

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

136 State Capitol
Denver, CO 80203 - 1792
Phone (303) 866-2471



Bill Owens
Governor

D 003 06

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Imminent Threat of Wildfires

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, Colorado Revised Statute § 24-32-2101 *et seq.*, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order making certain funds available from the Disaster Emergency Fund for wildfire preparation and suppression activities.

1. Background & Need.

For the past four years, the State has focused resources on mitigating wildfire risks and building the capability to contain wildfires before they become uncontrollable. Accordingly, I have proactively utilized state disaster emergency funds to pre-position wildfire-fighting resources for the fire season. Ordinarily, we begin this pre-positioning process in the spring. However, already this year, Colorado has experienced several fires, including the Mauricio Canyon Fire, which burned over 6,000 acres of land and the fire near Carter Lake in Larimer County, which burned over 300 acres of land. Given the conditions of extreme fire danger, it is necessary to make funds available to address immediate risks due to unseasonably dry weather.

As envisioned by the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act (the "Act"), threats to the public safety of this magnitude confer upon the Governor unique powers and responsibilities. As Governor, I am responsible for meeting dangers to our state presented by disasters. C.R.S. § 24-32-2104(1). The Act defines disasters as "the occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural cause or cause of human origin, including but not limited to fire" C.R.S. § 24-32-2103(1.5). The purpose of the Act is to reduce the vulnerability of injury to the people of Colorado and damage to property located within the state and provide for coordination of activities relating to disaster prevention, preparedness and response by the state. C.R.S. § 24-32-2102(1)(a) and (f).

In accordance with the Act, this Executive Order makes certain funds available for wildfire mitigation and preparedness activities, including contracting of Single Engine Air Tankers, call as needed helicopters specifically equipped to fight wildfires, staffing additional wildland interface fire engines, employment of wildfire hand crews, and to provide for other preparedness and mitigation resources.

2. Directive.

- A. In accordance with §24-32-2102 and in order to reduce the vulnerability of injury to the people of Colorado and damage to property located within the state and provide for coordination of activities relating to disaster prevention, preparedness and response by the state, I hereby declare that the imminent threat of wildfires constitutes a disaster, as defined by C.R.S. § 24-32-2103.
- B. Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106, I order \$358,000 in disaster emergency funds be available for the expenses incurred during the period of this Executive Order. These funds shall remain available for this purpose for nine months from the date of this Executive Order.
- C. The disaster emergency funds authorized by this Executive Order shall be made available to the State Forest Service for wildfire preparedness and mitigation activities.
- D. The Director of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management is hereby authorized and directed to coordinate application to the federal government for any funds for public assistance disaster relief and for other funding related to the disaster emergency.

3. Duration.

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from the date of its execution unless extended by Executive Order.



GIVEN under my hand and the
Executive Seal of the State of
Colorado, this 7th day of
February, 2006.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Owens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Owens
Governor