

# Deep Fire

Tuesday, April 28, 2009 8:00 pm

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Cypress National Preserve  
33100 Tamiami Trail East  
Ocohopee, FL 34141



Firefighters worked to hold the burnouts that were conducted yesterday and continued to mop up the hot spots near the containment lines. The fire is in good shape with few areas of major concern, based on predicted weather. However firefighters must continue to make the perimeter secure and work toward control of this fire. Today's activities concentrated on the southeast section of the fire where smoke columns were visible. All these were well inside the containment lines.

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## Tomorrow

**Fire Size:** 27,000  
**Containment:** 60%

Weather forecast calls for persistent east-southeast winds with predicted high temperature around 90 degrees. Crews will continue work Wednesday to secure all fire lines and mop up the interior. A burnout will be conducted on the north end of the fire to secure line south of Bear Island Grade. The incident management team has recommended that I-75 be opened at 8:00 a.m. and remain open unless unexpected smoke conditions require additional short term closures. SH 29 will open tomorrow morning from US 41 to I-75 with warning signs and a reduced speed limit. It will remain closed north of I-75 to Oil Well Road.

## The Role of Fire & Management



Fire is a natural and necessary component of the habitats of the Big Cypress region. Pinelands and freshwater prairies require periodic fires to control the spread of shrubs and trees. Occasional burns help provide open habitat for the proliferation of herbaceous plants and the wildlife that depend on them. Big Cypress National Preserve serves as important habitat for a variety of wildlife. These floral and faunal species have evolved in coexistence with wildlife in the ecosystem.

The fire management team of Big Cypress National Preserve actively utilizes fire to maintain the integrity of several local ecosystems, reduce fuel loads in susceptible areas, and create buffers to hamper wildfires.

## Area and Road Closures

In the interest of safety, Big Cypress National Preserve has enacted some recreational access closures. These are necessary to ensure the safety of visitors and fire personnel. All areas in the Bear Island Unit, and all areas north of Fire Prairie Trail, including the trail itself, in the Deep Lake Unit are closed. I-75 and SH 29 **south** of I-75 to US 41 will **open at 8:00 AM Wednesday** with a reduced speed limit. Both these highways will **remain open** unless smoke conditions force closure again, however all motorists are encouraged to exercise caution when driving through these areas. **SH 29 will remain closed north of I-75 to Oil Well Road**