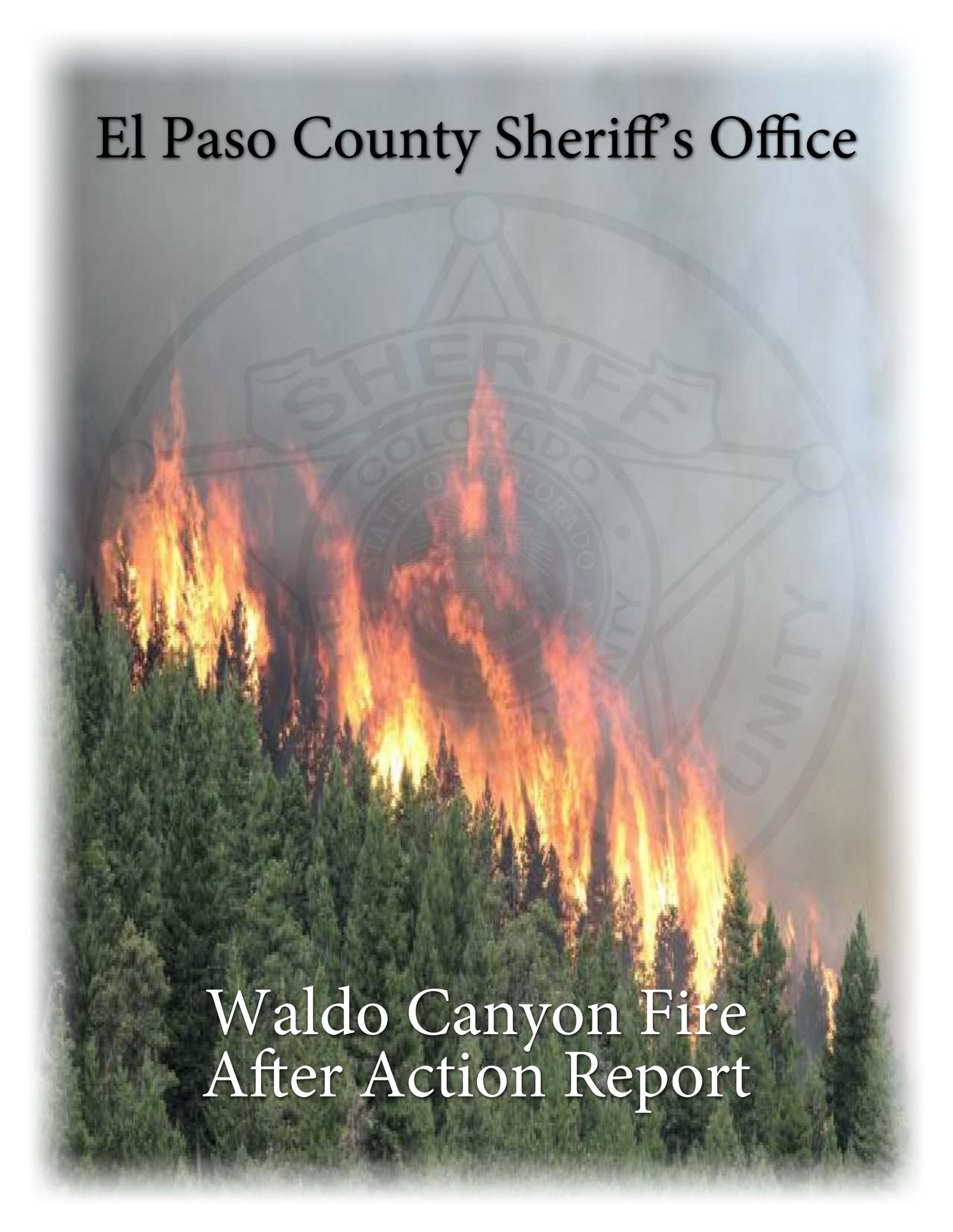


El Paso County Sheriff's Office



Waldo Canyon Fire
After Action Report

Purpose

To establish the facts regarding El Paso County's response to the Waldo Canyon fire which began on Saturday, June 23, 2012.

The intent of this report is to describe the roles played by El Paso County agencies during this event, identify the key tasks and functions that the County should be prepared to perform in future incidents, and finally identify opportunities for improvement in all areas of operations.

Executive Summary

On Friday, June 22, 2012 at approximately 1950 hours (7:50 pm), the El Paso County Sheriff's Office (EPSO) Dispatch received a call from Crystal Park reporting white smoke north of Cave of the Winds. Several reports of smoke subsequently followed. At 2022 hours (8:22 pm) the EPSO Wildland Crew, Cascade Fire Department, Green Mountain Falls Fire Department, Manitou Springs Fire Department, and the Colorado Springs Utilities Catamount Fire Crew responded to Pyramid Mountain Road. The US Forest Service (USFS) took command of the incident at 2036 hours (8:36 pm), and named it "Pyramid Command." Shortly afterward, USFS personnel hiked into the area to attempt to find the source of the smoke. At 2148 hours (9:48 pm), Command released all County resources and announced that the USFS would be back in the morning to investigate further.

On June 23, 2012 at approximately 0648 hours (6:48 am), the USFS and Cascade FD were back in the area attempting to locate the source of the smoke. At 1139 hours (11:39 am) crews were still in the area. At approximately 1200 hours (12:00 noon) several reports of smoke began to come into the dispatch center. Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal (ADFM) Campbell was notified. At 1220 hours (12:20 pm) a single-engine air tanker was ordered by ADFM Campbell. The Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) ordered "air support" at 1224 hours (12:24 pm). At 1238 hours (12:38 pm) ADFM Campbell ordered additional resources as well as activation of the Emergency Operations Center and staff notifications. At approximately the same time, ADFM Campbell ordered voluntary evacuation of Green Mountain Falls, Chipita Park and Cascade. CSFD established Command and staging at the Safeway store, located at 3275 W. Colorado Avenue.

At 1241 hours (12:41 pm) USFS took command of the incident, and named it the "Waldo Canyon Fire." USFS and El Paso County named Eric Zanotto, the USFS Division 9 Chief, Incident Commander (IC) of the fire.

The El Paso County Sheriff's Office EOC was activated and operational at 1249 hours (12:49). Colorado Springs Police Department informed EPSO Dispatch they were evacuating Cedar Heights at approximately 1306 hours (1:06 pm). The Incident Command Post for the El Paso County Type 3 Incident Management Team (consisting of USFS and El Paso County personnel) was established at 1500 hours (3:00 pm) at the Rocky Top Christian Center, located at 10605 Green Mountain Falls Road. The USFS ordered a Type 1 Incident Management Team (IMT1).

The County Animal Response Team (CART) opened a large animal shelter at the Norris-Penrose Events Center at 1401 hours (2:01 pm).

Evacuations of Eagle Camp and Rampart Reservoir were ordered at 1512 hours (3:12 pm). At 1544 hours (3:44 pm) mandatory evacuations were ordered for those areas previously under voluntary evacuation. The Pikes Peak Chapter of the American Red Cross (PPARC)

opened shelters at Woodland Park High School and Cheyenne Mountain High School. The Joint Information Center (JIC) was ordered to be established at the Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Bureau on Costilla Street.

The initial request for State Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) support was approved with no funding late Saturday afternoon. Representative Gardner contacted the Governor's office regarding EFF, and use of the EFF was approved with funding shortly afterward. Delegations of authority were received in preparation for the arrival of the Type 1 Incident Management Team. Targeted areas of Manitou Springs were placed under mandatory evacuation at 2300 hours (11:00 pm). At 2350 hours (11:50 pm) the County EOC sent a map of potential fire impact to the State to support the request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG).

At various times through the evening of June 23, and into the next morning, incident management team members from the Springer Fire (Park County) began to arrive and assist the Type 3 Incident Management Team in Green Mountain Falls.

On Sunday, June 24th, Teams from the El Paso County Wildland Crew worked through the night to begin structure protection near Cascade. USFS reported around 0017 hours (17 minutes after midnight) that they estimated the fire to be 4,000 acres, and it may impact the Cedar Heights community. A full evacuation of Manitou Springs was ordered at 0125 hours (1:25 am). The El Paso County Disaster Declaration was drafted at 0200 hours (2:00 am). At 0543 hours (5:43 am) an EPSO Deputy reported that a flare up has occurred at the top of Pyramid Mountain. At 0600 hours (6:00 am) incident command transferred from IC Zanotto (ICT3) to IC Russell (ICT2); Deputy IC remained the same. Colorado State Patrol (CSP) closed Highway 24 and requested EPSO to cover near mile marker 297 as CSP was short on staffing. Mandatory evacuation of Green Mountain Falls, Cascade and both south and west sides of Chipita Park was ordered by the Deputy IC at 0647 hours (6:47 am).

EPSO Deputies responded at 0742 hours (7:42 am) to assist with the evacuations of Cascade and Green Mountain Falls. The EPSO Wildland Crew Superintendent reviewed the structure protection plan for the Cascade area, and began work on improving fire lines. Two heavy air tankers were en route to the fire around 0823 hours (8:23 am). Approximately 0946 hours (9:46 am), east bound Highway 24 was closed. Due to changes in the fire's size and position, the Incident Command Post in Green Mountain Falls was ordered at 1124 hours (11:24 am) to relocate to Holmes Middle School in Colorado Springs.

At 1246 hours (12:46 pm), CSP completely shut down Highway 24 in both directions. The Rocky Mountain Christian Center was evacuated with the exception of EPSO Command Staff. Command Staff waited until all EPSO Deputies had returned from the evacuation, which was completed at 1342 hours (1:42 pm). All EPSO units left the area at the same time.

The Type 3 ICP and the EPSO Mobile Command Post were relocated to Holmes Middle School at 2455 Mesa Road, Colorado Springs. The El Paso County Agency Representative moved to the same location, within the Agency Representative room. The EPSO Mobile Command Post was utilized to house the law enforcement functions of the incident.

Woodland Park and the US Air Force Academy (USAFA) had been put on a pre-evacuation order at 1111 hours (11:11 am). Later that day, as the fire began to spread, evacuations were put into place for USAFA Farish Camp, and southeast Woodland Park. The USAFA provided their delegation of authority for the management of the incident.

The County EOC received notification from the State OEM Field Manager at 1700 hours (5:00 pm) that the FMAG was approved. At 1845 hours (6:45 pm) the Manitou Springs Fire Chief notified the EOC that, at 2000 hours (8:00 pm), Manitou Springs would lift its mandatory evacuation and down grade to a voluntary evacuation. All Manitou Springs residents would be allowed back in their homes.

The Type 3 Incident Management Team (IMT3) prepared for transition to the Type 1 Incident Management Team (IMT1) the following morning.

On Monday 25th at 0600 hours (6:00 am), Command was transferred from the IMT3 to the IMT1. The Agency Representative Room was set up within Holmes Middle School. Agency Representatives were briefed at 1700 hours (5:00 pm) each evening during the incident.

The National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1000 hours (10:00 am) through 2100 hours (9:00 pm).

Communication in the Agency Representative (AR) room was poor initially, with weak cell service and only one telephone. Network access was established quickly. County IT worked with the cable company to amplify the network signal and brought a television to the room so local news could be observed. County Budget Administration assigned personnel to assist with administrative duties.

The control lines, established by the previous team near Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Crystola, held. The ADFM was relieved by the IMT1 at 1100 hours (11:00 am).

EPSO requested 60 officers from the Department of Corrections, to assist EPSO in security.

On Tuesday, June 26th, a Red Flag warning was in effect from 1200 hours (12:00 noon) to 2100 hours (9:00 pm). The IMT1 focused air resources over Queen's Canyon.

A large vertical smoke column, with ice capping, was present over the fire by mid afternoon, and the fire was very active. At 1550 hours (3:50 pm) ADFM Campbell informed Commander Reid that if the large well-developed smoke column collapsed, it would most likely bring the fire within Colorado Springs. Commander Reid informed the Colorado Springs Fire Department Branch Director that the County had fire apparatus available if he needed them.

Shortly after the fire entered Mountain Shadows, resources from the EPSO Wildland Crew began to arrive; they started the process of extinguishing structure fires and protecting homes by establishing a control line. When Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) assets began to arrive in the same area as ADFM Campbell, the ADFM met with the responding CSFD Battalion Chief and discussed strategy. Once the strategy was decided, the ADFM relocated the EPSO firefighters to the Peregrine and Oak Valley areas. EPSO hand crews and bulldozers began to build and connect fire lines around these areas.

At 1711 hours (5:11 pm), the EPSO Wildland Crew Superintendent asked the County EOC to start assembling task forces with resources requested from County fire departments. At 1721 hours (5:21 pm) an all-County page was sent out by the County EOC, asking all available County fire resources to assemble at the County Firebase on Cimarron Street to establish task forces. The following fire departments provided resources: Fountain, Calhan, Stratmoor Hills, Fort Carson, Black Forest, Security, Pueblo, Tri-County and Ellicott.

At 1753 hours (5:53 pm) the County EOC called Pueblo to see if they had any available resources. At 1833 hours (6:33 pm) residents north of Woodmen Road, east of Dutchrock Rd., south of the Air Force Academy, and west of I-25 were evacuated. Over the next couple of hours, thousands of people were evacuated from their homes. Law enforcement resources were stretched thin in the wake of the mass evacuations.

At approximately 2300 hours (11:00 pm), there were three bulldozers on the ground, under the direction of the ADFM, working on the fire line near the Peregrine community. The EPSO Wildland Crew worked through the night, with the assistance of the above-mentioned fire departments, and completed the control lines and burn outs by approximately 0500 hours (5:00 am) on June 27.

On Wednesday, June 27th, the National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1000 hours (10:00 am) until 2100 hours (9:00 pm).

EPSO Deputies continued to provide security to the Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Chipita Park communities. Highway 24 remained closed.

At 1213 hours (12:13 pm), Teller County ordered an evacuation of Crystola west of the Highway 24 corridor through Baldwin, north from Baldwin to Rampart Range Road to Loy Creek and south from Kelly's Dam. There was still heavy fire activity to the west of Wellington Gulch. EPSO Deputies assisted with the Crystola evacuations.

Protection of Colorado Springs Utilities water systems remained a priority, as well as maintenance of containment lines on Highway 24 so that evacuees could return.

On Thursday, June 28th due to slightly lower temperatures and higher relative humidity, there was no Red Flag warning on this day.

EPSO was informed that the President of the United States would be coming to Colorado Springs on Friday June 29th. The Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) did not have the personnel to provide security, and requested that EPSO handle the security detail.

The National Guard was staffing most of the trail closures. The Department of Corrections was supplementing roadblocks within the City.

On Friday, June 29th, the Sheriff's Office EOC was planning for the re-entry of residents into the Cascade and Green Mountain Falls communities. The IMT1 was concerned that there was still active fire near the Cave of the Winds.

President Obama, Senator Mark Udall, Senator Michael Bennet and Representative Doug Lamborn visited Colorado Springs. President Obama declared a Major Disaster in Colorado. EPSO and CSPD provided security for the presidential delegation's visits to various sites.

The National Weather Service was forecasting that monsoon rains would begin soon. Post-fire flooding in the Ute Pass area was now a major concern for the Sheriff's Office EOC.

On Saturday, June 30th, The potential of fire spotting to the west side of the Highway 24 corridor was still a remote concern as the crews worked to secure the fire line, and mop up continued.

Plans were being reviewed for the re-entry of Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Chipita Park. Electric and gas companies were allowed into the area to ensure their infrastructure was in good repair. They identified that a power pole had been damaged by fire, and needed to be replaced. Electric company crews worked through the night to replace the damaged pole and restore power. During the evacuation, bears and raccoons had spread trash all over the neighborhood. The Green Mountain Falls Marshal was working to clear the bears from the area.

On Sunday, July 1st, the National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1200 hours (12:00 pm) until 2100 hours (9:00 pm).

From 0900 hours (9:00 am) until 1300 hours (1:00 pm), Highway 24 was opened only to residents of the Ute Pass area. Volunteers organized by the Sheriff's Office EOC were in the area cleaning up trash scattered by the wildlife. Both gas and electric companies were in the area to assist residents. Food was provided for the residents for the first 12 hours. The Sheriff was present to personally welcome residents back. At 1300 hours (1:00 pm), Highway 24 was opened to the public, in both directions.

On Monday, July 2nd, weather forecast predicted scattered thunderstorms, with less than 0.5 inch of rain expected.

The IMT1 ordered the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team.

The Sheriff's Office EOC was pre-planning and gathering information to establish emergency procedures for possible flooding and mudslides.

On Tuesday, July 3rd, the weather forecast predicted possible isolated thunderstorms, with less than 0.5 inch of rain expected.

That morning, the Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Team held its first meeting with local agencies and cooperators. Several questions were asked of the team as to what to expect should there be significant rain over the burn scar. That afternoon, the Sheriff's Office EOC met with subject matter experts and representatives of local jurisdictions to develop the first version of a system to alert residents of flooding or mudslides in areas downstream of the burn scar.

On Wednesday, July 4th, the possibility of transferring command of the fire on July 7th was discussed. Cost share and processes were also discussed.

The County EOC made plans to host a public flood information meeting at Centennial Hall on July 5th.

Commander Reid and ADFM Campbell patrolled the County for illegal use of fireworks, without result. EPSO also responded to six smoke investigations and reports of three outside fires.

On Thursday, July 5th late in the afternoon, the BAER team presented preliminary information regarding possible mudslides and flooding in the Ute Pass area. A lengthy discussion was held on when and how this information would be provided to the public. It was decided that a public meeting would be held in Ute Pass as soon as it could be organized, even with limited information. The Ute Pass meeting was scheduled for Friday evening, July 13th at the Ute Pass Elementary School in Chipita Park. The Sheriff directed that sandbags be filled and provided to the citizens of the Ute Pass area.

The first public flood information meeting was held at Centennial Hall at 1900 hours (7 pm).

The IMT1 began the process of demobilizing the ICP.

On Friday, July 6th, The IMT1 continued to demobilize operations, and the Holmes Middle School building was completely clear by the end of the day. All paperwork was completed for the transfer of command to a Type 3 IMT in the morning.

On Saturday, July 7th, Command of the Waldo Canyon Fire was transferred to a Type 3 IMT commanded by IC Troy Nelson. Inmates in the EPSO Gateway program filled approximately 5,000 sand bags, which were staged to be used later.

A close-out meeting with the IMT1 was held at the Glen Eyrie Castle.

On Friday, July 13th, Filled sand bags were delivered to the Ute Pass Elementary School before the public meeting, for use by the citizens. That evening at the Ute Pass public meeting, possible flooding concerns were discussed, safety measures were explained, and the National Flood Insurance program was discussed in detail.

County IT produced several handouts, which provided several sources of information and assistance. These materials were provided to citizens at the meeting.

Representatives of EPSO, County government, and the BAER Team were available to answer residents' questions and discuss their concerns.

Date	Time	Event Description
6/22/12	7:50p	Report of smoke north of Cave of the Winds
6/22/12	8:22p	Smoke investigation begins – Pyramid Mountain Road
6/22/12	8:36p	USFS takes command of the smoke investigation
6/22/12	9:48p	USFS announces will return in the morning
6/23/12	6:48a	USFS and Cascade FD resume smoke investigation
6/23/12	12:00p	Numerous reports of smoke flood the dispatch center
6/23/12	12:20p	First air tanker ordered
6/23/12	12:41p	USFS took command of the “Waldo Canyon Fire”
6/23/12	12:49p	EOC was active and operational
6/23/12	3:00p	Command Post established. Type 1 Team (IMT1) ordered
6/23/12	3:44p	Mandatory evac for Ute Pass communities
6/24/12	1:25a	Mandatory evac for Manitou Springs
6/24/12	11:24a	Incident Command moved to Holmes Middle School
6/24/12	12:46p	Hwy 24 closed
6/24/12	5:00p	Notice received from State OEM - FMAG approved
6/25/12	6:00a	Command transferred IMT1
6/26/12		IMT1 focused air resources over Queens Canyon
6/26/12		Large vertical smoke column with ice capping was present over the fire by mid afternoon
6/26/12	4:21p	Fire had moved into C/S. Wildland Crew did structure protection and other effort in Mountain Shadows, Peregrine and Oak Valley
6/26/12	6:33p	County residents north of Woodmen, west of I-25, south of USAFA were evacuated
6/27/12	12:13p	Per Teller County, mandatory evac of Crystola
7/1/12	1:00p	Hwy 24 open to the public
7/2/12		IMT1 ordered the BAER Team
7/5/12		First public meeting reference flash flood held at Centennial Hall
7/7/12		Command was transferred from IMT1 to IMT3

Waldo Canyon Fire After Action Report

Introduction

The Waldo Canyon Fire was the most destructive fire in Colorado's history. The response to this fire tested every facet of El Paso County: Every elected official, every County department, every private organization, and every individual.

Every County department and agency helped manage this emergency. Some responded to the incident while others supported the responders. As the fire grew and evacuations expanded, all departments continued to deliver critical public services even as some operations were displaced from their facilities. In an ever changing and fluid situation, County managers and staff continued to serve the public while also supporting their evacuated colleagues.

The initial response to the fire was the responsibility of several divisions of the El Paso County Sheriff's Office: The Emergency Services Division (ESD), the Wildland Fire Crew, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), and the Patrol Division. Their response was quick and according to plan. They took immediate action to protect lives and property either by evacuating residents or preventing access to the areas where firefighters were trying to stop the fire's spread.

The Wildland Fire Crew and local firefighters worked side by side, day and night, to protect the communities of Ute Pass. Sheriff's Deputies worked in harms way going door-to-door to notify residents of evacuations, and to assist them in any way they could.

As law enforcement and firefighting operations intensified, the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) began executing its' disaster plans. OEM worked with the City of Colorado Springs OEM to open shelters, issue emergency warnings, and organize new evacuations. The El Paso County Animal Response Team (CART) cooperated with the Colorado Springs Animal Response Team and the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region to shelter the pets of evacuated residents. For the first time, the all-volunteer El Paso County CART also evacuated and sheltered large animals.

The Sheriff's OEM staff also provided supplies and specialized personnel to establish the first Incident Command Post. Some of the most-needed personnel were the highly skilled members of the all-volunteer Special Communications Unit (SCU), the Sheriff's Office Information Technologies Section (EPSO IT) and El Paso County (EPC) Information Technologies. These technicians helped deploy the Sheriff's Mobile Command Post (MCP) to the Incident Command Post (ICP) in Green Mountain Falls, and quickly established telephone and data communication in an area where communication was difficult.

As the fire grew rapidly, so did the citizens' need for information. To fill this need, the public information officers of many organizations established a Joint Information Center (JIC) on the first day of the fire. To convert the Sheriff's conference room into a JIC facility, EPSO and County IT teams quickly equipped the room with extra telephones and wireless Internet access. The JIC, working with public information officers in the field, provided a steady

stream of accurate and timely information to the public through press conferences, web sites and social media.

The fire affected six incorporated municipalities in two counties, as well as the Pike National Forest, several fire protection districts, and local military installations. All levels of government would eventually be involved. The Sheriff, all County Commissioners, and other County leaders coordinated with our state legislators and members of Congress to secure support for affected citizens. The Sheriff remained in constant contact with the ICP staff, ensuring that the needs of the emergency response would be communicated to the state and national levels. The Sheriff's Office and City OEM staff worked to keep the lines of communication open, to ensure a coordinated community response.

The response to the fire demanded a total commitment from County personnel. More and more people were needed to close roads and trails, to staff animal shelters, support the front-line responders, and perform even more evacuations. The EOC operated 24 hours per day for ten days. All the while, normal services had to continue. Staff and volunteers rose to the challenge, without complaint, working grueling hours for many days. Valuable help came from the Colorado Department of Corrections, Kit Carson County, and the Colorado National Guard, whose personnel helped maintain road and trail closures.

When the fire entered western Colorado Springs, Sheriff's Office OEM requested and organized firefighting aid from El Paso and Pueblo Counties. These resources responded under the direction of the Wildland Fire Crew to help protect homes in Mountain Shadows. Eventually these firefighters were moved to the Peregrine community, where they worked through the night building fire line.

In the aftermath, the Colorado Department of Local Affairs asked El Paso County to establish a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) to serve citizens who had been affected by the disaster. Within 36 hours, El Paso County had opened the doors to the newly established DRC. This was a monumental task that required around-the-clock work and a huge level of coordination among many County personnel. As members of one community, the County personnel who staffed the DRC worked very hard to support their neighbors who had lost so much.

El Paso County's performance during the Waldo Canyon Fire exemplifies the expression "Service before Self." The fire created massive and complex challenges for the County staff and volunteers, who protected our citizens while still providing essential services to our community. This effort required both hard work and improvisation. Some approaches worked well; some did not. As an expression of our commitment to continual improvement in all we do, this report documents both our successes and our failures.

INCIDENT COMMAND (IC)

Structure/Delegation of Authority/Incident Response

Friday, June 22, 2012

- ◆ Several reports of smoke were first reported north of the Cave of the Winds, the first at approximately 1950 hours. At 2022 hours, El Paso County Wildland Fire Crew, Cascade Fire Department, Green Mountain Falls and Manitou Springs Fire Departments and the Colorado Springs Utilities Catamount Fire Crew responded to Pyramid Mountain Road.
- ◆ The US Forest Service (USFS) took command of the incident at 2036 hours and originally named it “Pyramid Command.” USFS personnel hiked into the area to find the source of the smoke but did not locate the source. At 2148 hours, Command released all resources and stated they would return the following morning to investigate further.

Saturday, June 23, 2012

- ◆ At approximately 0730 hours, El Paso County Sheriff’s Office Communications received a call from a citizen who reported that he observed a fire smoldering off a dog leg on Waldo Canyon Trail while he was hiking. He was advised that responding agencies were aware of the report. The reporting party’s contact information or specific location was not captured or reported to responding agencies as the dispatcher believed responding agencies were aware of the location of the fire.
- ◆ USFS personnel reported back to the area on at 0648 hours but no sign of smoke. Personnel began hiking into the area and at 1148 hours but still did not observe smoke but requested the incident remain open. At 1203 hours, a citizen reported spoke emanating from approximately 500 yards off of the Waldo Canyon Loop. El Paso County Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal Scott Campbell was notified. At 1206 hours, Wildland Fire crew was paged at 1206 hours. At 1220 hours, Campbell ordered a single engine air tanker was ordered. Immediately following, Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) ordered air support. At 1238 hours, Campbell ordered additional resources, activated the Emergency Operations Center, and staff notifications. Campbell also ordered voluntary evacuation of Green Mountain Falls, Chipita Park, and Cascade.
- ◆ Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) established Command and staged at the Safeway located at 3275 W. Colorado Avenue.
- ◆ At 1241 hours USFS took command of the “Waldo Canyon Fire.” USFS Division 9 Chief, Eric Zonatto was identified as the Incident Commander (IC) of the fire.
- ◆ CSFD reported to Pyramid Mountain Road to provide Delegation of Authority to the Incident Commander. Campbell understood that CSFD thought Pyramid Mountain was Incident Command and advised CSFD that Incident Command was already established and requested CSFD report back to Cedar Heights as the fire was progressing in that direction.
- ◆ The El Paso County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated and operational at 1249 hours.
- ◆ The Incident Command Post for the Type 3 Incident Management Team consisting of USFS and El Paso County Wildland Fire Team was established at 1500 hours at the Rocky Top Christian Center located at 10605 Green Mountain Falls Road.

- ◆ The USFS ordered a Type 1 Incident Management Team.
- ◆ Initial request for State Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) support was with funding late Saturday afternoon.
- ◆ In preparation for the arrival of the Type 1 Team, **Delegations of Authority** were received from all affected jurisdictions except one agency. ******Note**** *Delegations of Authority in this context refer to documents that permit state and national resources to provide assistance in local jurisdictions. These documents do not diminish or relinquish the responsibility of local authority.***
- ◆ **Unified Command** with participating agencies remained in effect. ****** Note**** *Unified Command refers to municipal, county, state and national agencies working in cooperation and joint authority for incident management.***
- ◆ Throughout the evening of June 23rd, incident management team members began to arrive to assist the Type 3 Incident Management Team.
- ◆ Evacuation of Eagle Camp and Rampart Reservoir were ordered at 1512 hours.
- ◆ Mandatory evacuations were ordered for those previously under voluntary evacuation at 1544 hours.
- ◆ The Joint Information Center was ordered to be opened and established at the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Law enforcement Bureau at 101 W. Costilla Street throughout the afternoon hours
- ◆ Targeted Areas of Manitou Springs were mandatorily evacuated at 2300 hours and full evacuation of Manitou Springs was ordered at 0125 hours on Sunday, June 24, 2012.

Sunday, June 24, 2012

- ◆ At 0600 hours, incident command transferred from IC3 Zonatto to IC2 Russell.
- ◆ Geocast sent for mandatory evacuation of Green Mountain Falls, Chipita Park and Cascade south of Highway 24 at 0647 hours.
- ◆ Air attack was ordered with a lead plane and 2 heavy air tankers enroute at 0823 hours.
- ◆ At 0742 hours, deputies began evacuations of Cascade and Green Mountain Falls.
- ◆ At 1020 hours, the City of Colorado Springs signed the Delegation of Authority.
- ◆ Woodland Park and the US Air Force Academy (USAFA) had been put on a pre-evacuation order at 1111 hours. The USAFA provided the delegation of authority for the Incident Management Team.
- ◆ Mandatory evacuation was ordered for Farish and Carroll Lakes campground areas.
- ◆ At 1124 hours the Incident Command was ordered to move to Holmes Middle School at 2455 Mesa Road in the Northern area of Colorado Springs due to the change in the size and direction of the fire.
- ◆ At 1246 hours, Colorado State Patrol closed Highway 24 West through Ute Pass in both directions.
- ◆ The Type 3 ICP and the EPSO Mobile Command Post relocated to Holmes Middle School. The EPSO Mobile Command Post also relocated to site and was utilized to house law enforcement operations involved in the fire.
- ◆ All Type 3 and Type 1 personnel began reporting to Holmes Middle School in preparation for transition to the Type 1 Team on the morning of the 25th.

- ◆ Representatives from El Paso County, City of Colorado Springs, U.S. Forest Service, Type 3 and Type 1 Teams were assigned to Incident Command and located to the Agency Representative Room.

◆

Monday, June 25, 2012

- ◆ The Type 3 Incident Management Team prepared for transition to the Type 1 Incident Management Team and officially delegated operations to the Type 1 Team at 0600 hours.
- ◆ Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal Campbell was relieved by the Type 1 Incident Management Team at 1100 hours.
- ◆ El Paso County Sheriff's Office requested 60 officers from the Department of Corrections to assist EPSO with security.
- ◆ Communication in the Agency Representative room at Holmes Middle School was poor initially with weak cell phone service and only one telephone. County IT worked with the cable company to amplify the network signal and brought a television to the room so local news could be monitored. Network access was established quickly. County Budget Administration assigned personnel to assist with administrative duties.

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

- ◆ A large vertical smoke column, with ice capping, was present over the fire by mid afternoon and the fire was very active.
- ◆ Evacuation for Crystal Park was downgraded from mandatory to voluntary at 1516 hours.
- ◆ At 1550 hours, Campbell who was leading El Paso County Wildland Fire Team, informed El Paso County Fire Marshall Jim Reid who was the El Paso Representative at Incident Command that if the large, well developed smoke column collapsed the fire which was now in Queens Canyon, would most likely progress into the City of Colorado Springs.
- ◆ At approximately 1621 hours, Mayor Steve Bach ordered mandatory evacuations of previously pre-evacuations for the remainder of the northern part of Mountain Shadows.
- ◆ Commander Reid informed the Colorado Springs Fire Department Branch Director, Steve DuBay who was the City of Colorado Springs Representative at Incident Command, that the County had fire apparatus if the City needed them.
- ◆ The column from the thunderhead collapsed and winds were reported as high as 60MPH. As a result, the fire moved into Mountain Shadows within the city limits and structures were burning at approximately 1735 hours. Campbell directly requested resources from Ft. Carson to respond immediately.
- ◆ Incident Command was not notified immediately that the fire had crossed the ridge and structures were burning.
- ◆ Shortly thereafter spotters throughout the area reported that structures in Mountain Shadows were burning.
- ◆ The USAFA began evacuating families.
- ◆ At 1833 hours, residents north of Woodmen Road, east of Duthrock Road, south of the Air Force Academy and west of I-25 were evacuated. Over the next couple of hours,

thousands of people were evacuated from their homes. Law enforcement resources were stretched thin in the wake of mass evacuations.

- ◆ Mandatory evacuation was ordered of Colorado Springs North of Garden of the Gods Road and West of I-25 to Centennial at 1855 hours.
- ◆ Southbound I-25 is closed at Interquest at 1957 hours.
- ◆ Mandatory evacuation ordered west of I-25, north of Filmore, north of Fontmore and east of 30th at 2206 hours.
- ◆ Mandatory evacuation ordered for Holland Park and Kissing Camels at 2212 hours.

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

- ◆ EPSO deputies continued to provide Security to Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Chipita Park communities. Highway 24 remained closed.
- ◆ At 1213 hours, the Teller County Sheriff ordered an evacuation of Crystola west of the Highway 24 corridor through Baldwin, north from Baldwin to Rampart Range Road to Loy Creek and south from Kelly's Dam. There was still heavy fire activity to the West of Wellington Gulch. EPSO deputies assisted with Crystola evacuations.
- ◆ Pre-evacuation notice was ordered for Pleasant Valley at 1306 hours.
- ◆ Pre-evacuation was order for north of Air Force Academy to County Line, west of I-25 including Monument and Palmer Lake at 1319 hours.
- ◆ During this type EPSO also responded to two additional smoke investigations.
- ◆ Protection of Colorado Springs Utilities water systems and the radio communication tower located on the north ridge of Stanley Canyon remained a priority as well as maintenance of containment lines on Highway 24 so that evacuees could return.

Thursday, June 28, 2012

- ◆ National Guard was staffing most of the trail closures.
- ◆ EPSO responded to 5 smoke investigations and reports of 3 outside fires.

Friday, June 29, 2012

- ◆ USAFA allowed re-entry into family housing at 0600 hours.
- ◆ President Obama, Senators Mark Udall and Michael Bennett, and Representative Doug Lamborn visited Colorado Springs. President Obama declared a Major Disaster. EPSO and CSPD provided security for the presidential delegation's visit to various sites.
- ◆ The Type 1 Team was concerned there was still fire near the Cave of the Winds.
- ◆ EPSO also responded to 5 smoke investigations, 2 outside fires and 1 hazardous material response.

Saturday, June 30, 2012

- ◆ Plans were reviewed for the re-entry of Cascade, Green Mountain Falls and Chipita Park. Electric and gas companies were allowed into the area to ensure their infrastructure was

in good repair. They identified that a power pole had been damaged by fire and needed to be replaced. Electrical crews worked through the night to replace the damaged pole and restore power.

- ◆ Mandatory evacuation order was lifted for Teller County and Woodland Park.

Sunday, July 1, 2012

- ◆ Mandatory evacuation order was lifted for Green Mountain Falls, Cascade and Crystola. From 0900 hours until 1300 hours, Highway 24 was opened only to residents of the Ute Pass area to streamline the re-entry process before Highway 24 was opened to the public. Volunteers organized by the County EOC were in the area cleaning up trash scattered by wildlife. Both gas and electric companies were in the area to assist residents in restoring power.
- ◆ At 1300 hours, Highway 24 was opened to the public in both directions.
- ◆ EPSO also responded to 21 smoke investigations and 6 outside fires.
- ◆ Mandatory evacuation order was lifted at 2000 hours for remaining areas within the city limits except the burned areas in Mountain Shadows.

Monday, July 2, 2012

- ◆ The Incident Management Team ordered Burned Area Emergency response (BAER) Team.
- ◆ EPSO also responded to 14 smoke investigations and 3 outside fires.

Tuesday, July 3, 2012

- ◆ EPSO also responded to 9 smoke investigation and reports of 6 outside fires.
- ◆ Carroll Lakes opens to residents only at 1100 hours. Farish Memorial Recreation area remains closed.

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

- ◆ The possibility of transferring command of the fire on July 7, 2012 was discussed. Cost share and processes were also discussed.
- ◆ Commander Reid and ADFM Campbell patrolled the County for illegal use of fireworks without result.
- ◆ EPSO also responded to 6 smoke investigations and reports of 3 outside fires.

Thursday, July 5, 2012

- ◆ The Type 1 Management Team began the process of demobilizing the Incident Command Post.
- ◆ EPSO also responded to 2 smoke investigations and 1 report of an outside fire.

Friday, July 6, 2012

- ◆ The Type 1 Team continued to demobilize operations and the Holmes Middle School building was completely clear by the end of the day. All paperwork was completed for transfer of command to a Type 3 Incident Management team the following morning.

Saturday, July 7, 2012

- ◆ Command of the Waldo Canyon Fire was transferred to a Type 3 Incident Management Team commanded by Incident Commander Troy Nelson.
- ◆ Inmates in the EPSO Gateway Program filled approximately 5,000 sandbags which were staged to be used later.
- ◆ A close-out meeting with the Type 1 Team was held at the Glen Eyrie Castle.

Areas of Strength

- ◆ Type 3 Incident Management Team was established quickly and managed the incident for the first 18 hours.
- ◆ Type 3 Incident Management Team achieved tactical and management objectives of protection of life and property. No structures were burned in the County and no civilians or personnel were injured.
- ◆ Incident Command location was identified and strategically moved for easy access and in accordance with the progression of the fire.
- ◆ The Type 3 Incident Management Team efficiently transitioned to the Type 1 Incident Management Team as the magnitude of the fire grew larger.
- ◆ Delegations of Authority were signed and received quickly so State and Federal resources could be allocated as necessary.
- ◆ Evacuations in the unincorporated El Paso County were conducted quickly, streamlined and accounted for after the first night by notification to Dispatch who would document the address so it could be readily confirmed that contact had been made.
- ◆ The closure of Highway 24/Ute Pass area was effective in ensuring that the entire area would remain evacuated and assisted emergency responders with quick access and avoided obstacles such as traffic in and out of the area. Since eastern and western access points were closed and guarded by law enforcement personnel, there was no risk of citizens or looters entering the area during the evacuation and minimized the need for additional law enforcement personnel to maintain security in this large area.
- ◆ The Sheriff's Office Citizens Patrol Unit was assigned to a variety of tasks and all shifts throughout the incident. These volunteers also staffed the Large Animal Shelter at Norris-Penrose Event Center providing security around the clock reducing the need for full time personnel at this site.
- ◆ Co-locating representatives from other agencies such as Colorado State Patrol (CSP) in the Mobile Command Post was beneficial in coordinating road closures and staffing roving patrols.

Areas for Improvement

- ◆ Locating the source of the fire was difficult as reports were vague stating it was north of the Cave of the Winds. Initial response on June 22nd and 23rd was Pyramid Mountain Road on the south side of Pyramid Mountain. The origin of the fire was later determined to be on the north side of Pyramid Mountain. Pinpointing more specific location would potentially expedite response. Obtaining specific information from witnesses as to their location with respect to the sighting of smoke/fire and responding to reporting parties' locations as they were reporting signs of the fire would more narrowly identify the location of the fire.
- ◆ Communication from Field Resources to Incident Command was sporadic. All fire and condition reports as well as request for resources were not solely channeled through Incident Command. Field Resources were communicating with additional fire agencies and requesting additional resources but not consistently keeping Incident Command advised. Communications were policy driven not technology driven.
- ◆ There was initial confusion by CSFD about the location of Incident Command versus who the Incident Commander was due to the fact that the Incident Commander was away from the Command Post on Pyramid Mountain Road assessing the fire. An Incident Commander should be designated, specifically assigned and remain in the Command Post. Field Commanders and Managers cannot maintain dual responsibility as the Incident Commander.
- ◆ Terms such as pre-evacuation, voluntary evacuation and mandatory evacuation were not defined for the public creating some confusion as to action that should be taken. These types of evacuations have since been defined and the public will be educated about appropriate response and compliance to these notifications.
- ◆ Reverse 911 reached large numbers quickly however, it was later learned that citizens who did not register their cell phones were not notified. In addition, those who were retrieving messages from their hard lines remotely were disconnected by the prompts to retrieve the evacuation message. In the future, educating citizens on the reverse 911 processes is necessary.
- ◆ Mass notification for evacuation was challenging. Multiple calls were abandoned in part due to call volume. As power was interrupted in areas of evacuation, residents who have bundling through COMCAST lost all services to include television, internet, and phone and therefore did not receive notification unless their cell phones were registered.
- ◆ Assessing the Reverse 911 system to determine improvements for efficiency and call load should be accomplished. There is no back-up system to ensure redundancy.
- ◆ Assigning additional personnel to Dispatch to specifically document evacuations would allow for more organized evacuation processes. At the onset of evacuations in the County, deputies and other personnel conducting evacuations were not documented requiring them to return the following day to ensure evacuations had been conducted.
- ◆ As additional closures throughout the Pike National Forest became necessary, additional law enforcement personnel were required to maintain these closures for long periods of time. Special Operations personnel and the Reserve Unit were utilized. Deployment of personnel and operational plans for future large scale incidents will be examined to determine the best options to increase and or maximize personnel.
- ◆ The need for additional vehicles, portable radios and batteries was great as more personnel and volunteers were assigned throughout the incident.

- ◆ As the fire moved into the City of Colorado Springs, evacuations in the areas of the county bordering Mountain Shadows and Peregrine became necessary and were very challenging due to traffic congestion and mass evacuations. Advanced communication amongst agencies and streamlined through Incident Command is necessary to implement a more organized approach to evacuations.
- ◆ A representative from all primary agencies should be assigned to Incident Command and the Mobile Command Post at all times to maximize efficiencies in communication and coordination of resources.
- ◆ Logistics such as ordering of supplies and food need to be identified as well as the vendors who can provide these items.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)

Saturday, June 23, 2012

- ◆ The El Paso County Sheriff's Office Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated at operational at 101 W. Costilla Street, the Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Bureau at 1249 hours.
- ◆ The County Animal response Team (CART) opened a large animal shelter at Norris-Penrose Events Center at 1401 hours.
- ◆ The Pikes Peak Chapter of the American Red Cross (PPARC) opened shelters at Woodland Park and Cheyenne Mountain High Schools were ordered throughout the afternoon hours.
- ◆ The EOC sent a map of potential fire impact to the State Office of Emergency Management to support the request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG).
- ◆ The Public Information Officers set up a non-emergent call center at 1749 hours and it was sent out via twitter.

Sunday, June 24, 2012

- ◆ The El Paso County Disaster Declaration was drafted at 0200 hours.
- ◆ The first Situation report was posted to Web EOC-Statewide Significant Events Board at 0600 hours.
- ◆ The Humane Society stopped taking evacuated animals and published list of animal shelters at 1600 hours.
- ◆ The State Office of Emergency Management Manager notified the County EOC that the FMAG was approved at 1700 hours.
- ◆ At 1824 hours, the Manitou Springs Fire Chief notified the County EOC that effective 2000 hours this date, Manitou Springs would lift its' mandatory evacuation and downgrade to a voluntary evacuation. All Manitou Springs residents would be allowed back in their homes.

Monday, June 25, 2012

- ◆ The National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1000 hours through 2100 hours.

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

- ◆ The National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1000 hours through 2100 hours.
- ◆ A Red Flag warning was in effect from 1200 hours to 2100 hours. The Type 1 Team focused air resources over Queen's Canyon.
- ◆ Summit Elementary becomes the Special Needs only shelter at 1607 hours.
- ◆ An All Call Page for fire resources to contact EOC for orders was sent at 1721 hours.
- ◆ Emergency Operations Staff began checking in county fire resources to build task forces at 1750 hours.
- ◆ At 1753 hours the County ECO called Pueblo asking for any available resources.
- ◆ New Red Cross Shelter was opened at the YMCA Southeast Family Center at 2190 Jetwing Drive.
- ◆ Red Cross requests shelter staffing help from the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The Deputy Director contacts the MRC director to activate the MRC to support the Red Cross at 1906 hours.
- ◆ The Humane Society set up a shelter for small animals at the Freedom Financial Center on North Nevada at 1909 hours.
- ◆ A Red Cross Shelter was opened at Lewis Palmer High School at 2022 hours.

Wednesday, June 27, 2012

- ◆ The National Weather Service issued a red Flag warning from 1000 hours until 2100 hours

Thursday, June 28, 2012

- ◆ No Red Flag warning was issued due to slightly lower temps and higher relative humidity.

Friday, June 29, 2012

- ◆ Today was not a Red Flag day though temperatures were slightly higher and relative humidity slightly lower.
- ◆ The National Weather Service was forecasting that monsoon rains would begin soon. Post-fire flooding in the Ute Pass area was now a major concern for the County EOC.
- ◆ The County EOC was planning for re-entry of residents into the Cascade and Green Mountain Falls communities.
- ◆ The County EOC begins working on recovery issues and meets with City EOC to offer to take the lead on post-fire flooding.

Saturday, June 30, 2012

- ◆ The Disaster Recovery Center opens at 0900 hours.
- ◆ The County EOC begins working with weather forecasters and Dispatch to design a warning system to alert local cooperators of flooding or mudslides in any area downstream of the burn.
- ◆ The continuation of the County Disaster Declaration was drafted.

Sunday, July 1, 2012

- ◆ The National Weather Service issued a Red Flag warning from 1200 hours until 2100 hours.

Monday, July 2, 2012

- ◆ The weather forecast predicted scattered thunderstorms with less than .5 inch of rain expected (more than .5 would result in flooding in burn areas).
- ◆ The County EOC was pre-planning and gathering information to establish emergency procedures for possible flooding and mudslides.
- ◆ All Red Cross Shelters close except one remains open at Cheyenne Mountain High School.

Tuesday, July 3, 2012

- ◆ The weather forecast predicted possible isolate thunderstorms with less than .5 inch of rain expected.
- ◆ The BAER Team held its' first meeting with local agencies and cooperators. Several questions were asked of the team as to what to expect should there be significant rain over the burned area. Later in the afternoon, the County EOC met with subject matter experts and representatives of local jurisdictions to develop the first version of a system to alert residents of flooding or mudslides in areas downstream of the burn area.

Wednesday, July 4, 2012

- ◆ The County EOC made plans to host a public flood information meeting at Centennial Hall on July 5, 2012.
- ◆ The County EOC downsized to skeletal crew.

Thursday, July 5, 2012

- ◆ Late in the afternoon the BAER Team presented preliminary information regarding possible mudslides and flooding in the Ute Pass area. A lengthy discussion was held on when and how this information would be provided to the public. It was decided that a public meeting would be in Ute Pass as soon as it could be organized. The Ute Pass meeting as scheduled for Friday evening, July 13, 2012 at the Ute Pass Elementary School in Chipita Park. The Sheriff directed that sandbags be filled and provided to the citizens of the Ute Pass area in preparation for mudslides and flooding.

- ◆ The first public information meeting was held at Centennial Hall at 1900 hours.

Monday, July 9, 2012

- ◆ The large animal shelter at Norris-Penrose Events Center closed.

Thursday, July 12, 2012

- ◆ The small animal shelter at Freedom Financial Expo center closed.

Friday, July 13, 2012

- ◆ Filled sand bags were delivered to the Ute Pass Elementary School before the public meeting for use by citizens.
- ◆ At 1800 hours, a public meeting was held at Ute Pass Elementary discussing possible flooding concerns and safety measures were explained. The National Flood Insurance Program was discussed in detail.
- ◆ Representatives from EPSO County government and the BAER Team were available to answer residents' questions and address their concerns.

Areas of Strength

- ◆ Staff directing operations and staffing the EOC were trained in the Incident Command System.
- ◆ Responsibilities were divided into the following categories and specifically defined so staff was clearly able to manage the tasks.
Operations, PIO, Logistics, Planning, Technical Dispatch, Emergency Manager, Public Works, Red Cross, Department of Human Services, CART, Situation Unit, Public Safety, Firefighting and HazMat, Amateur Radio Operations (R.A.C.E.S.), United Way 211, Health Department, GIS Coordination.
- ◆ Staffing was adequate to manage the magnitude of the operation as it expanded.
- ◆ Staff/volunteers clearly understood assignments and responsibilities and readily adapted as the magnitude of the incident became larger.

Areas for Improvement

- ◆ The accounting system for staff as they checked in was manual and although adequate created logistical issues in accounting for post incident documentation.
- ◆ The coordination of resources to conduct road closures, roving patrol and evacuations require precise planning of personnel. During these operations, staff in the EOC re-allocated personnel without first consulting with the Incident Command. This created hours of additional work for those in the Command Post to find staffing and resources to adequately handle operations. The EOC should not deploy or direct field resources but coordinate those efforts through the Incident Command.

- ◆ The training and utilization of volunteers as spotters in the field would free up law enforcement and fire personnel to conduct other operations.
- ◆ The Division of the EOC and the Joint Information Center although necessary for efficient management of the incident, created some confusion initially. Incident Command System (ICS) training could improve the understanding and need for the division.
- ◆ The use of Sheriff's Office volunteers to include Citizen Patrol and Reserve Deputies to staff the Large Animal Shelter became challenging after a few days as most of these personnel had to return their full time employment. Additional plans should be established for long term staffing of evacuation shelters.

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER (JIC)

Saturday, June 23, 2012

- ◆ The Joint Information Center (JIC) was ordered to be opened and established at the El Paso County Sheriff's Office Law enforcement Bureau at 101 W. Costilla Street throughout the afternoon hours.
- ◆ County IT responded quickly to provide data for multiple users throughout the JIC.

Monday, July 2, 2012

- ◆ The JIC closed and all responsibilities were transferred to the EOC.

Areas of Strength

- ◆ Social media in the JIC was a valuable tool. One designated social media representative tweeted on behalf of several agencies simultaneously which ensured consistency with updates and directions.
- ◆ Representatives from all agencies provided personnel to staff the JIC 24 hours which provided a broad scope of information.
- ◆ Information and current updates concerning incident management was quickly disseminated to the citizens.

Areas for Improvement

- ◆ Some staff in the JIC was not familiar with ICS which created some confusion as to the flow and source of information. ICS training or a brief orientation upon assignment to the JIC could assist with this issue.
- ◆ Once the Type I Team arrived with their Public Information Officer, there was additional confusion created as to the flow of information in the JIC. Unlike the EOC where there was a designated EOC Coordinator or Manager, there was no specific designated manager

in the JIC. The Type I Team PIO was serving somewhat in that role however, was attempting to handle phone duties and inquiries as well.

FIRE RESPONSE

Saturday, June 23, 2012

- ◆ El Paso County Wildland Fire Crew worked through the night to begin fire protection near Cascade. United States Forest Service reported at 0017 hours that they estimated the fire to be around 4,000 acres and that it may impact the Cedar Heights community in the City of Colorado Springs.

Sunday, June 24, 2012

- ◆ Fire crews continued to fight the fire as it began to shift in a north and east.
- ◆ Crews investigated several reports of smoke and responded to additional isolated fires.

Monday, June 25, 2012

- ◆ Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal Campbell was relieved by the Type 1 Incident Management Team at 1100 hours.
 - ◆ Control lines established by the previous teams near Cascade Green Mountain Falls and Crystola continued to hold.

Tuesday, June 26, 2012

- ◆ A Red Flag warning was in effect from 1200 hours to 2100 hours. The Type 1 Team focused air resources over Queen's Canyon.
- ◆ A large vertical smoke column, with ice capping, was present over the fire by mid afternoon and the fire was very active.
- ◆ At approximately 1400 hours, air resources were diverted to another large fire in Boulder County.
- ◆ At 1550 hours, Campbell who was leading El Paso County Wildland Fire Team, informed El Paso County Fire Marshall Jim Reid who was the El Paso Representative at Incident Command that if the large, well developed smoke column collapsed the fire which was now in Queens Canyon, would most likely progress into the City of Colorado Springs.
- ◆ Shortly thereafter, the column collapsed and winds were reported to as high as 60MPH. As a result, the fire moved into Mountain Shadows within the city limits and structures were burning. Campbell directly requested resources from Ft. Carson to respond immediately.
- ◆ Incident Command was not notified immediately that the fire had crossed the ridge and structures were burning.

- ◆ Shortly thereafter spotters throughout the area reported that structures in Mountain Shadows were burning.
- ◆ Campbell and the Wildland Fire Team began firefighting efforts by establishing control lines and extinguishing structure fires.
- ◆ Colorado Springs Fire Department (CSFD) assets arrived in the area. Campbell met with CSFD Battalion Chief and discussed strategy. Shortly thereafter, Campbell and the Wildland Fire Team made the decision to relocate to the Peregrine and Oak Valley areas. Hand crews and bulldozers began to build and connect fire lines around these areas.
- ◆ At 1711 hours, the Wildland Fire Crew Superintendent asked the County EOC to start assembling task forces with resources requested from County fire departments. At 1721 hours, the EOC sent an All County Page requesting all county fire resources to report to Fire Base on Cimarron Street to establish task forces.
- ◆ At approximately 2300 hours, there were three bulldozers on the ground under the direction of ADFM Campbell, working on the fire line near the Peregrine community. The EPSO Wildland Fire Crew worked through the night with the assistance of the above mentioned fire departments and completed control lines and burn outs by approximately 0500 hours on Wednesday, June 27th.

Saturday, June 30, 2012

- ◆ The potential of fire spotting to the west side of Highway 24 corridor was still a remote concern as the crews worked to secure the fire line and mop up continued.

Areas of Strength

- ◆ Teams were mobilized and began attacking the fire quickly.
- ◆ The response of the County's fire protection districts and municipal fire department through mutual aid was prompt and disciplined.
- ◆ Transition to the Type 1 Team was integrated smoothly and efficiently.
- ◆ Teams consistently mobilized and maintained constant throughout the incident ensuring adequate resources.
- ◆ Public Services equipment operators responded with bulldozers to help the firefighting teams create breaks at strategic points.

Areas of Improvement

- ◆ Locating the source of the fire was difficult as reports were vague stating it was north of the Cave of the Winds. Initial response on June 22nd and 23rd was Pyramid Mountain Road on the south side of Pyramid Mountain. The origin of the fire was later determined to be on the north side of Pyramid Mountain. Pinpointing more specific location would potentially expedite response. Obtaining specific information from witnesses as to their location with respect to the sighting of smoke/fire and responding to reporting parties' locations as they were reporting signs of the fire would more narrowly identify the location of the fire.

- ◆ Communication from Field Resources to Incident Command was sporadic. All fire and condition reports as well as request for resources were not solely channeled through Incident Command. Field Resources were communicating with additional fire agencies and requesting additional resources but not consistently keeping Incident Command advised.
- ◆ Multi-agency coordination and communication was challenging especially as the fire entered the City of Colorado Springs. El Paso County Assistant Deputy Fire Marshal Scott Campbell ultimately moved Wildland Resources to Peregrine to begin structure protection as the fire was rapidly moving north.
- ◆ Public services personnel need to have protective equipment and wildland fire training.
- ◆ Fire response was challenging as the fire progressed through Pike National Forest and ultimately into the City of Colorado Springs due to access routes through the National Forest. Fire breaks could not be cut to prevent progression of the fire as access was limited through the National Forest. This issue needs to be explored in depth in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Sunday, June 24, 2012

- ◆ County Information Technology (IT) worked in the Joint Information Center located at the Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Bureau to establish broader range of communication through phone service as well as broader viewing capability by installing additional monitors.

Monday, June 25, 2013

- ◆ County IT helped establish clear communication in the Agency Representative Room at the Incident Command located at Holmes Middle School as there was weak cell service and only one telephone.
- ◆ County IT established communication links in the Mobile Command Post with laptops and internet access.

Friday, July 13, 2013

- ◆ County IT distributed several handouts to attendees which provided several sources of information and assistance.

Areas of Strength

- ◆ County IT had the resources, equipment and technology available to establish almost any level of communication at Incident Command, the Mobile Command Post, and the Joint Information Center. They were capable and immediately responsive.

- ◆ Computers and Internet access in the Mobile Command Post was extremely beneficial for planning operations, scheduling staff, and email correspondence. Laptops are now part of the equipment inventory in the Mobile Command Post.

Areas for Improvement

- ◆ County IT should be involved at the onset of any major event where the Incident Command System is activated as the need for equipment, access, etc. was immediate and although quickly, it took some time to deploy the amount of equipment and resources needed to establish wide range communication.
- ◆ Based on the rapid evolution and magnitude of the incident, the need for multiple phone lines, laptops and internet access was required at multiple locations such as Incident Command, the Mobile Command Post, EOC, and the JIC. This was challenging for staff and ultimately County IT once they were notified of the need. A large EOC with an adjoining JIC and availability of resources to equip each operation would be ideal in future incidents.

MEDIA/COMMUNICATION

Areas of Strength

- ◆ Communication within the Incident Command System amongst County agencies was readily accessible.
- ◆ Press conferences including key officials from Joint Command to include El Paso County, City of Colorado Springs, State Forest Service and the Type 1 Team were established quickly and were consistently scheduled to provide updated information and instructions.
- ◆ Local media began live streaming quickly which provided timely and updated information disseminated from the Joint Information Center.

Areas for Improvement

- ◆ Communication between county, city and state agencies was somewhat hampered as agencies operate on different channels. Although this is somewhat remedied through the Incident Command Post through the presence of agency representatives from all entities involved in the operation, communication on designated radio channels for specific operations instead of specific agencies would aid in communication.
- ◆ Local media began live streaming and broadcasts. Some of the information disseminated was not accurate due to the volume of reports and unconfirmed information that was disseminated. This created some confusion for operations and citizens. In future incidents, all information should be vetted through the JIC.
- ◆ Insufficient equipment such as additional radio batteries created somewhat of a problem based on the magnitude and length of the operation. Since incidents of this magnitude

seldom occur, it would not be fiscally prudent to maintain a large storage of additional equipment.

- ◆ As the fire progressed into the city limits of Colorado Springs and structures began to burn, cell phone service was interrupted frequently due to the volume of communication. Hard lines have since been installed in the Mobile Command Post.
- ◆ Translation services for hearing impaired and foreign languages was delayed and established approximately 2 days into the incident. These services need to be provided immediately to ensure appropriate notification for evacuations, safety concerns, etc.