STATE OF COLORADO

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Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Implementing the 2009 Wildfire Preparedness Plan

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, Colorado Revised Statute § 23-30-310, *et seq.*, I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order making certain funds available from the state treasury for wildfire preparedness and mitigation activities.

I. Background and Need.

Wildfire activity has increased in severity over the past ten years threatening lives, improved property, natural resources, and the economy of the State. The State has focused resources on mitigating wildfire risks and building the capability to contain wildfires before they become uncontrollable. In 2006, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 96, amending C.R.S. §23-30-310 and creating the Wildfire Preparedness Fund and appropriating moneys pursuant to C.R.S. § 34-63-102(5).

Pursuant to Senate Bill 06-96, the Governor, by Executive Order or Proclamation, may access and designate moneys in the wildfire preparedness fund for wildfire preparedness activities. As required by C.R.S. § 23-30-310, the State Forester, along with County Sheriffs' of Colorado, the Colorado State Fire Chief's Association, the Director of the Division of Emergency Management, and the Adjunct General, developed a Wildfire Preparedness Plan (the "Plan"). According to this Plan, state resources will be made available to assist local and county resources to attack wildfires quickly when they are small. The Plan also provides for mitigating wildfire threat by reducing wildland fuels at strategic locations to protect communities and watersheds using available state resources.

In accordance with the C.R.S. § 23-30-310, this Executive Order makes certain funds available for wildfire mitigation and preparedness activities, including contracting of Single Engine Air Tankers and on-call helicopters equipped to fight wildfires, staffing additional wildland interface fire engines, employing wildfire hand crews with personnel provided by the Department of Corrections, providing support and assistance to fire departments across the State, undertaking fuel reduction projects, and providing for other preparedness and mitigation resources.

II. Directives

A. In accordance with C.R.S. §23-30-310 and in order to reduce the vulnerability of injury to the people of Colorado and damage to property located within the State and provide for coordination of activities relating to wildfire prevention, preparedness, mitigation, and response by the State, I hereby direct the implementation of the 2009 Wildfire Preparedness Plan.

B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 23-30-310(4)(b), I order $3,250,000 in wildfire preparedness funds be available for the expenses incurred during the 2009/2010 state fiscal year and order moneys from the 2008/2009 state fiscal year that currently are held in the wildfire preparedness fund for wildfire preparedness activities calendar year be carried over.

C. The wildfire preparedness funds allocated by this order shall be used to implement the 2009 Wildfire Preparedness Plan, which includes contracting of Single Engine Air Tankers and on-call helicopters equipped to fight wildfires, staffing additional wildland interface fire engines, employing wildfire hand crews with personnel provided by the Department of Corrections, providing support and assistance to fire departments across the State, undertaking fuel reduction projects, and providing for other preparedness and mitigation resources.

D. The preparedness funds authorized by this Executive Order shall be made available to the State Forest Service for wildfire preparedness and mitigation activities. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 23-30-310(4)(a), any moneys not expended at the end of the 2009 calendar year shall remain in the wildfire preparedness fund.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this 16th day of January, 2009

Bill Ritter Jr.

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor