



Elk and Lee Fire Update – Sunday, August 17, 2025

Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 3

Casey Cheesbrough, Incident Commander & Jay Miller, Deputy Incident Commander

Fire Information: 970-341-8665 | Media: 970-341-8663

Size: Elk Fire: 14,518 acres | Lee Fire: 137,465 acres

Total Personnel: 1,155

Containment: Elk Fire: 100% | Lee Fire 42%

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 6 Aircraft | 25 Hand Crews | 78 Engines | 46 Heavy Equipment

Key message: Rocky Mountain Complex Incident Management Team 3 is nearing the end of its 14-day assignment. Another team, the Northern Rockies Complex Incident Management Team 1 has been mobilized to assume command of the fire. The new team will arrive tomorrow and shadow RM CIMT Team 3 to ensure a seamless transition in strategic firefighting and fire suppression repair operations.

Important Notes: The Rio Blanco County Sheriff's Office downgraded several evacuation zones. Check your evacuation zone on the interactive map: <http://bit.ly/lee-fire-zones>. Highway 13 is open with a speed limit reduction of 50 mph. There is no stopping along the highway except in emergencies. Be aware that firefighters and utility personnel are working along the road.

Yesterday: Lee Fire – Firefighters secured containment line along the north and west edges of the fire perimeter, allowing officials to reopen Highway 13. Unmanned aerial systems (UAS) flights helped identify remaining heat along the northern perimeter of the fire. Crews patrolled, monitored, and removed hot spots along the fire perimeter. On the south side, the fire received a tenth to a half inch of rain. Firelines along County Road 5 held, and firefighters continued reinforcing those lines. Crews continue to strengthen contingency lines south of the fire with mastication equipment to reduce brush and vegetation.

Elk Fire – Increased moisture and humidity supported firefighter efforts in reaching 100% containment on the Elk Fire. Evaluation and implementation of suppression repair work continued.

Current Situation: Lee Fire – Islands of unburned fuel remain active near County Road 5 on the south side of the fire, with heat and isolated torching. Firefighters will continue to mop up to remove heat and strengthen firelines. Crews are working to protect structures and other values at risk while reinforcing containment lines in those areas. Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 3 is coordinating closely with the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies to plan repair that meets established standards.

Elk Fire: Suppression repair efforts for the Elk Fire are underway. Crews are pulling soil back over contingency lines and scattering vegetation to restore areas affected by firefighting operations. This process aims to restore areas impacted to their original, pre-fire condition.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Temperatures will reach the mid-80s with west/southwest winds 6-12 mph and gusts up to 20 mph. Isolated afternoon showers are possible. A drying trend is expected from tonight through mid-week. Fuel moisture remains low, and significant precipitation would be needed to return levels to normal.

Evacuations and Closures: CR 5 remains closed. For accurate up-to-date information on evacuations and road closures for Rio Blanco County go to Rio Blanco County Sheriff's Office Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/RioBlancoCountySheriffsOffice>. For Garfield County updates go to:

<https://www.garfieldcounty.net/>. White River National Forest closure information is available at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/whiteriver/alerts>. BLM White River Field Office closures information at:

<https://ow.ly/78uF50WGjNW>.

Elk and Lee Fire Information:

Phone: 970-341-8665; Email: 2025.elkrbx@firenet.gov

Facebook: www.facebook.com/elkleefire

Inciweb Lee Fire: <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cowrd-lee-fire>

Inciweb Elk Fire: <https://inceb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cowrd-elk-rbx-fire>