

# STATE OF COLORADO

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

136 State Capitol  
Denver, Colorado 80203  
Phone (303) 866-2471  
Fax (303) 866-2003



John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor

## D 2018 019

### EXECUTIVE ORDER

#### **Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to Multiple Fires in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to Article IV, Section 2 of the Colorado Constitution and the 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 declaring a state of disaster emergency due to multiple fires in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties, enabling state agencies to coordinate response and recovery efforts, and making resources available to state agencies for response and recovery activities.

#### 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(1). The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act defines a disaster as “the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, 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).

On July 10, 2018, several fires started in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties following storms with associated lightning. These fires included the Fawn, Sprague, Winter, Smith, and Ridgetop fires in Rio Blanco County and the Skunk Creek Fire in Moffat County. Local resources were unable to adequately respond to and manage these incidents as the fires were occurring simultaneously. Gusty winds from thunderstorms and dangerous fuel conditions posed additional challenges. The fires threatened multiple structures, including residential occupancies, communication infrastructure, and oil and gas infrastructure. In addition, multiple fires were burning in the State, so the availability of distant mutual aid was limited. These fires were on private, State, and federal lands.

On, July 10, 2018 at approximately 4:45 PM, the Division of Fire Prevention and Control determined that, collectively, the Fawn, Sprague, Winter, Smith, and Ridgetop fires in Rio Blanco County and the Skunk Creek Fire in Moffat County qualified for funds from the Emergency Fire Fund.

On July 10, 2018 at approximately 4:51 PM, I verbally declared a disaster emergency for the Fawn, Sprague, Winter, Smith, and Ridgetop fires in Rio Blanco County and the Skunk Creek Fire in Moffat County and activated the State of Colorado Hazard and Incident Response and Recovery Plan (“State Emergency Operations Plan”).

## II. Declarations and Directives

- A. The Fawn, Sprague, Winter, Smith, and Ridgetop fires in Rio Blanco County and the Skunk Creek Fire in Moffat County, and associated impacts, constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of July 10, 2018, declaring a disaster emergency is hereby memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if it were contained within this Executive Order.
- B. The State Emergency Operations Plan is hereby activated. All State departments and agencies shall take whatever actions may be required and requested by the Director or Acting Director of the Office of Emergency Management pursuant to the State Emergency Operations Plan, including provision of appropriate staff and equipment as necessary.
- C. Due to the insufficiency of funds in both the Emergency Fire Fund and the Disaster Emergency Fund established in C.R.S § 24-33.5-706(2)(a) to pay for the State’s share of fire suppression and recovery efforts related to the multiple fires in Rio Blanco and Moffat Counties, I order the transfer of one million, eight hundred thousand dollars (\$1,800,000) from the Controlled Maintenance Trust Fund into the Disaster Emergency Fund pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-706(4)(b). I further encumber one million, eight hundred thousand dollars (\$1,800,000) of the Disaster Emergency Fund to pay for the fire suppression and response efforts related to the fires since July 10, 2018.
- D. Further, pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-705.4(5), the Director of the Office of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to allocate the funding described in Section II.C. to the appropriate government agencies and non-profit organizations and execute awards, purchase orders, or other mechanisms to effect

the allocation of the funds. These funds shall remain available for this purpose until sixty (60) months from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall be reimbursed to accounts from which they were originally transferred.

- E. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is authorized and directed to coordinate application, via fire billing practices within the Division of Fire Prevention and Control, to the federal government for funds available for reimbursement and to coordinate application for any other funds available related to this disaster emergency. Specifically, the Division of Fire Prevention and Control is directed to seek reimbursement and make payments as needed to agencies providing assistance for these fires

### III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from July 10, 2018, unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in Section II.C above shall remain available for the described purposes for sixty (60) months from the date of this Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and  
the Executive Seal of the State of  
Colorado this ninth day of  
August, 2018.



  
John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor