

## **Beaver Creek Fire**

**June 24, 2016**

### **Morning Release**

Contact: Public Information Office

Rocky Mountain Incident Management Team Blue

**Information Line: 307-223-2291**

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Hours 8am-8pm



### **Beaver Creek Fire; Wind and Dead Trees Influence Fire, No Significant Growth**

(WALDEN, Colo.) June 24, 2016 – The Beaver Creek Fire, which started last Sunday on the Medicine Bow – Routt National Forests and Thunder Basin National Grassland, is firmly established on Bureau of Land Management’s Independence Mountain and private land. This fire continues to be heavily influenced by afternoon thunderstorms and beetle killed trees.

The fire perimeter did not change significantly on Thursday June 23<sup>rd</sup>. To date, 5368 acres have burned and containment remains at 5%.

Yesterday a thunderstorm blew over the fire area in the late afternoon and evening increasing fire activity but produced little rainfall over the fire. The small amount of rain received will quickly dry out with the predicted winds. The fire continues to become active within the fire perimeter in pockets of unburned fuels with erratic winds influencing changes in fire behavior.

Additional resources have arrived bringing resource totals to: 61 fire engines, 11 water tenders, 2 dozers, 1 hand crew and 4 helicopters. Today crews are actively working to suppress spot fires, create fireline and protect and prepare buildings at risk. 379 firefighters are assigned to the Beaver Creek Fire which includes a Bureau of Land Management Law Enforcement Officer.

The forecast today includes temperatures in the range of 75-80 F with thunderstorms possible in the afternoon ahead of a cold front that is moving into the area. Stronger winds are expected today from the southwest at 25 mph with gusts up to 40 mph prior to the cold front’s arrival this evening.

The fire is burning primarily in heavy timber with a high percentage of beetle kill, and in some areas of grass and sagebrush. The fire area includes timber with 50-80% beetle killed trees, retaining very low moisture levels allowing them to burn very easily. Deputy Incident Commander Rob Powell said “the fire needs to burn through areas of beetle kill while firefighters continue to scout and prepare indirect containment lines and protect values at risk. Maintaining firefighter and public safety is the top priority.”

Fire location is approximately 15 miles northwest of Walden, Colorado and two miles south of the Colorado/Wyoming state line.

Forty residences or cabins remain at risk. Concerned cabin owners or local residents should contact the Jackson County Sheriff’s Department at (970) 723-4242. Structure damage/loss information will be provided by the Sheriff.

Closures are in place for the following areas/recreation sites/roads: Big Creek Lakes Recreation Area (including both upper and lower Big Creek Lake, and Big Creek Lakes Campground), the area east of the Mount Zirkel

Wilderness boundary, south of Forest Road 681 and south of Forest Road 80. All of Independence Mountain is closed, Beaver Creek and Seven Lakes Trailheads, County Road 6W, as well as Forest Roads 80 (Hog Park Road), 600, 681, and 689.

The cause of the Beaver Creek Fire remains under investigation, and anyone with information on suspicious activity this past weekend in the Twisty Park area should contact U.S. Forest Service Officer Hannah Nadeau, 307-343-2335. The initial vehicle sought in the investigation has been cleared of suspicion.

Official information on the fire is being disseminated via Inciweb, <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4797/>.

Information will also be posted on Twitter at: @FS\_MBRTB, hashtag #BeaverCreekFire. Facebook: Beaver Creek Fire

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