



Forest Service

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News Release

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U.S. Forest Service Responds to Wildfire in the Sipsey Wilderness in Bankhead National Forest

(Oct. 17, 2015) Double Springs, AL - A wildfire is burning in the Sipsey Wilderness of the Bankhead National Forest. The U.S. Forest Service was notified of the wildfire late Friday afternoon and immediately began taking measures for public safety. Portions of the Sipsey Wilderness Trails have been temporarily closed. Forest Service and Wild South volunteers are working at the trail heads and along the trails to notify visitors of the trail closings.

According to Dave Casey, district ranger for the Bankhead District, the safety of the public and wildland firefighters is our number one priority. "We are very appreciative of the Wild South volunteers and the Lawrence and Winston County Sheriff's Office for all their support" said Dave Casey. "Through the support of these volunteers the Forest Service is able to dedicate additional resources to contain the approximately 130-acre wildfire."

Until further notice the following Trails remain closed; 209 Sipsey River, 224 Bunyan Hill Wagon Trail/Road, 204 Bee Branch, and 206 White Oak. The Forest Service is asking Wilderness visitors to limit parking at Braziel Creek and Borden Creek trailheads to accommodate emergency responders. The Owl Creek Non-Motorized Trail System and the following Sipsey Wilderness Trails; 208 Thompson to Gum Pond, 223, 202, 201, 203, 207, 200 and 210 are open at this time.

The Sipsey Wilderness and surrounding forest are very dry. All visitors should be careful with campfires and make sure fires are completely out before leaving the area.

The cause of the wildfire is currently under investigation. Contact the Bankhead District at (205) 489-5111 for additional information.

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