

FEMA Authorizes Funds to Fight Montana's River Road East Fire

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DENVER – Early this morning FEMA authorized the use of federal funds to help with firefighting costs for the River Road East Fire burning in Sanders County near the Paradise community.

FEMA Region 8 Administrator Nancy Dragani approved the state's request for a federal Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) after receiving the request overnight and determining that the fire threatened such destruction that it would constitute a major disaster.

At the time of the request, the River Road East Fire was threatening residences in the community of Paradise, population 166 and an additional 250 residents in the surrounding area. There was also an imminent threat to infrastructure including transportation systems and critical communications. The fire has now burned nearly 12,000 acres of state, federal and private land and there is 0% containment.

The authorization makes FEMA funding available to pay 75-percent of the state's eligible firefighting costs under an approved grant for managing, mitigating and controlling designated fires. It is a reimbursable program. These grants do not provide assistance to individual home or business owners and do not cover other infrastructure damage caused by the fire.

Fire Management Assistance Grants are provided through the President's Disaster Relief Fund and are made available by FEMA to assist in fighting fires that threaten to cause a major disaster. Eligible items can include expenses for field camps, equipment use, mobilization activities, tools, materials and supplies.

When there is an FMAG authorization, additional funding is made available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Post Fire for the mitigation of wildfire and related hazards, such as flood after fire or erosion. Some eligible wildfire project types include defensible space measures and ignition-resistant



construction.

For more information on FMAGs, visit <https://www.fema.gov/fire-management-assistance-grants-program-details>. For HMGP Post Fire, visit <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-grant-program-post-fire>.



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