



Elk and Lee Fire Update – Thursday, August 14, 2025

Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 3

Casey Cheesbrough, Incident Commander

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

Size: Elk Fire: 14,518 acres | Lee Fire: 127,107 acres

Total Personnel: 1,274

Containment: Elk Fire: 75% | Lee Fire 3%

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 10 Aircraft | 20 Hand Crews | 81 Engines | 35 Heavy Equipment

Important Notes: Yesterday, the Garfield County Sheriff's Office upgraded the evacuation status of the following zones: 81 is in GO (red), 85 is in SET (yellow) 84 is in READY (green) Check your zone on this map: <https://bit.ly/lee-fire-zones>. The change in reported acreage on the Elk Fire is due to better mapping. The decrease in containment for the Lee Fire is due to an increase in acreage and expansion of the perimeter of the fire. Existing containment lines have not been lost. Critical fire weather is expected today on the Lee Fire. Critical fire weather is expected again today on the Lee Fire, then beginning to improve by Friday.

Yesterday: Lee Fire – Critical fire weather arrived as predicted, but firefighters along the Highway 13 corridor made good progress with operations going as planned. Cloud cover in the area aided suppression efforts. Crews working inside the fire reported decreased interior heat and smoke. On the south end, the spot fire just over Highway 5 held well and did not cross into Garfield County. From County Road 5 to County Road 3, lines remain secure. Additional crews are focusing along Highway 13 south to County Road 5 with the goal of making it safe for travel as soon as possible. Four hotshot crews, engines, and a UAS monitored for hotspots, work that will continue over the next several days.

Elk Fire: The Elk Fire remained within established control lines with minimal to no growth. Crews continued to patrol and mop-up, addressing creeping and smoldering hotspots. Work focused on reinforcing lines around structures and values at risk along County Roads 8, 40, and 49. Favorable winds supported suppression efforts, keeping the perimeter secure throughout the operational period.

Current Situation: Lee Fire – Active fire behavior is expected again today, especially in the southern area. Critical fire weather will bring shifting winds, low humidity, and hotter temperatures that will challenge existing lines along Highway 13. Crews will maintain point protection for communities, infrastructure, and other values at risk. Direct line construction will continue on the east side of the fire and from Highway 13 south to County Road 5, as well as holding and improving lines between County Roads 5 and 3. Hotspot detection will continue with UAS flights, supported by hotshot crews and engines for rapid response. The hotspot near the Garfield County line will remain a priority for full suppression and reinforcement.

Elk Fire: Crews will continue to patrol and mop-up the fire, reinforcing containment lines off County Road 8 and in the Beaver Creek area. Work will focus on keeping the fire within existing lines while protecting nearby structures values at risk.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Critical fire weather is expected today, with winds shifting to the west/southwest and gusts over 20 mph. Temperatures will be in the upper 80s to mid 90s, with relative humidity between 8–12 percent. Dry thunderstorms may develop in the afternoon, bringing erratic winds and the potential for rapid changes in fire behavior.

Evacuations and Closures: CR 5 and Hwy 13 remain closed. To sign up for Garfield County Emergency Alerts, go to: <https://garco911.com/>. For Garfield County updates go to: <https://www.garfieldcounty.net/>. Go to the Rio Blanco County Sheriff's Office Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/RioBlancoCountySheriffsOffice> - for accurate up-to-date information on all evacuations and road closures. To sign up for emergency alerts at: <https://rioblancoalerts.genasys.com/portal/en>. White River National Forest closure information at: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r02/whiteriver/alerts>. BLM White River Field Office closures information at: <https://www.blm.gov/announcement/blm-colorado-issues-emergency-closure-public-lands-rio-blanco-county>.

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://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/cowrd-elk-rbx-fire>