



Elk Fire Update – October 12, 2024

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

Size: 84,328 acres (5,048-acre increase)

Containment: 32 percent

Resources: 13 aircraft | 20 crews | 66 engines | 8 dozers | 16 water tenders | 5 masticators | 8 skidders | 5 feller bunchers
1 processor

Total Personnel: 937

Cause: Lightning

Key Messages: As containment increases on the fire’s eastern perimeter, resources are shifting to the southern side of the fire, which is the priority focus of the suppression effort. During a presentation of today’s operational plan, Deputy Incident Commander Jay Miller said, “Some things we can control and some things we can’t, but we can control the work we’re doing. We’ll be as aggressive as we can be while keeping firefighters and residents safe and protecting the watershed from lasting damage.”

Today’s reported acreage increase is a result of both recent firing operations conducted primarily on the southern side of the fire and the ongoing growth of the main fire.

Current Situation: While much of the fire’s eastern perimeter is now contained, engine crews will maintain a presence in the area as they patrol and extinguish any lingering hotspots they observe from containment lines. Firefighters are also backhauling excess equipment.

Yesterday evening, on the northwest side near Broderick Flat, the fire spotted across a dozer line adjacent to the 114 Road. While receiving aerial assistance with water drops, crews constructed fireline around most of the spot fire. Night operations then finished line construction, secured, and mopped up hotspots. Today, crews will continue to monitor the area. Along the 144 Road, chipping operations continue, clearing slash piles accumulated from earlier road preparation.

Fire growth on the western side remains moderate. However, numerous firefighters spiked out at a second camp near Burgess Junction continue to install pumps and sprinklers around structures and are ready to use firing tactics should the fire advance westward. North of Burgess Junction on the 15 Road, crews are using hand tools and heavy equipment to remove vegetation and prepare the area for defensive action.

On the fire’s south side, firing operations have been completed around the water intake facility. Night operations mopped up remaining hotspots and started to remove fire hose and pumps. They also completed 85 acres of firing operations north of Red Grade Road. To stay ahead of the fire, crews will continue those firing operations today. Along Red Grade Road, heavy-equipment operators and hand crews are removing vegetation to clear and widen the road, which is serving as the primary fireline. Parallel to and south of the road, aircraft made numerous retardant drops to pretreat the area should firing operations north off the Red Grade Road be necessary to halt the fire’s southward progression.

Weather & Fire Behavior: A weak cold front will move across the area today, bringing northerly winds, slightly cooler temperatures, and higher humidities. The shift in wind direction will be favorable to crews working on the northern and eastern sides of the fire but challenging to those on the southern and western sides. Numerous days of unseasonably hot, dry conditions have led to the vegetation and abundant dead and down trees being extremely dry and receptive to burning. The incident’s fire behavior analyst has advised crews to anticipate active fire behavior and potentially significant growth of the main fire. The public may observe abundant smoke today. For air-quality and smoke information, go to airnow.gov.

Evacuations and Closures: Sheridan County evacuations can change frequently. For current information and a map, check the Sheridan County Emergency Management website: tinyurl.com/2s38bcc5. Information regarding county road closures can also be found on the same website. If you have further questions, call either the Sheridan County Sheriff’s Office (307-672-3455) or Sheridan County Emergency Management (307-752-2174). Red Cross has established an evacuation center at the Sheridan County Fairgrounds that is accommodating people, RVs/campers, pets, and livestock. Call 307-752-2174 or 307-683-6965 to make arrangements. 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. Bighorn National Forest lands around the Elk Fire are closed under [Order 02-02-06-24-08](#). The order and map can be viewed here: fs.usda.gov/alerts/bighorn/alerts-notices.

Elk Fire Information:

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