



Shawnee National Forest

## Forest Service News Release

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### New wildfire on Shawnee National Forest

*Bald Knob Trails 201, 201A temporarily closed*

**(Harrisburg, IL, March 26, 2026)** — Firefighters are actively responding to suppress a small wildfire in the Bald Knob Wilderness area, discovered on March 25, 2026. Shawnee National Forest resources, in coordination with forest partners and Alto Pass Volunteer Fire Department, responded, focusing immediately on protecting communication structures and infrastructure in the area.

To reduce the threat to public safety from fire, snags and rolling material, as well as for the safety of firefighters on scene, forest officials have temporarily closed Bald Knob Loop, Trails 201 and 201A.

The fire is burning in steep, rugged terrain, with thick dead and down fuels from prior storms and insect outbreaks. Firefighters are attacking this with full suppression efforts.

Resource specialists with expertise in Wilderness policy and operations have been assigned to minimize fire suppression impacts. No structures have been impacted at this time, and crews are assessing for any other damage. The cause is under investigation.

To learn more about wildland fires visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire>. To learn more about “good” prescribed fire, visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/prescribed-fire>.

For more information on alerts and closures, please visit our [website](#) or follow Shawnee National Forest’s [Facebook](#).

To report information regarding this fire, please call or text the forest tipline (618) 201-3364.

**About the Forest Service:** The Forest Service has, for more than 100 years, brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology — and rooted in communities — the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct

or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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