

# STATE OF COLORADO

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## EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

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Bill Owens  
Governor

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### EXECUTIVE ORDER

#### Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to a Wildfire in Costilla and Huerfano Counties

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, and pursuant to the relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, §24-32-2100 *et seq.*, C.R.S., I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency.

1. Background and Need.

On Sunday, June 18, 2006, lightning caused a fire to ignite in southern Colorado. Due to dry conditions and heavy winds, this fire quickly escalated into a major wildfire in Costilla and Huerfano Counties. As of this time, the “Mato Vega Fire” has burned more than 8,900 acres. Several towns and subdivisions are threatened by this wildfire and mandatory and voluntary evacuations have been issued. Highway 160 has been closed for safety reasons.

The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act defines a disaster as “the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damages, injury or loss of life or property resulting from any natural cause or cause of human origin, including but not limited to fire...” C.R.S. § 24-32-2103(1.5).

In response, I have encumbered state funds and directed the use of state resources to contain and extinguish this wildfire in the shortest possible timeframe. I have directed the Colorado State Forest Service and its wildfire experts to provide assistance in combating this fire. In addition, the state has made single engine air tankers, National Guard helicopters, ground vehicles, and fire crews available to assist in this effort. The State of Colorado will use every resource at its disposal when the life or property of its citizens is at risk.

2. Mission and Scope.

- A. I hereby declare that the Mato Vega Fire constitutes a disaster for purposes of C.R.S. §24-32-2103.
- B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106, I order the encumbrance of \$3,000,000 from the State Disaster Emergency Fund to finance fire suppression activities. These funds shall remain available for this purpose for nine months from the date of this Executive Order.
- C. The Director of the Colorado Office of Emergency Management and the Colorado State Forest Service is hereby authorized and directed to coordinate application to the federal government for funds available to individuals affected by this disaster, federal funds available for reimbursement, and for any other funds available related to this disaster emergency.

3. Funding Directive

- A. It is the policy of the state that funds shall always be available to meet disaster emergencies. C.R.S. § 24-32-2106(1). Because the Disaster Emergency fund is depleted, it is necessary to transfer funds from the TABOR Emergency Reserve. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106(4), I hereby order the transfer of \$3,000,000 from the TABOR Emergency Reserve into the Disaster Emergency fund. The Director of the Office of State Planning and Budgeting shall determine which particular TABOR Emergency Reserve accounts shall be deducted.

4. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from its date of signature unless extended by Executive Order



GIVEN under my hand and the  
Executive Seal of the State of Colorado  
this 21<sup>st</sup> day of June 2006.

*Bill Owens.*

Bill Owens  
Governor