



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Forests in North Carolina

## U.S. Forest Service News Release



Media Contact:

Southern Area Red Team

2025.RattlesnakeBranch@firenet.gov

(828) 519-8242

<https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/ncncf-rattlesnake-branch>

<https://www.facebook.com/nfsnc/>

### Rattlesnake Branch Fire Daily Update -- April 2, 2025

**Note:** Widespread rainfall this week reduced overall fire danger across much of North Carolina, so the North Carolina Forest Service has **lifted a ban on all open burning** across the state. **Please remain vigilant about burning safely and responsibly.** Coinciding with the end of the statewide burn ban, the USDA Forest Service has **lifted fire restrictions across the four National Forests in North Carolina.** Forest visitors may once again build campfires and use camp stoves and fire rings. However, several areas will continue experience warmer and windy weather in the days ahead, so **please exercise extreme caution when burning outdoors.**

**CRUSO, N.C., April 2, 2025** – The Rattlesnake Branch Fire is on private land and the Shining Rock Wilderness Area on Pisgah National Forest around the community of Cruso, approximately 11 miles southeast of Waynesville, North Carolina. It started on March 26, 2025, and quickly spread due to dry conditions of the hardwood leaves and branches on the ground. The cause remains under investigation.

The fire is approximately **1,851 acres** and **24 percent** contained. The reduction in acreage is due to better mapping. **Nearly 180 personnel** are working on the fire.

#### Yesterday's Activities

Yesterday the fire did not move, but with sunlight, heat in some large logs and dead trees came to life as flames. Firefighters continued to patrol, hold and mop up areas burned on the Rattlesnake Branch Fire and construct fire lines to protect homes outside the fire footprint. Around Cruso, they patrolled along US 276 and homes to ensure no heat remains in those areas. Structure protection was a focus of work in the Burnette Cove Road area, including using leaf blowers to remove dead leaves and other debris away from structures.

Firefighters used the support of a local resident in identifying locations for fire lines north and west of the fire footprint, including an area close to the Shining Rock Wilderness Area boundary around Lenoir Creek. The intelligence will be used to connect potential fire lines along a system of roads in the Dix Creek/Pollyanna Creek area and old Jeep trails and logging roads further to the west. Areas around Rickman Fields and Sorrells Creek were also identified as places for potential control lines. With clear air, the drone flew an infrared mission to better map the fire.

### **Today's Activities**

Today, crews will continue to improve, hold and monitor fire lines, mopping up as necessary, to secure the fire's edge around powerlines and private property in Cruso, along US-276, Crawford Creek and Rattlesnake Branch Road. In the Burnette Cove Road area, firefighters will continue to extend fire containment lines to protect private properties northward towards the East Fork of the Pigeon River. Firefighters will prepare Lenoir Creek to serve as a reliable containment line. They will continue to assess and gather data for a structure protection plan around Burnette Cove, Lenoir Lane, Dix Creek Road, Frazier Road, Little East Fork Road and the Camp Daniel Boone Boy Scout Camp.

Scouting for potential fire lines will continue outside of wilderness north, northwest and west of the fire including Dix Creek Road, Chambers Cove Road, Rocky Branch Road and Murray Cove Road. Crews will remove downed trees from Glacier Road to improve access to potential fire line locations.

In the wilderness, firefighters will use only chainsaws, leaf blowers and bucket water drops from helicopters as necessary and will coordinate with a resource advisor to protect wilderness values during fire suppression operations. This includes determining appropriate areas from which to draft water.

A drone is assigned to the fire to help with aerial ignition, mapping and reconnaissance. Today the drone will fly to do some infrared mapping of the fire, launching from the Schoolhouse Branch Road area west of the fire. Other aircraft available include two large helicopters, two small helicopters, an air attack platform and two fixed-wing "super scoopers".

**Weather/Fire Behavior:** Today will be partly to mostly cloudy. The afternoon has a 50-percent chance of showers and a possible thunderstorm. The high temperature will be 61-64 degrees with 49-55-percent minimum relative humidity. Winds will be south/southeast, 11 mph with gusts 14-28 mph.

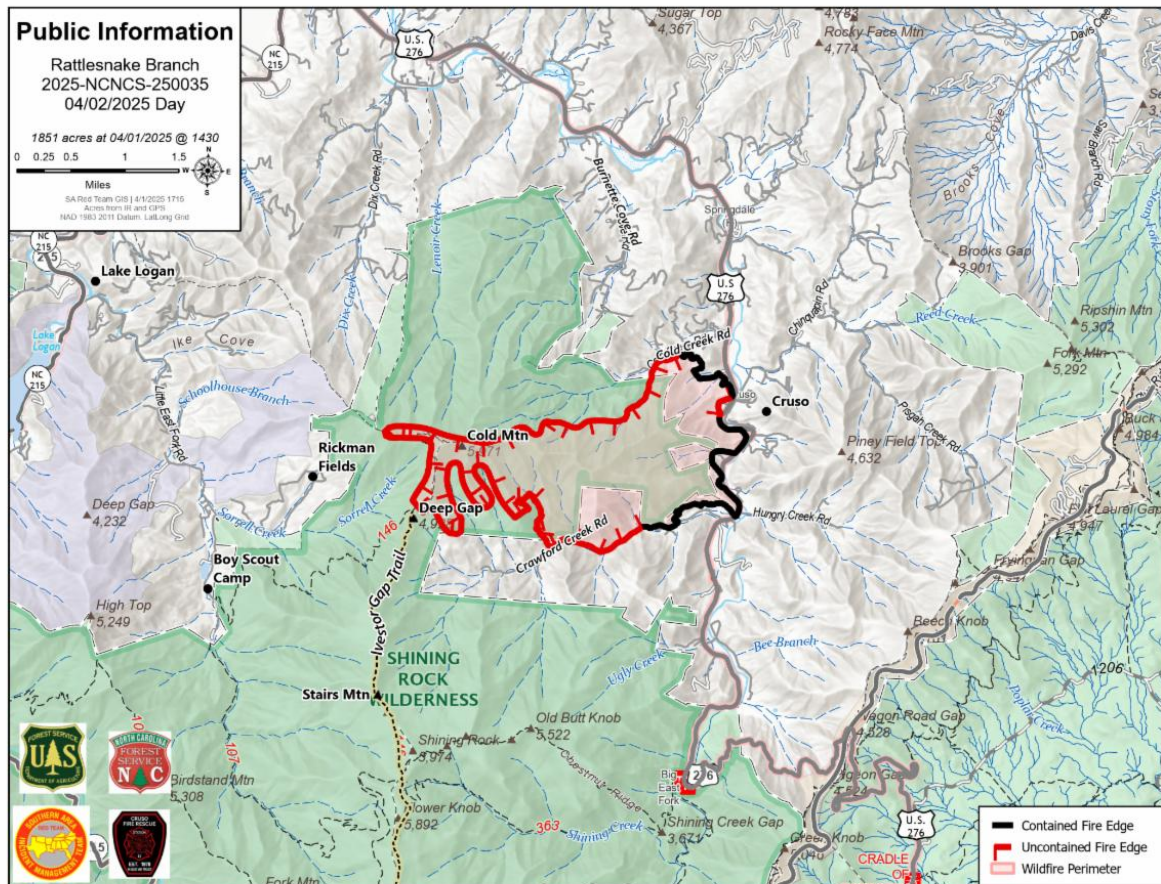
Even though yesterday was a good drying day, dead hardwood leaves on the ground retain moisture for a few days after a wetting rain. With today's cloud cover keeping ground cover moist, minimal fire activity is expected. Heat retained in large logs and dead trees may come to life as they did yesterday. Live and dead vegetation on the ground may become receptive to fire in exposed areas on southern-facing or canopy-damaged slopes and ridges later in the day if cloud cover decreases. Air quality information is available at [Smoke Outlook for Western North Carolina and Upstate South Carolina](#), [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) and [www.wildlandfiresmoke.net](http://www.wildlandfiresmoke.net).

**Closures and Restrictions:** The Pisgah National Forest has issued an [area closure of the Shining Rock Wilderness Area](#) to protect the public from wildfire and firefighting operations. This closure includes all National Forest System land between US-276 and NC-215 north of the Blue Ridge Parkway (between mile

markers 405 and 420). Please stay safe and keep out of these areas

**A temporary flight restriction** is in effect in and around the fire area. This includes use of personal drones. If you fly, we cannot fly!

For wildfire updates, follow the National Forests in North Carolina on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/nfscnc](http://www.facebook.com/nfscnc) or visit <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/ncncf-rattlesnake-branch>.



###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

National Forests in North Carolina | 160 Zillicoa St | Asheville, NC 28801 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!