



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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Owen Fire Crews Making Good Progress, Smoke Still to be Expected

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) July 9, 2014 – The Owen Fire was declared 80 percent contained following Tuesday’s operational period and crews are hopeful to make even more gains today.

The wildfire has not grown in size over the last 24 hours and remains at approximately 500 acres in the area directly north of Lake Owen on the Medicine Bow National Forest.

Despite the significant containment progress, there are still many pockets of unburned timber within the fire perimeter and thus the public should still expect to see smoke in the area for some time to come.

Staff on the fire now totals 175, with a wide variety of resources being utilized. Helicopters, which have dropped up to 20 loads of water per hour on the fire, have proved to be a valuable asset to fire managers. The aircraft have made good use of the fact that Lake Owen is the south boundary of the fire and have aided ground crews considerably.

Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities, which operates Lake Owen as part of their city water supply, authorized use of the water in the lake for fire suppression.

Weather forecasts are calling for possible thunderstorms on Wednesday afternoon. Crews will pay close attention to any winds that could be associated with those storms.

To this point there have been no firefighter injuries, nor have there been any structures burned. Firefighter and public safety remains a top priority on the incident.

Forest Roads 517 and 540, which are immediately adjacent to the fire perimeter, remain closed and fire officials are discouraging the public from entering the area or other roads adjacent to the fire perimeter. A ‘No Unnecessary Travel’ restriction by the Albany County Sheriff’s Department is still in place for Fox Creek Road to the east of the fire.

Nearby residents have been advised by the Sheriff’s Department to shelter in place until given further notice. An emergency shelter remains in place at Harmony School on WY Hwy 230.

The Owen Fire was discovered Monday afternoon burning primarily in large beetle-killed timber about 30 miles southwest of Laramie.

The cause of the fire remains unknown and is under investigation.

As information becomes available, updates will be provided by Public Affairs staff from the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland on Twitter at:

@MBRNFsTBNG, hashtag **#OwenFire** and at InciWeb, <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/3932/>.

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