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Press release: Firefighters battle small wildfire north of Silverthorne

SILVERTHORNE – Summit County firefighters worked quickly into Monday evening to quash a small wildfire on a private ranch north of Silverthorne.

No people or structures were threatened by the five-acre blaze, which was burning in shrubs and dead-standing aspens on a hillside on the Mount Powell Ranch about 10 miles north of Silverthorne along Colorado 9.

Responding to the fire were about 25 firefighters from Lake Dillon Fire; Red, White & Blue Fire; Copper Mountain Fire; the High Country Training Center; and the U.S. Forest Service. They were joined by another dozen representatives from the Summit County Sheriff's Office and the Colorado State Patrol, as well as the Colorado Department of Transportation.

"Even though it's early in the season, we take an all-hands-on-deck approach," said Summit County Sheriff John Minor. "We aren't taking any chances."

The fire was reported about 4:15 p.m., and by 7 p.m. firefighters had it about 20 percent contained and were optimistic going into nightfall that they would keep it at its current size.

A cause of the fire has not yet been determined, but it does not appear to be intentional.

Light winds allowed firefighters to work on containment, but they faced some hazards such as potential falling trees and occasional torching of trees amid the single-digit relative humidity.

Although early in the season -- there are still patches of snow on the ground near where the fire was burning -- the blaze at about 8,100 feet was not unprecedented for the area at this time of year.

'Fire season is here," said Lake Dillon Fire Chief Dave Parmley. "We all need to begin that mindset of preparation and awareness, and don't let the heavy snow of this past winter mislead you into thinking it's going to be an uneventful summer when it comes to wildfire."

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