



Jude's Gap Fire Update

N.C. Forest Service

Wednesday, Feb. 16, 2011

Fire Information Officers:

David Brown, (828) 273-0982

Bill Swartley, (919) 218-3179

4 p.m.

Current Status

The fire is now four days old and continuing to slowly burn near Jude's Gap. Firefighters are constructing control lines and will be conducting burn out operations over the next several days to contain and control the fire. The burnout operations, which combust available fuel between the control lines and the fire's perimeter, will primarily be conducted during the daytime when burning conditions are most favorable. Although the size of the fire is presently 600 acres, it is expected to grow in size another 500 to 1,000 acres. This expansion on the overall fire footprint will result from the wildfire's continued growth coupled with burnout operations being completed to control the fire.

Today's weather of cooler temperatures, higher humidity, and light winds has been beneficial for firefighters conducting burnout operations. These weather conditions have kept the wildfire from making any fast runs at control lines.

Smoke from the fire will be visible in the area surrounding Jude's Gap and may impact local communities, particularly during night time temperature inversions that act to trap smoke close to the ground. Area residents should be aware of ground level smoke as it may impair night time driving on roads. Communities that could be smoked in this evening include Lake Lure, Chimney Rock and other communities north of the fire.

Management of the fire suppression was turned over to a NC Forest Service Type 2 Incident Management Team early this morning. The Hendricks-Willis IMT has set up an Incident Command Post at the Western Justice Academy, located off US 64 in Edneyville, NC. There are 143 firefighters assigned to this fire, including fire managers. Participating agencies include the NC Division of Forest Resources, NC Parks & Recreation, and local fire departments and VFDs that are providing structure protection services.

An Information Center has been set up at the Incident Command Post. The Information Center's email address is judesgapfireinfo@gmail.com. Fire information will also be posted in gathering places in communities close to the fire. Progress on the fire can also be followed on Twitter [@JudeGapFireInfo](https://twitter.com/JudeGapFireInfo).

Fire size

Fire is currently 600 acres, and could expand to about 1,500 acres.

Plans for today

Establish containment lines completely around the fire. Patrol the fire lines and burn out fuels to establish control.

Cooperating Agencies

N.C. Division of Forest Resources, N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, N.C. Justice Academy, Edneyville, Sunny View, Chimney Rock and Lake Lure Fire Departments, Americorp