

# Elk Fire Update

Wednesday, October 23, 2024 – 9:00 a.m.



## Rocky Mountain Complex Incident Management Team 1

Dan Dallas, Incident Commander



**Information Phone:** 307-303-7642

**Hours:** 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Email:** [2024.Elk@firenet.gov](mailto:2024.Elk@firenet.gov)

**InciWeb:** <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/wybhf-elk-fire-2024>

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

**Information Linktree:** <https://linktr.ee/2024ElkFire>

**Special Notes:** U.S. Highway 14 reopened this morning with reduced speed limits and truck traffic prohibited. There are firefighters and highway repair crews working along the highway. Please obey speed limits and drive cautiously. Consider avoiding the area entirely if you don't have to be there.

**Current Situation:** Risk to identified values was decreased by yesterday's colder temperatures, light precipitation and high relative humidity. However, pockets of heavy fuels continue to burn inside the fire perimeter. Additional fire growth is expected to be minimal, and fire behavior is primarily creeping and smoldering.

Good progress is being made on suppression repair work along the eastern side of the fire. All suppression repair is being conducted in coordination with Resource Advisors from the local area.

**Division A:** With limited access to hand crews and few values at risk, this Division is being observed by aircraft as needed and is a lower priority for action at this time.

**Division Z:** Even though the snow is melting, muddy conditions make access very challenging by vehicle and on foot. Crews are continuing to improve firelines in the Red Canyon area. A road grader worked yesterday on suppression repair of dozer lines.

**Divisions P, M, K:** Graders continue making progress along the dozer lines from Division P, to M, implementing suppression repair where appropriate. Fire managers have been working with landowners in Division M to address specific suppression repair issues on their property.

**Divisions I:** About 75% percent of suppression repair work in this division has been completed on the mapped and previously unmapped dozer lines. Crews made good progress on clearing ladder fuels along roads in the southern part of the division.

**Division H:** Heavy fog hampered the work planned for yesterday, so it will likely take an additional day to get this indirect line prepped. Crews continue work on the 26, or Red Grade Road, prepping it to use as an indirect fireline, to its junction with the 16 Road. They will prep that road to its junction with Highway 14. This work includes removing brush and other fuels by limbing trees and removing understory vegetation to eliminate small ladder fuels. This will assist with defending firelines in the event fire activity increases.

**Divisions D, F:** Fire supervisors are searching for hot spots with aerial resources, including drones. They assessed the road system for a potential indirect fireline north of Burgess Junction to protect the WY DOT compound and the Forest Service Visitor Center and Work Center. Good progress was made to prep the 15 Road north to Division A, limbing trees and removing small ladder fuels. Road graders are clearing the snow remaining on the roads, making way for crews and heavy equipment.

### Weather, Fuels, and Fire Behavior:

Snow from the recent weather system has mostly melted away, except in some areas with north-facing slopes and dense canopies. It will be slightly warmer and drier today, in between successive cold fronts, but good overnight humidity recovery continues. Lighter winds, with a prevailing southwest direction for higher elevations, are expected. An overnight cold front will bring higher humidity and potential for light rain/snow showers before sunrise Thursday, along with a return of northwest winds. Today's fire behavior will be minimal, limited to creeping and smoldering, with no fire growth expected.

**Evacuations:**

For information on Johnson County evacuations, go to Johnson County Emergency Management's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/JohnsonCoWYEMC> . For info on Sheridan County evacuations and road closures, go to the Sheridan County Emergency Management website: [www.tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5](http://www.tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5) . You can also call the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office (307-672-3455) or Sheridan County Emergency Management (307-752-2174).

**Closures:** A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place over the Elk Fire. Wildfires are a no-fly zone for unauthorized aircraft, including drones. **If you fly, we can't.** For more information, visit <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org>.

US Highway 14 opens today between Burgess Junction and Dayton. The highway may be congested by firefighter traffic, highway repair work, and public use. Please minimize stopping and don't block side roads so that firefighters can get to their assignments. There continue to be closures on Red Grade Road and County Road 89 from Dayton to Beckton Junction. County Road 335 is closed from the intersection of County Road 335 and Brinton Road to the west. View the Wyoming Department of Transportation road-closure map here: <https://www.wyoroad.info/> . Bighorn National Forest closure Order No. 02-02-06-24-08 remains in effect. The order and map can be viewed here: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/bighorn/alerts-notice> .

**Elk Fire Statistics:**

Size: 96,360 acres | Containment: 51% | Total Personnel: 451 | Location: West of Sheridan, WY  
Reported: September 27, 2024 | Cause: lightning

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