



Elk Fire Update – October 16, 2024

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



Size: 92,487 acres (506-acre increase)

Total Personnel: 903

Containment: 28 percent

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 13 aircraft | 18 crews | 60 engines | 7 dozers | 19 water tenders | 5 masticators | 8 skidders | 5 feller bunchers
4 processor | 3 chippers

Key Messages: Fire behavior is expected to be active today due to hot and dry conditions; however, firefighters will be preparing for colder weather and moisture starting later this evening.

Public information officers will be at the Big Horn post office today from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm to answer questions about the current fire situation, operational strategies, and evacuations.

Current Situation: Yesterday and overnight, crews were able to keep fire activity at the south end of the fire from moving below Rapid Creek and Forest Service Trail 238 despite hot and dry conditions.

Crews were able to finish work to secure the edge of the seven-mile-long control line from Big Goose Creek water intake facility south to Red Grade Road during operations yesterday and last night. Today, crews will continue to patrol the area and mop-up hotspots to slow the fire's progression to the southeast.

On Red Grade Road today, firefighters in the Poverty Flats area will continue implementing structure protection measures around homes. The work includes clearing flammable debris and adding sprinklers, hose and pumps on properties. Heavy equipment operators will also continue the effort to remove trees and vegetation along the Red Grade Road, in order to create defensible space should strategic firing operations be necessary. Structure preparation south of the Red Grade Road will continue all the way west to US Highway 14.

Firing operations were conducted along the 168 Road north of Burgess Junction yesterday to secure the lines created in the area.

On the northwest corner of the fire near the Broderick Flats, southwest winds caused spot fires yesterday. Assisted by helicopters doing water drops, crews were able to put fireline around the spot fires. High temperatures and low humidity early in the day today will combine with southwest wind gusts up to 25-30 mph to increase fire activity in the area.

Patrols will continue on the northwest side and along the containment line stretching from the northeast corner of the fire down to the Soldier Creek, including the Tongue Canyon area.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Today's high temperatures could reach 80 degrees in the lower elevations. Relative humidity will be in the teens early in the day and start rising late in the afternoon and overnight. A cold front moves in overnight which will drop temperatures and bring in rain and snow over the fire area tomorrow.

For air-quality and smoke information, go to airnow.gov.

Evacuations and Closures: For information on Johnson County evacuations, go to Johnson County Emergency Management's Facebook page: facebook.com/JohnsonCoWYEMC. For info on Sheridan County evacuations and road closures, go to the Sheridan County Emergency Management website: tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5. You can also call the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office (307-672-3455) or Sheridan County Emergency Management (307-752-2174). The Red Cross has an evacuation center at the Sheridan County Fairgrounds that can accommodate people, RVs/campers, pets, and livestock. Call 307-752-2174 or 307-683-6965 to make arrangements. US Highway 14 is **closed** between Burgess Junction and Dayton. View the Wyoming Department of Transportation road-closure map here: wyoroad.info. Bighorn National Forest closure has been expanded to include Forest System Roads 319 and a portion of 226 and Forest System Trail 200 and a portion of Trail 038 under Order 02-02-06-24-08. The order and map can be viewed here: fs.usda.gov/alerts/bighorn/alerts-notice.

Elk Fire Information:

Phone: 307-303-7642 (8 am to 8 pm) | Email: 2024.Elk@firenet.gov | Linktree: linktr.ee/2024ElkFire