



# Swan Lake Fire

## Wildfire Fact Sheet



Tuesday, September 17, 2019 at 9:00AM

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

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

**Public Information Phone:** (208) 391-3488

**Email:** [2019.swanlake@firenet.gov](mailto:2019.swanlake@firenet.gov)

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

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

Location: 5 miles northeast of Sterling, AK

Incident Command: Type 2 Northern Rockies Incident Management Team 4, Rick Connell, I.C.

**Size:** 167,164 acres

**Containment:** 48%

**Personnel:** 259

**Current Status:** The change in fire size is again due to acreage of previously unburned interior islands, there has been no increase on the perimeter. Fire crews along with heavy equipment finished cutting fire weakened trees and chipping brush along the Skilak Loop Road on the southeastern portion of the fire. The Skilak Loop Road is now open for public use for its entire length and to the Lower and Upper Skilak Boat Launches. All lands, campgrounds, trails, and day use facilities except for the boat launches remain closed due to fire impacts. The southern side of the fire remained unstaffed but monitored from the air. On the southeastern side of the fire two crews of firefighters continued to seek out hot spots and cool those areas along the Fuller Lakes Trail. In Cooper Landing Structure Protection firefighters completed as much of the preparation work in the Russian Gap Road area as they could though limited by wetter conditions. A high pressure ridge moved over the area bringing clear skies and sunshine during the day. Even with drier conditions fire behavior remained low due recent moisture and cooler temperatures.

**Planned Actions:** Field operations will continue with a focus on monitoring the fire perimeter, beginning suppression repair, and continuing to remove hazards where it is safe to do so. On the south end of the fire, crews will prepare water handling equipment near the Doroshin Cabin to leave in place over the winter. Firefighters on the southeastern side of the fire will return to the Fuller Lakes Trail area to continue working on cooling hot spots in order to secure the fire perimeter. Today's weather will begin with sunshine but cloud cover will quickly move in as a low pressure system enters the area and brings additional chances of rain. Due to recent and expected precipitation, fire spread potential is expected to remain low; however, deep duff pockets and heavy fuels will continue to smolder and cause visible smoke.

**Key Messages:** Changes to Evacuation Preparedness Levels and Closures occurred early this morning. The Level 1 READY alert for all areas of Cooper Landing has been lifted as of 12:01 a.m. on September 17. The portion of the Kenai River from Jim's Landing to Skilak Lake reopened at 12:01 a.m. on September 17 as well. The entire length of the Skilak Loop Road along with the Upper Skilak Boat Launch reopened at the same time to allow for the takeout and launching of boats. All lands, campgrounds, and trails within or adjacent to the Skilak Wildlife Recreation Area remain closed due to fire impacts. Visitors need to be aware that hazardous conditions exist in the burned areas that can be difficult to see. Standing trees can be weakened as the fire burns the organic duff layer surrounding their roots. Any amount of wind will blow these trees down. In addition, 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 to prevent injuries.

**Restrictions/Closures:** An area closure remains in effect for the back channel on the south side of the Kenai River from approximately River Mile 69.5 to River Mile 71.5. All recreation facilities along the Skilak Loop Road, including campgrounds, trails, and day use areas remain closed. Additionally, all refuge lands that have been burned are closed to public access. 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 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, National Guard, Alaska Department of Transportation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.