



Chelan County
Fire District 8



Chelan County
Fire District 1



Washington
Department of
Natural Resources



Okanogan-
Wenatchee
National Forest



Bureau of Land
Management
Spokane District



Ed Lewis
Incident
Commander
IMT PNW Team 3

Fire Announcement – 07/15/2014 7:45 am PT

Mills Canyon Fire

Burn Out Planned For Today

The midslope containment line perched on the north side of Swakane Canyon is a special concern to fire managers. Several instances of burning material rolling downhill and igniting spot fires below the line have occurred over the past three days. These have all been promptly detected and suppressed, but they indicate a vulnerability to a fire escape and repeatedly expose firefighters to very steep terrain and rolling material. Preventing fire from crossing the Swakane Canyon is viewed as a critical link in averting a potentially devastating run southward. Establishing a secure line in the bottom of the canyon will greatly reduce the threat of escape.

To accomplish this, managers are planning a burn out operation this morning. Fire suppression personnel will begin approximately four miles up the canyon from Highway 97A and work their way back out to the highway. The objective is to reduce the energy and momentum of the fire front before it reaches new containment lines on the bottom of the valley. As the term implies, a burn out is literally fighting fire with fire by lighting successive narrow strips of fire parallel to the line progressively further interior from the line. The desired result is to consume enough of the fuel near the ground without allowing it to establish in the tree tops or other aerial fuels. Thus depriving the approaching fire front of fuel in its path.

Burn outs can produce copious amounts of smoke that can be mistaken for increased fire activity and cause considerable concern for the observing public. Smoke may also necessitate closures on Highway 97A. Today's operation is expected to begin at approximately 10:00 a.m. It is possible the operation may be delayed to later in the week if conditions are not deemed favorable. Local media outlets will be kept abreast of developments and the Fire Information office telephones will be staffed to answer questions or concerns.

FOR ADDITIONAL AND UPDATED FIRE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT:

<http://inciweb.nwccg.gov/incident/3937/> or follow www.twitter.com/OkaWenNF

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