



EMERGENCY FIRE SUPPRESSION ACCOUNT

Provided to the Joint Appropriations Committee

December 11, 2024

The Emergency Fire Suppression Account (EFSA) was established by the Wyoming Legislature in 1986 and amended in 2001 and 2005. The program allows all counties to join the EFSA by paying annual assessments based on statutory provisions; currently, all twenty-three (23) counties are members of the account. Participating counties may request financial assistance from the EFSA for qualifying fires that exceed the fire suppression capability of the county. Upon meeting the county “floor costs”, additional suppression resources are paid upon approval by the Wyoming State Forester, the account administrator.

Wyoming has had a significant wildfire season this year. Mid-November numbers have Wyoming reporting 2,021 fires across 850,425 acres on all lands. Notably, 83% of the fires reported were on state and private lands with 70% of total acres burned – 1,679 fires on 596,922 acres. The 10-year average (2014-2024) is 664 fires on 112,512 acres.

The Wyoming State Forester approved 24 Emergency Fire Suppression Account (EFSA) fires in 13 counties. So far, estimated suppression costs for these fires totaled roughly \$103.1 million, and estimated EFSA fire cost share responsibilities are approximately \$55 million. Final costs will not be known until 2025 or later due to the complex nature of final accounting and the numerous agencies involved.

In 2024, 4 fires have been declared FEMA Fire Management Assistant Grant (FMAG) fires:

DATE	FIRE	COUNTY	ACRES BURNED
March 1	Happy Jack	Laramie	6,634
July 30	Pleasant Valley*	Platte & Goshen	28,984
August 21	House Draw	Johnson	174,547
September 27	Elk Fire	Sheridan County	98,351

*Burned into the Haystack Fire (Goshen County)

The FMAG reimburses State costs associated with *specific* wildfire suppression **only 75%** of the costs. The process takes approximately 3-5 years to receive the reimbursement. *No reimbursements will occur in this biennium.* FMAG reimbursement funds go back into the EFSA account.

Wildfire suppression operations and the costs involved are complex. A timeline is provided to clarify how fire suppression costs are estimated, incurred, and paid.

WILDFIRE COSTS TIMELINE



COUNTY, STATE & FEDERAL RESOURCES RESPOND

99% OF THE TIME FIRE CONTAINED & EVERYONE GOES HOME

EFSA

- FIRE GOES BEYOND COUNTY CAPACITY
- COUNTY APPLIES FOR EFSA APPROVAL

- WSFD APPROVES EFSA & BEGINS FINANCIAL OVERSIGHT
- COST SHARES SIGNED
- COSTS CONTINUE TO INCUR*

WSFD TRACKS ESFA EXPENSES, REIMBURSEMENTS & STATE COSTS**

FMAG

- FIRE THREATENS COMMUNITY
- EVACUATIONS
- STATE FORESTER APPLIES FOR FMAG

- STATE FORESTER & FEMA NEGOTIATE END DATE AND REQUIREMENTS
- PAYMENT PROCESS IS SAME AS EFSA

- WSFD PAYS ALL STATE COSTS
- WSFD SEEKS REIMBURSEMENT FOR FMAG (75%/3-5 YRS/PLACED IN EFSA)

- SPRING COST DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN ALL ENTITIES
- PAYMENTS FINALIZED FOR ALL KNOWN COSTS
- ONGOING REVIEW & AUDIT IF NECESSARY

*Fire finance utilizes elsuite software to estimate costs.
 **Jurisdictional entities continue to pay bills through winter months.



A summary of all approved Emergency Fire Suppression Account (EFSA) fires within 2024 is provided in the table below. Not all bills are finalized. *These costs are estimates.* The 4 FMAG fires are highlighted in orange. Included are estimated split costs between Wyoming, federal agencies, and other jurisdictional entities based on cost-share agreements, typically based on the percentage of ownership for the acres burned.

Fire Start Date	Fire Name	County	Estimated Total Fire Cost	EFSA (State) Cost Committed	Federal Est. Cost	Other jurisdictional Costs
3/1/2024	Happy Jack	Laramie	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00		
6/11/2024	Creek	Crook	\$1,000,000.00	\$910,000.00	\$90,000.00	
7/24/2024	Owen Creek	Albany	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00		
7/24/2024	Badger	Sheridan	\$1,500,000.00	\$750,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$700,000.00
7/30/2024	Pleasant Valley	Platte	\$5,500,000.00	\$5,000,000.00	\$500,000.00	
7/30/2024	Haystack*	Goshen				
8/3/2024	Wildcat Creek	Campbell	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,500,000.00	\$500,000.00	
8/4/2024	Deer Creek**	Johnson	\$850,000.00	\$600,000.00	\$250,000.00	
8/4/2024		Campbell				
8/4/2024		Sheridan				
8/13/2024	Merna Butte	Sublette	\$1,000,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$975,000.00	
8/21/2024	House Draw	Johnson	\$6,500,000.00	\$6,250,000.00	\$250,000.00	
8/21/2024	Flat Rock	Campbell	\$3,500,000.00	\$3,000,000.00	\$500,000.00	
8/21/2024	Constitution	Campbell	\$3,000,000.00	\$2,500,000.00	\$500,000.00	
8/21/2024	Remington	Sheridan	\$6,500,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$2,750,000.00	\$2,750,000.00
8/21/2024	Weston County Complex	Weston	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00		
9/1/2024	Silver Spoon	Campbell	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,800,000.00	\$200,000.00	
9/9/2024	West Warm Springs	Hot Springs	\$500,000.00	\$450,000.00	\$50,000.00	
9/10/2024	Hazelton	Washakie	\$300,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$100,000.00	
9/11/2024	Short Draw	Campbell	\$4,250,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$3,000,000.00
9/12/2024	Bear Creek	Albany	\$1,500,000.00	\$1,500,000.00		
9/13/2024	La Bonte	Converse	\$6,000,000.00	\$5,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00	
9/17/2024	Livingston Draw	Johnson	\$850,000.00	\$630,000.00	\$220,000.00	
9/24/2024	Passaic 2	Sheridan	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00		
9/30/2024	Elk Fire	Sheridan	\$55,000,000.00	\$20,000,000.00	\$35,000,000.00	
10/5/2024	Sweetwater	Weston	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00		
2024	Initial Attack - Aviation			\$1,000,000.00		
Totals:	24 EFSA Fires	13 Counties	\$103,100,000.00	\$54,465,000.00	\$43,185,000.00	\$6,450,000.00

*The Haystack Fire was an EFSA-approved fire. The Pleasant Valley Fire burned into the Haystack Fire, and the Haystack Fire is now considered the Pleasant Valley Fire.

**The Deer Creek Fire started in Johnson County and burned into Campbell and Sheridan Counties. Each county has to apply and be approved to utilize the EFSA for their costs associated with the fire.