



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Morning Update on the Black Cove Complex Fires in Polk County

POLK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA – Firefighters continue to work to contain three wildfires in Polk County, North Carolina. The N.C. Forest Service Red Incident Management Team assumed command of the fire on March 22. As of this morning the fire is being managed under unified command with N.C.F.S. Red Team, Polk County Emergency Management and Henderson County Emergency Management.

This group of fires consists of the Black Cove, Deep Woods, and Fish Hook Fires. Currently there are 263 personnel from North Carolina and other states are present to manage the incident. Firefighters have come from South Carolina, Michigan, Montana, Tennessee, Oregon, South Dakota, and California to help contain this fire.

Yesterday fire managers held a community meeting in Columbus, North Carolina. Approximately two hundred local residents were present at the meeting and had an opportunity to bring questions and concerns to local emergency officials and fire managers.

Early this morning a wet front moved over the fire area, bringing approximately 0.05 inches of rain. Firefighters are using this period of moderating weather conditions to secure some of the firelines from the previous few days. Windy and further dry conditions are expected this afternoon and evening, evaporating the moisture received over the fire area.

Polk County has issued 165 evacuation orders at this time and Henderson County has issued 29 evacuation orders.

- **Black Cove Fire**-(35° 17' 7.53" N , 82° 17' 49.96" W) The Black Cove Fire was first reported on March 19th and was last mapped at 2,076 acres. This fire is burning on state-owned and private land in the Green River Gorge approximately two miles northeast of Saluda. The fire is burning in timber on steep terrain and is currently 0% contained. Firefighters are working to build control lines on both sides of the river to prevent fire spread into neighborhoods and inhabited areas to the west of the fire. Evacuation orders for Polk County have been issued for residents at:
 - Green River Cove Road addresses from 1091-1528
 - Lady Slipper Trail
 - Big Hungry Road
 - Spurgeon Cove Lane
 - English Heifer Cove Road
 - Deer Trail



- Scarlets Mountain Road

Yesterday the Black Cove Fire made a push to the northwest, crossing into Henderson County in the upper reaches of the Big Hungry River. Henderson County has issued a voluntary evacuation for residents at:

- Laurel Mountain View Road
- Boulder View Road.

- **Deep Woods Fire-** (35° 17' 34.77" N , 82° 15' 34.00" W) The Deep Woods Fire was first reported on March 19th and was last mapped at 2,545 acres. This fire is burning on state-owned and private land in the Green River Gorge and in the neighboring Holbert Cove Community approximately 5 miles northwest of Columbus. The fire is burning in timber on steep terrain and is currently 0% contained. Firefighters are working on protecting structures on the southern end of the fire and preventing it from spreading south of Holbert Cove Road. Evacuation orders have been issued for residents at:
 - 5079-7265 Holberts Cove Road
 - Fox Paw Lane
- **Fish Hook-**(35° 20' 52.42" N , 82° 14' 5.01" W) The Fish Hook Fire was first reported on March 20th and is currently mapped at 199 acres. This fire is burning on private land near Lake Adger approximately 5 miles northwest of Mill Spring, North Carolina. The Fish Hook Fire currently stands at 50% containment and forward progress of the fire has been stopped. Firefighters have been securing firebreaks along the edges of the fire and extinguishing smoldering fuels. Containment is expected to increase in the coming days and firefighters will remain on scene until the fire poses no further threat. All evacuations related to the Fish Hook Fire have been lifted.

The Federal Aviation Administration has placed a Temporary Flight Restriction (TFR) over the fire in order to allow firefighting aircraft to operate safely. North Carolina General Statute 15A-300.1 prohibits flying an unmanned aircraft (drone) over any fire under the authority of the NC Forest Service.

To check wildfire activity across the state, use the North Carolina Wildfire Public Viewer at <https://ncfpublic.firesponse.com/> .