

STATE OF COLORADO

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

D 2014-018

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Extending the Availability of Funds for Recovery Efforts Due to the West Fork Fire Complex

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to relevant portions of C.R.S. § 28-3-104 and relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.*, I, John W. Hickenlooper, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order extending the availability of funds to pay for costs associated with the disaster emergency due to the June 2013 West Fork Fire Complex in Hinsdale, Mineral, and Rio Grande Counties, Colorado.

I. Background and Purpose

The Governor is responsible for meeting the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters. C.R.S. § 24-33.5-704. 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. §24-33.5-703(3).

In June 2013, a series of fires combined to form the West Fork Fire Complex. These fires grew to over 100,000 acres and led to a mandatory evacuation east of the Continental Divide including the Town of South Fork. In response to these fires, all available firefighting resources were deployed. Our office declared a disaster emergency due to West Fork Fire Complex in Executive Order D 2013-017, which was subsequently amended in Executive Orders D 2013-020 and D 2013-022. We transferred a total of \$12,500,000 to the Disaster Emergency Fund from the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 appropriations for the Controlled Maintenance Trust Fund for fire suppression, response, and recovery efforts. Of those funds, \$195,000 was designated specifically for funding of recovery efforts. The funds transferred into the Disaster Emergency Fund for West Fork Fire Complex have been made available until December 26, 2014.

Presently it takes approximately 36 months for federal fire agencies, the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to process expenditures and payments for all fire suppression and related activities. Thus, the funding expiration date of December 26, 2014 needs to be extended.

Further, as recovery efforts have progressed, several stakeholders have determined that more time is needed to address the impacts of the West Fork Fire Complex sufficiently. The Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (RWEACT), which includes representatives from Hinsdale, Mineral and Rio Grande Counties, have devised an action plan for use of these funds. This plan requires that the funds previously set aside in the Disaster Emergency Fund remain available until June 1, 2015. Accordingly, the Board of Commissioners from Mineral County, Hinsdale County, Rio Grande County, as well as RWEACT, requested an extension until that date. Finding good cause, I hereby make the following declarations and directives relating to the funding of the West Fork Fire Complex recovery efforts.

II. Declaration and Directives

- A. I hereby extend the funding in the Disaster Emergency Fund provided in paragraphs II(C) and (D) of Executive Order D 2013-017 until June 30, 2016, to facilitate final payments of the expenses associated with the West Fork Fire Complex. The Division of Fire Prevention and Control and the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management are authorized and directed to allocate the funding to the appropriate resources as may be appropriate and permitted by law.
- B. The last sentence of Paragraph II(E) of Executive Order D 2013-017 is hereby replaced to read as follows: "These funds shall remain available for this purpose until June 30, 2016, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the Disaster Emergency Fund."

III. Duration

The provisions of Executive Orders D 2013-017, D 2013-020, and D 2013-022 that have not expired shall remain in full force and effect as originally promulgated. This Executive Order which amends paragraphs II(C), (D), and (E) of Executive Order D 2013-017, shall remain in effect until June 30, 2016, unless extended by further Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado this twentieth day of
October 2014.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "John W. Hickenlooper".

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor