



Elk Fire Update – October 10, 2024

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

Size: 76,378 acres (409-acre increase)

Total Personnel: 902

Containment: 15 percent

Cause: Lighting

Resources: 10 helicopters, 21 crews, 63 engines, 8 dozers, 12 water tenders, 5 masticators, 1 skidder

Key Messages: The recording of last night's community meeting at Big Horn High School can be viewed on the Elk Fire YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/@2024ElkFire/videos) and the Bighorn National Forest's Facebook Page (Facebook.com/bighornnf).

The percent containment reported decreased from 16 percent to 15 percent because of recent fire growth. Percent containment measures how much of the fire's perimeter is surrounded by a control line. The perimeter of the fire is 225 miles, with 34 of those miles being contained firelines.

Overnight, the fire crossed the Big Goose River on the southern end of the fire. The night crew was ready and anticipating this forward progression. They completed firing operations to introduce low-intensity fire on the landscape to reduce the fuel load before the active fire got there. The day shift will continue to work in this area, patrolling and mopping up residual hotspots.

Current Situation:

Residents in Sheridan, Beckton, Bighorn, or Story may have noticed more fire activity and smoke yesterday. The fire was very active, particularly on the west side, due to high winds, high temperatures, low humidity. The fire is expected to be active again today, potentially producing abundant smoke. Additionally, the Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team has been implementing strategic firing operations along the northern and southern edges of the fire perimeter, consisting of adding low- to moderate-intensity fire to the ground in targeted areas to remove fuels from the fire and limit its intensity. Firing operations will continue today if weather conditions permit.

On the fire's northern side, a hotshot crew conducted additional firing operations, and air operations dropped fire retardant yesterday off the 144 Road. Today, the crews will continue to prepare the 144 Road to protect the Little Bighorn Canyon. The established containment line along the northeastern side of the fire perimeter is holding, and there is minimal heat detected in the area.

On the southeastern and southern parts of the fire, mopup and patrolling continues. Firefighting crews will continue to build additional control lines and prepare areas for potential firing and aerial operations that would protect the watershed and associated water-treatment plant structures. Road graders are working alongside firefighting resources to prepare the Red Grade Road.

On the western side of the fire in the Burgess Junction area, structure protection is in place, and more pumps and sprinklers will be installed today. Firefighters remain on scene to protect structures and conduct defensive firing operations if needed.

Weather & Fire Behavior: A cold front is moving in today, dropping temperatures, increasing humidity, and shifting wind direction to the northwest. The shifting, gusty winds will likely increase fire activity and smoke production, particularly on the fire's west side, directing growth into the Bighorn National Forest. Vegetation remains extremely dry and receptive to burning. The cooler, moister conditions are not expected to reduce fire behavior in areas with timber. For air-quality and smoke information, refer to the AirNow website: airnow.gov.

Evacuations and Closures: Sheridan County evacuation levels did not change Wednesday. For detailed information, view the evacuation map and all news releases on the Sheridan County Emergency Management website: tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5 or 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 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.

US Highway 14 is closed at Granite Pass/Hunt Mountain Road/FS 10 (milepost 38.3). US Highway 14A is closed at Hunt Mountain Road/FS10 (milepost 85.6). View the Wyoming Department of Transportation road-closure map here: wyoroad.info. Sheridan County road closures have been modified. The following roads remain closed to allow fire personnel to travel the roads safely, ranchers in those areas to move cattle safely, and the residents who live in those areas to travel safely as well.

Soft Closures (roads are closed to the public except local residents):	
All of Pass Creek Road to the Wyoming/Montana state line	All of Beckton Road
Slack Road at the Wyoming/Montana state line	Soldier Creek Road West from the Wolf Creek and Soldier Creek Road Intersection
Little Horn Canyon Road	Big Goose Road from the Intersection of Big Goose Road and Beckton Road
Twin Creek Road at the Parkman Access	Rapid Creek Road
Columbus Creek Road	Beckton Hall Road
Smith Creek Road	Big Horn Road
Tongue Canyon Road	Little Goose Canyon Road
Hard Closures (no public access):	
All of Red Grade Road	

Evacuation Shelter:

An emergency shelter has been established at the fairgrounds in Sheridan and can accommodate numerous people, campers, and animals. To plan for people or animals, call 307-752-2174 or 307-683-6965.

Elk Fire Information:

Phone: 307-303-7642 (8 am to 8 pm)

Email: 2024.Elk@firenet.gov

Linktree: linktr.ee/2024ElkFire

