

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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News Release

Returning Heroes Firefighters Answer Call for Help in Texas

Santa Fe - New Mexico State Forestry is sending two crews from the Returning Heroes Wildland Firefighters program to aid wildfire suppression efforts at the Guadalupe Mountains National Park in Texas. One crew arrived at the park today and a second is pre-positioned in Ruidoso in Lincoln County.

“For this year’s fire season, our Returning Heroes have added about 50 firefighters to their workforce,” says State Forester Eddie Tudor. “With expanded resources, they are prepared to deploy to wildfire emergencies at all times, both here at home or wherever our neighbors need help.”

Named the Coyote Fire, lightning caused the incident in Texas over two weeks ago. The fire had briefly crossed state lines into Otero County, but resources were able to effectively manage it on the New Mexico side. Yesterday, the Coyote Fire aggressively spread eastward, prompting the National Park Service to call for additional support. The fire is not considered a threat to New Mexico.

The Returning Heroes Wildland Firefighter Program was created to provide veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces with training and work opportunities to fight wildland fires. Previously a pilot program, Returning Heroes was made permanent and signed into legislation by Governor Susana Martinez in 2014.

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.