News Release

USDA Announces Waiver of Cost-Share Requirements for EWP in Designated Areas of New Mexico Impacted by Wildfires

MORA, N.M., June 15, 2022 – Today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a waiver of the cost-share requirements for the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program to address watershed impairments in designated areas of New Mexico impacted by recent wildfires. Through EWP, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) can direct Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding to help with assistance.

This waiver will allow for NRCS to pay for 100% of the cost. The waiver is part of a broader effort by the Biden-Harris Administration to supplement state and local recovery efforts in areas affected by wildfires and straight-line winds through a Presidential major disaster declaration for four counties earlier this month.

“The need in New Mexico is tremendous. We are working diligently to provide assistance and outreach to communities in need as quickly as possible. We are committing to covering 100% of the costs in impacted watersheds,” said Terry Cosby, Chief of USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, who toured wildfire damage today in Mora and San Miguel County. “The Emergency Watershed Protection Program helps communities rebuild after natural disasters and prepare for the future, and this is assistance will help New Mexico Build Back Better.”

This is the largest wildfire in New Mexico history and NRCS is doing onsite visits for potential EWP assistance.

EWP is a recovery effort aimed at relieving imminent hazards to life and property caused by floods, fires, windstorms and other natural disasters. The waiver of the cost share requirements allows NRCS to cover 100% of cost for the following areas:

- Cooks Peak Fire in Colfax County
- Hermits Peak and Calf Canyon Fire in Mora and San Miguel counties
- McBride Fire in Lincoln County
- Nogal Fire in Lincoln County

More Information
In addition to EWP, USDA also helps farmers and ranchers recover from natural disasters. More information is available in this May 10, 2022 news release.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more
resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

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