

News Release

Arapaho Fire

June 29, 2012 9:00 a.m. (MST)

Contact: Laura McConnell, PIO

www.INCIWEB.org

Information office 307-212-4844*

*Staffed 8:00 a.m. – 8 p.m. (24 hour recorded message)



Winds Fuel Arapaho Fire – Evacuations in Effect

Rocky Mountain Type 2 Incident Management Team B (Incident Commander Todd Pechota) has assumed management of the Arapaho Fire today. This fire was discovered on 6/27 at approximately 10:30 p.m. The cause of the fire is unknown, however earlier in the week a lightning storm went through the area. Two additional fires were also reported in the immediate area. Crews began working these fires yesterday.

Red Flag Warnings have been in place for the past seven days, and dry, hot, windy weather is believed to have aided in the fire's ability to grow rapidly. In addition to the Incident Management Team personnel, resources no longer needed for the Russell's Camp Fire have been reassigned to the Arapaho Fire and will assist in today's efforts.

Today's operations will focus mainly on alerting residents and protecting structures in the path of or near the fire's edge. Crews, engines and dozers will work at the south end, and the flanks, of the fire. Last evening Albany County Sheriff's Office issued evacuation notices for the following areas: Cottonwood Park, Friend Park, North Laramie Trailhead, and Harris Park. Converse County evacuated all residents along Estherbrook Road. This evacuation is from the county line to the Estherbrook Guard Station. Approximately 400-500 structures are affected. **The community of Estherbrook is not included in the evacuations at this time.**

As of midnight last evening the fire was reported to be approximately 5,000 acres in size, however it was growing rapidly. It's possible that upslope winds and dry conditions allowed the fire to get established and produce a pyrocumulusⁱ cloud which has the ability to create its own weather conditions.

Incident Commander Todd Pechota and Operations Chief Jay Miller flew over the fire this morning in order to gather additional information in regards to fire perimeter, terrain, fire behavior and current conditions.

Today's weather is expected to be hot and dry with light winds gusting to 20 miles per hour. Plume dominatedⁱⁱ fire behavior is possible with large crown runs.

The Type 3 helicopter assisting on the Russell's Camp Fire will be available to the Arapaho Fire as needed. An Air Attack will be flying over the fire to relay real time information back to Operations personnel.

A Type 1 Incident Management team is on order and expected to arrive sometime on Sunday. Public and firefighter safety, along with steep terrain and dehydration remains a concern.

###

MEDIA NOTES:

An evening update will be provided today after 9:00 p.m. All information will be posted to

www.INCIWEB.org

ⁱ Pyrocumulus Cloud: Type of cumulus cloud that forms over a heat source such as a wildland fire. Wikipedia:

<http://tinyurl.com/PYROCUMULUS>

ⁱⁱ Plume dominated wildland fire: **A wildland fire whose activity is determined by the convection column.** NWCG

Glossary of Wildland Fire Terminology: <http://tinyurl.com/WildlandFireTerms>