

# Cottonwood and Morrill Fires Update

Sunday, March 15, 2026 – 9 a.m.

## Rocky Mountain Complex Incident Management Team 1

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### Facebook:

Cottonwood Fire: [www.facebook.com/cottonwoodfire](http://www.facebook.com/cottonwoodfire)

Morrill Fire: [www.facebook.com/morrillfire](http://www.facebook.com/morrillfire)



**Special Notes:** The Rocky Mountain Complex Incident Management Team 1 (CIMT1) assumed management of the Morrill and Cottonwood Fires yesterday evening. We want to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the local resources who have been working these challenging fires. The team will coordinate closely with local resources.

When wildfires increase in complexity and require more resources, CIMTs are ordered to help manage and support the incident. The Rocky Mountain CIMT1 is comprised of local, state and federal personnel largely from Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. Its members have specific qualifications in incident management positions such as operations, logistics, finance, planning and public information.

Maps, size estimates and other statistics for the fires are not available this morning but will typically accompany the morning update.

**Current Situation:** The team's operations group spent yesterday alongside local crews on both fires to begin becoming familiar with the area. Scouting and planning will continue today as additional resources arrive and are incorporated into the firefighting effort. High winds are expected to keep aircraft grounded.

### Cottonwood Fire

Crews will be assessing structure protection needs on the north side of the fire. Personnel on the northwest side will scout for areas where they can directly engage the fire and identify features where the opportunities to hold the fire will be successful. Local crews will continue to patrol and mop-up the fire line on the south and southeast flanks, where fire activity has lessened.

### Morrill Fire

The fire made a push south in the Clear Creek area west of Lake McConaughy but did not cross the North Platte River. Today team personnel will support local resources engaging the fire. Firefighters will continue to scout the area and track resources. The structure protection group will conduct assessments.

**Weather, Fuels, and Fire Behavior:** A high wind warning is in effect until 6 p.m. MDT today. High rates of fire spread are possible with northwest wind gusts in excess of 50 m.p.h. expected. It has snowed on the northwest side of the Morrill Fire, but with the strong winds it may not mitigate fire behavior. With low temperatures forecast to be under 10 degrees tonight, firefighters must take special precautions to protect their engines and equipment, such as draining water, parking inside and using antifreeze. While temperatures are cold today, hot and dry weather is forecast later in the week with record temperatures possible. The area is experiencing significant drought, and fuels are cured and very receptive to fire.

A Temporary Flight Restriction is in place over the Morrill and Cottonwood Fires. Wildfires are a no-fly zone for unauthorized aircraft, including drones. **If you fly, we can't.** For more information, visit <http://knowbeforeyoufly.org>.

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