



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 23, 2016 a.m.**

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### **Whipping Creek Road Fire, Dare and Hyde Counties**

#### **Fire Receives One Inch of Rainfall – US 264 Reopens Conditionally**

The Whipping Creek Road Fire has increased to 13,705 acres and is now 20% contained. Rain gauges located around the fire recorded about an inch of precipitation from last night's storms. The precipitation will serve to keep fire growth to a minimum today. With sunny and dry skies and falling humidity forecast for the beginning of the work week, fire officials expect the fire to become active once again. Fire officials suppression strategy continues to hold the northern fire perimeter from advancing north of Jackson and Maple Roads and east of US 264 from the Pain's Bay area to the north towards Stumpy Point. High pressure winds and afternoon sea breezes will ultimately determine which direction the fire moves.

The fire and smoke have become less hazardous along US 264 and the highway will be conditionally open this morning until further notice. Daily hours of travel are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. The NCDOT maintains a website that overviews road openings and closures on a real-time basis that can be accessed at <http://tims.ncdot.gov/tims/RegionSummary.aspx?re=8>.

Increased fire or smoke behavior along the highway may cause fire officials and local law enforcement to close the highway at any time during this period. For this reason, fire managers recommend that drivers check the DOT website before traveling this route. Residents and visitors traveling US 264 should be aware that firefighters and their equipment will be working along the highway and adjust their speed accordingly. Drivers should also be looking ahead for any utility poles or power lines that may have fallen on the highway. Remember to treat all downed power lines as "live wires" and keep a safe distance.

Although the fire has burned lands in Dare and Hyde Counties, its flames have not directly threatened any near-by communities or visitor destinations. Commerce and tourism on NC's Outer Banks has received little impacts from the fire. Smoke impacts on the Outer Banks and Manteo Island have been minimal. All public facilities in the area remain open for business. Special weekend events are ongoing as planned.

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