



Wildfire Incident Annex

Section 1. Introduction

This annex ensures a coordinated response to a wildfire. It is not intended to address response procedures of any specific ESF, but rather provides support in coordinating these efforts. ESFs are required to have their own response procedures in alignment with the Operating Plan.

1.1 Authority & Decision Making

The fire location and ownership of land is essential to determine who is responsible for firefighting and the costs of suppression:

Local Responsibility Fire: fires within LPC on non-federal land. The Sheriff and the Fire Chief share certain jurisdictional responsibilities for the incident. Both will be party to any cost share agreement with federal participants.

State Responsibility Fire: a fire that exceeds the county and the Sheriff’s capability to control or extinguish and is escalated to the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC). The county and state will provide an agency administrator to the incident. The state and county will enter into an agreement concerning the transfer of authority and responsibility for fire suppression and the retention of other responsibilities.

Federal Responsibility Fire: federal participants are responsible for wildland fire protection on the respective federal lands within their jurisdictional boundaries.

Boundary Land Fire: a fire that occurs on lands of intermingled/adjoining protection responsibilities and that is adjacent to a protection boundary or located in an area of undetermined jurisdiction. The responsibility will be the initial attack of the protecting agencies on both sides of the boundary. If multiple agencies are engaged on a fire or near common boundaries, the agency representatives should mutually agree upon the fire strategy and delegate an IC. If the fire is confined to a single jurisdiction, that agency will delegate an IC. It is the responsibility of the jurisdictional agency to provide and mobilize replacement forces.

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Section 2. Wildfire Considerations

In accordance with CRS-30-10-512¹ the Sheriff is the designated fire warden. CRS-23-30-307² provides limitation of State responsibility regarding repayment. To learn more about LPC's wildfire risk and potential to experience wildfire, see the [La Plata County Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire Program](#).

2.1 Communication / Dispatch Center

La Plata County has three communication centers:

Durango La Plata 9-1-1 Communications Center: provides coordination support to communications amongst Durango, Fort Lewis Mesa, Upper Pine River Fire Protection District, and LPC users.

Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch (DRC): support lands managed by the US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) (Dispatch, 2021). Provides communication support for initial attack and incident support (link between local, state, tribal, and federal). Can dispatch resources beyond the 24-hr. mutual aid period, as described in the Operating Plan.

Southern Ute Dispatch Center: provides coordination support to communications amongst the Los Pinos Fire Protection District.

*If property owners are planning to burn irrigation ditches and/or fields, they are advised to inform the Durango La Plata 9-1-1 Communications Center via the non-Emergent phone line: **(970) 385-2900**.

2.2 Resource Requests

In the event of a Wildfire incident, the incident commander (IC) must request all resources directly from the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch or the Durango La Plata 9-1-1 Communications Center. This practice allows for all resource requests to be properly captured and documented. The 9-1-1 Center shall be the responsible for reporting resource requests to the LPC EOC Coordinator.

¹ CRS 30-10-512: Sheriff to act as fire warden. The Sheriff, in cooperation with the local fire protection district(s) is responsible for wildland fire management on all non-federal and non-tribal (unincorporated) lands in La Plata County outside of a fire district.

² CRS 23-30-307: Limitation of state responsibility. Nothing in this statute may be construed to authorize any county fire warden, firefighter, or county officer to obligate the state for payment of any money.



Section 3. Concept of Operations

3.1 Ready, Set, Go!

Residents and visitors of La Plata County should (Prepare for Wildfire, 2019):

Be Ready	Get Set	Go
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create & maintain defensible space, harden home against flying embers • Assemble emergency supplies and belongings into a safe place • Plan an escape route 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare your family and home ahead of time for evacuation, have an evacuation plan • Learn your community's response plan and methods to receiving emergency notifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go early for your safety • Take necessary evacuation steps to enhance your family and home's chance of surviving a wildfire

3.2 Local Response

The public should call 9-1-1 when reporting a wildland fire. The receiving dispatch center will notify surrounding dispatch centers, including the DRC. AOP participants will coordinate all detection activities involving aerial flights through the DRC to avoid duplication of effort, ensure there are no gaps in coverage, and provide for air safety. Participants will share information gained from detection activities with all affected participants through the DRC. Mutual aid will be implemented as necessary. Mutual aid zones are one (1) mile on either side of the boundary between the jurisdictional agency's lands and can be extended if there is imminent threat to life or property. Each agency will assume responsibility for its own expenses during the mutual period.

The DRC will notify the appropriate federal agencies to respond to the fire. The involvement of federal agencies and resources may be based on the fire's proximity and threat to state, federal, and tribal lands. If the fire continues to escalate all or part of the ICS positions may be needed. The ICS structure and ESF integration are in the Concept of Operations section of the LPC EOP Umbrella Plan.

La Plata County has four fire districts: Durango Fire Protection District, Upper Pine River Fire Protection District, Los Pinos Fire Protection District and Fort Lewis Mesa Fire Protection District. See Figure 1: La Plata County Fire Districts & Stations outlines each of the four districts and their respective fire stations.

3.3 State Response

The Sheriff will notify the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) regional fire management officer of any County fires that are expected to or do exceed the Sheriff's capability to control or extinguish or that are threatening multiple homes and/or other structures. The local dispatch centers or the DRC that receives the

initial notification of a wildland fire from any source will dispatch the necessary initial attack resources. Initial attack resources are not predetermined but are based on resource availability.

La Plata County

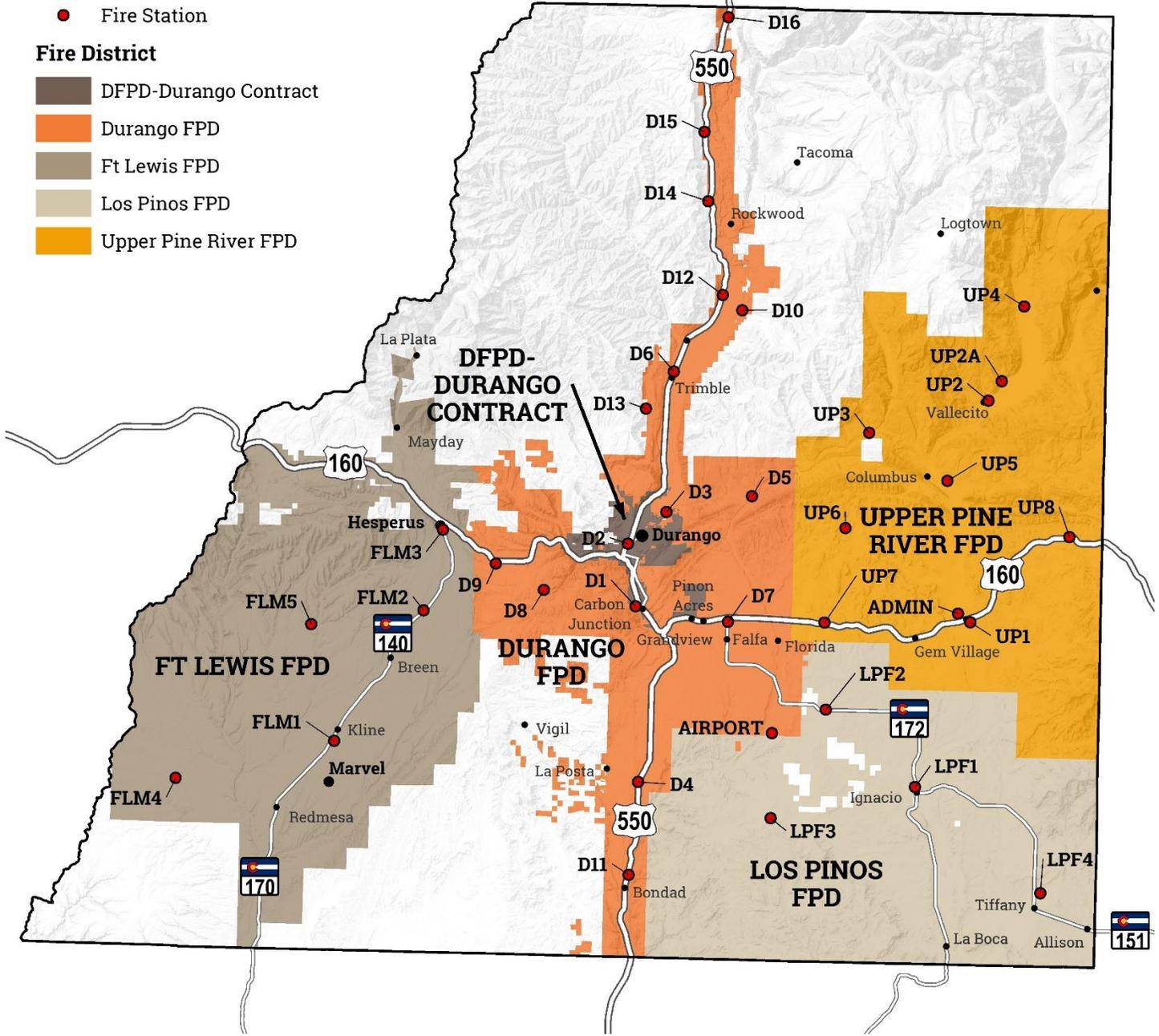
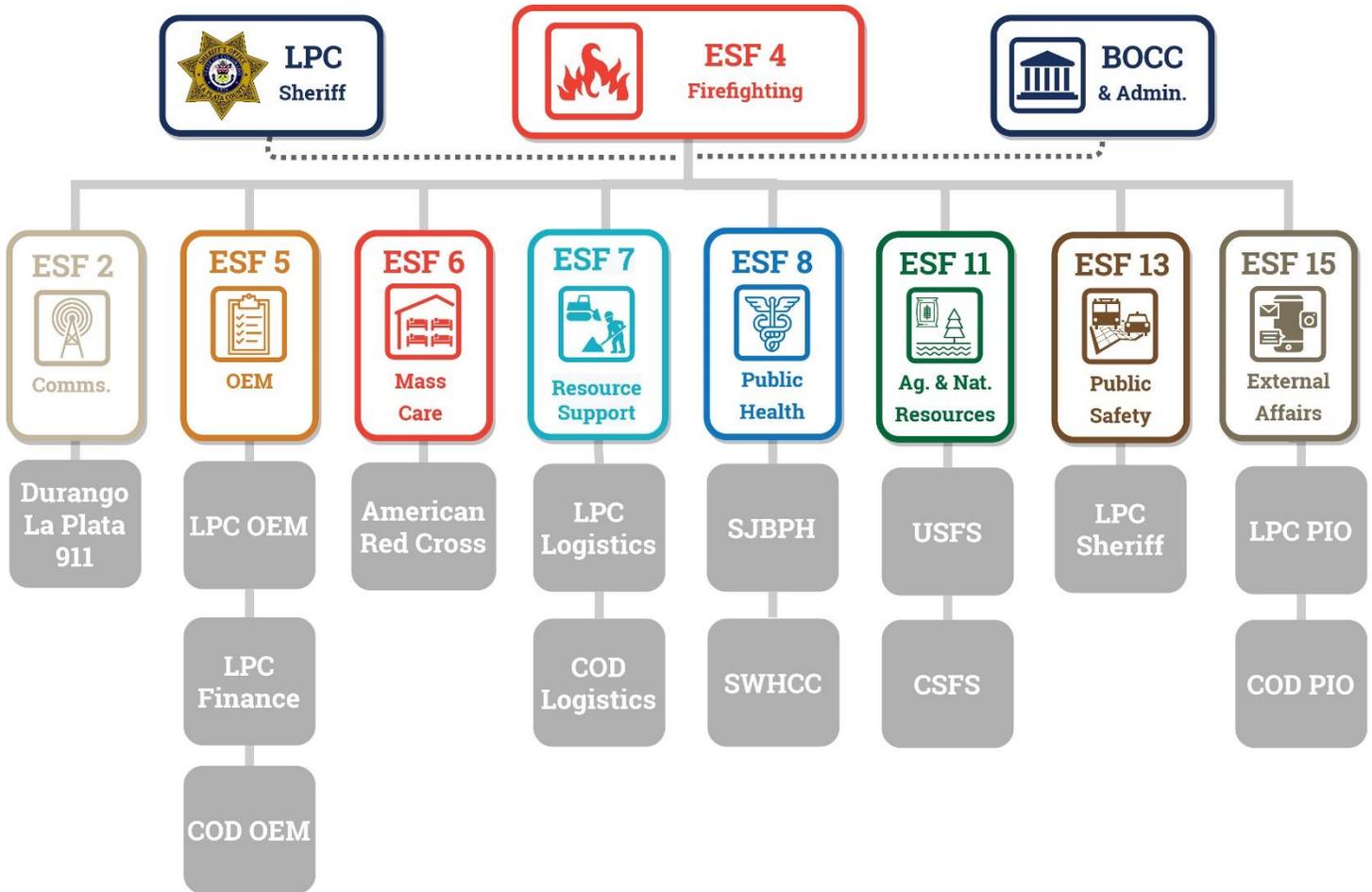


Figure 1: La Plata County Fire Districts & Stations

Section 4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The following sections outline the primary and support emergency support functions (ESF) that have a role in preparedness and response to a wildfire incident within La Plata County. Dependent upon the situation, additional emergency support functions may be called upon by the La Plata County Emergency Manager. Along with the fire warden (La Plata County Sheriff) **ESF 4** is generally the lead for wildfire incidents in the county.



Acronyms:

- La Plata County (LPC)
- City of Durango (COD)
- Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS)
- Public Information Officer (PIO)
- Southwest Health Care Coalition (SWHCC)
- San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH)

4.2 Local Government Entities

4.2.1 Primary ESF

ESF 4 - Fire & EMS



The Fire Districts individually maintain their own wildfire preparedness and resource management plans for personnel and equipment. Each district may have differing capabilities and resources. First on scene manages the scene by precisely identifying the location of the fire and relaying this information to the Durango-La Plata 9-1-1 Communications Center.

ESF 4 – Initial Attack

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	The closest forces of the AOP participants should be dispatched without regard to jurisdictional boundaries. Participants will initiate the appropriate management activities within their capability. Participants will not initially attack if such attack puts personnel at unreasonable risk or if asked to stand down by the jurisdictional agency.
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	First on scene assume the role of IC, regardless of jurisdiction and IC is responsible for initial emergency action. IC must relay command name, report if others are responding, request additional resources as necessary, relay staging location (if established), notify Sheriff of evacuation or Alert and Warning (A&W) need, establish comms channel, and determine legal description of fire point of ignition and jurisdictional agency. Establish direct communication and coordination with the EOC upon activation.

ESF 4 – Assuming Command During Initial Attack

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	If IC is not a representative of the jurisdictional agency, command will be offered to a qualified representative of the jurisdiction once he/she arrives. An agency Administrator from each jurisdiction will collaboratively assign command during Multi-Jurisdictional Fire. Administrators are responsible for establishing objectives for the IC. An IMT may be established as appropriate.

4.2.2 Support ESFs

ESF 2 – Communications



The Durango La Plata 9-1-1 Communications Center gathers basic information from the reporting party and notifies the appropriate response personnel through radio broadcast. The 9-1-1 Communications Center queries the reporting party and others on or near the scene to describe the location of the fire. If the responding agency requests mutual aid, **ESF 2** will notify the appropriate entity.

ESF 2 - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	Notify through simulcast broadcasting: appropriate fire districts, shift commander and patrol deputies of the Sheriff’s Office, and OEM Director.
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	If the responding agency requests mutual aid, the 9-1-1 Communications Center contacts agencies providing mutual aid and the Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 2 - Public Alert and Warning

Coordinate with **ESFs 5, 15, and 6** to develop emergency notifications for the public (including people with AFN and those with limited English proficiency) of a disaster event or evacuation. Refer to the Alert & Warning Annex for further details.

ESF 5 - Emergency Management



OEM is responsible for maintaining situational awareness of threats that may necessitate an evacuation of citizens. OEM will coordinate the County government’s role in response to and recovery from the disaster. OEM will work in partnership with the EM of the municipalities within the County to provide overall coordination at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

ESF 5 - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	With the support of ESF 2 and at the request of the Sheriff or IC, coordinate Public Alert and Warnings, see Alert and Warning Annex. Provide support to ESF 15 as needed. Assure documentation includes record of resource and personnel costs. Initiate Finance Department to set up an account for expenditures; see Finance in the EOP Umbrella Document.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 5 – EOC Activation

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Notify staff of pending EOC activation and/or to current activation levels. Coordinate staffing of all needed positions. Activate the Multi-Agency Coordination Group (MACG) for coordination and decision-making purposes. Maintain coordination and communication between the EOC and support agencies, including direct communication with the ICP. Communicate with DHSEM, keeping the State apprised of local situation.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 5 – Sheltering & Mass Care

The American Red Cross (ARC) is the primary mass care and sheltering provider. ARC supports all people affected to receive care, shelter, and hope during an emergency (Cross, 2021).

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	OEM Director activates ARC to provide mass care & shelter. ARC provides support to ESF 6 & ESF 8 in meeting necessary needs of evacuees and provides a private location for affected family members. OEM Director identifies a liaison from ARC to establish communication. ARC provides mental health and counseling services, in coordination with the disaster response team, as appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 6 – Mass Care & Human Services



The Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for supporting the coordination of movement of people, including those with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) during an evacuation emergency. DHS is additionally responsible for providing shelter prior to ARC's involvement. DHS will coordinate animal care with the support of County Animal Care providers.

ESF 6 - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Coordinate sheltering for mass care with the support of the American Red Cross; see Mass Care Annex. Provide specialized staff to shelters. Coordinate placement of evacuated animals. Attempt to place animals with owners when possible. Coordinate the movement of Animal Control Officers to support Evacuation Task Force as developed by EOC personnel.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Coordinate with ESF 9 for the use of the Salamander system for tracking resources, personnel, evacuees, etc. With ESF 8 support, coordinate transportation of non-ambulatory persons and people with disabilities. Coordinate with Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers, if activated.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 7 – Logistics Management & Resource Management



LPC Road & Bridge Department will provide materials, equipment, and/or personnel for the emergency maintenance and/or restoration of basic services to the public during an emergency or disaster. Coordination with outside contractors and/or CDOT may be necessary. R&B will develop plans, policies, and procedures for the central control and repair of transportation assets for emergency utilization of county vehicles, heavy equipment, supplies, and personnel.

ESF 7 - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Provide support to first responders by conducting traffic control measures such as barricades and flares, including establishment of emergency traffic routes and identification and marking of dangerous areas in coordination with the Sheriff's Department. If road closures are necessary, communicate those to the IC.
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Clear and/or close roads, as necessary. (May enter fire zone with heavy equipment only when accompanied by a knowledgeable firefighter, e.g., "dozer boss." and with proper Fire training and PPE). Document all costs associated with the firefight efforts via R&B district team leaders and R&B superintendent. Provide initial damage assessment information to the Public Works Director relevant to road damage, county equipment, and hazardous conditions.

ESF 8 – Public Health & Medical



Public Health identifies the health and medical needs of those impacted by the emergency, including patients evacuating medical care facilities, hospitals, hospices, and nursing homes.

ESF 8 – Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	With the support of ESF 6 and EOC personnel, coordinate specialized transportation for evacuees with medical and functional needs. Coordinate care for evacuees whose needs cannot be accommodated in general population shelters. Active and coordinate the SWHCC as appropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Monitor support for individuals at pickup points and provide medical support at designated evacuation assembly areas and pickup points to perform triage of citizens prior to evacuation.

ESF 11 - Colorado State Forest Service



CRS 23-30-304: State responsibility determined. The state forester shall determine areas of a fire for which the state has financial responsibility. The management of fires in all other areas is primarily the responsibility of local or federal agencies.

ESF 11 - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Coordinate the identification of fire location and the potential of fire encroaching on State lands. Coordinate CSFS response, as necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated <input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Completed <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	In coordination with ESF 13 and DFPC, determine if a wildfire meets the criteria of an Emergency Fire Fund (EFF) fire. Upon qualification for an EFF fire, District Forester will submit a report to the CSFS.

ESF 13 - Sheriff's Office



CRS 30-10-513.5: Authority of Sheriff relating to fires within unincorporated areas of county - liability for expenses. The Sheriff may request assistance from a fire protection district in controlling or extinguishing a fire on private property. The fire protection district may seek reimbursement from the property owner for rendering such aid. The Sheriff will organize & coordinate all evacuation efforts upon request from the IC.

ESF 13 Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Assume role of IC if the fire is in unincorporated lands. Coordinate with ESF 4 to determine if any evacuations are needed. Contact OEM Director to establish evacuation center or shelter. Coordinate the re-entry movement of evacuees back to their homes when safe. See Evacuation Annex.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 13 - Public Alert and Warning

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Use loudspeakers to alert the public in immediately threatened areas. Coordinate with ESF 4 and ESF 5 to develop emergency notifications as necessary see Alert & Warning Annex.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 13 - Traffic Control

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Pre-identify evacuation routes. Major Evacuation Routes are highways HWY 160, HWY 550, and HWY 172. Facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles with local police and the Colorado State Patrol. Coordinate the routes for movement of motorists toward designated / safest evacuation routes. Maintain direct communication with EOC and ICP.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

ESF 15 – External Affairs



External Affairs/public information officers/public affairs officer, provides accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible information to affected populations, including governments, media, the private sector, and the local populace, including children, those with disabilities and others with AFN, and individuals with limited English proficiency

ESF 15 Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	Provide emergency public information. Provide continuous and accessible public incident information. Ensure that information is authentic and valid and informs individuals with sensory, intellectual, or cognitive disabilities; individuals with limited English proficiency, and others with AFN. Coordinate the actions for public information releases. Inform responding stakeholders how to, or when not to, interact with the media during an emergency.
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	

BOCC & ADMIN



CRS 23-30-305: Cooperation by counties. The Boards of County Commissioners may cooperate and coordinate with the governing bodies of organized fire districts, fire departments, and municipal corporations; private parties; other counties; the state forester; the United States Secretary of the Interior; the United States Secretary of Agriculture; and an agency of the United States government in the management and prevention of forest fires.

CRS 30-11-107(1)(o): Powers of the board. The Board of County Commissioners of each county has power at any meeting to cooperate with other counties and with the state forester in the organization and training of rural fire fighting groups, payment for the operation and maintenance of firefighting equipment and in sharing the cost of suppressing fires.

BOCC & ADMIN - Coordination List

STATUS	ACTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Initiated	
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Progress	Communicate with the OEM Director to receive updates and status of fire and its effects on people and property. Cooperate with the PIO(s) to help elected officials prepare statements regarding the fire. Issue emergency declarations as the situation escalates beyond the Local Government's capacity
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed	
<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	