



D 2025 017

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Oak Fire in Archuleta County and Authorizing Employment of the Colorado National Guard

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, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado, issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency due to the Oak Fire in Archuleta County, enabling State and federal agencies to coordinate fire suppression, response, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts.

Further, pursuant to Article IV, Section 5 of the Colorado Constitution and C.R.S. § 28-3-104, I authorized employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard for the purpose of supporting fire suppression and consequence management efforts as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety for the Oak Fire.

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 August 10, 2025, the Oak Fire started in Archuleta County near Pagosa Springs and burned multiple structures and caused numerous evacuations on private land in the Wildland Urban Interface, threatening over 5,100 buildings and 2,000 homes. The number of required resources and management level needed for the rapidly evolving Oak Fire exceeded available resources at the local level.

As referenced in Executive Order D 2025 012, on August 10, 2025, at approximately 6:53 PM, I verbally declared a disaster emergency due to the Oak Fire in Archuleta County and activated the State of Colorado Emergency Operations Plan and directed the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) to take all necessary and appropriate State actions to assist the affected jurisdictions with their fire suppression, response, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts. At the same time, I verbally authorized employing unarmed members of the

Colorado National Guard to respond to the Oak Fire by providing fire suppression and consequence management support.

On August 11, 2025, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) for the Oak Fire, determining that the fire threatened such destruction that it would constitute a major disaster. The FMAG authorized the use of federal funds to help with firefighting costs.

As of August 16, 2025, the Oak Fire had burned 75 acres and was 100% contained.

II. Declarations and Directives

- A. The Oak Fire and associated impacts constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of August 10, 2025, 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. My verbal order of August 10, 2025, activated the State Emergency Operations Plan. All State departments and agencies are authorized to take whatever actions may be required and requested by the Director or their delegate of the OEM pursuant to the State Emergency Operations Plan, including provision of appropriate staff and equipment, as necessary.
- C. Further, pursuant to C.R.S. § 28-3-104, this Executive Order hereby memorializes my verbal orders of August 10, 2025, authorizing employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard to assist with fire suppression and consequence management efforts as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety for the Oak Fire, and my verbal authorization has the full force and effect of law as if it were contained within this Executive Order.
- D. I direct State agencies to pursue all available federal funding for response and recovery operations.
- E. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-706(4)(b), funds in the Disaster Emergency Fund (DEF) are insufficient to pay for fire suppression, response, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts related to the Oak Fire. Therefore, I order that one million three hundred sixty seven thousand dollars (\$1,367,000) be transferred from the State Emergency Reserve Cash Fund (SERCF) to the DEF. I encumber one million three hundred sixty seven thousand dollars (\$1,367,000) in the DEF to pay for fire suppression, response, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts related to the Oak Fire.

- F. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-33.5-705.4(5), the Director of the OEM is authorized and directed to allocate the funding described in Section II(E) to the appropriate government agencies and nonprofit organizations and execute awards, purchase orders, or other mechanisms to effect the allocation of funds. The funds described in Section II(E) shall remain available for this purpose until seventy-two (72) months from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the DEF.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from August 10, 2025, unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in Section II(E) above shall remain available for the described purposes for seventy-two (72) months from the date of this Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado this eighth
day of September, 2025.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jared Polis".

Jared Polis
Governor