

FEMA Authorizes Funds to Fight Colorado's Lee and Elk Fires

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DENVER – This afternoon FEMA authorized the use of federal funds to help with firefighting costs for two fires in Colorado, the Lee Fire and the Elk Fire burning within 15 miles of each other in Rio Blanco County near the town of Meeker.

FEMA Region 8 Acting Regional Administrator Katherine Fox approved the state's request for federal Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG) after receiving two separate requests earlier this afternoon and determining that each fire threatened such destruction that either fire would constitute a major disaster.

At the time of the request, the Lee Fire had burned more than 45,000 acres of land, nearly 40% of which is state or private land. The Elk Fire has burned more than 14,250 acres of land, more than 60% of which is state or private land. Both fires are 0% contained with continuing fire weather in the forecast.

The fires started August 2, 2025 and have prompted 2500 residents in the town of Meeker to be placed under various evacuation orders. There are 1000+ homes threatened, one primary evacuation route open, and a local hospital and nursing home already evacuated. There are nine other large fires burning uncontrolled within the state.

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. 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, repair and replacement; mobilization and demobilization activities; and tools, materials and supplies.



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For more information on FMAGs, visit <https://www.fema.gov/fire-management-assistance-grants-program-details>.



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