In the fall of 2016, historic wildfires burned an estimated 42,000 acres on the Chattahoochee National Forest beginning October 1. The Rock Mountain Fire burned a total of 24,725 acres. Approximately 12,962 acres burned in northeastern Georgia, with the remaining 11,763 acres in North Carolina. The Rough Ridge Fire burned 27,870 acres in northwest Georgia.

Significant portions of the Chattahoochee National Forest were closed to the public to protect the safety of firefighters and forest visitors. Today, visitors recreating on the national forest face new hazards throughout the burned area, such as falling trees weakened by drought and fire.