



Swan Lake Fire Wildfire Update

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

Inciweb: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6387/>

Email: 2019.swanlake@firenet.gov

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kpbalerts/>

Alaska Fire Info: <https://akfireinfo.com>

Public Information Phone: (208) 391-3488

Kenai Peninsula Borough: <http://kpboem.com/>

Incident Command: Alaska Type 3 Organization, Zane Brown Incident Commander

Size: 167,164 acres

Containment: 81%

Personnel: 104

Firefighters working on the lightning-caused Swan Lake Fire are getting a helping hand from cooler, wetter weather. A reconnaissance flight over the fire Tuesday to confirm the benefit of work that has been done and to evaluate the threat of fire spread. Due to the moderating fire activity, fire managers are beginning the demobilization process and expect to start releasing crews over the next few days. Firefighters working on the Swan Lake Fire continue to remove hazard trees, chipping them where possible, and work on suppression repair along Skilak Lake Road.

Fire behavior will remain low, however deep pockets of duff and heavy fuels will continue to smolder and produce visible smoke in some locations for several weeks and possibly months. Residents and visitors need to be aware that hazardous conditions exist in the burned areas that can be difficult to see. Standing trees can weaken and fall as the fire burns the organic duff layer surrounding their roots. Any amount of wind will blow these trees over. The fire has burned very deep in some places, leaving hot ash pits behind. Please remember to keep pets and children close at hand and out of the burned area.

Homer Electric Association Project: The Homer Electric Association is working in close coordination with the Swan Lake Fire management team, Alaska Department of Transportation and Alaska State Troopers to safely remove power lines crossing the Sterling Highway that have been damaged by intense fire activity. Fire damaged trees continue to fall on the line near the highway crossings so a removal project is being conducted to mitigate the risk of unplanned sagging or dropping of the line that could present a threat to traffic flow and public safety. The removal of the line crossings will involve temporarily blocking of highway traffic to allow HEA crews to safely work in the vicinity of Milepost 62.5 and 58. The approximate time of these temporary delays will be distributed to the public via the fire team and AK Dept. of Transportation public information system. There should be no interruption of electric service to HEA members. The public is reminded to avoid the area of the damaged poles or downed power lines in the vicinity of the Swan Lake fire since they will continue to pose a risk to public safety until initial operations to mitigate the damage are completed.

Restrictions/Closures: An area closure remains in effect for all refuge and national forest lands that have been burned. Skilak Lake Road is open to provide access to Lower Skilak, Upper Skilak, and Jim's Landing boat launches and Bottenintnin Lake. All other recreation facilities in this area including campgrounds, trails, and day-use areas remain closed. Contact the Refuge Visitor Center by calling 907-260-2820 or by clicking www.kenai.fws.gov. Information on these closures is available at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6387/>

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR): The current TFR in place for air space over part of the Swan Lake Fire (9/9687 **NOTAM**) will lessen impacts to local aviation operators. Remember that temporary flight restrictions also apply to unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones. **If you fly, we can't!**

Cooperating Agencies: US Fish and Wildlife Service, State of Alaska Division of Forestry, US Forest Service, Alaska State Parks, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Central Emergency Services, Cooper Landing Volunteer Fire Department, Alaska State Troopers, Alaska Department of Transportation, Alaska Department of Fish & Game.