enough for fire to potentially spread at low intensities in the mid-afternoon. Significant fire spread or intensity is not expected. Isolated smokes are likely during the afternoon hours.

Evacuations

No evacuations are in place.



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Closures

For the protection of public health and safety, and for the protection of resources, the following acts are prohibited due to fire suppression activities on the North River and Lee Ranger Districts, George Washington and Jefferson National Forest, Virginia and West Virginia.

- Being on a National Forest System Trail when closed by a sign, gate or barricade. 36 CFR 261.55(a)
- Operating, leaving, possessing, or parking a motor vehicle on any road when closed by a sign, gate, or barricade. 36 CFR 261.54(e)
- Being in the area of closure by pedestrian or horseback. 36 CFR 251.53(e)
- Being in the area of closure by non-motorized or wheeled conveyance (bicycle). 36 CFR.54(a)

The North River and Lee Ranger Districts and the following roads and trails are also closed:

Great North Mountain Area Trails

- FST # 1013.1 Tuscarora Trail -Three Ponds Tr.
- FST # 1013.3 Tuscarora Trail - County Line Tr. South from SR 55 South FST # 1103.2
- FST # 1013.2 Tuscarora Trail - Pond Run Tr.
- FST # 1014 Wilson Cove Tr.
- FST # 400 Vances Cove Tr.
- FST # 405.4 Tuscarora Trail - Little N. Mountain Tr. to SR 600
- FST # 902 Gerhard Shelter Tr.
- FST # 1003 Halfmoon Jr.
- FST # 1003 Halfmoon Lookout Tr.
- FST # 1004 Mill Mountain Tr. Closed north from FST # 1004A Big Schloss Tr.
- FST # 1007 Long Mountain Tr. Closed north FSR 1621 (Cherry Ridge)
- FST # 1014 Wilson Cove Tr.
- FST # 1029 Capon Tr.
- FST # 1030 Bucktail Tr.
- FST # 1030A Bucktail Connector Tr.
- FST # 1036 Racer Camp Hollow Tr.
- FST # 1037 Old Mailpath Tr.
- FST # 1038 German Wilson Tr.
- FST # 400 Vances Cove Tr.
- FST #414 Sulphur Springs Tr.
- FST # Little Sluice Tr.
- FST # 398 Little Sluice Mountain
- FST # 411 Bread Road Tr.

Shelters and Cabins

- Gerhard Shelter Closed
- Sugar Knob Cabin Closed

Forest Service Roads

- FSR 93 Vances Cove Road
- FSR 371 Wilson Cove Road
- FSR 1614 Sugar Hollow Road

Central Massanutten Mountain

- FST # 408 Massanutten National Recreation Trail S from Habron Gap Tr. (#559) and FST # 408 Massanutten National Recreation Trail S. From Edinburg Gap
- FST # 408A Kennedy Peak Tr.
- FST # 458 Stephens Tr.
- FST # 407 Lions Tale National Recreation Trail
- FST # 409 Gap Creek Tr.
- FST # 409A Jawbone Gap Tr.
- FST # 555 Scothorn Gap Tr.
- FST # 642 Massanutten Story Book Tr.
- FST # 644 Discovery Way Tr.
- FST # 645 Wildflower Tr.
- FST # 410 Massanutten Connector Tr.
- FST # 416 Massanutten South Tr.
- FST # 416B Birds Knob Tr.
- FST # 519 Brown Hollow Tr.
- FST # 582 Roaring Run Tr.
- FST # Pitt Springs Lookout Tr.
- Taskers Gap and Peters Mill Run Off Highway Trail System

Forest Roads

- FSR 274 Crisman Hollow Road
- FSR 374 Edinburg Gap Road
- FSR 375 Pitt Springs Road
- FSR 1618A

Bergton Area

- Blue Hole Recreation Area
- Forest Roads**
- FSR 302 to 302 intersection
- FSR 302A
- FSR 302.AI
- FSR 302E



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Closures (continued)

The following individuals are exempt from the prohibitions contained in the order: Any federal, state, local officer, or member of an organized rescue or firefighting force engaged in the performance of an official duty. These prohibitions are in addition to the general prohibitions in 36 CFR Part 261, Subpart A.

Hwy. 211 is expected to reopen at 8 p.m. today.

Smoke and Air Quality

Air quality is currently good. Additional information is available at www.aimow.gov.

Safety

We ask the public to avoid areas with active fire for their own safety and to allow firefighters to work safely. Public and firefighter safety is always our top priority. In addition, please do not fly drones near or over a wildfire. Drones and firefighting aircraft are a dangerous mix and could lead to accidents or slow down wildfire suppression, including water drops. **If you fly, we can't.**

Burn Ban

Virginia's 4 p.m. Burning Law remains in effect until April 30, 2024. It bans open-air burning before 4 p.m. if the fire is within 300 feet of the woods or dry grass which could carry fire to the woods. Burning is allowed between 4 p.m. and midnight as long as the burner takes proper precautions and attends the fire at all times. For more information, please visit <https://dof.virginia.gov/wildland-prescribed-fire/fire-laws/4-pm-burning-law>.