

**Michelle Lujan Grisham**, Governor  
**Sarah Cottrell Propst**, Cabinet Secretary  
**Todd E. Leahy, JD, PhD**, Deputy Cabinet Secretary  
**Laura McCarthy**, State Forester

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Contact:** George Ducker  
Wildfire Prevention and Communications Coordinator  
[george.ducker@emnr.dnm.gov](mailto:george.ducker@emnr.dnm.gov)  
505-699-0601



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**New Mexico Awarded Over Eleven Million Dollars in Community  
Wildfire Defense Grants  
Funds to serve local wildfire mitigation efforts**

**Santa Fe, NM** – – The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department’s (EMNRD) [Forestry Division](#) wishes to congratulate the recipients of the latest round of federal Community Wildfire Defense Grants. Recipients include the Cimarron Watershed Alliance, the International Association of Fire Chiefs, Sandoval County, and the Forest Stewards Guild.

Funds totaling \$11,482,174 will be administered by the state Forestry Division, provided through the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. Recipients were selected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service to help communities plan for and reduce their risk from wildfire.

[Cimarron Watershed Alliance](#) received grants for two projects. The first, in collaboration with the Colfax Collaborative Wildland Urban Interface Project, will put \$8,048,150 towards residential defensible space creation and hazardous fuel thinning projects in forests that will treat approximately 3,400 acres over the next five years. The second, with Flying Horse Ranch Fuel Break Project, receives \$1,821,254 to maintain and widen fuel breaks across approximately 75 acres of the Enchanted Circle Priority Landscape within Taos and Colfax counties.

The [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#) will use their \$235,404 funding to aid in the exercise and implementation of the San Miguel County Community Wildfire Protection Plan over a 24-month period. The CWPP identifies high priority projects including training, community education and outreach, and evacuation planning projects.

[Sandoval County's](#) award of \$63,000 will go towards updating their Community Wildfire Protection plan in order to aid first responders and community members living within the wildfire urban interface.

The [Forest Stewards Guild](#), in collaboration with the Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition, receives \$1,314,366 to deliver hazard assessments and fuel mitigation treatments over 125 acres of the Santa Fe fireshed area over the next five years. Funds will increase the number and geographic coverage of prevention ambassadors and the number of education and outreach events.

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, 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 not more than ten years old.

Following last year's October 2022 deadline, 22 grant applications were received by Forestry Division, totaling over \$41 million dollars. Funds are scheduled to be available for distribution by New Mexico State Forestry Division shortly after July 1, 2023.

New or returning applicants from local agencies or collaborative groups have another chance to apply: the next deadline for CWDG applications is coming up very soon. More information is available through the [USDA Forest Service](#).

“We'd like to express our congratulations to the local agencies and their community partners helping to increase wildfire prevention and mitigation practices in this state,” said State Forester Laura McCarthy. “It's still March, and while there may be snow on the ground this week, we're already looking forward to summer, when we can get to work implementing these funds on the ground.”

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*The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.*

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