2012 Colorado Wildfires

- Record Heat and Drought
- Mountainous Terrain
- High Winds
- Limited Resources
- State and Country Wide
2012 Waldo Canyon Fire

Fire Details:
- Burned 18 days
- 18,247 Acres
- 346 Homes Destroyed
- 26,000 Evacuated
- 2 Deaths
- Multiple Agencies/Jurisdiction Impacted
CDOT Responses to Waldo Canyon Fire

• Maintenance Responses
  - Emergency
  - Planning
  - Repairs

• Fire Mitigation Project
  - Sediment Capture
  - Embankment Stability
  - Slope Stabilization

• Coordination/Cooperation/Communication
2012 Waldo Canyon Fire

Impacts to I-25
- Closure to evacuate 26,000 west side residents.
- Daytime Visibility Problems leading to additional congestion.

Impacts to US-24
- Closure to all through traffic
- Communities Evacuated along 10 miles within the Canyon.
CDOT Response to Waldo Canyon Fire

- Maintenance Staff Provided Road Closure Signage.
- Coordination with External Agencies.
- Corridor Patrols to Monitor Damages to US 24.
- Internal CDOT Coordination with Engineering and Maintenance Staff.
- Participated in Initial Risk Assessment of Vulnerable Areas
Post - Waldo Canyon Fire Impacts

Post Fire Flooding and Debris:
- Closures to Hwy 24
- Roadway Embankments Compromised
- Local Roads Not Passible for Alternative Routes
- Maintenance Efforts Focused on Drainages Along US 24
Post - Waldo Canyon Fire CDOT Response

- Participated in Post-Fire Studies
- Increased Emphasis of Storm Drainage Maintenance and Debris Removal from the Structures
- Rain Gages Installed Providing Text Alerts to CDOT Maintenance Staff
- Design Construction Package to Provide a More Reliable US 24
Flood Event Monitoring

• NWS Issues a Flash Flood Watch / Warnings
• Burn Areas are monitored by Law Enforcement
• Equipment Staged along the Corridor for Immediate Response
• Active Monitoring along Hwy 24 by CDOT Personnel during Warnings
Lessons Learned

• Maintenance Emphasis on Storm Drainage Facilities. Important to Keeping Structures Clear.
• CDOT Recognizes New Environment.
Lessons Learned

• Need to Find Opportunities to Integrate CDOT Into the Community Command.
• Logistics Issues and CDOT Staff Willingness to Participate with Peer Agencies.
• CDOT Knowledge with Post Fire Flooding and Debris Mitigation is Critical.
• ER Designation for Pre-Disaster Mitigation Projects along Major Highways?
• Improved External and Internal CDOT Relationships.