



BIGHORN BASIN FIRESMART

BIGHORN BASIN FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

WYOMING'S 2013 FIRE SEASON IS COMING.

Here is the National Interagency Fire Center prediction

“In its first 2013 fire outlook that extends through the summer months, the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) Predictive Services unit is forecasting above normal potential for significant fire activity in the West Coast states, the Southwest, and portions of Idaho and Montana. **The potential in most of the rest of the country is expected to be normal** or, in the case of much of the South, below normal.”



Spring snowstorms converted Wyoming's predicted intense fire season to one that could be closer to those experienced during the more normal years of the century-to-date.

Wyoming typically has hundreds of wildfires per year, so you should still:

- ⇒ Do your preseason home & cabin Firewise checklist (*Spring 2013 newsletter*).
- ⇒ Review your “When wildfire threatens” list (*Winter 2012 newsletter*), and share it with family and visitors.
- ⇒ Pay attention to the fire situation in your vicinity. That can be found at <http://lands.state.wy.us/> then click “Forestry” then “Wildland Fire Management”

For the current nationwide wildfire situation, access the website <http://www.inciweb.org/>

If you are a mountain cabin owner, dates and locations of the 2013 Firewise picnics are on the flyers on pages 5 through 7.

In this issue:

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- Firewise Coordinators and Updates **2**
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Special points of interest:

- * Day-to-day fire activity websites.
- * Fontelle Fire near a cabin
- * Fuel treatments that saved homes
- * Basin and Greybull projects
- * Summer 2013 Firewise picnic
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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, 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, 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

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.- <http://codyconservationdistrict.com/firewise.php>

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 gwynn@wytfs.com, 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.

This newsletter is provided as a service of your county’s Firewise Coordinator. If you choose not to receive future issues, please respond to the E-mail address that delivered it, or to Big Horn County Firewise (6628 W. Riverside Drive, Casper, Wyoming 82604) by mail.

Page Three is a followup to the Fontenelle Fire photos from the Spring newsletter. Here’s an image from that fire just to show that it wasn’t short flames creeping in duff.

Below is a summary statement of why all the cabins were saved.

“Having the hazardous fuel treatment allowed firefighters to stay longer and do a burnout and be successful in saving the summer homes of Middle Piney.”

Paul Hutta, East Zone Fire Management Officer
Bridger-Teton National Forest



The full report “*How Hazardous Fuel Treatments Helped Save the Middle Piney Summer Homes from the Fontenelle Fire,*” can be obtained on-line, or by contacting the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

PART TWO OF THE 2012 FONTENELLE FIRE CABIN PROTECTION SUCCESS

These photos illustrate the fuel treatments that made the protection of the Middle Piney homes possible during the 2012 Fontenelle Fire west of Big Piney, Wyoming.

PHOTO #1 shows the surrounding forest conditions prior to the Bridger-Teton National Forest activities to reduce fuels in the mixed-conifer forest near the cabins. Note the density of trees, and the dead and downed woody fuel loading.

PHOTO #2 shows the same location after fuels reduction near the cabins. Treatments included:

- ⇒ Removal of the small trees that would have carried fire into the larger tree crowns.
- ⇒ Thinning the larger trees to 20 feet apart to reduce fire spread from tree crown to tree crown.
- ⇒ Removal of dead and dying vegetation and reducing the downed surface fuels to reduce potential fire intensity.
- ⇒ Cut trees and removed surface fuels were piled, and later burned.



PHOTO #1



PHOTO #2

These treatments were completed in the decade prior to the fire.

The **red arrows** point to a tree that is in both photographs.

When fire threatened the cabin area, fire crews cut the trees that had died since the thinning, and removed other downed trees. Working this close to the fire was only possible because the previous thinning and fuel reduction work had lowered the potential fire intensity, and provided a safe environment for fire forces to work in the vicinity of the threatened cabins.

It should be noted that when it was proposed, and after the work was completed, the cabin owners were opposed to what they considered drastic thinning and fuel treatment. Their opinion changed when they found that their cabins had not burned.

The treatments around the Middle Piney cabins could be duplicated in any of the cabin and housing communities in the Bighorn Basin. That is one of the goals of the Firewise programs in the basin.

RECENT FIREWISE PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

BASIN: Recent Big Horn County Firewise accomplishments included fuels treatment on Mike Saldana's property just east of the town of Basin. This eight-acre project removed Russian olive, and made a drastic reduction in the fuel loading along that segment of the Bighorn River, with cost-share assistance from the Big Horn County Firewise program. The big slash piles will be burned next winter.

This site is visible from the Basin boat ramp and the river bridge on Lane 42.



Saldana Project



Saldana Project

GREYBULL: Another recently completed project is the forty-acre Phase Two portion of the Greybull town riverside fuels treatment. This treated the east side of

the river north of the Highway 14 bridge, and the town side of the river south of the bridge. Those slash piles will also be burned next winter.

Slash piles were burned on Greybull Phase One this past winter, and the burned spots seeded with grass. A few piles were left unburned as habitat for wildlife. This area is on the west side of the river north of the bridge, and is pictured below.

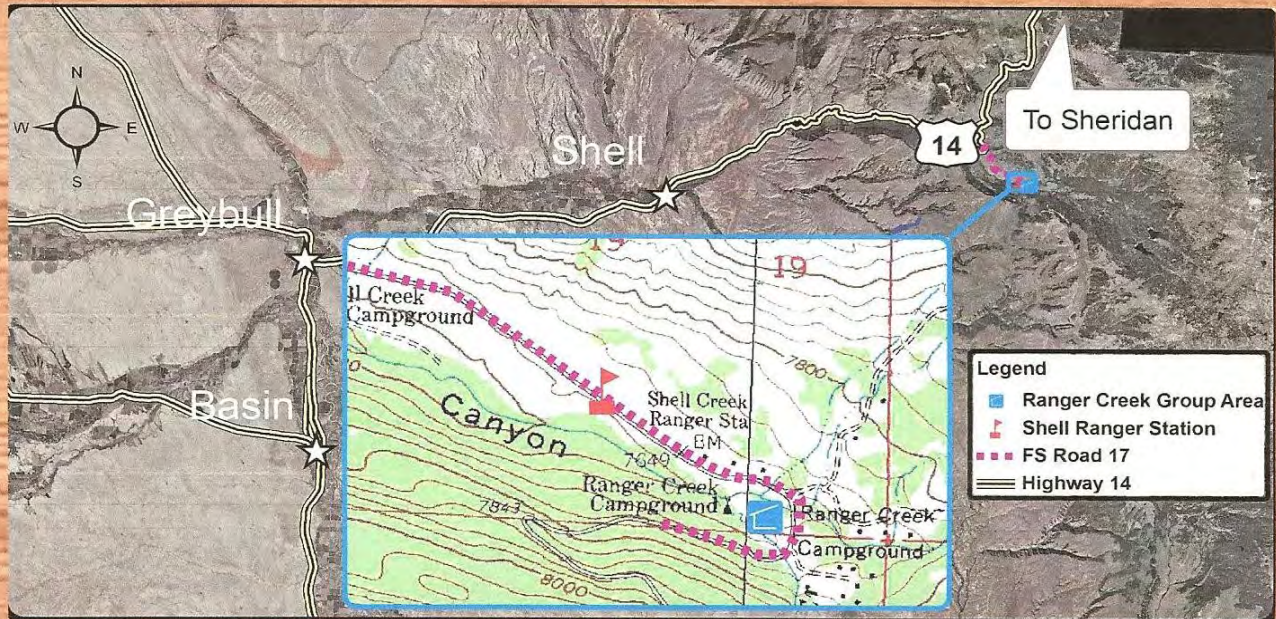
If you are walking the Greybull levee, take a look. Everything on the town side of the river has now been treated.



Greybull Phase One; looking across the Bighorn River toward town.

Big Horn County Firewise Picnic

June 15, 2013 at the Ranger Creek Group Area



Research shows that properly designed and implemented defensible space treatments around cabins reduces ignitability during wildfire.

What: **Annual Big Horn County Firewise Picnic**

Date: **June 15, 2013**

Time: 11:30 am to 3:00 pm (see Agenda below)

Place: Ranger Creek Group Area, Big Horn National Forest (see map above)

Agenda:

11:30 am to 1:00 pm – Lunch barbeque provided by Big Horn County Firewise.

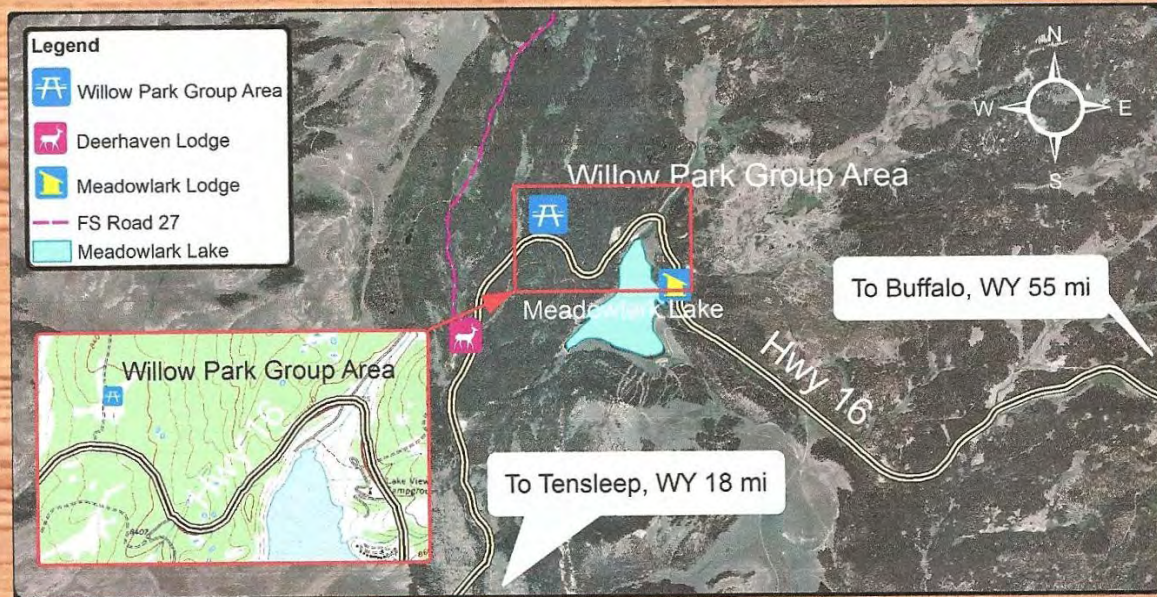
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Tour of forest management activities; completed cabin home ignition zones - defensible space treatments; examples of cabins needing treatments

3:00 pm - Adjourn

Lunch provided courtesy of Big Horn County Firewise and the Big Horn County Fire Warden. For more information contact the Big Horn County Firewise Coordinator at: (307) 272-9533 or (307) 333-2887 Email: Firewise@wytfs.com

Big Horn County Firewise Picnic

June 29, 2013 at the Willow Park Group Area



Research shows properly designed and implemented defensible space treatments around cabins reduces ignitability during wildfire.

What: Annual Big Horn County Firewise Picnic

Date: June 29, 2013

Time: 11:30 am to 3:00 pm—(see agenda below)

Place: Willow Park Group Area, Bighorn National Forest

Agenda:

10:30 am to 11:30 am—West Tensleep Cabin Owner's Association Meeting.
(Contact Keith Gentzler for more information (307) 347-8429.)

11:30 am to 1:00 pm – Lunch barbeque (food and beverages provided Big Horn County Firewise).

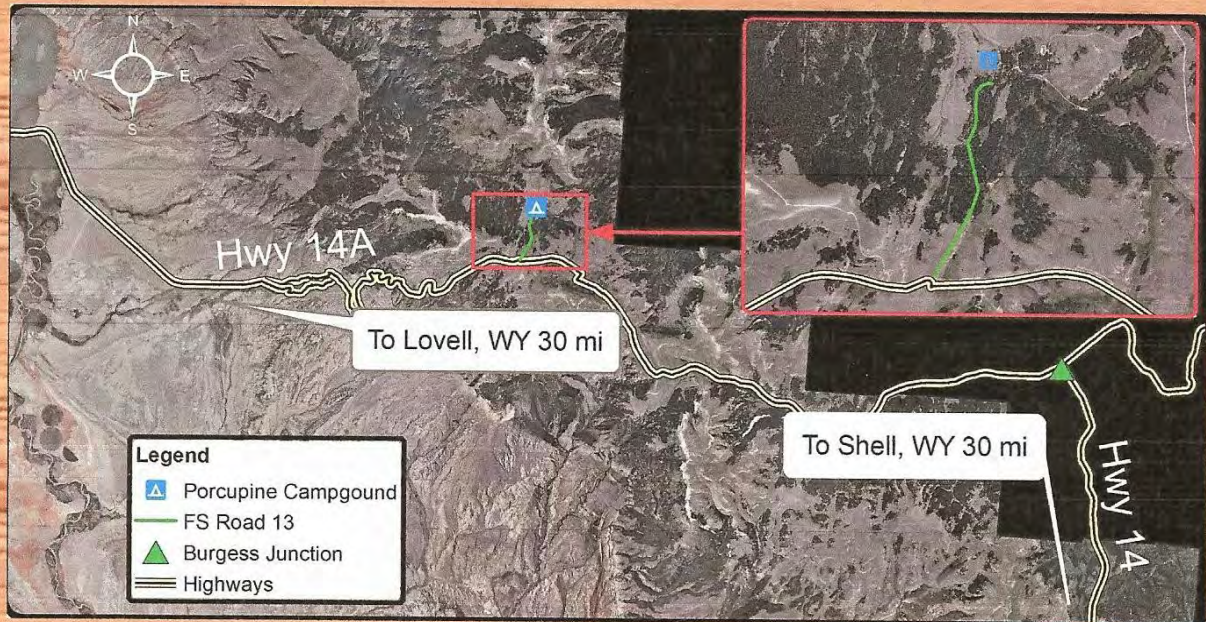
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Introduction to the Firewise Communities program; Tour of West Tensleep Project forest management activities; completed cabin home ignition zones; examples of cabins needing treatments; other activities/presentations to be determined.

3:00 pm - Adjourn

Lunch provided courtesy of Big Horn County Firewise and the Big Horn County Fire Warden. For more information contact the Big Horn County Firewise Coordinator at: (307) 272-9533 or (307) 333-2887 Email: Firewise@wytfs.com

Big Horn County Firewise Picnic

July 13, 2013, at Porcupine Campground Sites 8 & 9



Research shows properly designed and implemented defensible space treatments around cabins reduces ignitability during wildfire.

What: Annual Big Horn County Firewise Picnic

Date: July 13, 2013

Time: 11:30 am to 3:00 pm

Place: Porcupine Campground sites 8 and 9, Bighorn National Forest

Agenda:

11:30 am to 1:00 pm – Lunch barbeque provided by Big Horn County Firewise.

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Tour of forest management activities; completed cabin home ignition zones - defensible space treatments; examples of cabins needing treatments

3:00 pm - Adjourn

Lunch provided courtesy of Big Horn County Firewise, Lovell Fire Department and the Big Horn County Fire Warden. For more information contact the Big Horn County Firewise Coordinator at: (307) 272-9533 or (307) 333-2887 Email: Firewise@wytfs.com

ANOTHER LITTLE THING THAT COUNT



CAUTION

Even a brick or masonry foundation won't save your home or cabin if the foundation vents are open or unshielded. Embers can enter the crawl-space, and ignite wooden underhouse components.

Screens with no larger than 1/8 inch mesh are recommended.

*Big Horn County Firewise
6628 W. Riverside Drive
Casper, Wyoming 82604*

