

## Smoke From a Distant Fire

Written by Steve Frank

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For most of us in the High Country, there was and is no doubt about a fire somewhere in the area, that as smoke has found its way into the valleys and is clinging to the mountainsides across the area. The smoke has been so thick in many areas that it prompted phantom fire calls, with firefighters searching for the source of the smoke. For the most part, it was the Table Rock fire in the Linville Gorge, where firefighters are now in day four of battling the huge woods fire. Crews from the U.S. Forest Service firefighters and volunteers found the fire at three times the size yesterday morning as the day before, and still spreading—3 to 400 acres late yesterday. Firefighters are trying to get lines around the fire to contain it, but the main thrust is protection of the Outward Bound base camp area, currently vacant. There were two more fires yesterday in the area, one in the Foscoe area, another battled in Wilkes near the Ashe line, and smoke from that is causing other phantom fire calls in the area as well. Hopes are for more humidity—and even some rain—to help at least keep the fire from spreading further.

Photos: Phillip Greene, Jim Landis