

# New Mexico Wildfires Report #8

## July 15, 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.

- On July 7, 2022, EPA received an extension to August 1, 2022, and funding increase of \$31,500 for the FOS MA to bring the MA ceiling to \$248,500. The extension allows additional time to provide personnel to the RRCC, IOF, or JFO, as needed to support disaster operations.
- A pay cap waiver for responders working under the MAs was signed on July 7, 2022. The pay waiver start date is Saturday, June 18, 2022, and end date is Saturday, August 27, 2022

## **SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS.**

- Collection of HHW and bulk asbestos began in Mora and San Miguel on June 27, 2022. Assessment and collection teams continued operations in Mora and San Miguel Counties, with a focus on the counties prioritized areas of concern for flooding during the upcoming monsoon season. As shown in Map 1 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.
- The IMT developed a plan with the Mora and San Miguel Sheriff's Offices for handling and disposal of ammunition found at properties. However, San Miguel County notified the State of New Mexico that the county is not able to securely stage ammunition of 50-caliber or below recovered by the collection teams. NMED is working on locating a staging area for any ammunition found by the collection teams. To date, no ammunition has been found.
- EPA will provide pick up and disposal for ammunition once the State verifies a staging location. No ammunition has been found to date.

## **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).
- The Debris Management Task Force and the Outreach Group are developing plans for additional outreach to ensure ROEs are received and validated by the July 22, 2022, cut-off date.
- NMED is having discussions with FEMA and the USACE regarding how USACE will perform HHW collection after August 1, 2022.

## EPA RESOURCES

EPA Resources (As of July 14, 2022)					
Agency	Remote IMT	REOC	JFO (virtual)	IMT	TOTAL
EPA	4	10	1	6	21
NMED	0	0	0	1	1
START	0	0	0	9	9
ERRS	0	0	0	11	11
Total	4	10	1	27	42

## OPERATIONS

EPA teams worked in Mora and San Miguel Counties. Teams have run into multiple properties with locked gates over the last week. NMED made several calls over the last few days to property owners for questions about gate access and their ROEs. Several property's access issues were resolved as well as questions about structures on properties. Multiple ROEs have been received for properties where there are no structures. Those properties are noted as complete and passed on with notes to the USACE.

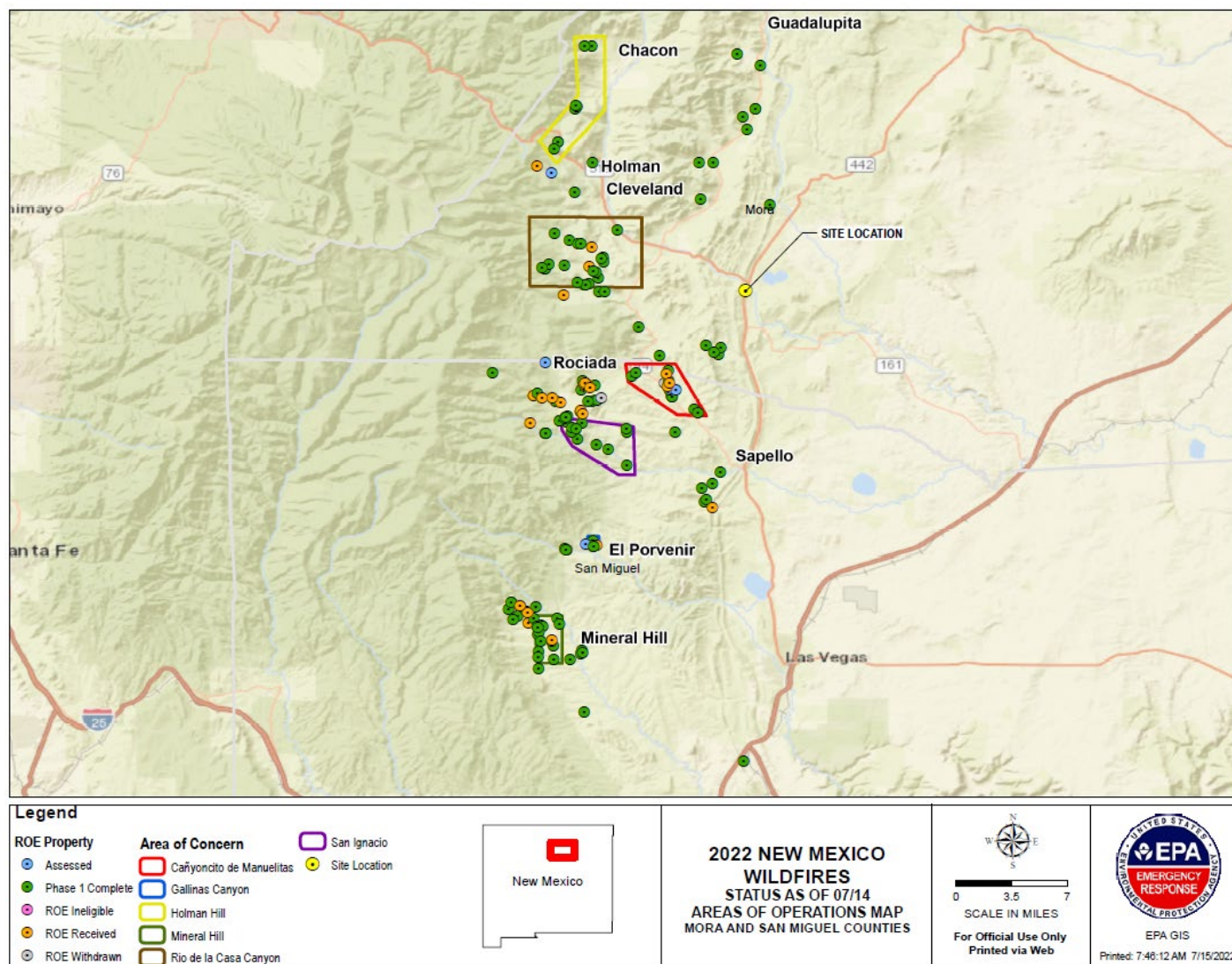
Safety continues to be an issue with increased rain and flooding.

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

***PROGRESS METRICS FOR 2022 NEW MEXICO WILDFIRE HHW COLLECTION***

Current ROE Status	Mora		San Miguel		Total	
	July 14	Total	July 14	Total	July 14	All
ROE Received	0	54	7	144	7	198
ROE Withdrawn	0	0	1	4	1	4
ROE Ineligible*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unable to Access	0	0	0	2	0	2
Phase 1 Complete	8	48	7	104	15	152
Remaining ROEs	---	6	---	34	---	40

**Map 1 – Areas of Operations Map**





## PICTURES



*Picture 1: NMED and EPA discussing property in San Miguel County*



*Picture 2: EPA Completion sign in front of property in Mora County*