

**NEWS RELEASE: Sheep Herder Hill Complex Fire
Thursday, September 13, 2012, 8 a.m.**

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PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULED
Friday, September 14 beginning at 5:00 p.m.
Location: Casper City Hall, City Council Chambers 200 North David

Work continues on Sheep Herder Hill Complex Fire

Casper, WY –Firefighters will continue to work on securing fireline today as warmer weather and light winds will allow for direct line construction on the Sheep Herder Hill Complex Fire. The acreage figures for the fire have been revised as more accurate mapping was completed late yesterday. The Shepherder Hill and Elkhorn fires have burned a combined 15,416 acres. The Sheep Herder Hill Fire is 50% contained and the Elkhorn Fire is 100% contained. The fire is being managed by the Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team B under the direction of Incident Commander Todd Pechota.

While many structures have been saved, 36 residences and 16 outbuildings are confirmed as destroyed, one has been damaged. Officials have been notifying residents who have had damage to their property and the process of assessing damage will continue today. Property owners displaced by the fire may call Emergency Management (307) 235-9205 to leave information on their property location and how they can be contacted.

Evacuations are still in effect for approximately 150 homes, with another 750 on advisory alert. The Red Cross is assisting with an evacuation center that has been established at the National Guard Armory in Casper. **Some evacuations lifted:** Residents living along the Hat 6 Road are being allowed to return to their homes. The road is open to those residents only. All other evacuations remain in effect. Casper Mountain, Garden Creek, Circle Drive/Coal Mountain roads remain closed. **Unauthorized persons are cautioned to remain out of the fire area. Citizens can be in danger from damaged trees and power lines and can be cited for hindering firefighting efforts.**

Deputy Incident Commander Mark Hatcher briefed firefighters this morning and said that “Today will present the opportunity to make good progress on this fire” as critical fire weather may return tomorrow with drier and breezy conditions forecasted. Today firefighters will continue to work on constructing and securing firelines, especially in the west and northwest portions of the fire and around residences. On the remainder of the fire crews will focus on building fireline, and extinguishing hot spots. People may continue to see smoke over the fire as unburned areas within the fireline burn.

Agencies assisting in the firefighting effort include Natrona County Fire District, Casper Fire-EMS, Casper Mountain, Mills, Evansville, Bar-Nunn Fire Departments, Wyoming Army National Guard, Natrona County Emergency Management, Natrona County Sheriff's Department, Wyoming Medical Center, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, Wyoming State Forestry Division, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Forest Service, Casper-Natrona County Health Department and Natrona County Medical Reserve Board.

Fire stats at a glance:

Start Date: Sunday, September 9, 2012

Cause: Under investigation

Acreage Burned: 15,416

Percent Contained: Sheep Herder Hill Fire -50%
Elkhorn Fire – 100%

Structures destroyed: 36 Residences, 1 damaged
16 Outbuildings

Structures/outbuildings threatened: 853

Personnel: 354

Crews: (5) Type 1, and (1) Type 2

Aviation: (1) Type 1 Heavy lift helicopters,
(3) Type 3 light helicopters
(2) SEAT (Single Engine Air Tankers)

Injuries: 0

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