

Port Saint John Fire

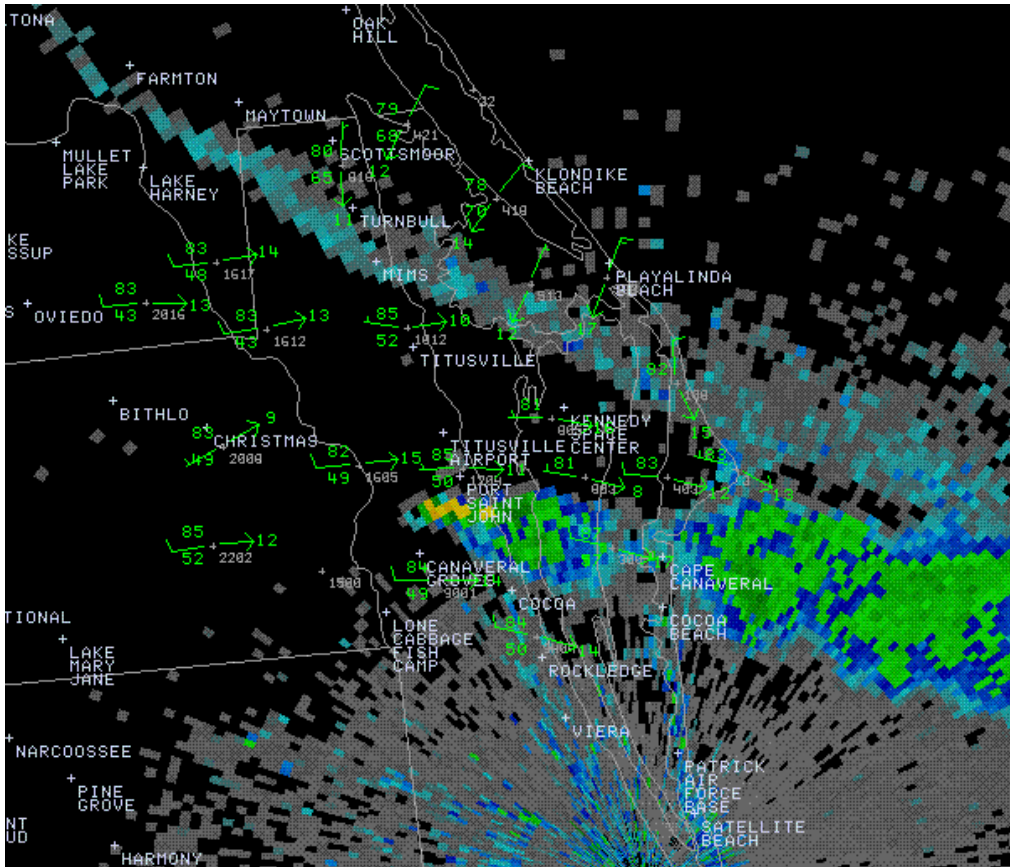
April 27, 2006

A small brush fire developed in a wooded area just west of the intersection of the Port Saint John Parkway and Interstate 95 on the afternoon of April 27th. A cold front passed over the Brevard county Spacecoast earlier in the day and due to strong and gusty westerly winds and very dry relative humidities the fire quickly crossed Interstate 95 just south of the Port Saint John Parkway. The fire grew in size consuming palmetto, scrub and dry grasses. Occasional torching occurred in pine and palm trees and this combined with strong winds spread the fire eastward near Sharpes and Port Saint John. By around 7 pm the fire had grown to over 700 acres and Interstate 95 was closed in both directions.

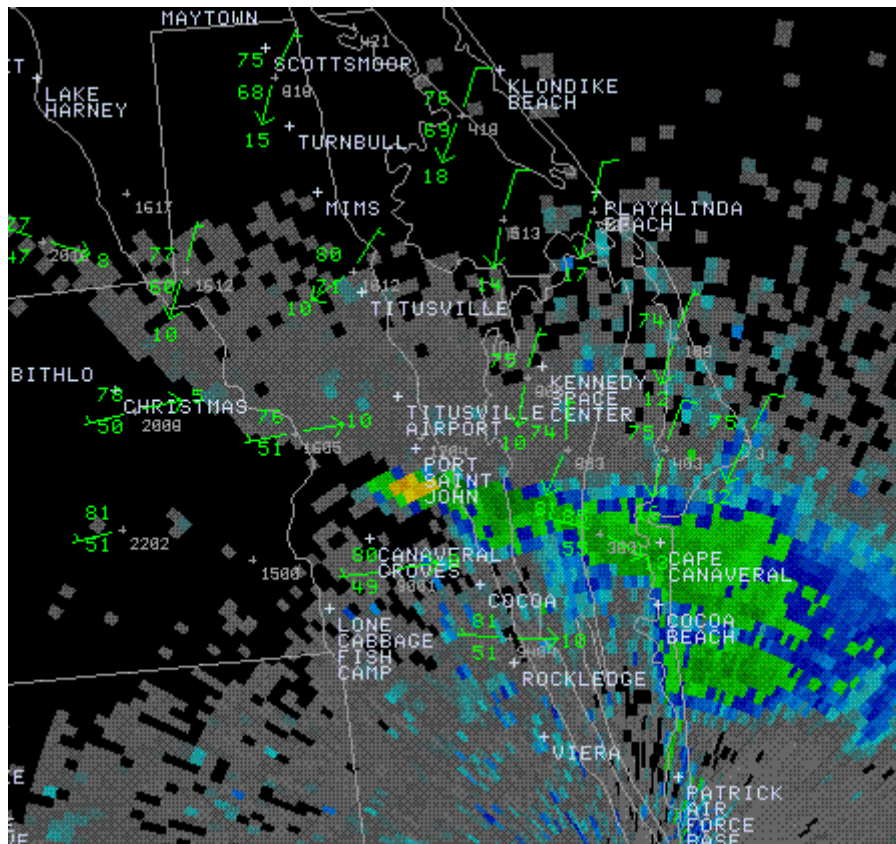
Numerous crews from Brevard County Fire Rescue, US Fish and Wildlife and neighboring agencies converged on the fire. Helicopter buckets were brought in from surrounding areas to drop water on the fire. Numerous mobile units were staged in the residential areas to contain the fire should structures have been threatened. Fortunately the fire did not consume any residential structures and there were no evacuations necessary. A wind shift as documented in the images below originated from a "surge" of northeast winds from the coastal Atlantic waters in the evening from 7pm to 9pm . After the wind shift hit the fire area the spread was pushed toward the south-southwest as shown by the final radar image (#3). Nightfall and higher humidity aided in containing the fire and smoke issues were the main problem during the overnight hours.



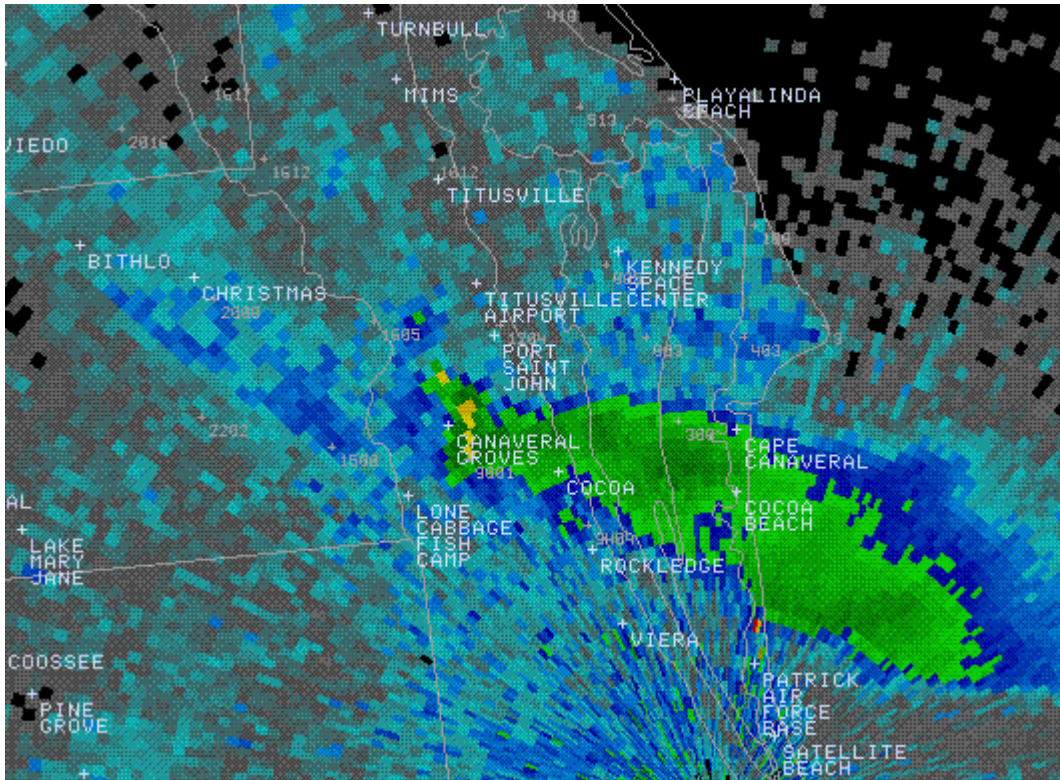
Area affected by the fire.



Radar image #1: Wind surge approaching the fire site.



Radar image #2: Wind surge about to reach fire site.



Radar image #3: Wind surge has passed through the fire site.

The leading edges of these surges, in a way, resemble a cold front but are not thought of in a classical sense. Most significantly for the fire location, the surge would produce a wind shift of over 90 degrees within a 15 to 20 minute period, as well as a significant rise in humidity due to the influence of the marine airmass.

Products Issued by National Weather Service, Melbourne

WWUS82 KMLB 272153
SPSMLB

SPECIAL WEATHER STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MELBOURNE FL
552 PM EDT THU APR 27 2006

FLZ147-272230-
NORTHERN BREVARD COUNTY-
552 PM EDT THU APR 27 2006

...SMOKE REDUCING VISIBILITIES ACROSS NORTHERN BREVARD COUNTY FROM
PORT SAINT JOHN FIRE...

A LARGE SMOKE PLUME WAS DETECTED BY NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER
RADAR WEST OF PORT SAINT JOHN TO SHARPES. THE HEAVY SMOKE WILL
REDUCE VISIBILITIES BELOW HALF A MILE IN SPOTS. MEDIA REPORTS
INDICATE INTERSTATE 95 HAS BEEN CLOSED IN BOTH DIRECTIONS BETWEEN
ROUTE 407 AND THE STATE ROUTE 528 DUE TO THE FIRE AND HEAVY SMOKE.

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FLUS42 KMLB 280219
HWOMLB

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MELBOURNE FL
1019 PM EDT THU APR 27 2006

AMZ550-555-570-575-FLZ041-044>047-053-054-058-059-064-141-144-147-
281000-

COASTAL WATERS FROM FLAGLER BEACH TO COCOA BEACH OUT 20 NM-
COASTAL WATERS FROM COCOA BEACH TO JUPITER INLET OUT 20 NM-
WATERS FROM FLAGLER BEACH TO COCOA BEACH 20 TO 60 NM OFFSHORE-
WATERS FROM COCOA BEACH TO JUPITER INLET 20 TO 60 NM OFFSHORE-
INLAND VOLUSIA-NORTHERN LAKE-ORANGE-SEMINOLE-SOUTHERN BREVARD-
OSCEOLA-INDIAN RIVER-OKEECHOBEE-ST. LUCIE-MARTIN-COASTAL VOLUSIA-
SOUTHERN LAKE-NORTHERN BREVARD-
1019 PM EDT THU APR 27 2006

THIS HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK IS FOR EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA.

.DAY ONE...TONIGHT

...DENSE FOG/SMOKE IMPACT...

LINGERING SMOKE FROM THE FIRE NEAR PORT SAINT JOHN IN BREVARD
COUNTY MAY REDUCE VISIBILITIES OVER CENTRAL BREVARD OVERNIGHT AND
EARLY FRIDAY. MOTORISTS ARE ADVISED TO DRIVE WITH CAUTION ON
ROADWAYS IN THE AREA SOUTH OF PORT SAINT JOHN DUE TO THE
POSSIBILITY OF LOWER VISIBILITY IN SMOKE.

.DAYS TWO THROUGH SEVEN...FRIDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY
WINDS ARE FORECAST TO VEER FROM NORTHEAST TO EAST FRIDAY THROUGH
SATURDAY AND INCREASE TO 15 TO 20 KNOTS OVER THE COASTAL WATERS.
ADDITIONALLY...NORTHEAST SWELLS ARE FORECAST TO BUILD FRIDAY
THROUGH MONDAY...WITH COMBINED SEA HEIGHTS REACHING 5 TO 7 FEET
NEAR SHORE AND UP TO 9 FEET OFFSHORE BY SATURDAY.

LOW AFTERNOON HUMIDITIES AND NORTHEAST WINDS OF 15 TO 20 MPH
FRIDAY WILL LEAD TO INCREASED FIRE SENSITIVITY...ESPECIALLY OVER
THE INTERIOR SECTIONS IN THE AFTERNOON.

.SPOTTER INFORMATION STATEMENT...

SPOTTER ACTIVATION WILL NOT BE NEEDED.

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PENDERGRAST