

New Mexico Wildfires Report #4

July 2, 2022

INCIDENT OVERVIEW

Due to wildfires throughout the State, including a number over 1,000 acres, the State of New Mexico made a Disaster Declaration on May 3, 2022. The President subsequently approved a federal disaster declaration on May 4, 2022, to provide federal funding to State and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations. The declaration covers the counties of Colfax, Lincoln, Mora, San Miguel, and Valencia. The President decreased the state cost share from 25% to 0% on June 11, 2022, for a 90-day period from April 5 to July 3, 2022.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- On May 11, 2022, EPA received a signed Federal Operational Support (FOS) Mission Assignment (MA) for \$217,000 with a Projected Start Date of May 11, 2022, and Completion Date of July 11, 2022. This MA covers providing appropriate personnel to staff the Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC), Initial Operating Facility (IOF), Joint Field Office (JFO), or other regional, state, tribal, territorial, or local teams, including Rapid Needs Assessment Teams, and/or facilities to include virtual as requested to support disaster operations.
- On May 14th and 15th, 2022, Region 6 mobilized a Subject Matter Expert (SME)/State EOC Liaison and EPA Superfund Technical Assistance and Response Team (START) contractor respectively. The SME and START worked with the State of New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (NMDHSEM) and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to develop products outlining cleanup needs and applicable laws and regulations required for property owners who clean up properties on their own.
- On June 15, 2022, EPA received a Direct Federal Assistance (DFA) MA for \$2,000,000 with a Projected Start Date of June 14, 2022, and Completion Date of July 3, 2022. This MA covers oil and hazardous materials response operations including disposal of household hazardous waste (HHW) and bulk asbestos, in support of FEMA disaster operations under Emergency Support Function (ESF) #10 of the National Response Framework (NRF).
- On July 1, 2022, EPA received an extension to August 1, 2022, and funding increase of \$1,653,017 for the DFA MA to bring the MA ceiling to \$3,653,017. The extension allows additional time to conduct HHW and bulk asbestos collection, management, and transportation and disposal. This amendment also extends the 0% state cost share.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS

- The Liaison Officer (LNO) mobilized on June 23, 2022, is staffing the Joint Field Office (JFO) in Santa Fe and providing daily updates on EPA activities and liaising with FEMA and other responding agencies.
- Two Task Force Leaders mobilized on June 26, 2022, to lead the waste assessment and collection teams in Mora and San Miguel Counties.
- Collection of HHW and bulk asbestos began in Mora and San Miguel on June 27, 2022. Assessment teams continued operations in Mora and San Miguel Counties. The counties prioritized areas of concern for flooding during the upcoming monsoon season and forwarded the Right of Entry (ROE) forms to the Incident Management Team (IMT). As shown in Map 2 in this Management Report, the priority areas in Mora County are Rio de la Casa Canyon and Holman Hill. The priority areas in San Miguel County are Mineral Hill, Gallinas Canyon, San Ignacio and Cañoncito de Manuelitas.
- On June 27, 2022, the NMDHSEM published a press release stating property owners do not forfeit their right to sue government entities for damages if property owners sign an ROE. The State of New Mexico tweeted the press release, “Enrolling in Full Service Debris Removal Program does not prevent property owners from pursuing future litigation,” giving EPA the ability to retweet the press release. EPA posted press release on Region 6’s Facebook with a link to the press release.
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/EPAregion6/status/1542144105014255620>
 - Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/eparegion6/posts/pfbid037aSVj7WUomGhQGpoSE9SeD5LPs3j86GprBmHZ1hgt9HYxbDuuSRv2nvqxY1UVx4Rl>
- The IMT developed a plan with the Mora and San Miguel Sheriff’s Offices for handling and disposal of ammunition found at properties. The ammunition will be staged at a county facility with EPA providing the disposal. As of July 2, 2022, no ammunition has been found.

COORDINATION WITH STATE AND OTHER PARTNERING AGENCIES

- EPA continues to participate in the Debris Management Task Force (DMTF) which is composed of debris experts from NMED, NMDHSEM, FEMA, and the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE).

EPA RESOURCES

EPA Resources					
Agency	REOC	Remote IMT	IMT	JFO	TOTAL
EPA	9	3	5	1	18
NMED	0	0	3	0	3
START	0	0	11	0	11
ERRS	0	0	12	0	12
Total	9	3	31	1	44

OPERATIONS

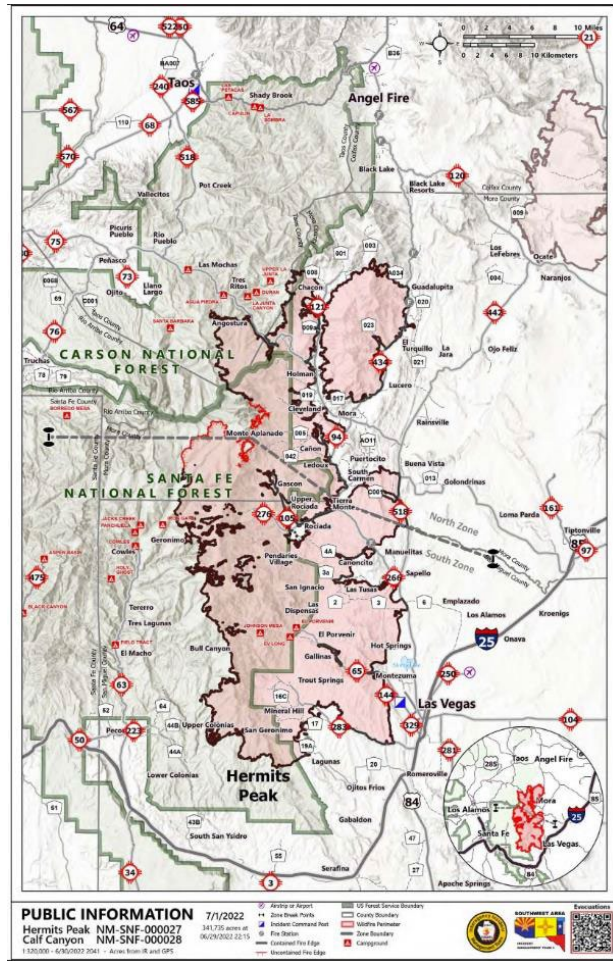
Assessment and Collection Teams continue working in both Mora and San Miguel Counties. The counties prioritized areas of concern for flooding during the upcoming monsoon season and forwarded them to the Incident Management Team (IMT). Most of the properties in the priority areas have been addressed, as new ROEs are received in these areas, they will be addressed.

On July 1, 2022, EPA teams worked in the priority areas EPA received from San Miguel County. Heavy rain in the afternoon affected operations as high water and debris covered the road in multiple locations. Safety continues to be an issue with increased rain and flooding. The teams reported people have been complimentary of the professionalism of the EPA work is doing.

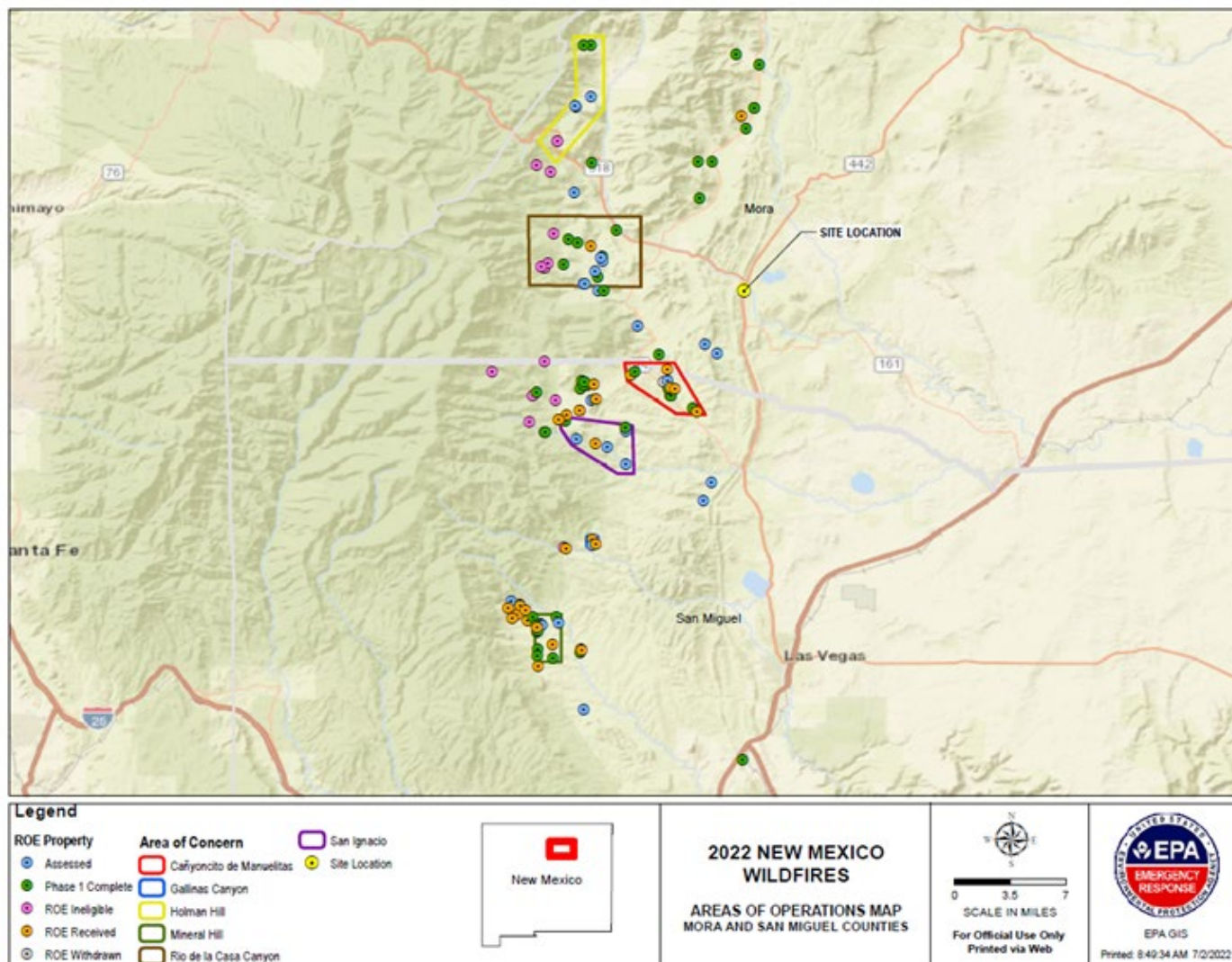
The disposal site for the non-hazardous/non-asbestos waste was screened for EJ. The site in Rio Rancho, NM was below the 80th percentile for all indices in a 1, 3 or 5 mile radius. As additional waste disposal locations are chosen, the IMT will ensure the locations are screened for EJ to ensure they are below the 80th percentile.

PROGRESS METRICS FOR 2022 NEW MEXICO WILDFIRE HHW COLLECTION (As of 7/1/2022)				
ROE Status	Mora County		San Miguel County	
	7/1	Totals	7/1	Totals
ROE Received	0	44	0	98
ROE Withdrawn	0	0	2	2
ROE Ineligible	2	10	0	7
Unable to Access	0	0	0	0
Assessed	0	32	11	61
Phase 1 Complete	0	19	10	42

Map 1



Map 2 – Areas of Operations Map



PICTURES



Picture 1: Waste at the Staging Area



Picture 2: Waste at the Staging Area



Picture 3: EPA Teams working large site in San Miguel County