



Elk and Lee Fire Update – Wednesday, August 13, 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: 14,549 acres | Lee Fire: 120,650 acres

Total Personnel: 1,284

Containment: Elk Fire: 75% | Lee Fire 4%

Cause: Lightning

Resources: 14 Aircraft | 26 Hand Crews | 77 Engines | 10 Heavy Equipment

Important Notes: 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. Shifting winds with hot, dry temperatures will challenge firefighters, especially on the southern portion.

Yesterday: Lee Fire – Firefighters on the northwest side of the Lee Fire were able to take advantage of favorable weather to construct firelines directly at its edge. Strategic firing operations on the southwest side of the fire were conducted as planned with moderate fire behavior and good success in strengthening the line along County Road 5 and County Road 3. Firefighters continued reinforcing containment lines on the north and east side of the fire and along Highway 13. They also continued securing lines around structures and other values at risk. Firefighters faced challenging conditions as they worked on the spot fire south of County Road 5. Air tankers and helicopters assisted these efforts, focusing on slowing fire spread. Night shift continued firing operations on the southeast of Cow Creek to limit the potential for fire spread to the south.

Elk Fire: Firefighters made significant progress around the perimeter of the Elk Fire. Crews continued to mop-up and patrol to eliminate hotspots and reinforce containment lines. Some flare up occurred overnight as the fire reached unburned pockets of fuels inside the fire perimeter. Firefighters working on structure protection continued to patrol around structures and other values at risk.

Current Situation: Lee Fire – Active fire behavior is expected, 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 continue to monitor and improve containment lines west of Highway 13 and south of Highway 64. Firefighters will work on constructing firelines around the spot fire below County Road 5. Firefighters will continue to scout and construct containment lines in the southern area by incorporating roads, trails and natural features that would inhibit fire growth. Constructing indirect or secondary lines provides firefighters with the opportunity to work the fire on their terms with the highest probability of success of protecting values at risk.

Elk Fire: Crews will continue reinforcing containment lines off County Road 8 and in the Beaver Creek area as they patrol and mop up any hotspots. Crew will continue working to secure lines on the west side of the fire. Crews are working toward the goal to fully secure the perimeter of the fire.

Weather & Fire Behavior: Critical fire weather is expected today. Winds will shift to the west/northwest. Hotter and dryer conditions will prevail. Relative humidity will be at 7-10 percent. There is a potential for the development of large plumes of smoke and possibly of Pyrocumulus clouds.

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>