

# Release

from the SC Forestry Commission, Pickens County Emergency Management Agency and the Pumpkintown Fire Department



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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CONTACTS**

Doug Wood, SCFC PIO  
(803) 968-1576  
[DWood@scfc.gov](mailto:DWood@scfc.gov)

Jay Marett, G<sup>3</sup>ville Sheriff PIO  
(864) 467-2680  
[JMarett@greenvillecounty.org](mailto:JMarett@greenvillecounty.org)

Kayli Yardley, USFS PIO  
(435) 864-8676  
[cufireteam1@gmail.com](mailto:cufireteam1@gmail.com)

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## **Hand crews focused on containing northern breach of Pinnacle Mountain fire**

PICKENS—The wildfire that escaped a small portion of the northern perimeter late Saturday and ran up Rocky Mountain yesterday surrounded the hill Sunday night. The latest reports indicate the fire is moving northwest toward Buzzard Mountain, but the containment strategy of constructing hand lines around the area remain the same.

The fire grew 244 acres overnight, and the containment area, which does not include the spread toward Buzzard Mountain, now encompasses more than 5,400 acres. Incident command officials say the fire remains at 35 percent containment.

Nearly half of the 89 hand crew members on the mountain – the largest count to date – are devoted just to the northern division focusing on this section of the breached line. The western and southwestern firelines are the best contained after successful burnouts. Most other personnel are concentrating their efforts on reinforcing and improving the lines on all other sides of the containment area.

One Black Hawk and two Chinook helicopters continue to drop water on hot spots today, and a Cessna 401 airplane will be conducting reconnaissance all day, providing ground crews with aerial observations.

### **Evacuation update**

Residents who were asked to evacuate Thursday because of the large-scale burnout may return to their homes beginning at noon today. Officials made the call to lift the evacuation this morning after evaluating the progress of containment efforts on the eastern side of the fire.

### **Weather**

On-scene incident meteorologist Mike Proud says winds will be very low today; however, the greatest cause for concern weather-wise will be extremely low humidity between 13 and 17 percent.

### **Facts & figures**

According to financial records being kept on the scene, the total cost of the incident, including personnel, time and resources has exceeded \$1.6 million. The South Carolina National Guard reported Monday morning it had dropped more than 1 million gallons of water on the Pinnacle Mountain wildfire since air support operations began more than a week ago.

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*The Pinnacle Mountain Fire began Wednesday, Nov. 9 and was caused by an escaped campfire. Efforts to control this fire have involved numerous local, state and federal agencies, with hundreds of personnel assigned to the incident so far. This mission is being coordinated under a unified command between the SC Forestry Commission and the Pumpkintown Fire Department (previously Holly Springs Fire Department).*



This photo taken Monday morning shows the plume of smoke from Rocky Mountain where the fire that had escaped the northern containment line continues to burn. Hand crews continue to make progress around this new section of the fire.