



# BIGHORN BASIN FIRESMART

Big Horn County



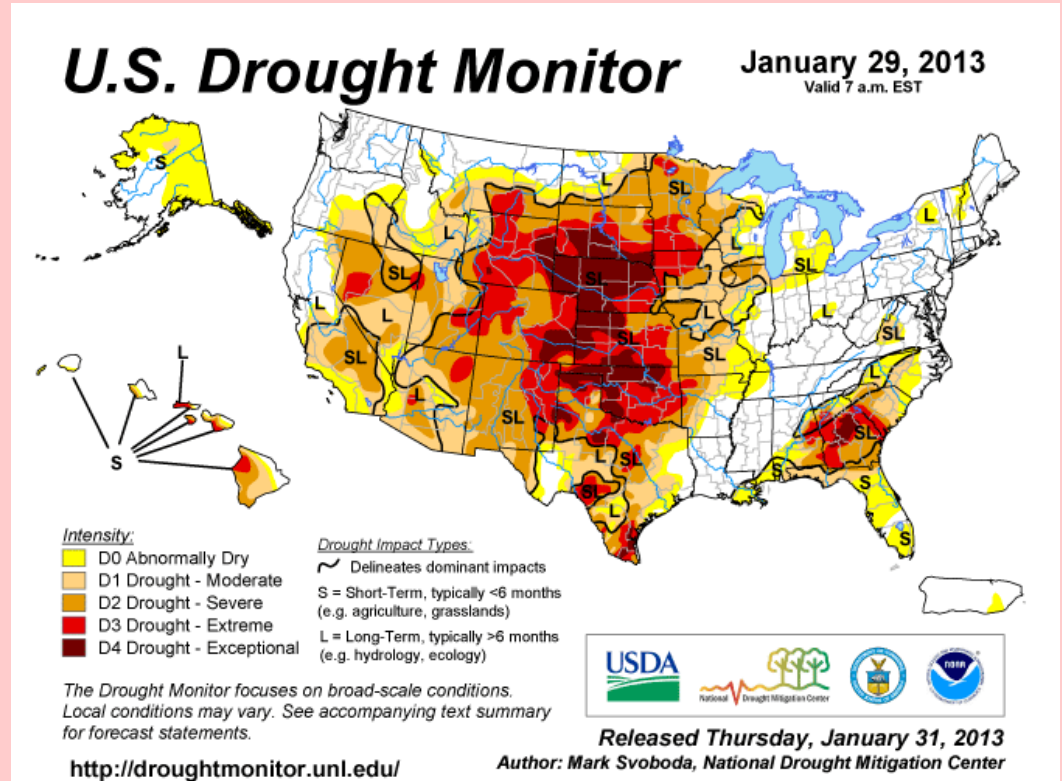
Firewise

BIGHORN BASIN FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

ISSUE #11—SPRING 2013

## WYOMING'S 2013 FIRE SEASON IS COMING. SOME PREDICT IT WILL BE WORSE THAN 2012!

According to Bill Crapser, Wyoming State Forester, firefighting agencies and forces within the state are gearing up for what could be another record-breaking fire season. This is based on the early 2013 drought monitoring map below, and on the moisture deficient (dry) forest fuel conditions resulting from the previous dry years.



Unless spring precipitation is greater than normal, this mapping translates into an active fire season for all of Wyoming.

This should give warning that having your home or cabin Firewise could be more important this year. Page 3 is a success story from 2012, and Page 7 is a checklist for your home and cabin that is already Firewise.

### In this issue:

- Projections for the 2013 fire season **1**
- Firewise Coordinators and Updates **2**
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- How to reduce risks from a wildfire **5**
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### Special points of interest:

- \* Predictions from several sources.
- \* Firewise picnics plus Cody H & G Show
- \* Fuel treatment effectiveness
- \* Keeping fire out of tree crowns
- \* Around your home or cabin
- \* A Firewise success story
- \* Wyoming wildfire news online

**THE BIG HORN BASIN FIREWISE COORDINATORS ARE:**

**Big Horn County:** The County Fire Warden is Brent Godfrey (307) 568-2324. The Firewise Coordinator is Chris Weydeveld, [cweydeveld@wytfs.com](mailto:cweydeveld@wytfs.com), Technical Forestry Services, LLC, 6628 W. Riverside Dr. Casper, Wyoming 82604, or (307) 333-1098 (office), (307) 272-9533 (mobile).

**Washakie County:** Chris Kocher, Fire Warden, [ckocher@worlandfire.org](mailto:ckocher@worlandfire.org), P.O. Box 504, Worland, Wyoming 82401, or (307) 347-6379.

**Hot Springs County:** No Firewise Coordinator has yet been selected. Contact Jay Duvall, County Fire Warden, at (307) 921-1485, or [hscdwarden@gmail.com](mailto:hscdwarden@gmail.com)

**Park County :** Bernie Spanogle, Firewise Coordinator, can be reached at [pcfirerwise@gmail.com](mailto:pcfirerwise@gmail.com). or at 307-250-9387. The County Fire Warden is Russ Wenke, [rwenke@parkcounty.us](mailto:rwenke@parkcounty.us), 1131 11th Street, Cody, Wyoming 82414, or (307) 527-8551.- <http://codyconservationdistrict.com/firewise.php>

If you have general or specific questions about Firewise, two other online sources of answers are:

[www.firewisewyoming.com](http://www.firewisewyoming.com) and [www.livingwithfire.com](http://www.livingwithfire.com).

Do you have topics you would like included in future newsletters? Please submit your suggestions and comments to [gwynn@wytfs.com](mailto:gwynn@wytfs.com), [cweydeveld@wytfs.com](mailto:cweydeveld@wytfs.com), to Chris at any of the above phone numbers, or by mail to G. Wynn, 824 Country Club Road, Casper, Wyoming 82609.

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

**FIREWISE AT THE BIGHORN BASIN HOME AND GARDEN SHOW APRIL 12 & 13.**

Park County Firewise Coordinator Bernie Spanogle will have a Firewise Booth at the Cody Big Horn Basin Home and Garden Show. The Home and Garden Show attracts folks from all over the Basin and it is scheduled for April 12 (afternoon) and April 13 at the Riley Ice Arena in Cody. **Bernie and a Big Horn County Firewise representative** will be available to answer questions about the Firewise Program from Park and Big Horn counties, provide handouts, explain Park County cost-share funds, and familiarize folks with the Park County/Bighorn Basin Firewise Website. If you are attending the Home and Garden, stop and visit, or share your Firewise story and questions.

**SUMMER 2013 ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR BIGHORN MOUNTAIN CABIN GROUPS**

Big Horn County Firewise is planning a full set of cabin-owner picnics similar to the successful 2012 events. No dates or locations are yet known, but you will be notified in the Firewise #12 newsletter expected to be out in early June. Please let Chris Weydeveld

know if you would like something different than last year. Contact information for Chris is above.





**7. Fontenelle Fire: Before and After Photos Tell the Fuel Treatment Success Story**



Figure 9 – Middle Piney summer homes before the Fontenelle Fire. (Source: Google Earth Imagery 2011.)

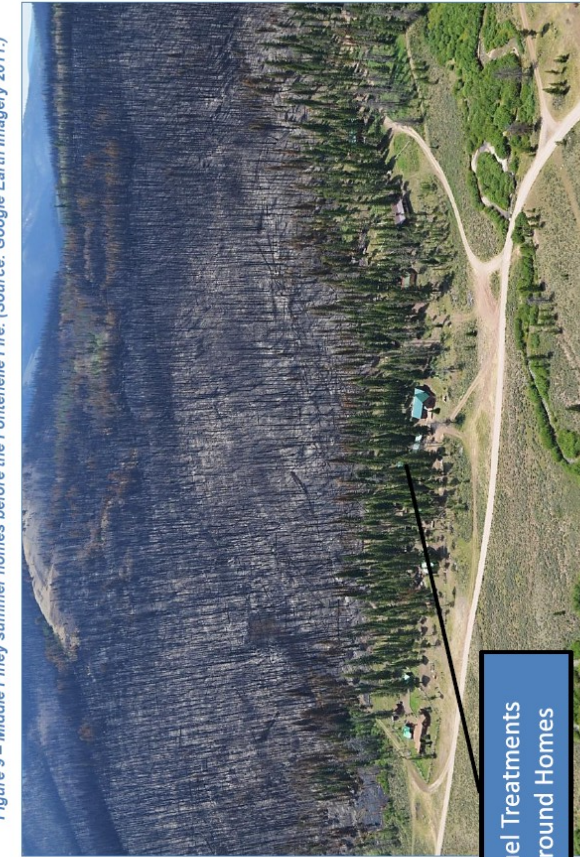


Figure 10 – Middle Piney summer homes after Fontenelle Fire. The green trees surrounding the summer homes are located within the fuel treatment area. (Source: Jim Menakis, USFS.)



\* Figure 11 – Middle Piney summer homes before Fontenelle Fire. (Fuel treatment not visible from this camera angle.) (Source: Nan Stinson, USFS 2004.)

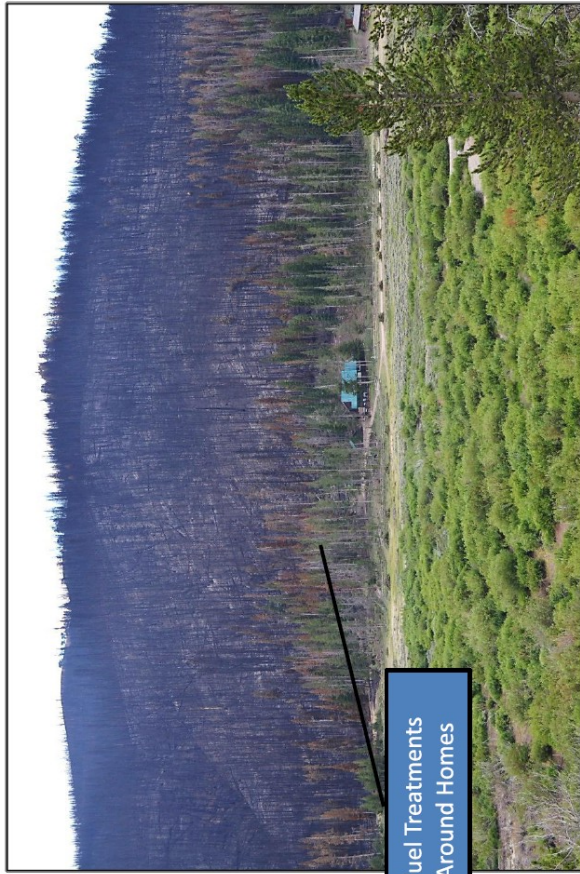


Figure 12 – Middle Piney summer homes after Fontenelle Fire. The green trees around the summer homes were within the fuel treatment that helped protect these homes. (Source: Jim Menakis, USFS.)

Photos and figure numbers come from the January 2013 “How Hazardous Fuel Treatments Helped Save Summer Homes from the Fontenelle Fire,” by the Bridger-Teton National Forest

Here are some before and after photos of the 2012 Fontenelle Fire west of Big Piney. In the foreground are summer cabins. Thanks to the efforts of the firefighters, none of the 22 threatened cabins burned. Firefighters were only able to work near the cabins because of intensive fuel treatments within the cabin group. These fuel treatments will be detailed in the next newsletter.



# Ladder fuels

To keep fire out of tree crowns, it is necessary to disrupt a fire's pathway to branches, needles and leaves. The strategic removal of lower tree limbs — which act like rungs of a ladder that a fire can climb — can make the difference between a scorched trunk and a tree stripped of all foliage.



NIFC



OSU EXTENSION

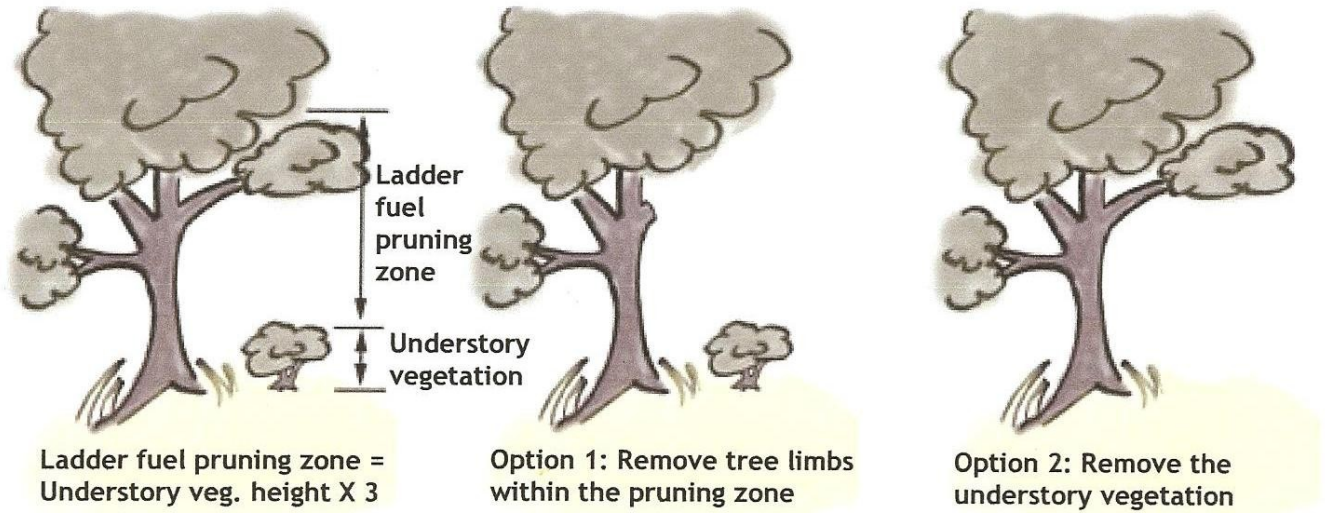
Most wildfires start on the ground in the smallest fuels — needles, leaves and dry grass. Fire will continue to spread upward — up a hill, up a tree — unless pathways to fresh fuel are interrupted (left). Removing ladder fuels helps to keep fire on the ground, where it is manageable, rather than in the tree crowns, where fire is difficult to control.

## How high can flames fly?

About three times taller than the height of the understory plant that is burning.

Understory vegetation height	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Ladder fuel pruning zone distance	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27

All measurements in feet



The above illustration is based on one provided by the Oregon Department of Forestry. Their Firewise program has created several illustrations that are appropriate for the Firewise program in our area, and has given permission to use them for Bighorn Basin Firesmart.



**YES**—The newsletter editor **DOES** know that the below structure protection items have been mentioned in previous newsletters. In the Firewise program, these items are important enough that occasional reminders are helpful. When doing your walk-around preseason checklist on Page 7, consider how your home or cabin meets the this criteria.

## HOW TO REDUCE RISKS FROM A WILDFIRE

There are three threats or exposures that a building can experience during a wildfire. These include windborne embers (also known as firebrands), radiant heat, and direct flame contact. When considering the vulnerability of your home or business to wildfire, you need to evaluate and address all three potential exposures, and work to reduce vulnerability to each. [READ MORE »](#)



### Identify Roof Vulnerabilities

Roof design and materials can increase or decrease a structure's vulnerability to wildfire damage.



### Understand and Reduce Roof Risks

Assess your wildfire risk and then determine if your existing roof provides enough protection.



### Protect Windows and Doors

Solutions for preventing damage due to blowing embers and exposure to radiant heat and flames.



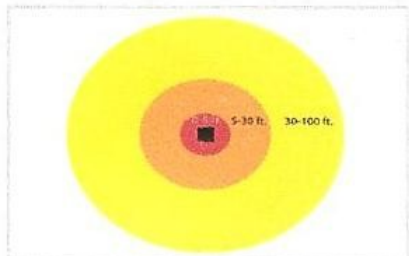
### Protect Vents

Solutions for evaluating risks and preventing entry of ember and flames.



### Protect Decks, Patios, Porches

Solutions for reducing the risk of these areas catching fire.



### Create Defensible Space Zones

Identify, create and maintain three zones to keep wildfire from igniting vegetation and structures.

### **FIRE TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT WYOFIRE 2013**

**Dates:** May 17-19, 2013 Friday afternoon through Sunday afternoon

**Check In:** will be on Friday, May 17th from 1300 to 1800 hours

**Location:** Camp Guernsey, Guernsey, WY

Field Training, Task Books encouraged

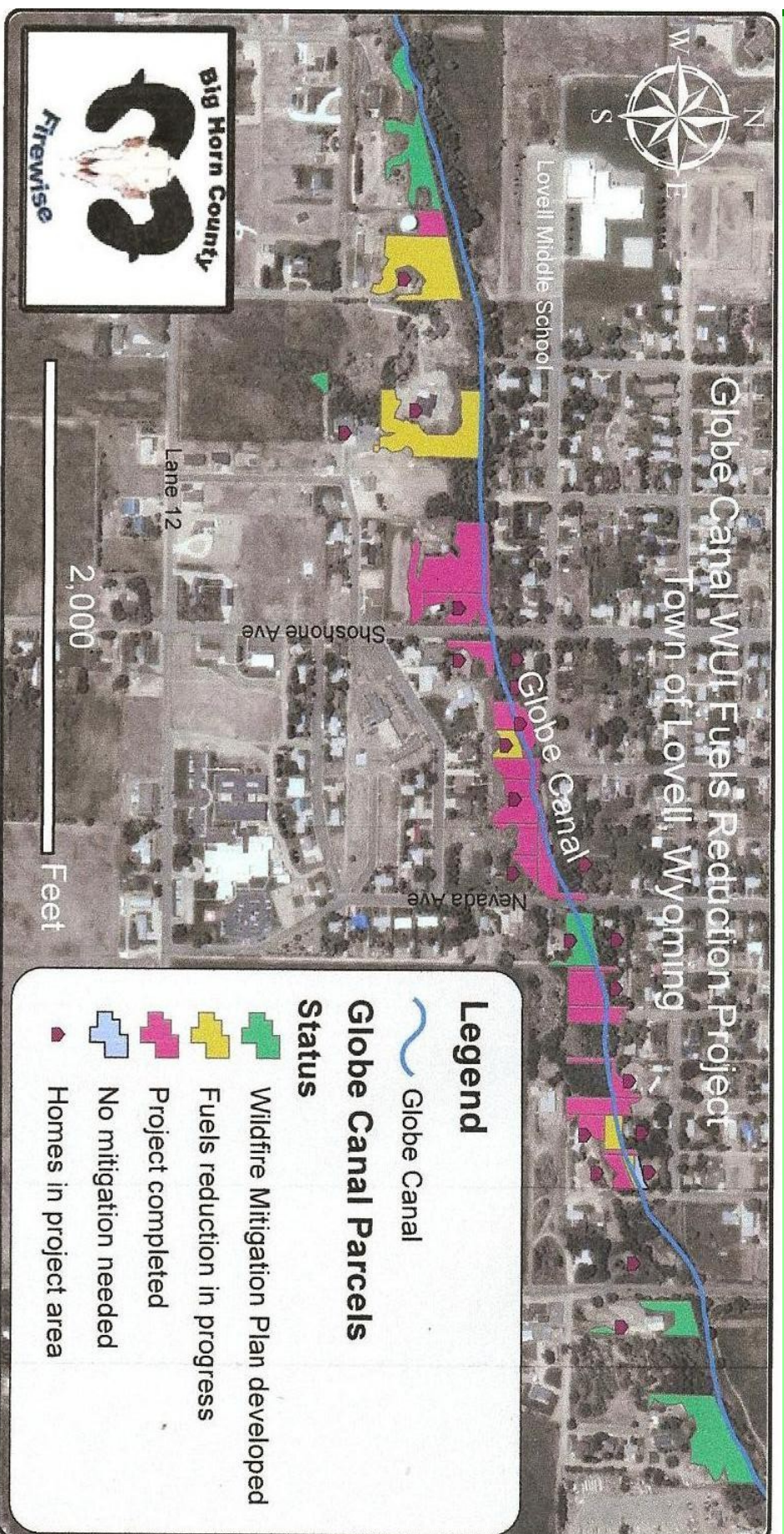
Live Fire Suppression, Structure Protection, Water Handling. Fire Investigation, ICT4 with aircraft and all ICS positions

**Contact/Registration More info:** Mike Bournazian  
at [mike.bournazian@wyo.gov](mailto:mike.bournazian@wyo.gov) or [307-856-0027](tel:307-856-0027)



**THE GLOBE CANAL PROJECT**

One of the success stories of the Big Horn County Firewise program is the Globe Canal portion of the Wildland Urban Interface through Lovell. This urban area was identified as a high priority community in the 2010 Big Horn County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and has received extensive treatments to reduce and modify fuels adjacent to homes. Funding for the Wildfire Mitigation Plans and fuel treatments has come from several sources: Big Horn County Firewise, individual homeowners, the City of Lovell, and cost-share dollars from the National Fire Plan via the Wyoming Division of Forestry, and the Bureau of Land Management. All work has been completed by the homeowners, local contractors, and a crew from Lovell Public Works.





## ANNUAL PRE-FIRE-SEASON FIREWISE WALK-AROUND CHECKLIST

Once a home or cabin has been made Firewise, the owner can't sit back and enjoy it. Vegetation will continue to grow, and human activities will change the situation on an irregular basis.

### BEFORE FIRE SEASON:

\_\_\_ Remove leaves and forest litter from gutters, roofs, and within 3 feet of all structures

\_\_\_ Clean chimney screens

\_\_\_ Cut new small trees and shrubs within the 100-foot zone

\_\_\_ Remove dead trees within the 100-foot zone

\_\_\_ Check your address placard or sign for clear visibility

\_\_\_ Move your conveniently-placed winter woodpile to more than 30 feet from all structures

\_\_\_ Check/replace the batteries in your emergency alert radio

\_\_\_ Inspect your powerline for branches within four feet in all directions

\_\_\_ Check window screens for a tight fit, and patch any holes

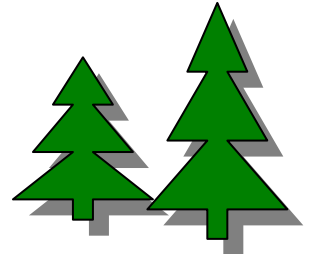
\_\_\_ Remove leaf and needles between the boards of decks, and under any decks and porches.

\_\_\_ Check walls and foundation for fresh bird and animal holes, and patch appropriately

\_\_\_ Pick up winter-broken limbs within the 100-foot zone

\_\_\_ Remove flammable materials from decks and porches, except when actually in use

\_\_\_ Review your evacuation plan, and share it with the family



### BEFORE GRASS CURES IN MID-SUMMER:

\_\_\_ Mow grassy areas around all structures

\_\_\_ Mow grass within and adjacent to driveways



## STATE WILDFIRE INFORMATION AVAILABLE ONLINE

Recently the Wyoming State Forestry Division created a webpage devoted to informing the public on current Wyoming wildfires. The webpage can be found on State Forestry's website at: <http://lands.state.wy.us/> then click on Forestry, then under Wildland Fire Management, click on Fire Information Website.

The site has up to date information on current wildfires and includes maps identifying wildfire locations around the State. There is also a fire restrictions map which identifies counties under current fire restrictions.

While you are there, make sure to Like us on Facebook or Follow us on twitter to receive up-to-date information about Wyoming State Forestry Division.



**MORE LITTLE THINGS THAT COUNT**



**Leaf and litter buildup in decks and porches.**



**Faded or obscured address signage.**

*Big Horn County Firewise  
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Casper, Wyoming 82604*

