



Swauk Creek Fire - Update

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InciWeb: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/wases-swauk-creek>



September 15, 2024

Estimated size: 324 acres

Containment: 28%

Start Date/Time: 9/8/2024 at 3:54 PM

Area of Origin: Adjacent to Highway 97, 14 miles east of Cle Elum, WA

Cause: Vehicle Fire/Under Investigation

Structures Damaged: 0

Update: Acreage has continued to fluctuate due to more accurate mapping. We have also strengthened and secured more fire lines, which increased fire containment to 28%. Crews have continued to monitor the fire overnight. Today, crews are continuing work around the fire perimeter, improving and strengthening more handlines and progressing toward more containment. Dozers and masticators are hard at work again today, continuing to strengthen and open areas around the perimeter and containment lines.

As crews continue preparing for firing operations, they are also continuing work on the outer contingency lines for protection should unfavorable or unexpected weather patterns impact the fire. Firing operations will be scheduled in the next few days and will bring the edge of the fire up to the control line on the northern portion of the fire.

Firing tactics remove dense fuels near fire lines and fuels that may be hazardous to safety or firefighting operations. Without removing the dense, unburned materials, there is a higher chance that the fire could grow and spread over the current fire lines. The primary purpose of a firing operation is to safely consume the available fuels ahead of an active fire edge while reducing the potential for negative impacts and resource damage caused by higher-intensity fire. While firing operations occur, smoke will likely be visible from Highway 97 and surrounding communities.

The mapping of homes and properties continues as the structure protection group identifies and evaluates properties surrounding the fire. Structure groups will be assigned to protect structures during the firing operations to ensure no embers or other hazards from the burn threaten homes or structures.

Road Closures: Highway 97 remains open. Due to the increased flow of fire vehicle traffic traveling in and out of the fire area, we ask that people drive slowly through the area using caution.



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Evacuation Levels: Evacuation levels remain the same. They were updated as a precaution; there is no immediate residential threat from this fire. Evacuations can be found on the interactive map. Many Forest Service roads are affected in this area; please review the map if you want to know about a specific location/road.

Live map of active fires from Kittitas County:

<https://kitcogis.maps.arcgis.com/.../minima.../index.html...>

The First Creek area is currently closed to the public.

Notification Level 3 (Go Now) is shown on the map; however, this area has no residential structures.

Notification Level 2 (Get ready)

- Residences east of US 97 north of fire to Liberty Rd
- Forest Service Road 3506 south of fire to Upper Green Canyon Rd

Notification Level 1 (Be Fire Aware)

- The town of Liberty
- All Liberty Rd
- Forest Service Road 9726 and all of its extensions (including Deer Gulch, Pine Gulch, Robinson Gulch, and Harkness Gulch)

Currently, no evacuation notices are issued for residents south of First Creek or west of US Highway 97.

As always, conditions can change quickly; please stay alert and avoid the area if you feel unsafe.

Weather and Fire Behavior: An upper-level trough will bring cooler temperatures and a slight change of showers on Sunday. Minimum RH values will be about 35 to 40 percent on Sunday and 25-30 percent on Monday, with good overnight recoveries. Today's high will be 65-68 degrees with light winds 5-7 mph. Tonight's temperatures will be 50-53 degrees.

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