

## **Letter from Brad Abbott, Executive Director Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp**

**Here's the short story on we know about the Cameron Peak Fire:** The Fire continues to burn near northern Colorado's Poudre Canyon. As of Tuesday (8/18), the fire remained at 0% containment, according to the incident command team.

**How big is the Cameron Peak Fire?** The fire grew to 14,018 acres as of Tuesday, according to an incident report from inciweb, an incident information system. No structures or facilities have been damaged, according to a Tuesday incident report from the U.S. Forest Service.

**When did the fire start?** The fire started Aug. 13 on the Arapaho and Roosevelt national forests near Cameron Pass and Chambers Lake. A Type 2 Rocky Mountain Incident Management Blue Team took over management of the fire on Saturday. The cause of the fire is under investigation. Mapping showed the fire has crossed over Colorado Highway 14 in two spots.

**Why crews are building containment lines several miles away from Cameron Peak Fire?** Containment lines for the Cameron Peak Fire are being built several miles away from where the fire is now burning because of a dangerous combination of hazardous terrain, unfavorable weather conditions and highly flammable vegetation, an operations section chief said Tuesday.

Crews are working to protect structures along Colorado Highway 14 in the Poudre Canyon and the Laramie River Road (County Road 103) and have engines available from local fire departments to help put out any structures that might catch fire.

For the most part, though, officials aren't planning to actively try to suppress the fire until it encroaches on the Red Feather Lakes and Pingree Park areas to the north and east and to more varied alpine vegetation near tree line on the south and west, said Hohn, operations section chief for the Rocky Mountain Incident Command's Blue Team. His team was brought in Saturday to direct firefighting operations of the fire in the upper Poudre Canyon near Chambers Lake.

The safety of firefighters, Hohn said, dictates the team's approach. "It can be a little frustrating and confusing to understand why we're looking so far out away from this fire," Hohn said. "But the day it blew across the highway, we had a highway, a big river and still it just made its way across with the extreme winds and the extreme fire that we have out there."

The fire is burning on both sides of Highway 14, which is closed from Rustic to Gould, through forest that was hit hard by pine beetle infestation that killed as much as 80% of

the trees. High temperatures, strong winds and low relative humidity have created erratic conditions within the fire. Stronger winds were expected Wednesday, with little chance of rain.

There were 393 personnel working the fire Tuesday, according to the fire website. Ten helicopters — seven Type 1, two Type 2 and one Type 3 — were available. Bulldozers and other heavy equipment were being used to build containment lines along Deadman Road (Larimer County Road 86) northeast of the fire, Manhattan Road (County Road 69) to the east and Pingree Park Road (County Road 63E) to the east.

Most of Monday's fire growth was along the west and southwest flanks of the fire in the Rawah Wilderness and near Cameron Pass. Most suppression efforts so far, Hohn said, have been on that southwestern edge to prevent it from spreading north and west of Highway 14 and Long Draw Road, Hohn said. There also is a crew assigned to protect structures along Highway 14 and another tasked with protecting a water-supply storage shed along Laramie River Road near the tunnel that brings water from the west side of the Continental Divide near Grand Lake into the Poudre River.

People from all over the country have called or emailed asking how they can help. The answer is simple - as the fires spread throughout Colorado and the west I ask you to please pray for all those affected by the fire or currently fighting to protect the structures (like Sky Ranch) left behind.

For the most current information regarding the Cameron Peak Fire, click on the link <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6964/> or follow the fire on Facebook at [https://www.facebook.com/CameronPeakFire/?tn-str=k\\*F](https://www.facebook.com/CameronPeakFire/?tn-str=k*F).