

Firefighters from Wells, Ogunquit battle York brush fire



YORK WATER DISTRICT'S SUPERVISOR DON NEUMANN, HELPS AREA FIREFIGHTERS EXTINGUISH A LARGE WOODS FIRE OFF FALL MILL ROAD EXTENSION THAT BROKE OUT WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. ROUGH TERRAIN MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR ACCESS AND WATER SUPPLY BUT THE FIRE WAS UNDER CONTROL BY 3 PM
DEB CRAM PHOTO

By **Susan Morse**

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YORK — Firefighters from six departments including Wells and Ogunquit battled a large brush fire Nov. 20 about a half mile in the woods off Fall Mill Road Extension.

The fire is under investigation but is not considered suspicious, according to York Village Fire Chief Chris Balentine.

"The likely cause is the careless disposal of smoking materials," Balentine said.

Hunters were seen in the area and firefighters found evidence they had been there, he said. No charges are expected, but Balentine is asking hunters and others to be careful.

"We're not out of the dry spell yet," he said. "The leaves on top are dry."

The fire was on property belonging to the Kittery Water District in York, near its water supply of Middle Pond.

Kittery Water District employee Carl Palm, who was working in the woods, found the flames and called in the fire at about 1 p.m., he said, but the fire may have broken out earlier that morning.

Someone else had reported smelling smoke at about 11 a.m., but after checking the woods, Palm found nothing, he said.

"It is the season of smelling smoke in the woods (from area chimneys)," he said.

Palm said after he smelled smoke, he called his supervisor and went looking for the source. He found flames on the ground in a 150-square-foot area, he said.

The fire grew to involve an area 500 by 300 feet and required "intense manpower," according to York Village Deputy Fire Chief David Apgar. Firefighters from York Village, York Beach, Kittery, Eliot, Ogunquit and Wells responded.

The fire had been knocked down by about 3 p.m., according to York Village Fire Capt. Eric Humphrey. Firefighters had made a line surrounding the burned area and, about an hour before sunset, continued to battle "hot spots" of smoldering brush.



ELIOT FIREFIGHTER, JIMMY ROY HELPS WITH EXTINGUISHING A LARGE WOODS FIRE OFF FALL MILL ROAD EXTENSION THAT BROKE OUT WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON. TO GET TO THE AREA, ACCESS WAS TOUGH TO THE ROUGH TERRAIN. DEB CRAM PHOTO

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