



BIGHORN BASIN FIRESMART



BIGHORN BASIN FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

ISSUE #30 — EARLY 2019

2018 FIRESMART ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Firesmart was successful in providing these 2018 services:

- 86 acres of wildland fuel treatments, from a variety of funding sources.
- Two Wildfire Mitigation Plans (WMP) in Washakie County communities.
- Acquired grant funding for hazardous fuels treatment and forest health.
- Four Quarterly Bighorn Basin Firesmart newsletters.
- Annual Bighorn Basin Firesmart picnic and information sharing.
- Participation in the Canyon Creek Country Work Day.
- Provided technical assistance to 12 home and cabin owners.
- Recertified three Firewise Communities in Washakie and Bighorn counties.

2019 FIRESMART GOALS

Specific 2019 plans to continue the Firesmart program:

- 60 acres of wildland fuel treatments, from a variety of funding sources.
- Five Wildfire Mitigation Plans (WMP) in Washakie County communities
- Four Quarterly Bighorn Basin Firesmart newsletters.
- Providing Technical Assistance to twelve home and cabin owners.
- Annual Bighorn Basin Firesmart picnic and information sharing.
- Participation in the Canyon Creek Country Work Day.
- Continuing to offer tree pruning assistance to WUI home and cabin owners with approved WMP.
- Pursuit of additional funding for Firesmart and forest health funding.
- Promotion of the Firewise Communities program in Bighorn Basin WUI communities.
- Continue development of the **Bighorn Basin Firesmart Wildland Fire Public Outreach and Education Website:**

<http://wytfs.com/bighorn-basin-firesmart/>

This and all future Bighorn Basin Firesmart issues will go only to E-mail recipients. All issues will also be available on Facebook, at:

<https://www.facebook.com/bighornbasin.firesmart>

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THE BIG HORN BASIN FIREWISE/FIRESMART COORDINATORS ARE:

Big Horn County: The County Fire Warden is Brent Godfrey (307) 568-2324.

Washakie County: Chris Kocher, Fire Warden, ckocher@worlandfire.org, P.O. Box 504, Worland, Wyoming 82401, or (307) 347-6379. The Firesmart Coordinator is Chris Weydeveld, cweydeveld@wytfs.com, Technical Forestry Services, LLC, 6628 W. Riverside Dr. Casper, Wyoming 82604, or (307) 333-1098 (office), (307) 272-9533 (mobile).

Hot Springs County: Contact Dion Robbins, County Fire Warden, at (307) 431-2767, or hscwarden@rtconnect.com.

Park County : Bernie Spanogle, Firewise Coordinator, can be reached at pcfirerwise@gmail.com or at 307-250-9387. The County Fire Warden is Russ Wenke, rwenke@parkcounty.us, 1131 11th Street, Cody, Wyoming 82414, or (307) 527-8551.

The basin Firewise website : parkcountyfirewise.com When you get there, surf the MENU to see what articles, photos, and short video clips are there. Check it out.


If you have general or specific questions about Firewise, two good online sources of answers are: www.firewisewyoming.com and www.livingwithfire.com.

Do you have topics you would like included in future newsletters? Please submit your suggestions and comments to firesmart@wytfs.com, or by mail to G. Wynn, 824 Country Club, Casper, Wyoming 82609.

Thanks for providing this newsletter go to the Wyoming State Forestry Division, the Washakie County Fire Warden, and the U.S. Forest Service. They provide the funding.

This newsletter is provided as a service of your county's Firewise Coordinator. If you choose not to receive future issues, please respond to firesmart@wytfs.com, or to Big Horn/Washakie Firewise (6628 W. Riverside Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604) by mail.

**PROTECT YOUR
HOME FROM
WILDFIRE**

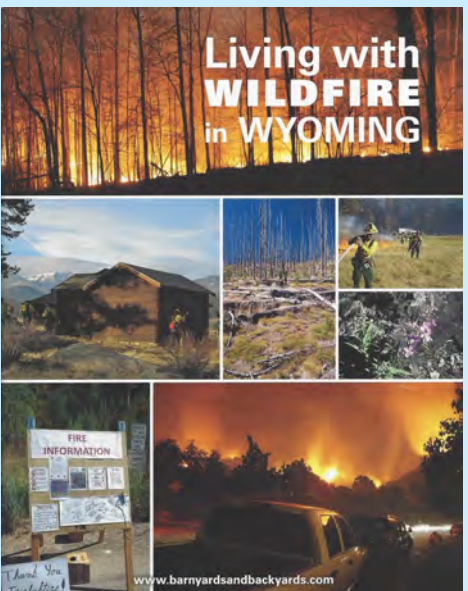


**A GUIDE FOR
HOME-OWNERS,
HOME-BUYERS,
AND HOME-BUILDERS**

FIREWISE WYOMING
The Elk Horn County Project

This has been prepared as a cooperative effort of the Firewise Wyoming Wildfire Mitigation Project, Wyoming State Forestry Division, Casper Mountain Fire Department, Casper Mountain Forest Stewardship Association, Natrona County Fire Department, Casper Fire Department, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, a Wyoming Community Foundation Grant, and a National Fire Plan Grant.

Two publications that provide basic details on making your home and cabin Firesmart. While both have been featured in this newsletter before, they are valuable resources for WUI home and cabin owners. They can be obtained from your county's Firesmart Coordinator or Wyoming State Forestry Division.



**Living with
WILDFIRE
in WYOMING**

www.barnyardsandbackyards.com

You can now keep up on daily news and events with Bighorn Basin Firesmart. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/bighornbasin.firesmart>



WYOMING'S 2018 FIRE SEASON

Wyoming experienced more than **900 wildfires**, that burned nearly **550,000 acres** (850 square miles), and destroyed **65 homes and cabins**, mostly in fires in the vicinity of Grand Teton National Park. Each of these numbers was substantially above the 2002-2016 yearly averages, and higher than the peak year of 2012.

The scale of the Wyoming fire season was small compared to California, but the contributing factors were generally the same, and will continue to influence fire numbers, acres burned, and structures at risk.

CALIFORNIA'S 2018 FIRE SEASON

2018 was the deadliest and most destructive California wildfire season on record.

Total number of wildfires = **8,527** Almost 60 were over 1,000 acres.

Total area burned = **1,893,913 acres** (3000 square miles. That's larger than Washakie County).

Total structures burned = More than **18,000 homes and commercial buildings**.

Fatalities = **98 civilians, and 6 firefighters** and firefighting equipment operators.

Estimated cost = More than **\$3.5 billion in damages and firefighting costs**.

Discarding the various political rhetoric about the events, here are observations from various sources – in no particular order of impact:

- More people living in areas of historic wildfire equals more human-caused fires.
- Increases in available fuel in wildland that included the WUI.
- Drought conditions, with some growing influence likely by climate change.
- Major residential construction in the WUI at locations where historic fires were large, but there were few residential structures to burn.
- Individual structures not in compliance with accepted and recommended Firewise practices. And each "un-Firewise" home that was burning threatened and ignited even those nearby that were Firewise.
- Burned communities were in historic fire-prone locations. The analogy was that homes in flood zones are subject to flooding. Homes in fire-prone landscapes are subject to wildfires.
- Houses were not burned by a flaming front through a heavy forest. It was the ember storm from other burning structures that ignited the buildings. Aerial images of burned neighborhoods showed that many of the trees didn't burn unless ignited by the flames of adjacent burning buildings.

All of the above factors apply to Wyoming WUI communities. All but periodic drought and any future influences of climate change, can be mitigated to some degree by reducing the flammability of homes and the community by land-use planning, changing construction codes for new buildings, reducing wildland fuels near WUIs, organizing Firewise Communities, and implementing Firesmart principles around individual homes and cabins.

NOAA Weather Alert All Hazard Public Alert Radio

Stay up to date on all the latest weather, hazard, and civil emergency information with the Public Alert Certified Midland WR-120EZ monitor. NOAA agency personnel have communicated to Bighorn Basin Firesmart personnel the importance of an All Hazard/Weather Alert Radio for those living in the Wildland Urban Interface in the Bighorn Basin counties in Wyoming.

In the event of a threatening wildfire, weather hazard, or civil emergency, this radio will activate a voice warning providing details of emergency preparedness or evacuation information.

Capable of receiving seven National Oceanic & Atmospheric Association (NOAA) /Environment Canada channels each of which receives and displays emergency advisories on wildfires, tornadoes, floods, severe thunderstorms, civil danger warnings, and more in three languages (English, Spanish, French), the WR-120EZ is a must for people who live in high-risk weather areas, such as the Southeast or Midwest. Plus, the seven NOAA channels offer coverage for roughly 93 percent of the U.S., so most people are well covered regardless of where they live. This unit has color coded Alert Indicators for over 60 types of alerts.



Weather-Alert radios are available from many on-line and store-front sources, for \$25 to \$100.

The unit described here is an example of a weather alert radio. Other brands and models are available. The Midland WR-120EZ has been used by Firesmart personnel and has been found to be reliable and accurate.

Rear controls/ports, left to right: external antenna, cleaning port, external alert, power button.

The WR-120EZ features Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) reception. SAME allows users to program the radio to sound an alert only when weather and other emergencies threaten a selected county or counties. The technology eliminates all alerts from other areas, so users won't have to perk up their ears each time the alert sounds only to find the emergency is actually 100 miles up the highway.



In addition, the WR-120EZ's memory system accepts up to 25 counties, so you can monitor a broad swatch of counties at once or restrict it to one. Should an alert occur, users have a choice of three warning systems: a 90 dB siren, a voice alert, or a flashing LED light. The siren is the best option for people with larger homes, or who aren't always near the monitor, while the latter two options work well for smaller homes.

Additional features include a clock with an alarm and a snooze button, an emergency power backup that keeps your radio working during power outages or outdoor use, and external antenna and alert jacks. The WR-120EZ, which works with three AA batteries (not included), is backed by a one-year warranty, and is the 2011 replacement for the popular WR-100.

Features:

- Alert Override automatically switches over to warn you of impending danger
- SAME Localized Reception
- Continuous Backlighting Option--keeps the LCD on
- 25 Programmable Counties
- Color coded Alert Indicators, and an Alarm Clock with Snooze



THE WYOMING STATE FORESTRY DIVISION

The Wyoming State Forestry Division (WSFD) was officially formed in 1952 by the Legislature. Under **State Statute the State Forester is mandated to “have direction of all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the jurisdiction of the State of Wyoming.”** The Forestry Division fulfills this charge by providing three basic programs to the people of Wyoming; State Trust Land Management, Fire Management, and Assistance Forestry.

Wyoming’s forested state trust lands are managed to enhance their long-term value to the trust, while producing revenue through sustainable harvest of forest products. Revenue from the sale of forest products goes to the appropriate trust account to support Wyoming’s schools and other state institutions.

Wyoming has about 263,000 acres of forested state trust lands, with about 137,000 acres available for commercial harvest. Most of these forested lands are on scattered parcels that are 640 acres (one square mile). The annual timber volume sold averages about 4 million board feet. The division is also responsible for fire management on 3.6 million surface acres of state trust land, and cooperative fire management on private and federal lands.

Removal of forest products, including firewood and Christmas trees, is only allowed with a valid contract or permit that can be obtained at your nearest WSFD District Office. District offices are located in Newcastle, Casper, Laramie, Riverton, Buffalo, Pinedale, and Lyman.

Two things to remember about state forestland:

- Accessing state lands across private lands requires permission from the private landowner.
- Camping and fires are not allowed under the Board of Commissioners rules.

In addition to forest products, forested state trust lands also produce water, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Besides direct management of state-owned forestland, the WSFD has other programs. Here are a few of them:

RURAL LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE — Provides technical assistance by developing management plans for private forestlands, and facilitating landowner workshops and field days.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY — Provides cost-share grants for tree planting and community forestry.

FOREST HEALTH — Bark beetle mitigation, forest pest funding, population surveys, and monitoring.

FOREST LEGACY — Identifying and preservation of culturally and ecologically critical areas.

FORESTRY CONSERVATION PROGRAM — Utilizes inmate crews for firefighting, rehabilitating burned areas, and doing tree thinning and planting. Crews are based in Newcastle.

WYOMING FIRE ACADEMY — The wildland and structure fire training Center in Riverton.

Each of the WSFD programs and tasks involves cooperation with several federal and state natural resource management agencies.

Much of the funding for Firesmart programs comes through WSFD from federal and state sources for preparing Community Wildfire Protection Plans, evaluating individual homes and cabins for wildfire defensibility, and implementing approved Wildfire Mitigation Plans.



INFORMATION FROM THE WYOMING DIVISION OF FORESTRY

Wyoming State Forestry Division Launches “Don’t Move Firewood “ Campaign

The Wyoming State Forestry Division is making the public aware of the potential for transporting tree-killing insects and diseases in firewood.

The “*Don’t Move Firewood*” effort was originally targeted at tourists visiting the state for the August 2017 eclipse, and emphasized the importance of obtaining and using only firewood from where they were camping. The hope was that this wouldn’t move wood infested with insects and disease from heavily-infested areas into forested areas where these factors were presently absent.

While the campaign signs and publicity are now over, the principles still apply. Trees in towns and forests are threatened by native and exotic insects and diseases that can kill trees. Some of these insects and diseases can hitch a ride in a load of firewood. Remember to always get firewood as close to your destination as possible. And well-seasoned (dry) firewood has the potential to carry fewer damaging insects to kill your home or cabin trees. Let’s keep our forests healthy so we can continue to enjoy camping, hiking, hunting, and fishing.

Protecting Wyoming's Forests

Trees across Wyoming are threatened by exotic insects and diseases that can kill trees. Wyoming State Forestry Division* is monitoring trees for certain insects and diseases. Two insects of concern are emerald ash borer (EAB) and gypsy moth. Traps are installed at various locations across the state to help us monitor our trees. If you see traps that have fallen out of trees, please contact Wyoming State Forestry Division.

EMERALD ASH BORER
Invasive metallic green wood-boring beetle eventually kills ash trees

GYPSY MOTH
(Female) (Male)
Invasive moth defoliates trees

EAB TRAP
Green funnel traps are placed 15' above the ground in ash trees. The green color and shape attracts EAB

GYPSY MOTH TRAP
Small green triangular box traps are attached to tree trunks 4-5' above the ground

*Traps are meant to demonstrate problem areas and are not to scale.
In cooperation with USDA APHIS PPQ, Wyoming Dept. of Ag, USDA Forest Service, and the National Park Service.
More Information:
(307) 777-7587
<http://wsfd.wyo.gov/home>

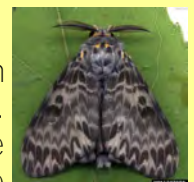
WYOMING STATE FORESTRY DIVISION

Mountain pine beetle and spruce beetle are two of the most important native insect pests in Wyoming's forests. Since the early 1990s, these beetles have caused tree mortality over millions of acres of federal, state, and private forest in Wyoming. These insects can be transported in firewood from trees less than one or two years dead.

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is a non-native invasive insect that infests native North American ash trees. It was accidentally introduced to the Midwest and has since been spreading to other areas of the U.S. Infestations of EAB include Boulder County, Colorado. Ash trees are native to parts of Wyoming, but considering the widespread urban planting of ash trees, EAB has the potential to eventually impact most Wyoming communities. By not transporting firewood from areas already infested, we can substantially delay EAB's arrival in Wyoming. EAB has not yet been detected in Wyoming and there is a state EAB response plan in place.

The poster shown here illustrates the effort to trap EAB to monitor populations as part of the EAB response plan. The other insect being trapped on this poster is the Gypsy moth, a non-native tree defoliator.

Trapping is also used to track long-term population levels of native forest pest insects. The designs of traps resemble those in the poster, but may be of colors other than the green shown on the poster. If you see these traps, don't disturb them.



Gypsy moth

2018 FIRESMART BEFORE AND AFTER COMPARISONS

Below are photos of 2018 Firesmart and forest health projects in the Bighorn Basin.



BEFORE TREATMENT



AFTER TREATMENT

Hazardous fuels reduction around a rural home. The results make this place much more Firesmart



BEFORE THINNING



AFTER THINNING

Timber harvest and tree thinning in the Bighorns. This is now less susceptible to wildfire and insects



BEFORE THINNING



AFTER THINNING

This is the Lewis Project featured in Bighorn Basin Firesmart #29.



If your Big Horn or Washakie County cabin, or Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) rural home needs a WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN, contact your **County Firewise/Firesmart Coordinator. For Washakie County, that's Firesmart@wytfs.com**, (307) 333-1098, or 6628 W. Riverside Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604. Requests will be kept on file, if funding is not available **in 2019. Here's a plan request form for Big Horn and Washakie counties.**



BIGHORN BASIN FIRESMART MITIGATION PLAN APPLICATION

PROPERTY/CABIN OWNER: _____

PROPERTY/CABIN PHYSICAL LOCATION/ADDRESS: _____

PROPERTY/CABIN OWNER MAILING ADDRESS: _____

PROPERTY/CABIN OWNER TELEPHONE: _____

PROPERTY/CABIN OWNER E-MAIL ADDRESS (OPTIONAL): _____

PROPERTY PRIMARY USE – CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:

- YEAR-ROUND RESIDENCE/RENTAL SEASONAL OCCUPANCY RESIDENCE
- COMMERCIAL OR BUSINESS AGRICULTURE

NUMBER AND KIND OF STRUCTURES ON THE PROPERTY: _____

CHECK THOSE WHICH APPLY:

- PLEASE CONTACT ME TO ARRANGE A MITIGATION PLAN FOR MY PROPERTY
- I WANT MORE INFORMATION ON THE FIREWISE PROGRAM
- OTHER: _____

COMMENTS: _____

If your property is included in the Firesmart program, would you allow Technical Forestry Services to use photos of it in future Bighorn Basin Firesmart newsletter, and promotional programs? Photos would not be identified with addresses or homeowner's names. Please check the one that applies.

YES. You may use photos of my property/cabin NO. Do not use photos of my property/cabin

LANDOWNER/CABINOWNER SIGNATURE: _____

LANDOWNER/CABINOWNER PRINTED NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Submit directly to Technical Forestry Services, LLC, 6628 W. Riverside Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604