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Craven County

**Administration Building**

406 Craven Street
New Bern, NC 28560
Fax 252-636-2728
hr@cravencountync.gov

Commissioners 252-636-6601
Manager 252-636-6600
Finance 252-636-6603
Human Resources 252-636-6602

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Lia Parker
(530) 919-5526

U.S. Forest Service Issues Update on Great Lake Fire

CRAVEN COUNTY, N.C. – Craven County Government received the following update from Lia Parker, the Great Lake Fire Public Information Officer with the United States Forest Service regarding the Great Lake Fire in the Croatan National Forest.

Great Lakes Fire grows to over 35,000 acres in Croatan National Forest – Type 1 Incident Management Team to arrive Sunday for in briefing and will transition on Monday.

Release Date: 4/21/2023

Fire crews are working to establish containment lines around the Great Lake Fire on the Croatan National Forest in Craven County. The fire was first detected Wednesday evening with units responding and attempting to put in containment lines around the estimated 50-acre fire. Limited growth continued through Thursday as continued attempts to contain were made. Increasingly dry conditions and winds contributed to the rapid growth of the fire overnight through Friday.

Additional ground and aerial resources have been called up to assist in fighting the Great Lake Fire. The Southern Area Red Team, a Type 1 Incident Management Team, is due to arrive on Sunday and the fire will enter unified command.

The current size of the fire is estimated at 35,000 acres and 10% containment. Primary and secondary containment lines are being established on the eastern, southern, and western sides of the fire and an emphasis is being placed on the protection of private lands to the north.

Winds through the rest of Friday and through Saturday evening are expected to continue from the south. Communities to the north of Croatan NF can expect smoke impacts to continue. The wind direction is expected to reverse with winds coming out of the north then west, potentially impacting the communities south and east of the forest. A chance of rain is expected in the forecast for Saturday which may reduce fire behavior in some areas.

Firefighters from the US Forest Service, North Carolina Forest Service, and Craven County fire departments. Travelers on highways adjacent to the fire should proceed with caution especially on Highways 17 and 70 where firefighters are operating. Expect smoke in the area, particularly in the mornings and evenings. The cause of the Great Lake Fire remains under investigation.

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