

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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News Release

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Hyde Park Restoration Project Underway with Returning Heroes Program

Santa Fe, NM – Work has begun on the 80-acre Hyde Memorial State Park Watershed Restoration Project to reduce hazardous fuels, which will help protect the Santa Fe Watershed from wildfires.

“State Forestry and the New Mexico State Parks Division are taking a variety of steps to reduce tree density, lower the threat of catastrophic wildfire and protect park resources within this crucial watershed,” said State Forester Tony Delfin. “This project complements the forest thinning already conducted within the watershed on the Santa Fe National Forest. Thinning the forest in this area will not only protect the vital watershed on land managed by the State of New Mexico, it will also help protect communities, wildlife habitat and natural resources downstream from the project.”

Funding for the project comes from the U.S. Forest Service and is being implemented by staff from New Mexico State Forestry’s Returning Heroes Program. “This is a wonderful program that trains and employs military veterans to fight wildfires during fire season and conduct forest thinning projects in the off season,” says Delfin. The program was established permanently last year by Governor Susana Martinez after an overwhelmingly successful pilot program in 2013.

The Hyde Memorial State Park Watershed Restoration Project was identified in a statewide assessment conducted by the New Mexico State Forestry Division that identified watershed areas considered high-risk. State Forestry is in the process of implementing 14 watershed restoration projects throughout the state in high priority watersheds. These projects were funded with a \$6.2 million Capital Outlay appropriation that was authorized by Governor Martinez last year.

Crews will select trees for removal based on their position in the canopy, health, diameter and external or internal defects. The project is expected to last through Fall of 2016.

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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.