

Florida wildfire smoke closes highways

by UPI

LAKE CITY, Fla. - Fire crews battled 218 brush fires in Florida Monday and thick smoke forced officials to close some highways.

Crews tried to protect homes in Lake City, Fla., by clearing lines of brush, CNN reported.

"We're widening lines as fast as we can widen lines," firefighter Julian Priest told CNN.

The wind-driven fires are thought to have been sparked by lightning.

Officials closed portions of state and interstate highways in northern Florida over the weekend due to smoke and accidents caused by low visibility.

In Georgia, 41 wildfires were burning on more than 265,000 acres. The largest, called the Bugaboo Scrub fire, had burned 131,718 acres in Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. On Sunday, firefighters were started building a containment line as that fire reached the edge of the refuge, CNN reported.

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