



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dakota Prairie Grasslands

Forest Service News Release

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Little Missouri National Grassland, Watford City Volunteer Fire Announce the Elkhorn Fire 100% Contained

Bismarck, ND, October 16, 2024 – The U.S. Forest Service – Little Missouri National Grassland, McKenzie Ranger District and Watford City Volunteer Fire Department state the Elkhorn Fire is 100% contained.

Dave Uhlich, Watford City Volunteer Fire Department Chief, and Shane Tosse, Fire Prevention Specialist with the Little Missouri National Grasslands served as co-Incident Commanders under Unified Command for the Elkhorn Fire. “Unified Command is a form of fire incident management in which multiple jurisdictions work together to make decisions regarding fire suppression strategies,” said Shane Tosse.

The Elkhorn Fire started late afternoon on October 5, 2024. Heavy winds drove the fire, which exhibited extreme behavior when Uhlich’s and Tosse’s firefighters both initially responded on Saturday. “We had to quickly evaluate the situation and identify structures at risk and start suppression efforts in areas where it was safe to place firefighters for an initial attack,” said Dave Uhlich. Firefighting crews from both organizations continue to work together throughout the fire suppression efforts.

While the fire has been declared one hundred percent contained, that doesn’t mean the work is done. Firefighting crews will engage in suppression repair through the coming days. Both Tosse and Uhlich agree that the success of the suppression of the Elkhorn Fire can be contributed to the good working relationship between both of their responding agencies and managing the fire under a Unified Command structure.

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