

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Granted for Cave Fire

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Oakland, Calif. – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has authorized the use of federal funds to assist the State of California in combatting the Cave Fire burning in Santa Barbara County.

On Nov. 26, 2019, the State of California submitted a request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) for the Cave Fire. At the time of the request, the fire threatened 15,000 homes in the unincorporated areas of Santa Barbara County, with a population of 85,000. The fire also threatened 10 businesses, a county fire communication center, power transmission lines, and Chumash Painted Cave State Historic Park. Mandatory evacuations were taking place for approximately 4,000 people, with 3,000 people under a warning order or voluntary evacuation order.

The fire started on Nov. 25, 2019 and has burned in excess of 3,400 acres of federal, state, and private land. Currently, there are no other large fires burning uncontrolled within the state.

The FEMA Region IX regional administrator determined that the Cave Fire threatened such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. The state's request was approved on Nov. 26, 2019 at 12:38 a.m. PST.

FMAGs provide federal funding for up to 75 percent of eligible firefighting costs. The Disaster Relief Fund provides funding for FMAGs through FEMA to assist in fighting fires that threaten to cause major disasters. Eligible costs covered by FMAGs can include expenses for field camps, equipment use, materials, supplies and mobilization, and demobilization activities attributed to fighting the fire.

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