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Elk Fire Update - October 5, 2024

Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 3 Casey Cheesbrough, Incident Commander

Date Reported: Friday, September 27, 2024

Cause: Undetermined

Size: 62,104

Containment: 0%

Total Personnel: 584

Location: Approximately 6 miles northwest of Dayton, Wyoming

Key Messages: Due to fire activity, the Sheridan County Sheriff increased the evacuation levels in the following areas:

- “GO” - West of Beckton Road from Dayton, continuing south to the intersection of Beckton Road to Eaton Ranch Road. Eagle Ridge Subdivision and the homes directly east of US Hwy 14, heading up the mountain
- “SET” - Town of Dayton

Fire crews were very busy overnight around the fire perimeter. The highest fire activity was experienced on the southeastern side of the fire. Crews were forced to evacuate from subdivisions along US HWY 14 due to extreme fire behavior associated with the cold front passage at approximately 1:30 a.m.

On the northwest area of the fire crews conducted a quick burning operation along Cty Rd 144, in the vicinity of Gay Creek to stop the spread of the fire. This firefighting was done by hotshot crews, engines, heavy equipment, and water tenders.

As fire behavior moderated in the early morning hours, crews returned to the area to resume structure protection work.

Current Situation:

Fire behavior is expected to remain high today as winds will likely push fire to the southeast and downslope movement is likely to be seen on the face of the mountain.

Along the eastern side of the fire, crews will continue to extinguish areas of heat along established firelines; that area did not see movement overnight. Crews will continue structure protection work in the subdivisions along US HWY 14 now that the fire front has passed by.

Structure protection work is ongoing in the Burgess Junction area; this work includes multiple structure preparation techniques such as the removal of vegetation near structures, construction of fireline, and placement of hose and sprinklers where possible.

Firefighter and public safety remain the top priority. The tactics used to suppress the fire will be determined by the terrain, fire and weather conditions, and medical response time with a focus on only implementing plans and tactics that have a high probability of success.

Closures and Evacuations: The newest evacuation map can be found at the Sheridan County Emergency Management website, [Sheridan County \(sheridancountywy.gov\)](https://sheridancountywy.gov). US Highway 14 remains closed from Dayton to Burgess Junction. Please contact the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office at 307-672-3455 or Sheridan County Emergency Management at 307-752-2174 for more information on evacuations and road closures.

The Bighorn National Forest Closure has been expanded to include the closure of Red Grade Road. Please view the updated order on the Bighorn National Forest website, [Bighorn National Forest - Alerts & Closures \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov).

Weather & Smoke Information: A Red Flag Warning runs through 6:00 p.m. this evening. This critical fire weather is primarily due to continued high winds. The winds are forecast to continue out of the northwest with speeds 15-25mph and gusts to 35mph this morning and into early afternoon. Wind speeds are expected to decrease around 1800.

It is anticipated that the Elk Fire will continue to put up a smoke column; please go to the AirNow website (<https://www.airnow.gov/>) for smoke information.