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EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to a Wildfire in Larimer County

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, and pursuant to the relevant portions of the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act, §24-32-2100 *et seq.*, C.R.S., I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order declaring a state of disaster emergency.

1. Background and Need.

On March 31, 2004, a small fire in Larimer County quickly escalated into a major wildfire due to dry conditions and heavy winds. As of this time, the “Picnic Rock Fire” has burned approximately 6,000 acres, destroyed one home, and is threatening an additional 100 homes. Residents living in these homes have been evacuated. Unseasonably warm, dry and windy weather has caused this fire to spread in a rapid and erratic manner. The time frame in which this fire is contained is largely dependent on weather conditions.

As Governor, I am responsible for meeting the dangers to the state and people presented by disasters. The Colorado Disaster Emergency Act 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). As detailed above, this wildfire poses an imminent danger to life and property and, therefore, I find that it constitutes a disaster for the purposes of the Act.

When the life or property of its citizens is at risk, the State of Colorado will use every resource at its disposal to end that threat. I have ordered the immediate use of state funds and state resources to contain and extinguish this wildfire in the shortest possible timeframe.

2. Mission and Scope.

- A. I hereby declare that the Picnic Rock Fire constitutes a disaster for purposes of C.R.S. §24-32-2103.
- B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106, I order the encumbrance of \$2.2 million from the State Disaster Emergency Fund to finance fire suppression activities. These funds shall remain available for this purpose for six months from the date of this Executive Order.
- C. The Director of the Colorado Office of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to coordinate application to the federal government for any funds for public assistance disaster relief and for other funding related to the disaster emergency.
- D. All verbal orders that I issued in regard to this disaster emergency, including my verbal disaster emergency declaration on April 1, 2004, is hereby memorialized by this Executive Order and shall have the full force and effect of law as if they were contained within this Executive Order.

3. Duration

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from its date of signature unless extended by Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado, this 2nd
day of April, 2004.

Bill Owens
Governor