



**Great Basin
National Incident
Management
Team 1**

Swan Lake Fire

September 6, 2019 Update

Fire Size:
163,686 acres

Containment:
30%

Resources:
Hand Crews: 20
Helicopters: 4
Engines: 24
Dozers: 2

Total Personnel:
716

Location:
5 miles northeast of Sterling,
AK

Started:
06/05/2019

Cause:
Lightning

Management:
Great Basin National Incident
Management Team 1

For more information:

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

KPB OEM:
907-262-4636

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

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

Fire Information Line:
208-391-3488

Air Quality:
<https://www.purpleair.com/map/#10.18/60.4725/-149.7468>

“Testing the Plumbing”



An elaborate system of pumps, hoses and sprinklers, set up around structures in the Cooper Landing area, will be tested this morning. This “plumbing” would be used only in the event the Swan Lake Fire advances close to the community, an event with a low-probability of happening. Similar systems have already successfully protected remote cabins across the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. “All our computer modeling indicates the fire is not likely to grow much beyond where it currently sits in that area” says Fire Behavior Analyst Tim Klukas. “That’s because of recent rain, the fact that the days are getting shorter, and other factors, including direct and indirect control lines,” he added.

Recognizing the importance of protecting Cooper Landing, firefighters remain actively engaged building, and strengthening fire lines north of that community and south of the Kenai River. Yesterday, crews installed a series of pumps and hoses at Shaft Creek, in order to provide water to the line near the active fire’s edge. That line is on the east side of Resurrection Pass Trail. West of the trail, where terrain makes fire line construction impractical and unsafe, aircraft continue to dump water on the fire’s leading edge in order to slow its advance. If the fire does become active and these primary tactics do not work, crews have alternate lines, also with plumbing, to keep fire from crossing Resurrection Trail and prevent southerly movement of the fire. These lines could be “fired,” which means igniting fuel on the fire side of the lines, ahead of the advancing wildfire. Firing, also called “burn-outs,” robs the wildfire of energy it needs to grow. If those alternate lines were breached, a solid contingency line has been completed just outside Cooper Landing. If all three lines were breached, firefighters have the “plumbing,” as an additional tool to protect the community. The sprinklers also prevent stray embers from starting spot fires ahead of the wildfire.

Today is expected to be the last warm, sunny day before cooler weather moves in this weekend. As a result, travelers on the Sterling Highway should expect to see increased amounts of smoke, and possibly flames, in the areas south of the highway between Sterling and Cooper Landing. Some “islands” of unburned fuel remain and will continue to burn until additional moisture arrives. Some rain is possible Saturday night, accompanied by some strong winds but humidity is expected to remain high and moderate fire behavior.

Fire lines on the west side near Kenai Keys and Sterling continue to be “mopped-up” as firefighters patrol and look for any remaining hot spots to extinguish. Fire managers are confident the lines on the west side can withstand another test of wind, but also have alternate and contingency plans in place for the west side of the fire.

Caribou Lake: The Caribou Lake Fire, 25 miles northeast of Homer, remains at 904 acres, with 92% containment and 62 firefighters assigned.

Restrictions: The area closures for public lands surrounding and including the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Chugach National Forest remain in place to provide for public and firefighter safety. More information is available at <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6387/>.

Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFR): The current TFR in place for air space over the Swan Lake Fire (9/2925 NOTAM) will lessen impacts to local aviation operators. The TFR

includes unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), or drones, as well.