

Elk Fire Update

Friday, October 25, 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

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: Given firefighter progress made on suppressing fire activity, predicted future weather, fuel moistures, and lateness of the season, it is unlikely the Elk Fire will grow significantly. The small increase in acres yesterday is due to more accurate mapping. Over the next few days, fire managers will begin taking steps to align the firefighting workforce with expected fire behavior and the remaining work. This will include releasing some resources and transitioning to local leadership while ensuring continuity of objectives and actions.

A community meeting is planned for 6 p.m. Monday, October 28th, at the Sheridan Junior High School, located at 500 Lewis Street. The meeting will be recorded and posted to Facebook and virtual connection will be available through Facebook live streaming at: <https://www.facebook.com/bighornnf>.

Current Situation: Yesterday, lower elevations received up to ¼ inch of rain while higher elevations received 1-3 inches of snow. These moist conditions resulted in slick and muddy roads, presenting an increased hazard to firefighters. Despite road conditions, firefighters made progress increasing containment as fire activity continued to be minimal. On contained fireline, suppression repair operations were completed on the north side and additional progress was made on east side dozer lines. Heavy equipment operations also continued strengthening indirect firelines.

Today will begin a warming and drying trend expected to last through Sunday, allowing for accelerated progress as roads dry out and the possibility for increased fire activity. Several recent precipitation events across the fire over the last week have kept fire activity low as fine fuel (pine needles and grass) moistures were high. With predicted weather, these fine fuels will dry out, allowing fire activity to pick up slightly. Smoldering and creeping is also likely in heavy fuels (trees and logs) where moisture levels are low and heat has been retained. Firefighters will continue to focus on suppression repair supported with heavy equipment across several divisions while also securing uncontained firelines.

Division A: This division remains unstaffed and aircraft are observing fire activity. No change in tactics will occur today.

Divisions Z, P, M, K, I: Suppression repair work was completed in Divisions Z and P allowing heavy equipment resources to be assigned to other sections of the fire. Divisions M and P were combined with the bulk of work remaining on the eastern edge on the southern end of Division M through Division I. Slick roads prevented access in some areas although work will resume as roads dry out. Actions of the last several days, reducing suppression related impacts to natural resources, will continue today.

Division H: Heavy equipment continued with shaded fuel break development along the Red Grade Road and Forest Road 26 yesterday, and this work will be ongoing today.

Divisions D, F: Firefighters were focused on suppression repair, which included rehabilitating dozer lines in proximity to the Burgess Work Center and Hay Creek, and chipping previously cut vegetation along firelines. Indirect line construction on Forest Road 15 continued. Today, work will be unchanged.

Weather, Fuels, and Fire Behavior:

Across the fire area, temperatures will rise more than 10 degrees from yesterday and will be in the upper 40s at higher elevations and range from 65-75 degrees in lower elevations. Humidity will be in the 30-40% range and winds

will be light. Fire activity will be minimal with some smoldering, but generally struggling to burn due to retained moisture from yesterday's precipitation.

Evacuation Notices:

A *Ready* Evacuation status exists for several areas in proximity to the Elk Fire. For additional information about evacuation status, go to Johnson County and Sheridan County respective websites: Johnson County Emergency Management's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/JohnsonCoWYEMC> and Sheridan County Emergency Management website www.tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5. You may also contact Sheridan County Sheriff's Office (307-672-3455) or Sheridan County Emergency Management (307-752-2174).

Closures and Advisories:

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 between Burgess Junction and Dayton is open, restrictions are in place for some commercial vehicles based on weight and size. Red Grade Road and County Road 89 from Dayton to Beckton Junction are closed. County Road 335 is closed from the intersection of County Road 335 and Brinton Road to the west. Additional information may be obtained at <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-notices> .

Elk Fire Statistics:

Size: 96,935 acres | Containment: 58% | Total Personnel: 458 | Location: West of Sheridan, WY
Reported: September 27, 2024 | Cause: lightning

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