

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department



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News Release

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Gallinas Municipal Forest and Watershed Restoration Project Underway

Las Vegas, NM – Work has begun on the 411-acre Gallinas Municipal Forest and Watershed Restoration Project on National Forest System lands in San Miguel County, northwest of Las Vegas.

“State Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service are taking a variety of steps to reduce tree density, lower the threat of catastrophic wildfire and protect natural resources within the crucial Gallinas Watershed,” said Las Vegas District Forester Carmen Austin. “This project complements the forest thinning already conducted within the watershed on the Santa Fe National Forest. Our goal is to restore this vital area for future generations, and to improve the quality and availability of water, and support economic growth.”

Funding for the Gallinas Municipal Forest and Watershed Restoration Project was approved by Governor Martinez in 2014 as a part of \$6.2 million in severance tax dollars to be used to treat approximately 7,700 acres of 14 high priority watershed areas on public lands, as identified in the New Mexico Forest Action Plan.

“The project will not only protect the vital domestic water supply for the City of Las Vegas, it will also help protect communities, wildlife habitat and natural resources downstream from the project,” said Austin. “Water resources within the Gallinas Watershed include the Gallinas Creek and two water storage sites – the Peterson and Bradner reservoirs. The long-term health and integrity of the Watershed’s resources is critical to the residents of Las Vegas because the creek and reservoirs are the community’s primary source of domestic water.”

The project is expected to last through Fall of 2016. The area will be treated with mechanical equipment to reduce overly dense fuel stands where some smaller diameter trees will be cut and scattered through the area as a natural way to prevent soil erosion. Other small diameter logs will be used for specialized products such as latillas, posts and poles, and firewood.

Please visit www.nmforestry.com for more information.

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