

# Sargent Fire

(Continued from Page 1)

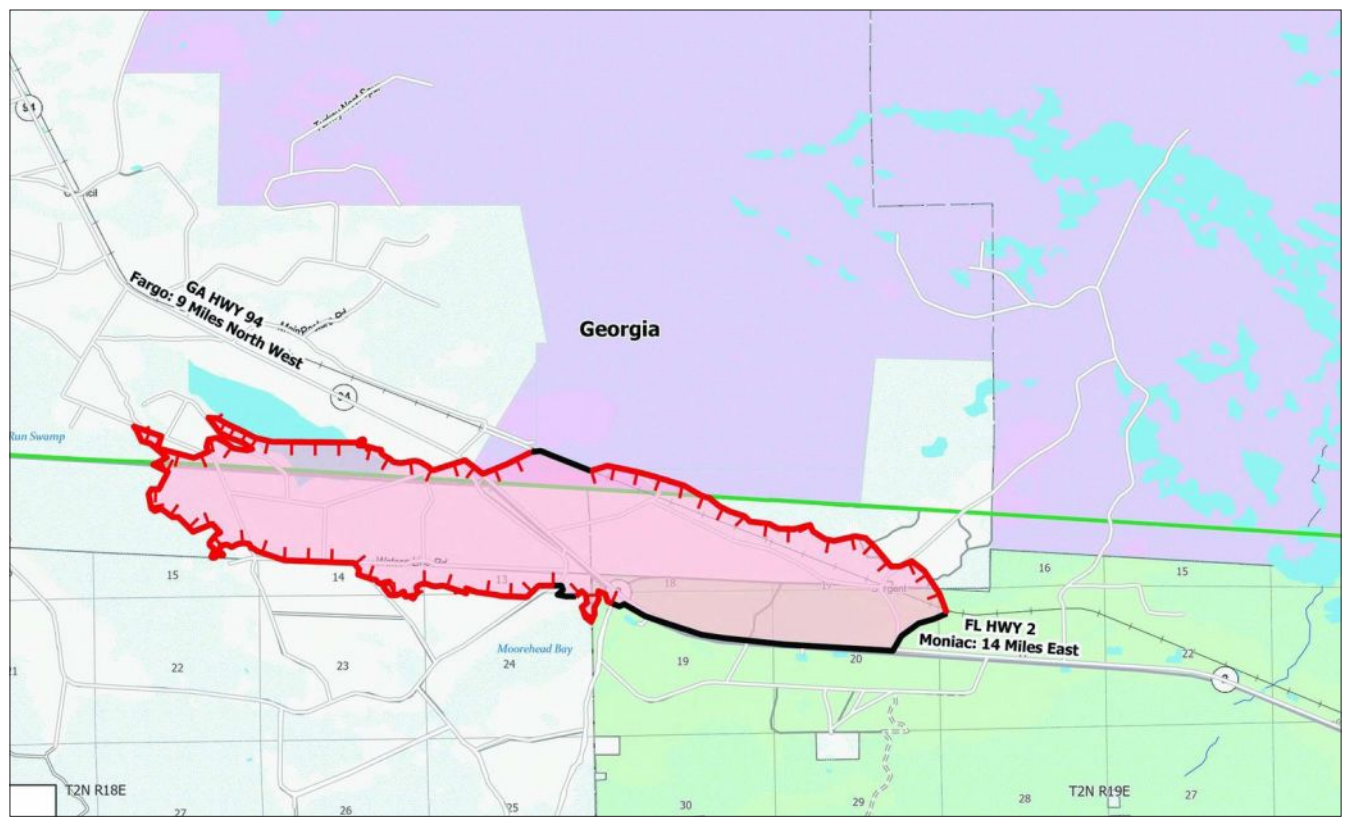
the fire and are working as directly along the fire's edge as possible to minimize impact and keep the fire contained. A joint Incident Management Team from the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC) and Florida Forest Service (FFS) remains in command," according to a statement from GFC.

Georgia Highway 94/Florida Highway 2 between Fargo and Moniac was closed at times since the fire began. As of Monday, it is open daily from 10 a.m.-10 p.m., with the road being closed at night due to reduced visibility due to smoke and fog.

"Looking ahead, forecasted winds could test containment lines along the southwest edge of the fire if rainfall remains limited," according to a statement from GFC.

No structures have been threatened thus far by the fire. Fire officials are urging residents in the area to stay aware of conditions in the area and to use caution when driving in smoke.

The public information line for the Sargent Fire is: 850-206-2675. Updated information online can be found at: BeWildfireReadyFL.com.



Above is the area where the fire has spread, about nine miles south of Fargo on the Georgia/Florida line.

## Legislative session ends

(Continued from Page 1) their tax base comprising properties that are not occupied by homeowners would be less affected.

Cities and counties could also raise their property tax rates. So could school districts, although, unlike cities and counties, nearly all of them are limited by law to a maximum rate of 20 mills, Mueller said. (A mill equals a dollar for every thousand dollars of assessed value.)

Sen. Blake Tillery, R-Vidalia, presented Senate Bill 33, formerly the hemp bill and now containing a mutation of HB 1116, on the Senate floor less than half an hour before midnight Thursday.

It passed despite firm opposition from Democrats, the minority party.

In the House, as the clock ticked toward 1 a.m., Rep. Shaw Blackmon, R-Bonaire, who'd been leading the charge on the House's primary agenda of property tax reduction, acknowledged that the cut would pass by hitchhiking, allowing senators to take the credit.

He recounted a line

from a favorite Marvel movie, involving the character Dr. Strange: "it's not about you," Blackmon said. "And we're going to do what's best for the taxpayer."

House Republicans sent the bill to Kemp, overriding opposition from Democrats, also in the minority in that chamber.

Later, House Speaker Jon Burns, R-Newington, expressed mixed emotions about the outcome.

"The bill that came back to us was not strong enough," he said. "There were several different initiatives we had in our property tax bill that would have been more meaningful for our property taxpayers." But it was still a "robust" tax cut, he said, vowing to push further next year.

If Kemp signs House Bill 463 into law, Georgians will also pay less for income taxes.

The measure approved by lawmakers would drop the rate to 4.99% from the current 5.19%. It would continue falling over eight years to 3.99% if state revenues remain strong. Income tax deductions would rise, as well, over eight

years, from the current \$12,000 for single filers, to \$18,000. The amounts would double for married couples. Dependent deductions also would rise by \$1,000 over eight years from the current \$4,000.

And the state income tax on overtime pay and cash tips would be waived on the first \$1,750.

HB 463 would offset the cuts by eliminating a handful of tax breaks for items like electrical vehicle chargers and the manufacture of cigarettes for export.

Democrats complained that Georgia's top earners would get the most back, and Blackmon responded that they put the most in.

He called it "real, meaningful tax relief."

But Sen. Josh McLaurin, D-Sandy Springs, said the tax credits being eliminated to pay for the income tax cut would not come close to making up for the lost revenue.

"It's a completely fiscally irresponsible bill," he said, adding that the tax exemption for overtime pay and tips was "a handful of peanuts that we're

throwing back" at Georgians.

Sen. Harold Jones, II, D-Augusta, the Senate minority leader, called the income tax legislation, which passed the Senate around 10 p.m., a "cynical attempt at electoral politics," in a year when affordability had become a central talking point.

Tillery, who, like McLaurin, is a candidate for lieutenant governor, admitted the income tax cut was not as big as what Senate Republicans had wanted. They had previously pushed a measure to eliminate state income taxes altogether.

"But it moves the ball forward," he said.

## HELP WANTED

Stephen C. Foster State Park in Fargo, GA is now hiring for Administrative Support. Minimum qualifications are a High School Diploma or GED AND ability to perform basic office functions and computer related duties. The entry salary is \$29,020.16. Please go to <https://gadnr.org/careers>. From this page you can view the DNR Vacancy Announcement (pages 14 and 15) and access the DNR Application for Employment. Email applications to [Parks6@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:Parks6@dnr.ga.gov) or bring/mail your completed application to Stephen C. Foster State Park at 17515 GA Highway 177, Fargo, GA. This position is open until filled. Call the park at 912-637-5274 if you have any questions.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you. When our home burned down, we felt lost—but this community wrapped its arms around us. Your donations, messages, and love have given us strength during one of the hardest times in our lives. We will never forget the way you showed up for our family. Thank you for helping us begin to rebuild, and for reminding us that even in tragedy, there is so much goodness around us.

-Carl & Gail Smith

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CLINCH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION**

For New Students ONLY-Clinch County Pre-K students do not need to register.  
Monday-Thursday, April 20-April 23 2026  
From 8:00 am to 2:00 pm

Children currently attending Clinch County Pre-K will be screened during the regular school day. Parents of these students do not have to attend registration.

Documents Required for Registration

- 1) Official birth certificate
- 2) Immunization Record - Georgia Certificate of Immunization (GA Form 3231). This form is available from your child's physician.
- 3) Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition Screening (Georgia Form 3300). This form is available from your child's physician.
- 4) Social Security Card
- 5) Proof of residence (utility bill, rental agreement, cable bill, mortgage agreement, or land line phone bill only--statements must be current-within the last 30 days.
- 6) Guardian papers (if applicable)
- 7) Kindergarten Assessment-Completed at time of registration by teacher. Student must be present.

\*Please visit our school website at [www.clinchcounty.com](http://www.clinchcounty.com) to access the 2026-2027 kindergarten registration packet on the CCES page. If you do not have the capability to download and print the registration packet, one can be picked up at CCES.

\*Registration is not complete until all documents have been received\*

If you have any questions, please contact Brooklyn Crews at [bcrews@clinchcounty.com](mailto:bcrews@clinchcounty.com) or call 912-487-5385.

**Note: Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2026.**