



Fire Information (509) 800-7550 (Call or Text)

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**Rich Cowger, Incident Commander
Don Pyrah, Deputy Incident Commander**

News Release – July 23, 2024

Swawilla and Owhi Fires

The Swawilla Fire burned to the Peter Dan/Manilla Road and burned over the road to the east of the summit. It is moving northwest towards State Hwy 21. Monday, the fire burned into the powerlines along Manilla Road, forcing the power company to shut down power for firefighter safety. This affected the community of Keller. As of Tuesday morning, the power is back on in Keller.

Several roads have been closed in the fire area to keep both the firefighters and the public safe during wildfire suppression:

- Peter Dan/Manilla Road
- Swawilla Basin Road
- State Hwy 21 from Manilla Creek to Keller Ferry
- Keller Ferry

The Town of Keller is now in Evacuation Level 2 (SET) due to fire activity.

There is a tentative plan to move the Evacuation Center to the Lake Roosevelt School in Coulee Dam.

With the increase in people and resources to fight the fire, the forward operations camp as outgrown the space in Keller and is being moved to Owhi Flats near the intersection of Cache Creek Road and the Agency Cutoff Roads. Fire suppression crews will continue efforts in the Keller area.

FIRE ACTIVITY: The weather remains unseasonably hot and dry and a dry cold front is predicted on Wednesday, which will bring strong winds to the fire. Firefighters are taking advantage of roads and topographic features (ridges, roads, streams) to build strong lines in preparation for this change in weather. Fire activity increases significantly in the afternoon and the fire is expected to grow especially in the northwest edge. Fire crews are working both day and night to take advantage of more favorable fire behavior and working conditions. A helicopter is supporting ground crews with bucket drops on hotter areas.

Quick Facts Swawilla Fire Summary	
Approximate Size	7,294 acres
Containment	0%
Resources on Fire	14 Hand crews 1 Engine 5 dozers 2 tenders 4 Skidgens
Total Personnel	226
Fire Danger	Very High
Values at Risk	Homes, Structures, Powerlines, Timber, Rangeland, Cultural, Ecological, Future Values, and Air Quality
Road Closures	Peter Dan/Manilla Road Swawilla Basin Road State Hwy 21 from Manilla Creek to Keller Ferry Keller Ferry



Recreationalists are encouraged to avoid the Swawilla Fire area until the fire is better controlled. This includes water, trail and road recreationalists. Please help keep our firefighters safe.

The Owhi Fire remains unchanged and is on patrol status. This will be the last update on the Owhi Fire.

PUBLIC AND FIREFIGHTER SAFETY IS THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY.

A 20 person Hand Crew moves through a burned area of the fire. Photo credit: Susan Hunzeker