



# North Zone Complex Daily Update

Tuesday March 26, 2024

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

## Contact Information

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### **\*\*Strategic Firing Operations Planned for Today\*\***

Residents will see increased smoke in the Waites Run and Capon Fires fire areas today. Firefighters will use strategic firing operations to bring uncontrolled fire to a more manageable location within fire control lines. Strategic firing operations are also used to bring fire to a specific control feature (road, trail, handline, dozer line) where firefighters can safely and effectively manage and monitor the fire. Strategic firing operations can be conducted on the ground by hand, by helicopter or drone when conditions are too dangerous to place firefighters in the area. The steep terrain and topography of the area play a significant role in determining our current tactics, as well as the sheer number of wildland urban interface areas along three of the five fires.

Please follow the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/gwjnf> for current information about these operations and potential smoke impacts. We will post notification alerts so surrounding communities will know when smoke is from planned operations.

### **Individual Fire Updates—14,593 total acres**

- 1. Waterfall Mountain/Shenandoah Forest/211 West Fire (6,257 acres, 29% contained) Shenandoah and Page Counties, VA** – Firefighters will identify ridges and roads for use in direct fire line construction. Crews have been improving current lines and progressing to the north and south along private lands. A containment line has been constructed to prevent fire from spreading on the fire’s west side.
- 2. Waites Run Fire (4,361 acres, 42% contained) Hardy County, WV** – Firefighters remain committed to securing and patrolling existing lines on the west and south west sides. Crews will focus on improving handline, dozer lines and existing features in preparation for strategic firing operations. The challenging terrain and fuels make it difficult for firefighters to fight the fire directly.
- 3. Capon/Brush Run Fire (2,622 acres, 75% contained) Rockingham County, VA** – Firefighters have worked hard to establish a good containment line around the north edge of the fire. They continue to look for opportunities to identify and implement dozer line and handline, especially along the western edge of the fire.
- 4. Edith Gap/Serenity Ridge Fire (1,198 acres, 8% contained) Shenandoah and Page Counties, VA** – Firefighters will continue to secure fireline around the southeast side of the fire, monitor and patrol.
- 5. Cove Mountain Fire (155 acres, 75% contained) Hardy County, WV**– Firefighters will continue securing the control line on the southeast edge of the fire. Once this is complete, the fire will move into patrol and monitor status.

The cause of the fires is undetermined but under investigation.

### **Resources**

2 Type 1 crews    4 Type 2IA crews    3 Type 1 and 3 Type 3 helicopters    12 engines    3 dozers    294 personnel

### **Weather**

Today will bring increasing clouds ahead of an approaching cold front which could bring rain showers on Tuesday night into Wednesday. The western edge of a coastal storm may then bring some additional light rain on Wednesday night into Thursday. Behind the front and coastal storm, gusty winds are drier conditions are expected for late this week.

### **Fire Behavior**

Fuels are possibly dry enough to allow for fire to spread at very low intensities, but overall fire danger remains low. A strategic fire operation is expected for the Waites Run Fire. Otherwise isolated smokes stump holes may continue to smolder.



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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 following areas are closed on the North River and Lee Ranger Districts:

### 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 persons 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.

### Smoke and Air Quality

Air quality may decrease today because of strategic firing operations. Additional information is available at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).

### Safety

A temporary flight restriction is in place today until midnight from the surface up to and including 6,000 feet MSL to provide a safe environment for the planned strategic firing operations. For more information, please visit [https://tfr.faa.gov/save\\_pages/detail\\_4\\_1810.html](https://tfr.faa.gov/save_pages/detail_4_1810.html).

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>.