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(Wyo.)-Cause Of Casper Wildfire May Never Be Known

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 10/04/2012 11:08 AM



CASPER, Wyo. (ASSOCIATED PRESS) - Fire investigators may never know for sure what started a wildfire that destroyed 37 homes and cabins on Casper Mountain.

The 24-square-mile Sheep Herder Hill Fire started Sept. 9 next to an all-terrain vehicle and snowmobile trail and was quickly spread by wind. Authorities said early on that they believed it was human caused. Now say they've narrowed the cause down to three possibilities - exhaust from an ATV or motorcycle, a discarded cigarette or an intentional start.

More evidence appears to be backing the exhaust theory but officials haven't been able to rule out the other two possibilities.

Motorcycles and ATVs were reported in the area before the fire began. Investigators also found small, metal engine fragments that appeared to be new.