



D 2025 018

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Crosho Fire in Rio Blanco and Routt Counties 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 Crosho Fire in Rio Blanco and Routt Counties, 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 efforts as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety for the Crosho 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 11, 2025, the Crosho Fire started burning near the border of Rio Blanco and Routt Counties on federal land and later spread to private land. Routt County issued evacuation notices beginning on August 12, and additional evacuations were ordered on August 13. By the evening of August 13, the Crosho Fire covered 1,700 acres, including 600 acres of private land. The fire exceeded the capacity of the counties based on the hazardous fuels conditions, exhibited fire behavior, incident complexity, and the external aviation and ground resources needed to manage the incident. Additionally, Rio Blanco County was already experiencing two other large fires (Elk and Lee Fires) at the same time.

As referenced in Executive Order D 2025 012, on August 13, 2025, at approximately 8:40 PM, I verbally declared a disaster emergency due to the Crosho Fire in Rio Blanco and Routt Counties, 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 Crosho Fire by providing fire suppression support.

As of August 25, 2025, the Crosho Fire burned 2,073 acres and was 100% contained.

II. Declarations and Directives

- A. The Crosho Fire and associated impacts constitute a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-33.5-701, *et seq.* My verbal order of August 13, 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 13, 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 13, 2025, authorizing employing unarmed members of the Colorado National Guard to support fire suppression efforts as deemed necessary by the Colorado Department of Public Safety for the Crosho 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 Crosho Fire. Therefore, I order that three million eight hundred fifty seven thousand dollars (\$3,857,000) be transferred from the State Emergency Reserve Cash Fund (SERCF) to the DEF. I encumber three million eight hundred fifty seven thousand dollars (\$3,857,000) in the DEF to pay for fire suppression, response, consequence management, mitigation, and recovery efforts related to the Crosho 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 13, 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