



Elk Fire Update – October 17, 2024

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



Size: 96,179 acres (3,692-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 processors | 3 chippers

Key Messages: A winter weather advisory is in effect from 6:00 am today until 6:00 pm tomorrow. Cold temperatures, high relative humidity, and precipitation will make fire activity very minimal.

Despite abundant smoke production yesterday, the fire did not progress southward toward Red Grade Road. Most fire activity was on the fire's west side.

Current Situation: Hot temperatures, very low humidity, and southwest wind gusts up to 30 mph in the higher elevations yesterday led to a lot of fire activity on the northwestern corner of the fire. Near Broderick Flat the fire started to spread, but large air tankers and helicopters dropped water and retardant in the area. Night shift crews were prepared to conduct firing operations off the 144 Road (Pass Creek Road). However, fire behavior decreased overnight eliminating the need. Today fire activity in the area should be low, with crews monitoring the area and beginning to repair areas damaged during the fire-suppression phase.

Despite fire activity and abundant smoke on the southern side, the fire remained north of Rapid Creek and Forest Service Trail 238. Southeast of Big Goose Creek a short-range spot fire was detected in the grass. Crews and aircraft kept it from significantly growing during the day, and then a hotshot crew, sawyers, and engines working the night shift contained it at 2.5 acres.

Most of the fire activity yesterday occurred in multiple areas along the western side of the fire, creating distinct smoke columns visible to communities to the east. Strong southwesterly winds along the fire's western edge pushed the fire back into itself, igniting unburned fuels along the serpentine fire perimeter.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Precipitation today through tomorrow morning is anticipated to be 0.6–1.1 inches across the fire area. At elevations above 7,000 feet, up to 12 inches of snow is possible. Cold temperatures, high relative humidities, and precipitation will result in very minimal fire behavior today and tomorrow; no growth beyond the fire's current perimeter is expected to occur. However, the fire will still smolder and produce smoke in some areas. 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). 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 Order No. 02-02-06-24-08 is in effect. 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