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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**July 12, 2023**

**Community Wildfire Defense Grant Workshop**  
*Sign up for project reviews and discussion*

**Santa Fe** – Writing grant proposals is tough –there's no doubt about it. Successful grant applications involve creative thinking and precise explanations of the proposed uses and funding outcomes. But this month, the Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department's [Forestry Division](#) will hold two workshops to help potential Community Wildfire Defense Grant applicants review the lessons learned from the program's first cycle of awards and improve their chances of success the next time.

Community Wildfire Defense Grants ([CWDGs](#)) are intended to help communities and tribes plan for and reduce the threat of wildfire. The program sets three priorities for funding and assigns them extra points in the application scoring. The priorities are:

- Communities that are in areas with high wildfire hazard potential
- Low-income communities, or
- Communities that have been impacted by a recent, severe wildfire disaster.

Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that focus on:

- Updates to existing Community Wildfire Protection Plans,
- Development of building code ordinances towards improving wildfire safety in at-risk communities
- Hazardous fuel mitigation projects such as cutting and thinning overgrown brush and trees, provided the projects are specifically described in Community Wildfire Protection Plans that is not more than ten years old

These upcoming workshops are intended to help applicants strengthen their grant proposals in real time, whether applicants are submitting for the first time or are re-applying for funds. Participants should bring the latest revision of their Community Wildfire Defense Grant

application for review. Unfinished drafts of project ideas are also welcome, so that workshop panel members can provide helpful tips for success. The workshop dates and times are:

- July 17, 9 AM –1 PM - Ruidoso Community Center: 501 Sudderth Dr. Ruidoso, NM
- July 21, 9 AM -1 PM - La Cienega Community Center: 136 Camino San Jose, Santa Fe, NM
- Virtual Option - Facebook Live, via [NM Forestry](#) or [Forest Stewards Guild](#)

The in-person sessions also will be livestreamed through the Forestry Division and Forest Stewards Guild Facebook pages.

Workshop panel members include Abigail Plecki and Eliza Kretzmann (NM Forestry Division), Francisco Salazar and Brett Miller (U.S. Forest Service), Eytan Krasilovsky and Gabe Kohler (Forest Stewards Guild), Rick Smith (Cimarron Watershed Alliance), and Wendy Blackwell (SWCA).

This month's workshops are supported in part by the Fire Adapted New Mexico Learning Network ([FACNM](#)) - a collective action initiative that supports wildfire adaptation through peer-learning and professional relationship building across the state.

If you are unable to attend either of the in-person meetings and would like to have your application reviewed, you can reach out to Abigail Plecki, Community Wildfire Defense Grant Coordinator, and set up a time to meet virtually (505-231-3086 | [abigail.plecki@emnrd.nm.gov](mailto:abigail.plecki@emnrd.nm.gov)).

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