



NEWS RELEASE

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UPDATE ON VIRGINIA WILDFIRES

Large fire in Bedford County in Jefferson National Forest

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA –The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) continues to respond to several wildfires across central and southwest Virginia. Since the start of Virginia’s fall fire season (Oct. 15 – Nov. 30), DOF has responded to 113 wildfires that have burned more than 12,000 acres. DOF suppression efforts over this period have protected 203 homes and 267 structures.

DOF is also responding along with local partners to a fire on Afton Mountain in Nelson County near mile marker 100 off Interstate 64. The fire is about 10 acres in size. The cause of the fire was a vehicle fire.

“We thank all of our firefighters, partner agencies, localities and community members who have pulled together as we continue to fight these wildfires,” said Chief of Fire and Emergency Response John Miller. “We need no further proof that fall fire season has arrived with a vengeance. We will remain vigilant to protect people and property.”

Quaker Run Fire, Madison County

The fire has cooled significantly and is now 90% contained. With minimal fire activity, many firefighters will leave the Quaker Run Fire today and travel to other fires that need resources. Remaining crews will patrol the fire’s perimeter, monitor for reburn and repair trails. The voluntary evacuation order for Finks Hollow Lane has been lifted.

At 8 p.m. today, the Southern Area Gold Incident Management Team is turning control of fire management activities on state and private lands over to DOF. The National Park Service is assuming control of fire management on national park lands. Information on management and closures at Shenandoah National Park can be found on their website:

<https://www.nps.gov/shen/planyourvisit/quaker-run-fire-information.htm>

Fire bans remain in effect for Madison County and Shenandoah National Park. The Rapidan Tract of the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area is temporarily closed.

DOF is also working on several fires in the Western region and the situation remains fluid. The Tuggles Gap fire in Patrick County is now fully contained and being monitored. A new fire began last night in Hoover Camp in Buchanan that is currently 700 acres with 50% containment. Other fires of note include:

Rocklick Fire, Buchanan County (Virginia and Kentucky)

- 2,232 acres in Virginia, 90% contained
- 86 homes and 159 structures have been protected

Rachel's Chapel Fire, Dickenson County

- 1,135 acres in Virginia, 90% contained

Horse Hollow Fire, Lee County

- 15 acres, 75% contained

Matts Creek Fire, Bedford County

The Matts Creek Fire is located in Bedford County within the James River Face Wilderness in the Jefferson National Forest. The entire fire is on National Forest lands and is approximately 2,800 acres. Coordinating agencies include the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service-Blue Ridge Parkway, Bedford County Fire and Rescue, Amherst County Public Safety, Rockbridge County Fire-Rescue and Emergency Management, Virginia Department of Forestry and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

There are approximately 120 firefighters and support staff, seven fire crews, four Type-6 engines, and three Type-1 helicopters responding to this fire. The fire was first reported on Sunday, Nov. 12 and the cause remains under investigation. Smoke will likely occur in nearby communities. For the latest air quality information, visit AirNow.gov.

For latest restrictions and closures, visit the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests website www.fs.usda.gov/gwj or follow updates on Facebook: www.facebook.com/GWJNF.

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