

## More than 70 acres burned in wildfire, Linville Gorge closed

Written by Lauren Ohnesorge  
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It is the season for brushfires,

according to N.C. Forest Ranger Joe Shoupe. "We're a little bit late as far as the vegetation greening up," he said. Shoupe hopes that when leaves return, the fire danger will settle down. While a brushfire on Molly's Branch Road in Roaring Creek had Avery firefighters occupied on Wednesday, the real story was a woods fire in Pisgah National Forest near Shortoff Mountain off Old N.C. Highway 105. The fire started Wednesday around 3 a.m. and was still going strong yesterday. Thus far, the fire has claimed at least 70 acres. Helicopters dropped fire retardant as firefighters on the ground cleared leaves and brush. Firefighters hope rainy weather will help stifle the blaze. "They're just trying to monitor it and let it burn out," Burke County communications manager Lisa Propst said yesterday. No word on the cause of the fire, but officials closed Linville Gorge and Old N.C. Highway 105 due to the blaze.