

State of New Mexico
Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

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NEWS RELEASE

Over 50 New Mexico Firefighters, Veterans Head West to Combat Wildfires

Santa Fe, NM – State Forestry is sending over 50 personnel, including 22 members of the Returning Heroes Wildland Firefighter Program to Arizona and California to combat multiple fires as fire season increases in those areas. The firefighters left New Mexico on Friday as their assistance was requested by the Southwest Coordination Center.

“We’re proud to answer the call to help our neighbors as fire season intensifies,” said Tony Delfin, New Mexico State Forester. “These resources are often called upon at the national level because of their training, expertise and willingness to serve. With a slow fire season here in New Mexico, we have plenty of resources to share and still be able to respond to any new starts that might happen in the state.”

The firefighters are first headed to Phoenix where they will be assigned to wildfires in both Arizona and California. In addition to the personnel, New Mexico is sending four fire engines to assist with efforts in the West. While the time of deployment is flexible, fire crews will spend at least two weeks assisting with firefighting efforts.

The Returning Heroes Wildland Firefighter Program, starting as a pilot program in 2012, was made permanent last year by Governor Susana Martinez.

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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.

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