

Shortoff fire: Under control

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Monday, 09 July 2007 18:23

A month after starting from a lightning strike on June 8- the wildfire at Shortoff Mountain is officially under control.

The blaze has burned 4,517 acres and is still going- but not spreading, according to U.S. Forest Service officials. The nearby Dobson Knob fire is also still burning, though under control. The fires will not completely extinguish without a healthy amount of rainfall, officials say. Falling leaves help the fire sustain itself. With the fire smoldering in the ground, soaking rain is needed for the fire to go out.

While the Mountains to Sea trail south of the Table Rock picnic area remains closed to the public, the Table Rock picnic area, the north end of the Linville Gorge and the west side off Forest Road 105, including Wiseman's View are open.

Lightning struck again- this time in Caldwell County Friday. The three-acre fire was quickly put under control. That site is at Rocky Knob near Collettsville.