

# Fremont County Wildfire News & Tips

A wildfire mitigation newsletter for the rural landowner

May 2020

provided by Fremont County Firewise



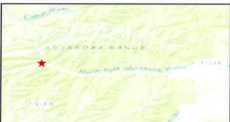
**Location:** 183 South Fork Hwy, Pahaska Teepee Lodge  
**Coordinates (DDM):** 44° 30.144' N, 109° 57.818' W

**Triage Category:** Defensible, Prep and Hold  
**Safety Zone Present:** Potential safety zone(s) in area  
**Comm with Dispatch:** Yes

**Type of Structure:** Commercial  
**Is the Building Occupied?:** Yes  
**Primary Structures:** 23  
**Outbuildings:** 13  
**Defensible Space:** More than 100ft treated  
**Fuel Surrounding Structure:** Shrub or timber  
**Access to Site:** T1 Engine  
**Describe Access:** Paved drives off paved highway. Dirt road going past owners residence is 1/2 mile long & ends at a barn & three other small structures.  
**Roof Material:** Noncombustible or not applicable  
**Siding Material:** Log construction  
**Electrical Power:** Yes  
**Gas to Structure:** Yes  
**Water Source:** Pressurized hydrant(s) or fixed sprinkler system  
**Hazards:** Multiple propane tanks spread throughout the development.  
**Mitigation Time (in hours):** 53  
**Mitigation Description:** Brush & limb around all structures & propane tanks as needed. Cut & dig saw &/handline around perimeter of development as needed. Install sprinklers around all structures and propane tanks. There are some fire hydrants scattered around that are supplied by an electric pump with a diesel generator as backup.

**Resources Needed to Protect Structures:**  
 (2) Type 4 engines, (2) Type 6 engines, (1) 20 Person hand crew

**Notes:** All primary structures are very well maintained with metal roofs. The old lodge has numerous heat traps due to its age and construction design. Some of the smaller outbuildings have asphalt roofs.

## Assessment Surveys

The summer of 2020 is just about up on us. The last couple of years have been fairly non-eventful years in the wildland urban interface (WUI) here in Fremont County. But, all of us know that can certainly be different before the snow comes once again.

One of the largest fires the local area has seen was the Lava Mountain Fire in 2016. After this fire event, it was realized that better information about the area structures, that could be shared with fire protection agencies, was something that could be improved.

Our local fire departments and agencies are some of the best there are, and helping them to protect us and our properties just makes sense. So to help them make faster, and better informed decisions when fire happens, Fremont County Wildfire has partnered with area departments and agencies to imple-

ment an assessment process here in the higher risk communities of Fremont County.

The survey assessment process was started in 2019 by Park County, and vetted during the Fishhawk Fire in September. The information that was gathered was easily shared between fire response forces, and the process for planning protection efforts was accelerated. Fortunately, an early fall storm dampened the fire threat, but firefighters were ready.

Fire managers had upfront information to plan for crews, supplies, and needed tactics much faster, and the time saved was spent on being proactive, not reactive to the fire itself.

So, Fremont County Wildfire, or a contract employee, will be traveling the areas of Fremont County this summer to begin gathering information here. It is voluntary for residents to allow your property to be assessed, but it is strongly encouraged. The information gathered will never be shared outside of the fire agencies, and will not contain any of your personal information.

As required, unless our agency is invited to your property, we will need a landowner permission form to be signed for us to do the survey. The survey in most cases will only take about 15-20 minutes.

If you would like to have a survey done on your property, please contact us at 307-857-3030, or by email at [fremontfirewise@wyoming.com](mailto:fremontfirewise@wyoming.com) to be put on our schedule.

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## Projects with Many Benefits

### Habitat Partnerships



Piles in the Aspens

Protection of your investments can come in a lot of different forms. One of the projects Fremont County Wildfire has become involved with does more than just protect structures and infrastructure from Wildfire. It began as a project by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to enhance large game habitat on South Pass, but has now expanded to other locations in the region.

The projects have been funded by numerous donations and funding sources, including the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Mule Deer Initiative, and the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.

The primary objective is to remove conifer (pine trees usually) from within the aspen clones. As the conifer grow, they shade and compete with the aspen for nutrients. This competition eventually kills the aspen.

Along with cutting the conifer, some project areas have some of the dying, but not yet completely dead aspen cut as well. Cutting these aspen actually stimulates the root "clone" and cause the aspen to generate new tree shoots. The process begins anew with new aspen trees.

The process of renewing these aspen stands creates a healthier ecosystem that supports numerous wildlife species, and provides wildfire protection for our residents. Healthy aspen are a fire resistant plant, and often are sought for protection around structures.

Some folks have been quite concerned with the project work as it is occurring, mainly the ground disturbance and remaining slash piles. I would encourage everyone to have patience since these projects take time to correctly, fully complete. The piles are placed for usually two summers to dry, this way they burn clean without a large amount of unburned material left behind.

In 3-5 years, it is amazing to see the project work areas. They will be full of new tree growth, grasses, forbes, and wildlife. This is a time frame that may not exist for the re-vegetation of an area after a wildfire. And, especially without replanting and seeding.

**WE ALL HAVE  
A ROLE!**

**Wildfire  
Survival**

**It Takes a  
Community**

## What Starts Fires?

The NFPA Journal, October 2011, printed an article of the totals of fire types and causes during a five year period, 2004 thru 2008. The portion of the report on vegetation fires, and what caused the fire to start is not what most would guess.

The number one cause of wildland fire is not lightening. When speaking of things that start fires, most folks feel this is the most common cause, and it is absolutely that last.

In almost two-thirds of wildland fires, the first item ignited was some type of light vegetation, including grass, leaves, needles, chaff, mulch, and compost.

The summarized data in the report shows the leading causes to be:

1. Intentional (Arson or debris burning) 20% of the time
2. Hot embers or ashes 17 %
3. Garbage burning 15%
4. High Wind issues 13%
5. Smoking materials 12%
6. Playing with a heat source 6%
7. Fireworks 5 %
8. Electrical Power lines 4%
9. Lightening 4 %

Important to notice, 6 of 9 are human caused directly.



Lightening is not #1

## Tid Bit— Something to Ponder

I hope that everyone is healthy and well as all of us navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. As most everything we accepted as normal has been modified or put on hold, so too has the Wildfire program.

In light of the current situation, it may cause some delay on the normal opening of the Union Pass Community slash pile. In the next few weeks, we will evaluate the snow conditions, mud, amount of water standing, and restrictions at the time.

Be assured, the pile will be open just as soon as events allow us to do so.



Union Pass Slash Pile

## Caution Advised Using Mulches

As an area that sometimes does not have much for mulch or debris build up naturally (Usually due to our climate), it is important to remember that mulch is a fine fire starting fuel that comes in various forms.

In Fremont County, there is an abundance of dead beetle killed trees which landowners are looking for ways to dispose of. One popular way of

removing the branches, after cutting the tree for other wood uses, is to use a chipper. This chipping produces a very usable chip product that is great for landscaping and the environment both.

Chips as mulch must be used with care however. Placing these chips back against and next to our homes and structures is NOT a good Firewise practice. These are fine fuels,

which are very easily ignited by a heat source.

Place these material several feet away from the structure to prevent igniting the structure if the chips catch fire.



## Funding Available in 2020

Over the past few years, Fremont County has been fortunate to receive grant monies to accomplish several different projects. Not to mention just having the funds to provide cost share assistance to area property owners.

For the next two summers (2020 & 2021) cost share funding will be available to assist landowners who want to cre-

ate defensible space, or complete hazardous fuel treatment on private properties. Any work started must be completed no later than spring 2021, and at the current time, money is not available after May 2021.

Contact Fremont County Wildfire now for assistance at 307-857-3030.



# FREMONT COUNTY WILDFIRE

Wildfire Safety Through Prevention & Education

Fremont County Wildfire  
305 South Smith Road  
Riverton, WY 82501

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WERE ON THE WEB!

[WWW.FREMONTCOUNTYWILDFIRE.COM](http://WWW.FREMONTCOUNTYWILDFIRE.COM)

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## Fremont County Wildfire



Electronic Mail & Phone  
Contact

Need more information about what you can do to your property? Contact us and schedule a visit at you location. There is no charge for having us out!

Give our office a call, or send me a note by email with your contact information.

Here is our contact information:

- 1) Office Phone 307-857-3030, and mail at 305 South Smith Road, Riverton, WY 82501
- 2) By email at [fremontfirewise@wyoming.com](mailto:fremontfirewise@wyoming.com)

Thanks for using our website and check often for new information.