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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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New Mexico Awarded \$28 million in Community Wildfire Defense Grants
Funds to advance local wildfire mitigation efforts

Santa Fe, NM – The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department’s (EMNRD) [Forestry Division](#) wishes to congratulate the eleven recipients of the latest round of federal Community Wildfire Defense Grants. See below for a complete list of awardees.

Funds totaling \$28 million will be administered by the Forestry Division and are provided through the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Recipients were selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service to help communities plan for and reduce their risk from future wildfire events. Risk reduction and planning state-wide aligns with Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s efforts to promote climate change resilience and build community capacity to withstand wildfire.

The \$28 million awarded to eleven New Mexico communities is a marked increase from the state 2023 award, when four communities received a total of \$11 million. The Forestry Division received 30 applications, totaling over \$108 million dollars, for this round of funding.

“The level of interest in this program shows that New Mexico residents are being proactive about reducing the potential for wildfires in their communities,” said EMNRD Secretary-Designate Melanie Kenderdine. “These critical awards will help enable New Mexicans to defend their homes, families, and communities against destructive wildfires.”

Community Wildfire Defense Grants ([CWDGs](#)) are intended to help at-risk local communities and tribes plan for and reduce wildfire risks. The grants prioritize at-risk communities in areas identified as having high or very high wildfire hazard potential; as being low-income; or having been impacted by a severe disaster.

Applicants were encouraged to submit proposals that focused on updates to existing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), on development of building code ordinances towards improving wildfire safety in at-risk communities, and on hazardous fuel mitigation projects specifically described in Community Wildfire Protection Plans that are not more than ten years old.

“Our congratulations go out to the local agencies and their community partners who are helping to increase wildfire prevention and mitigation practices in this state,” said State Forester Laura McCarthy. “With over twice the amount of federal funding received last year, we’re excited to start implementing the great ideas these communities have produced.”

More information is available through the [USDA Forest Service](#).

New Mexico Awardees:

Cimarron Watershed Alliance, Inc. received \$10,000,000 for the Angel Fire Community Protection Project. Implement high priority fuels reduction and forest restoration work on private lands in and around the community of Angel Fire, New Mexico. The project will create defensible space and fuel breaks and implement forest thinning and pile burning. Objective is to protect Angel Fire and surrounding landscape from high-intensity fires, reduce wildfire risk, restore forests to Fire Adapted ecosystems, make these areas more resilient, and allow all nearby communities to coexist with frequent wildfires.

West Latir Ditch Association received \$8,121,663 for the West Latir Collaborative Forest Fuel Reduction and Watershed Protection Initiative. Implement high priority fuels reduction work to reduce fuel loading, improve defensible space and create fuel breaks within and adjacent to the unincorporated/underserved communities El Rito and Latir in northeast Taos County, New Mexico.

Upper Chama Soil and Water Conservation District received \$7,137,470 to to implement upland forest Hazardous Fuel Reduction, conduct defensible space mitigation within Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas and riparian treatment and restoration within the Upper Chama Soil and Water Conservation District (UCSWCD) boundaries.

Village of Ruidoso Forestry Department received \$1,200,000 for Ruidoso Green Fuels Management. Funds will expand and enhance a program to reduce the amount of flammable material within the Village of Ruidoso while creating fuel breaks and defensible space around structures.

South Central Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. received \$784,080 for the Ruidoso Midtown Protection Project. Implement strategic hazardous fuels reduction treatments and establish and maintain fuel breaks to improve ingress/egress routes, improve forest health, protect life and property and provide support for first responders. Awardee also received \$215,400 for a Lincoln County CWPP update.

Otero County received \$243,100 to develop a CWPP for Otero County.

Grant County Office of Emergency Management received \$185,000 for CWPP update and modernization for Grant County.

Valencia County received \$159,600 to update and expand CWPPs throughout the county of Valencia, NM.

San Miguel County received \$88,000 to update the San Miguel County CWPP following the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Fire.

Mora County received \$88,000 to update the Mora County CWPP following the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Fire.

In addition to New Mexico counties and non-governmental organizations, **Santa Clara Pueblo** received \$228,177 in federal funding towards updating their Community Wildfire Protection Plan. More information on the awardees in New Mexico and across the U.S. can be found [here](#).

Link to this press release [here](#).

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