

NM Fires, Flood Recovery Over \$34 Million in Federal Assistance

Release Date: 1? 22, 2025

ROSWELL, New Mexico—More than seven months have passed since former President Joe Biden declared a major disaster in New Mexico. Under the declaration, he ordered federal financial assistance to supplement state, tribal, and local recovery efforts in the areas affected by the South Fork and Salt Fires that began on June 17, 2024, and the subsequent flooding.

The Presidential action made federal funding available to affected individuals, families and businesses in **Lincoln, Otero, Rio Arriba, San Juan counties** and the **Mescalero Apache Reservation**.

More than 1,400 structures, including at least 850 homes, were destroyed for a combined reconstruction cost value (RCV) estimated at \$370 million. Authorities have determined that the fire was extinguished on Aug. 20, 2024.

More than 3,000 fire and flood-impacted residents have registered for federal assistance. (The deadline to apply for FEMA aid was Oct. 19, 2024.) Nearly 2,800 individuals affected by the fires and flooding have visited a jointly operated State/FEMA Disaster Recovery Center. And nearly **9,100** homes in the affected areas have been visited, in-person, by more than **45** FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) personnel.

FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs) have engaged with nearly 200 national and local volunteer organizations, non-profits, government, faith and community-based organizations to identify survivor resources, unmet needs, and provide critical information on FEMA and its programs. The VALs have also been working with State of New Mexico Disaster Case Management (DCM) to assist with identifying survivor resources and connections to other agencies to assist with unmet needs.

FEMA financial assistance can include grants for temporary housing, limited home repairs, and replacement of some personal property. Additionally, the State of



New Mexico applied for and was granted Transitional Sheltering Assistance, in which those whose homes were uninhabitable received hotel stays while they determined a path forward. Moreover, FEMA awarded the State a Direct Housing mission, offering temporary travel trailers and manufactured housing units to eligible New Mexicans.

FEMA funding is also available to state, tribal, and eligible local governments and certain private nonprofit organizations on a cost-sharing basis for emergency assistance to save lives and protect property, and for permanently restoring community infrastructure in the designated counties and the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

To date, more than **\$34 million** in federal assistance, including long-term, low-interest loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration and flood insurance claims, has been approved for New Mexicans affected by the disaster.

FEMA, SBA and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) have approved grants, loans and insurance settlements for recovering homeowners, renters and businesses in Lincoln, Otero, Rio Arriba and San Juan counties and the Mescalero Apache Reservation. This assistance helps pay for eligible losses and disaster-related damage repair and replacement of homes and personal property, temporary housing, cleaning and sanitizing, moving and storage, childcare, medical and dental expenses and other needs of New Mexicans affected by the fires and flooding.

FEMA Individual Assistance

As of Jan. 22, FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) totaled more than **\$7.6 million** in grants to eligible homeowners and renters, including:

- More than **\$4.7 million** in housing grants to help pay for home repair, home replacement and rental assistance for temporary housing.
- More than **\$2.8 million** grants to help pay for personal property replacement and other serious disaster-related needs, such as moving and storage fees, transportation, childcare, and medical and dental expenses.

The first leasing-in for Direct Housing took place on Nov. 20; 41 families have been approved for Direct Housing, and to date, 39 families have been licensed to



occupy FEMA Transportable Temporary Housing Units and one family is awaiting to be licensed in. One household has successfully found permanent housing and no longer requires assistance from the program.

For more information about FEMA's IA program, visit www.fema.gov/assistance/individual.

FEMA Public Assistance?

FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) program for the South Fork and Salt Fires and flooding reimburses the state, counties, local governments, tribes, and certain private nonprofits (including houses of worship) for eligible costs of disaster-related debris removal and emergency protective measures. PA is available, on a cost-sharing basis, in all five designated areas: Lincoln, Otero, Rio Arriba and San Juan counties and the Mescalero Apache Reservation.

Under the direction of the state, private contractors have removed more than 161,000 cubic yards of debris from impacted areas of Lincoln County. That's about enough debris, stacked 10 feet high, to cover five football fields. More than 65% of the disaster's rubble has been hauled away.

National Flood Insurance Program

FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), to date, has settled claims for homeowners and businesses totaling more than **\$4.8 million**.

To find a list of flood insurance writers in New Mexico, visit: <http://www.floodsmart.gov/flood-insurance-provider>. For more information about NFIP, to find out if you live in a participating community, and what's covered by NFIP policies, contact your private insurance provider or visit FloodSmart.gov.

Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved over **\$21.6 million** in long-term, low-interest disaster loans to homeowners, renters, businesses and non-profit organizations.



Applicants may apply at <https://lending.sba.gov>. The official deadline to apply to SBA for property damage was Oct. 19, 2024, but SBA is still accepting applications. The deadline for Economic Injury filing is March 20, 2025. For more information, call SBA Customer Service at 800-659-2955 or visit www.SBA.gov/disaster.

For the latest information on New Mexico's recovery visit fema.gov/disaster/4795. Follow the FEMA Region 6 X account at [X.com/FEMARegion6](https://x.com/FEMARegion6) or on Facebook at facebook.com/FEMARegion6.



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