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## Elk Fire Update – October 8, 2024

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

**Date Reported:** Friday, September 27, 2024

**Cause:** Lightning

**Size:** 74,685

**Containment:** 10%

**Total Personnel:** 829

**Location:** Approximately 6 miles northwest of Dayton extending 6 miles southeast of Dayton, Wyoming

**Key Messages:** There will be a community meeting—particularly for residents of the Bighorn and Story areas—on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 7:00 pm at Bighorn High School, 333 WY-335, Sheridan. Attendees will get an update on the fire and evacuations, and will have an opportunity to ask questions and have one-on-one conversations with agency representatives and fire managers. The meeting will be recorded and posted to [YouTube \(youtube.com/@2024ElkFire\)](https://www.youtube.com/@2024ElkFire) and the [Bighorn National Forest's Facebook Page \(Facebook.com/bighornnf\)](https://www.facebook.com/bighornnf).

The southern part of the fire is a top priority for firefighting efforts today, as crews take actions to protect surrounding communities, the Big Goose municipal watershed, and structures in the Big Goose drainage that are potentially threatened by the fire. Heavy-equipment traffic on and near the Red Grade Road will increase and no civilian traffic will be allowed on the Red Grade Road today.

**Current Situation:** On the fire's northeast side, a hotshot crew conducted a firing operation yesterday off the 144 Road, and crews working the night shift secured and held the fireline by extinguishing hotspots. Crews will continue fuels removal work in that area today. They will also be patrolling and mopping up any heat sources around structures. Structure protection is accomplished through a variety of methods such as removal of vegetation near structures, construction of fireline, and placement of hose and sprinklers where possible. Day- and night-shift crews are continuing to brush and improve Pass Creek Road.

On the eastern side, construction of containment lines has been completed and the lines are holding. firefighters are patrolling and eliminating lingering areas of heat. On the south end of the fire, Red Grade Road and Poverty Flats will be busy with heavy equipment today. Crews will be constructing additional fireline in the area with a dozer and hand tools and potentially conducting firing operations using drones and helicopters if favorable weather conditions exist. Crews last night work on clearing brush away from the Sheridan Water Treatment intake to avoid damage to the structures and avoid disrupting service to the communities.

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 implementing plans and tactics that have a high probability of success.

**Closures and Evacuations:** US Highway 14 remains closed between Dayton and Antelope Butte, and US Highway 14A is closed 22 miles east of Lovell to Burgess Junction. For specific county-road closures and the current status of evacuation zones, including a map, refer to Sheridan County's [news listings web page](https://www.tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5) [tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5](https://www.tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5). You can also call either the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office (307-672-3455) or Sheridan County Emergency Management (307-752-2174). Bighorn National Forest lands around the Elk Fire are also closed under [Order 02-02-06-24-08](#). The order and map can be viewed on the forest's alerts web page: [fs.usda.gov/alerts/bighorn/alerts-notice](https://fs.usda.gov/alerts/bighorn/alerts-notice).

**Weather & Smoke Information:** Hot, dry conditions will persist Tuesday, increasing fire activity. Winds are expected to remain light. The Elk Fire will continue to produce smoke that is visible from nearby communities. Refer to the AirNow website ([airnow.gov](https://airnow.gov)) for smoke and air-quality information.