

State of New Mexico
Office of the Governor

Susana Martinez

Governor

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For Immediate Release

June 8, 2012

**GOVERNOR SUSANA MARTINEZ FORMALLY DECLARES
STATE OF EMERGENCY IN
CATRON COUNTY**

Emergency Declaration Allows for Mobilization of Additional State Resources to Assist Local Efforts in Flood Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness

RESERVE – Governor Susana Martinez announced today that she has formally declared a State of Emergency in Catron County due to the Whitewater Baldy Complex Fire, the largest wildfire in state history and currently the largest active fire in the United States. The declaration will fund the state’s share of a Fire Management Assistance Grant, making funds available for the local and state response to the fire and community needs. The Governor’s declaration will also make funds available to local communities and state agencies to coordinate emergency protective measures against flooding – a risk elevated by large burned areas and the approach of monsoon season.

“With the largest fire in state history burning in southwest New Mexico we must make all necessary resources available,” said Governor Martinez. “This declaration will allow the state to provide materials, personnel, and funding to Catron County so we can make every possible effort to not only address the fire, but also the heightened risk of flooding for these communities. My administration will continue to work with officials at both the federal and local levels to ensure that we are all doing everything we can to protect lives and property.”

Last week, Governor Martinez directed the Departments of Homeland Security & Emergency Management, Transportation, Energy Minerals and Natural Resources, and others within her Administration to coordinate with local officials and federal partners on the threat of flooding due to the extensive burned areas.

The full text of the Governor’s executive order is below.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2012-014
DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN CATRON COUNTY
DUE TO THE WHITEWATER BALDY WILDFIRE COMPLEX

WHEREAS, Catron County is suffering from a severe wildfire known as the Whitewater Baldy Wildfire Complex beginning on or about May 23, 2012 and continuing;

WHEREAS, the Whitewater Baldy Wildfire Complex, as of May 31, 2012, is the largest wildfire in the state's history at over 265,000 acres and is currently the largest active fire in the United States;

WHEREAS, the Whitewater Baldy Wildfire Complex has caused the evacuation of the Willow Springs community on May 22, 2012 and the historic community of Mogollon on May 26, 2012;

WHEREAS, the Whitewater Baldy Wildfire Complex has reached within one mile of several communities and consumed 12 homes to date;

WHEREAS, smoke from the fire has impacted the entire state and has caused significant health threats to vulnerable populations;

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has approved Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) FM 2978 because this fire threatens to become a major disaster;

WHEREAS, the Catron County Manager will request a Disaster Resolution from the County Commission at their next regularly scheduled meeting, June 8, 2012, stating that they have taken all actions within their power to limit the extent of damage and provide for public health and safety, and are requesting assistance from the state;

WHEREAS, Catron County has requested that the State provide the county and any other eligible recipients within its jurisdiction whatever emergency assistance funding and technical expertise may be available;

WHEREAS, this emergency requires immediate action to preserve the peace, health, and safety and to preserve the lives and property of the people of the State of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, this emergency is of such magnitude as to be beyond local control and requires the resources of the State to avoid or minimize economic or physical harm and to take action necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Susana Martinez, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of New Mexico, do hereby declare a State of Emergency to exist in Catron County due to the effects of the Whitewater Baldy Wildfire Complex beginning May 23, 2012, through the day the Governor's Authorized Representative determines to be the end of the emergency period.

I DIRECT the Department of Finance and Administration to make available emergency financial resources in an amount not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000.00) to the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in accordance with NMSA 1978, §§ 12-11-23 through 12-11-25. The funds shall be expended for resources and services necessary to avoid or minimize economic or physical harm until a situation becomes stabilized and again under local self-support and control; on a temporary, emergency basis for lodging, sheltering, health care, food, any transportation or shipping necessary to protect lives or public property; or for any other action necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. The funds shall be paid out upon warrants drawn by the Secretary of Finance and Administration upon vouchers approved by the Governor or the Governor's Authorized Representative.

I FURTHER DIRECT the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management to coordinate all requests for assistance and responses to such requests under the authority of and as determined by the Governor and her Authorized Representative and to request such aid and assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency as may be appropriate. In addition to such other eligibility criteria as may be established by the Governor and her Authorized Representative, applicants requesting financial assistance from the State for necessary action taken in response to the emergency shall be required to demonstrate that the cost of the necessary action exceeds their available resources, as determined based upon criteria developed in conjunction with the State agencies (if any) with financial and budgetary oversight responsibilities for the applicant.

I FURTHER DIRECT the Adjutant General to order into service any elements of the New Mexico National Guard as are or may be needed to provide military support to civil authorities as needed for this emergency. This action is pursuant to and in accordance with NMSA 1978, §§ 20-1-1 through 20-1-8, NMSA 1978, §§ 20-2-1 through 20-2-8, and NMSA 1978, §§ 20-4-1 through 20-4-14. Such emergency assistance shall be provided during the period of need at the discretion of the Governor's Authorized Representative.

I FURTHER DIRECT all Cabinet Departments and agencies under gubernatorial control to provide any assistance that may be required by the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management or by the State Emergency Operations Center under the authority of the Governor's Authorized Representative.

THIS ORDER supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations, or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as the Governor rescinds it.

**SIGNED AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE THIS
8th DAY OF JUNE 2012.**

**WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

**SUSANA MARTINEZ
GOVERNOR OF NEW MEXICO**

ATTEST:

**DIANNA DURAN
SECRETARY OF STATE**

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