

Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office Partnership with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service

Release Date: Aug 4, 2023

The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office cautions the community to be aware of misinformation, disinformation and individuals/businesses posing as a Claims Office representative. The Claims Office is aware of recent efforts by fraudsters pretending to be sources of official information regarding the Claims Office and claims process. It is important to be alert to potential scammers and verify sources.

The partnership between the Claims Office and the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offers landowners the opportunity to request an NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan for their property tailored to recovering from the Hermit's Peak Calf/Canyon Fire and subsequent floods. The plans will be provided to claimants at no charge and can be utilized by the Claims Office to streamline the review process. Any landowner with impacts to their property as a result of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire or subsequent flooding is eligible to receive a NRCS plan under this partnership.

Clarification of How the Process Works and How it will benefit Claimants

The Claims Office partnership with the NRCS offers claimants the opportunity to request a comprehensive Conservation Restoration Plan. Under this partnership, NRCS plans will include cost estimates for recovery actions allowable for compensation under the Claims Office. Plans will be expedited and developed by experienced certified local planners with more in-depth information than what may be available in the private market. Plans will be provided to claimants at no cost. These Conservation Restoration Plans will result in a partial payment for losses.



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The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office and NRCS are aware that the prices of goods and services may fluctuate over time. A Claimant can supplement and amend a claim to include additional claims/costs at any time before signing the Proof of Loss. Claimants may also ask to reopen a claim if they incurred additional financial losses.

A claimant may choose to submit a portion of the Conservation Restoration Plan or the plan in its entirety. The claimant may also opt out of receiving compensation for certain line items within the plan itself in lieu of utilizing third party estimates. All third-party estimates will require additional review by the Claims Office and may include requests for additional documentation and field visits if necessary. Third-Party estimates may also take additional time to process in comparison to line items developed within the scope of a Conservation Restoration Plan from the NRCS.

How to Request an NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan

Landowners have two options for requesting an NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan under this partnership.

1. The recommended first step is to submit a [Notice of Loss](#) to the Claims Office. Once you submit a Notice of Loss, your dedicated Claims Navigator will contact you to discuss your claim and the full scope of your loss. Your Claims Navigator will help you determine if you would benefit from a NRCS plan. If you have already submitted a Notice of Loss and are interested in a NRCS plan, we encourage you to mention this to your Claims Navigator. If you indicate that you want an NRCS plan, your Claims Navigator can assist in filling out the form to request one. An NRCS staff member will then contact you directly to schedule a visit to your property.
2. Landowners may also choose to contact the NRCS directly to request a Conservation Restoration Plan. To request a plan from NRCS directly, you can email ConservationRestorationPlan@usda.gov, or visit one of the two local service centers listed below.

NRCS Las Vegas Field Office

1927 A 7Th St
Las Vegas, NM 87701



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(505) 425-3594 Ext.3

NRCS Mora Field Office

523 State Highway 518

Mora, NM 87732

(575) 387-2424 Ext. 3

The Claims Office aims to provide the fullest compensation to Claimants possible under the law and would like to remind Claimants of our commitment to provide fair and equitable compensation for all claims.

The Claims Office and NRCS have coordinated to ensure that NRCS plans under this partnership will streamline the claims review process, ensuring claimants receive compensation that is comprehensive, fair, and transparent. NRCS can provide plans to landowners and properties of all sizes, but plans are specific to natural resource restoration. Payments based on NRCS plans under this partnership will be made directly to the claimant.

The Claims Office and the NRCS will only prepare Conservation Restoration Plans in coordination with Claimants who have either:

1. Submitted a [Notice of Loss](#) to the Claims Office and determined that a Conservation Restoration Plan will benefit them, or
2. Contacted NRCS directly to request a Conservation Restoration Plan. If you do not request a Conservation Restoration Plan the Claims Office will not independently obtain one

Under no circumstances will representatives from the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office or the NRCS show up unannounced or without having first coordinated with a landowner/claimant.

Example

After initiating the NRCS process, the NRCS will provide the landowner/claimant with a comprehensive Conservation Restoration Plan for their property. The landowner/claimant makes the decision to request compensation for the losses documented on the NRCS plan to restore their property. Included in the NRCS plan is a cost estimate to rebuild a fence that was lost due to the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fire. At the time that the Conservation Restoration Plan was



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written, the cost for fence was \$10/linear foot. At the time the plan was implemented by the landowner/claimant the cost for fence increased to \$12/linear foot. The landowner/claimant can re-open their claim to request additional compensation that will match the actual cost/loss incurred.

1000 ft of fence at \$10/linear foot = \$10,000 claim/compensation

Actual Cost at time of implementation \$12/linear foot: 1000 ft of fence at \$12/linear foot= \$12,000

The claimant can re-open the claim to seek compensation for the difference between initial compensation based on the estimate in the NRCS plan and final cost of fence and receive an additional \$2,000 to fully compensate for the cost of the fence.

When Will This Partnership Be Available?

Claimants may make the request for an NRCS plan under this partnership, which began on May 22, 2023. NRCS will meet with claimants to produce Conservation Restoration Plans on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Claims Office and NRCS have a three-year Memorandum of Understanding in place. NRCS plans to offer this service to claimants as long as the partnership is in place. We encourage all landowners whose natural resources were impacted by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire to take advantage of this partnership. The focus of the Claims Office is to ensure all claimants receive full compensation under the law.

How to Submit a Notice of Loss to the Claims Office

[Notice of Loss form](#) can be submitted via email at fema-hermits-peak@fema.dhs.gov, or by mail to FEMA Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office, or by visiting one of our three Claims Offices listed below. Claims Offices are open Monday – Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Mora Claims Office

Mora County Courthouse
1 Courthouse Drive
Mora, NM 87732



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Las Vegas Claims Office

216 Mills Avenue

Las Vegas, NM 87701 (In Mills Plaza) Santa Fe Claims Office

1711 Llano Street, Suite E

Santa Fe, NM 87505

(Next to Mucho Gourmet Sandwich Shoppe)

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