

STATE OF COLORADO

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John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

D 2012-020

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Waldo Canyon Fire

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, pursuant to relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act of 1992, C.R.S. § 24-32-2100, et seq., I, Governor John W. Hickenlooper, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency due to the wildfire in El Paso County, Colorado.

I. Background and Purpose

On Saturday, June 23, 2012, a wildfire ("Waldo Canyon Fire") started in El Paso County west of the community of Colorado Springs. It immediately threatened the communities of Manitou Springs, Ute Pass, Chipita Park, Cascade, and Green Mountain Falls forcing the evacuation of 10,000 homes. The fire grew rapidly being fueled by extremely dry vegetation, low relative humidity, high temperatures, and extremely windy conditions. The cause of the fire is unknown and is under investigation. As of June 27, the fire has spread to approximately 15,517 acres and more than 32,000 evacuation orders have been issued. El Paso County and local fire department resources have been fully engaged in both evacuating residents from harm's way and in fighting the wildfire. Predicted hot weather and strong gusty winds coupled with abundant dry fuels pose a real threat of the fire spreading toward additional state and private values at risk and indicate an aggressive response is essential. A local Type 3 Incident Management Team was immediately ordered for the fire along with use of several Helicopters, two heavy airtankers, two SEATs, thirty-five engines, and two handcrews. In addition, U.S. Department of Defense resources were authorized and a Dual-Status Command protocol coordinating State and federal resources is in place.

The Governor is responsible for meeting the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters. The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act of 1992, defines a disaster as "the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damages, 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. §

24-32-2103(1.5). The Waldo Canyon Fire's proximity to sub-developments in and the towns of Cascade, Manitou Springs, and Colorado Springs poses an imminent danger to life and property and, therefore, constitute a disaster for the purposes of the Act. In response to this disaster, on June 23, 2012, I declared a disaster emergency.

II. Declaration and Directives

- A. The Waldo Canyon Fire constitutes a disaster emergency under C.R.S. § 24-32-2103. My verbal order of June 24, 2012, 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 of the Division of Emergency Management or the Colorado State Forest Service, including provision of appropriate staff and equipment as necessary.
- C. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106(4), the funds in the Disaster Emergency Fund are hereby found insufficient to pay for fire suppression efforts related to the Waldo Canyon Fire. Therefore, it is ordered that \$4,000,000 be transferred into the Disaster Emergency Fund from General Fund appropriations in Fiscal Year 2011-12 to the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Medical Services Premiums line item; \$2,000,000 be transferred into the Disaster Emergency Fund from General Fund appropriations in Fiscal Year 2011-12 to the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Indigent Care Program, Children's Basic Health Plan Medical and Dental Plan line item; and \$175,000 be transferred into the Disaster Emergency Fund from General Fund appropriations in Fiscal Year 2011-12 to the Department of Human Services, Division of Youth Corrections, Community Programs Parole Program Services line item. It is further ordered that \$6,175,000 from the Disaster Emergency Fund is encumbered to pay for the fire suppression, response, and recovery effort related to the Waldo Canyon Fire since its inception. The Colorado State Forester, working in conjunction with the Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management, is hereby authorized and directed to allocate the funding to the appropriate government agencies. These funds shall remain available for this purpose for one year from the date of this Executive Order, and any unexpended funds shall remain in the Disaster Emergency Fund.

- D. The Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management and the Colorado State Forest Service are authorized and directed to coordinate application to the federal government for funds available for reimbursement and to coordinate application for any other funds available related to this disaster emergency.

III. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty days from June 23, 2012 unless extended further by Executive Order, except that the funds described in paragraph II(C) above shall remain available for the described purposes for one year from the date of this Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado this twenty-seventh day of June, 2012.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John W. Hickenlooper".

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor