



State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2025-281

AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DUE TO THE SOUTH FORK FIRE AND SALT FIRE

WHEREAS, Lincoln County was severely impacted by the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire, both of which began on June 17, 2024;

WHEREAS, the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire burned over 25,000 acres, collectively;

WHEREAS, the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire have claimed the lives of two people and impacted over 1,400 structures;

WHEREAS, the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire led to the evacuations of the Village of Ruidoso and many nearby communities;

WHEREAS, the Village of Ruidoso and the Mescalero Apache Reservation have both declared a local state of emergency as a result of the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire;

WHEREAS, the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire prompted Lincoln County to declare a local state of emergency on June 17, 2024;

WHEREAS, the local state of emergency issued by Lincoln County notes that all available local resources are insufficient to alleviate the emergency and repair impacted infrastructure;

WHEREAS, the local state of emergency issued by Lincoln County requests financial aid and material assistance from the State of New Mexico;

WHEREAS, the Governor initially declared a state of emergency in Lincoln County and

the Mescalero Apache Reservation due to the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire on June 18, 2024;

WHEREAS, the State of New Mexico has officially submitted a request that the President of the United States grant a Major Disaster Declaration for the State of New Mexico for the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire;

WHEREAS, President Biden issued the requested Major Disaster Declaration on June 20, 2024;

WHEREAS, the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire have resulted in widespread hazardous debris, which contains potentially dangerous toxins, including heavy metals and asbestos, that must be cautiously and expeditiously removed and properly disposed of;

WHEREAS, the Governor declared an emergency as a result of the ash and fire debris resulting from the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire on June 25, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has confirmed that the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire have caused sufficient damage to warrant support from the State, and that it is necessary to authorize the release of additional emergency funds to protect public peace, health, and safety.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Howie Morales, Lieutenant Governor of the State of New Mexico and acting Governor pursuant to Article V, Section 7 of the New Mexico Constitution, by 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 Lincoln County and the Mescalero Apache Reservation due to the South Fork Fire and Salt Fire, and **ORDER** and **DIRECT** as follows:

1. The Department of Finance and Administration shall make available emergency financial resources in an amount not to exceed seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000.00) to the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in

accordance with NMSA 1978, Sections 12-11-23 to -25, and NMSA 1978, Sections 12-10-14 to -15. The funds shall be expended for the resources and services necessary to avoid or minimize economic or physical harm until the situation becomes stabilized; 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, welfare, and property. The funds shall be expended in accordance with the policy and procedures of the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, as approved by the Governor or her Authorized Representative.

2. The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management shall coordinate all requests for assistance and responses to such requests under the authority of and as determined by the Governor or her Authorized Representative. In addition to such other eligibility criteria as may be established by the Governor or 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.

3. The Adjutant General shall 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, Sections 20-1-1 to -8, NMSA 1978, Sections 20-2-1 to -8, and NMSA 1978, Sections 20-4-1 to -14. Such emergency assistance shall be provided during the period of need at the discretion of the Governor or her Authorized Representative.

4. All Cabinet Departments and agencies under gubernatorial control shall 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.

I FURTHER ORDER and **DIRECT** as follows:

1. This Order supersedes any previous orders, proclamations, or directives to the extent they are in conflict.
2. This Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until all authorized funds are expended or no longer necessary to provide emergency assistance.

ATTEST:



MAGGIE TOULOUSE OLIVER
SECRETARY OF STATE

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE
THIS 11TH DAY OF JULY 2025

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



HOWIE MORALES
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

