

News Release

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Type 2 Incident Management Team Assumes Command of the Sheep Herder Hill Complex

Casper, WY, Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2012—The Sheep Herder Hill Complex grew to approximately 15,284 acres early this morning, pushed along by gusting west, southwest winds. The fire is comprised of the Sheep Herder Hill and Elk Horn incidents. Crews were hampered in efforts to control the fire by extreme fire behavior, rugged terrain and long-range spotting. The Elk Horn is a new small start approximately one mile north of the Sheep Herder Hill fire.

There are reports that seven structures have been lost, with 750 structures, three commercial properties and 100 outbuildings threatened. There are 150 people on mandatory evacuation with another 750 people on advisory alert. Casper Mountain, Garden Creek, Hat 6 and Circle Drive/Coal Mountain roads are closed.

The fire began Sunday, September 9 at 4:38 p.m. on Casper Mountain Road at the end of the pavement. The cause of the fire is presently under investigation.

The Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team B (Pechota) assumed management of the fire at 6 a.m. today. There are currently 229 people assigned to the incident with more personnel arriving. Resources battling the blazes include three 20 person crews, seven helicopters, two heavy air tankers, including a DC 10 Very Large Air Tanker. Other ground support was provided by 24 engines, five dozers and seven water tenders yesterday.

Today's firefighting efforts will focus on structure protection and line improvement on the west and northwest sides of the fire, anchoring and building fire line. Incoming firefighting resources will integrate and cooperate with local engines and firefighters to improve lines and structure protection activities. Citizens can expect a large contingent of aerial resources engaged over the fire today.

Local authorities are working with fire officials on assessing damaged structures. Owners will be notified by local authorities if their property has been damaged or destroyed.

A public meeting will be held at the City Council Chambers, 200 North David, tomorrow, Wednesday, September 12 at 5 p.m. and will be broadcast on the local cable channel.

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, and the U.S. Forest Service.

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