

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department Announces Laura McCarthy as State Forester



Santa Fe, NM – Today, the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Cabinet Secretary announced the appointment of Laura McCarthy as State Forester. EMNRD’s Forestry Division has 75 full-time employees, more than 300 seasonal firefighters, and is responsible for fire suppression on 43 million acres of on non-federal, non-municipal, non-tribal lands. Forestry also evaluates those lands and forests most at risk to wildfire, disease, and insect infestation by developing appropriate land management and restoration programs and implementing mitigation projects. McCarthy’s tenure will begin March 18, 2019.

“Ms. McCarthy is exceptionally well-qualified for this position,” said Secretary Sarah Cottrell Propst. “Her experience working for several New Mexico-based organizations on forest, fire, and conservation programs is exactly what we need at a time when drought and climate change are affecting our forests.”

McCarthy has more than 25 years of experience in forestry-related work, including starting her career as a wildland firefighter for the USDA Forest Service. Most recently as the associate state director for the Nature Conservancy’s New Mexico office, McCarthy created and directed the public-private partnership Rio Grande Water Fund to restore 600,000 acres of at-risk forest critical to New Mexico’s water supply.

“My vision is to take the partnership model to accelerate forest restoration to meet the challenges we face today. I look forward to the responsibility and am excited to participate in the management and restoration of New Mexico’s forests – just in time for wildfire season.”

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