

NEWS RELEASE: Sheep Herder Hill Complex Fire

Contact: Susan Ford, Public Information Officer  
Media Line: (307) 215-3099  
Phone: (303)-886-2171  
Website: www.InciWeb.org  
Twitter: @RMIMT2\_TeamB



## Containment Progress Improves Hot, Windy Weather Forecast Saturday

**Saturday, September 15, 2012, 8:00 a.m. Casper, WY** -- Progress continued to be made Friday in containing the Sheep Herder Hill Fire, according to Incident Commander Todd Petchota, with containment now estimated at 75%. However, Petchota noted that “red flag” fire weather is predicted for Saturday so crews will have to be especially vigilant as they work in the most dangerous, unsecured areas of the fire. Those areas are steep, heavily wooded slopes on the northwest side of the fire. Addressing a community meeting Friday night Petchota noted that the incident has been without injuries, and praised fire crews for their careful steady progress. “Those young men and women are working very hard in difficult and dangerous environment and while we want to get this fire under control as soon as possible, nothing is worth a life,” he said. A “red flag” weather forecast was issued for today because of low humidity, warm temperatures and expected strong gusty winds. A red flag warning means high fire danger with a high probability of a quickly spreading vegetation fire during the next 24 hours.

The fire has not grown in the past several days but hot spots continue to flare up inside the fire perimeter and residents can expect to continue to see smoke coming from the fire. One heavy helicopter and two light helicopters are still working on the fire, in addition to ground crews.

Beginning Saturday morning, the Natrona County Office of Emergency Management has scheduled brief site visits for some property owners whose structures were destroyed. No evacuations nor road closures are being lifted and residents in areas near the fire are encouraged to remain vigilant as fuels are still dangerously dry.

A total of 37 cabins and homes have been destroyed and two damaged, with 23 outbuildings destroyed. Aerial observations have recently identified some additional structures which were lost.

Fire stats at a glance:

**Start Date:** Sunday, September 9, 2012

**Cause:** Under investigation

**Acreage Burned:** 15,556

**Percent Contained:** 75%

**Structure information:** 37 Residences, 23 Outbuildings Destroyed, 2 Residences damaged

**Personnel:** 325 **Injuries:** 0

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

**Aviation:** (1) Type 1 Heavy lift helicopter

(2) Type 3 light helicopters and (2) Air Attack aircraft

**Structures/outbuildings threatened:** 853

Agencies assisting with the fire 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, Wyoming Office of Homeland Security and Natrona County Medical Reserve Board.

-END-