



## New Mexico Association of Counties

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To: 2010-2011 Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program Applicants  
From: Paul Gutierrez, Executive Director  
New Mexico Association of Counties  
Date: January 2, 2010

Welcome to the 2010-2011 Wildfire Risk Reduction for Rural Communities Grant Program. Funding for this program is provided by the National Fire Plan through the Department of the Interior/Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in cooperation with the New Mexico Association of Counties.

The program targets at-risk communities by offering seed money to help defray the costs of reducing wildland fire risk to non-federal WUI areas in New Mexico. Funding for this grant program is intended to directly benefit communities that may be impacted by wildland fire initiating from or spreading to BLM public land.

During the initial three years, the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program primarily funded projects for the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), a planning prerequisite to all other activities. The 2010-2011 grant cycle will give priority to applicants who request funding to implement CWPP identified projects that reduce hazardous fuels on non-federal lands and can show a direct benefit to BLM lands. Special attention will also be placed on applicants who request funding for CWPP Updates.

The following items are attached. Applications for each type of project are available on our website at [www.nmcounties.org](http://www.nmcounties.org) :

- ❖ Program Information including Grant Requirements
- ❖ Award Terms and Conditions Example
- ❖ Quarterly Report Example

Please review all materials thoroughly and complete the submission checklist before submitting your application packet. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. All packets must be received by the New Mexico Association of Counties office by 5:00 pm on March 1, 2010. If you have specific inquiries about the New Mexico Association of Counties, Wildfire Risk Reduction Program, Application for Funding, or grant distributions please contact:

Joy Esparsen, Intergovernmental Relations Director  
New Mexico Association of Counties  
(505) 820-8111  
[jesparsen@nmcounties.org](mailto:jesparsen@nmcounties.org)

*The Department of the Interior/Bureau of Land Management and the New Mexico Association of Counties appreciate your interest in protecting our residents, communities, and state from wildland fires.*

**New Mexico Association of Counties  
Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities  
2010-2011 Program Information**

**Background**

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities was established in 2005 under the National Fire Plan to assist communities throughout New Mexico in reducing their risk from wildland fire on non-federal lands. The New Mexico Association of Counties (NMAC), a nonprofit community foundation, has partnered with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to administer the program and distribute awards.

This grant program is only applicable to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). WUI is defined as identified in an approved Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). A completed and approved CWPP is a pre-requisite for funding through this program. The program targets at-risk communities by offering seed money to help defray the costs of reducing wildland fire risk on non-federal lands in WUI areas throughout New Mexico. Funding for this grant program is intended to directly benefit communities that may be impacted by wildland fire initiating from or spreading to BLM public land.

In 2010-2011, priority will be given to applicants who request funding to implement CWPP identified projects that reduce hazardous fuels and can show a direct benefit to BLM lands. CWPP updates are also strongly encouraged. Applicants may apply for complimentary projects with no more than one per category (1 Fuel Treatment, 1 Education, Prevention and Outreach, 1 CWPP Update). Each project must be submitted on a different application. A Selection Committee comprised of wildland fire experts, federal, state and local government officials will review all project proposals and make funding recommendations. The New Mexico Association of Counties Board of Directors will have final approval of these recommendations.

1. Grants for **Hazardous Fuel Reduction** projects on non-federal lands are available for up to \$50,000/project.
2. Grants for **Wildland Fire Education, Prevention and Outreach Activities** that support implementation of an applicable CWPP are available for up to \$20,000/project.
3. Grants for **CWPP Updates** to address broader WUI definitions or other modifications to previously approved CWPPs in order to address community specific actions, strategies, or treatments are available for up to \$5,000/project. If you are considering updating your CWPP or WUI definition please reference the (Federal Register - Vol.66, No. 3) or visit the NMAC website at [www.nmcounties.org](http://www.nmcounties.org) for more information.

All project proposals require a minimum 10% cost share. Cost share can be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. Funded projects must be completed within 12 months of award acceptance.

It is the responsibility of the grantee to assure that if their project is selected for funding through the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program that it complies with applicable local, state, and federal laws. Applicants who receive more than \$500,000 annually from federal sources will be required to submit a copy of their audit to NMAC.

All funds must be expended within 12 months of award acceptance. Funds cannot be used to attempt to influence legislation or the outcome of any public election.

Prescribed burning of any type including, but not limited to, broadcast burns, pile burns, understory burns, etc. is explicitly excluded as an approved practice through this grant program.

**New Mexico Association of Counties  
Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities  
2010-2011 Program Information**

**Eligibility**

Eligible applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

- ❖ Be a County Government or Municipality, a 501(c)(3) organization in the State of New Mexico, a statutorily recognized political subdivision such as a Soil & Water Conservation District, or a Native American tribe working on behalf of one or more communities at risk of wildfires in the State of New Mexico;  
AND
- ❖ Contribute at least 10% cost share to the project that can include “in-kind” services. In-kind services may be comprised of labor, staff work, or any other non-federal agency participation costs.  
AND
- ❖ Have their local BLM Field Office Fire Management officer review and sign off on the application with a recommendation for funding.

**Criteria for Selection**

Funding for this grant program is intended to directly benefit communities that may be impacted by wildland fire originating on or spreading to BLM public land. As a result, the following criteria will be considered when your project is evaluated.

Projects must demonstrate that:

- ❖ The area impacted by the project (s) is at risk to fire originating on or spreading to BLM public land.
- ❖ The area impacted by the project is in the wildland urban interface (WUI) as defined by the applicable CWPP for the project.

Special consideration will be given to projects that:

- ❖ Are for Hazardous Fuel Reduction and can demonstrate appropriate mitigation measures for cultural and endangered species impacts
- ❖ Are directly adjacent to BLM public land
- ❖ Include an Education, Prevention, and Outreach activity that compliments a requested Hazardous Fuel Reduction project
- ❖ Provides greater than the minimum 10% cost share
- ❖ Compliments existing or ongoing projects
- ❖ Utilizes Biomass from Hazardous Fuel Reduction projects
- ❖ Can demonstrate a cost-effective approach to treating hazardous fuels
- ❖ Develops sustainable education projects such as Train-the-Trainer
- ❖ Provides a benefit to multiple communities identified by the New Mexico Communities at Risk Assessment Plan
- ❖ Does not needlessly duplicate similar efforts in the community

**Timeline**

January 2, 2010	Release of Application for Funding
<b>March 1, 2010</b>	<b>Application deadline at 5:00pm, no late or incomplete applications accepted</b>
April 2010	Selection committee reviews project proposals

**New Mexico Association of Counties  
Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities  
2010-2011 Program Information**

**Fundable Projects**

All projects for hazardous fuel reduction and wildfire education, prevention and outreach must be identified in a CWPP. Funding for the 2010-2011 Program is estimated at \$400,000. Applicants may request funding for no more than one project in each of the following categories:

1. **Hazardous Fuel Reduction** - Fuel reduction projects and vegetation treatments remove or modify fuels in the wildland urban interface (WUI) to reduce potential wildfires. The goal is to modify or break up the fuels in such a way that lessens catastrophic fires and their threats to public and firefighter safety and reduces damage to property. Examples include fuel breaks, thinning, pruning, and landscape modifications. Prescribed burning of any type including, but not limited to, broadcast burns, pile burns, understory burns, etc. is explicitly excluded as an approved practice through this grant program. Biomass utilization is encouraged as a beneficial alternative for all Hazardous Fuel Reduction projects and will receive special consideration. Projects must be identified in a CWPP to be eligible for funding and must include a map showing exactly where the project will take place and the footprint of the project.

Please Note: Applicants requesting funding for Hazardous Fuel Reduction projects should thoroughly review the Endangered Species & Cultural/Historic Preservation Requirements included with this documentation and the application. Additional questions should be referred directly to the Grant Program Administrator.

2. **Wildland Fire Education, Prevention, & Outreach Activities** - Homeowners and communities have a responsibility to create "fire safe" conditions in and around structures that will limit the transmission of fire from wildlands to property and property to wildlands. Grants for wildland fire education, prevention and outreach activities should support implementation of an applicable CWPP through the development of educational products, community outreach events, data collection, home evaluations, media and public information events, and training residents. Topics for these activities may include, but are not limited to, structural ignitability, Firewise, defensible space, fire ecology, restoring fire to the environment, homeowner responsibility, etc.
3. **Community Wildfire Protection Plan Updates (CWPP)** - A completed CWPP is required before other activities can be funded through this program. CWPP's are community-based fire planning efforts that have been collaboratively developed and identify prioritized areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments. CWPP core groups may request funding to address broader WUI definitions or other updates to their previously approved CWPPs in order to address community specific actions, strategies, or treatments. Requests for CWPP updating funds should be considered complimentary funding to Hazardous Fuel Reduction or Education, Prevention, and Outreach projects and may not exceed \$5,000.

**New Mexico Association of Counties  
Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities  
2010-2011 Program Information**

**Endangered Species & Cultural/Historic Preservation Requirements**

All projects that include ground-disturbing activities such as thinning or other forms of fuel reduction require compliance with both endangered species and cultural/historic preservation laws. Photographs of the area where fuel treatment projects are proposed are required to assist with determining clearance requirements. Applicants are encouraged to review the Biological Assessment and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation guidance documents provided on the NMAC website at <http://www.nmcounties.org/wildfire.html>. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate the following "best practices" in the implementation of fuel reduction projects in order to limit requirements for clearance approval:

- a) Do not use off road vehicles during the project.
- b) Do not drag slash into piles; rather hand carry or move with wheeled carts.
- c) Do not use mechanical thinning equipment. Hand-thin with chain-saws.
- d) Use general best management practices to prevent soil erosion.

NMAC will review all Hazardous Fuel Reduction funding requests to determine appropriate compliance requirements. NMAC will then assist successful applicants through the compliance process, which in some sensitive areas may require changing the season, scope or type of work proposed, conducting cultural or species surveys, and/or consulting with state and/or federal agencies.

**Mapping Requirements**

Applicants for Hazardous Fuel Treatment funding must include a United States Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5-minute topographical map of the project footprint. Information regarding these maps can be obtained through the USGS website at <http://topomaps.usgs.gov/>. These maps will be required for cultural and endangered species review of all Hazardous Fuel Treatment project applications.

**Payment Information**

Grant awards will primarily be disbursed through quarterly reimbursement installments throughout the course of the 12-month grant period (i.e. personnel costs). Projects that require funds for a one-time task (i.e. equipment purchase) may be approved for a one time distribution.

**Grant Reporting**

All grant recipients will be required to submit quarterly progress reports to the New Mexico Association of Counties. A template has been provided with the program release and reports will include examples of news articles/press releases about your project, copies of any educational products developed, as well as photographs of your project's progress if applicable. Before and after photographs will be required for fuel treatment projects. If selected to receive a grant, organizations will be notified about quarterly progress report deadlines.

**Letters of Commitment**

Letters from committed partners must identify roles, responsibilities, and cost sharing arrangement for the specified project. Form letters will not be considered. Each letter must be submitted on the committed partners letterhead and include a current date. General letters of support should not be included.

**Application Submission:**

15 copies of each application including maps and letters of specific commitment. Submit to the New Mexico Association of Counties, Attn: Wildfire Risk Reduction Program, 613 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87505 - **NO LATER THAN 5PM, MARCH 1, 2010**. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted or considered for funding.

Quarterly Reporting  
Wildfire Risk Reduction Program for Rural Communities  
2010-2011 Program

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

PROJECT CATEGORY	HINTS - EXAMPLES	ANTICIPATED RESULTS OVER COURSE OF 12 MONTHS	QUARTERLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS				TOTAL ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS
			1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	
<p><b>COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS (CWPP's)</b></p> <p>Projects that develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans are identified in this section.</p>	<p><i>Number of CWPP's completed</i></p> <p><i>If you were awarded a grant to develop a CWPP, please report information on your current progress including public meeting dates and attendees/partners, status of project, media coverage if not listed separately under education and outreach below, contracts developed, drafts and final copies of CWPP, etc.</i></p>						
<p><b>NUMBER OF ACRES TREATED</b></p> <p>Projects that reduce fuels are identified in this section.</p>	<p><i>If you are completing a treatment project, please include information on treatment progress, community meetings, partners, photographs of before and after, media coverage if not listed separately under education and outreach below, status of project, contracts developed, etc.</i></p>						
<p><b>WILDFIRE EDUCATION, PREVENTION, OUTREACH PROJECTS</b></p> <p>Projects that educate residents and create behavior changes are identified in this section.</p>	<p><i>You may also list any public meetings and media coverage that is not already included under your CWPP or treatment report in this section. Each public meeting should be considered a different event. Please include the number of attendees at events, trainings and number of brochures, printed material distributed.</i></p>						

**NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES  
WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION GRANT PROGRAM**

**Terms & Conditions**

**NMAC AUTHORITY**

This is a sub grant of federal financial assistance from the New Mexico Association of Counties, (hereinafter referred to as "the Grantor") agrees to grant the entity named above (hereinafter referred to as "the Grantee") funds in the amount specified on the Grant Acknowledgement Form, to support the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program activated under this Grant Award. The Grantee agrees to abide by the Grant Award terms and conditions as set forth in this document.

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Program Administrator shall be responsible for oversight of the program, monitoring the performance of all grant recipient activities described in the application and distribution of grant funds. All correspondence should be directed to:

Joy Esparsen, Intergovernmental Relations Director  
613 Old Santa Fe Trail  
Santa Fe, NM 87501  
(505) 820-8111  
[jesparsen@nmcounties.org](mailto:jesparsen@nmcounties.org)

**FUNDING AUTHORITY**

Funding for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program is provided to the New Mexico Association of Counties through the following:

CFDA #15.228  
National Fire Plan: Wildland Urban Interface Community Fire Assistance  
Assistance Agreement Number: GDA 040021  
Assistance Agreement Period: October 1, 2009 to September 30, 2014  
Questioned Costs: None  
Federal Agency: Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management

**AMOUNT AWARDED**

This Grant Agreement is for the administration and completion of the approved Wildfire Risk Reduction grant award for fiscal year 2010-2011. Grant Agreement funds may not be used for other purposes. If costs exceed the maximum amount of funding approved, the Grantee shall pay the costs in excess of the approved budget.

**COST SHARE**

The cost-share requirement for this award is a minimum of 10% in-kind. Please reflect this information on your quarterly reports. If you need assistance in determining your in-kind contributions please contact the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program Administrator.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The Grantee shall perform the work described in the application package and made a part of the grant agreement articles.

## DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Funds will be distributed on a quarterly reimbursement basis unless prior approval has been received from the Grantor to release additional funds. Reporting requirements must be met before funds will be released. Final payment will be made upon completion of project. Please submit your receipts to the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program Administrator following the reporting and reimbursement chart below.

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Grantee shall submit quarterly status reports during the performance period. A copy of the required document is provided with this award package. There are no penalties for early completion of project.

Reporting Period	Report Due Date	Release Date of Payments	*Completion Percentage
Jul. 1 <sup>st</sup> – Sept. 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2010	October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2010	Sept. 5 <sup>th</sup> for Q1 Payment	25%
Oct. 1 <sup>st</sup> – Dec. 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2010	January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2011	Dec. 5 <sup>th</sup> for Q2 Payment	50%
Jan. 1 <sup>st</sup> – Mar. 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2011	April 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2011	Mar. 5 <sup>th</sup> for Q3 Payment	75%
Apr. 1 <sup>st</sup> – Jun. 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	June 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2011	Final Payments by Jun. 30 <sup>th</sup>	100%

\*Completion percentage is an estimate. We understand that some projects may not follow these percentages during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter. Please notify NMAC immediately if you are not on schedule after the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

## PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The performance period for the Grantee shall not exceed a maximum of 12 months. All costs must be incurred during the period of performance unless pre-award costs are approved. Unless an extension agreement is reached with NMAC, failure to meet project objectives within 12 month performance period will be considered a default in agreement and repayment of grant funds will be required.

## AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

All grantees expending \$500,000 or more in federal awards during a fiscal year are required to submit a copy of their financial audit to NMAC.

In order to comply with the federal requirements that regulate the funding provided for the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program, NMAC is required to ensure that grant recipient audits meet the requirements of OMB Circular A-133 and that the required audits are completed within 9 months of the end of the grantees audit period. In the event of audit findings, NMAC will issue a management decision within 6 months after receipt of the grantees audit report. NMAC must ensure that the grantee takes timely and appropriate corrective action on all audit findings. In cases of continued inability or unwillingness of a grantee to have the required audits, NMAC will take appropriate action using sanctions. Grantees agree to permit NMAC and auditors access to the records and financial statements as necessary for NMAC to comply with these requirements.

## REVISIONS

The Grantee shall notify the Grantor within 30 days of any changes in the primary contact or financial representative for their project.

## COMPLIANCE ISSUES

It is the responsibility of the Grantee to assure that their project complies with all applicable local, state, and federal laws. The Grantee also agrees to comply with all applicable laws and regulations governing standard grant management practices.

## TERMINATION

The Grantee may terminate the grant award agreement by giving written notice to the NMAC within ten (10) business days of receipt of this agreement.

## MEDIA

NMAC requires as a term and condition of the grant that the Grantee provides recognition and acknowledgement of the Association's award and contribution in all activities, publications, and materials associated with this funding. All media communications pertaining to your project or program should clearly indicate the support of the New Mexico Association of Counties and the National Fire Plan funding through the Bureau of Land Management.

The following is a suggested communications plan outline for your project's grant award:

### Press Releases

- a. Send out a press release announcing the grant award to your organization.
- b. Send out press releases preceding and following your program's events.
- c. Invite local media, donors, and elected officials and provide photo opportunities when appropriate.
- d. You may utilize the Press Release attached

### In-House Publications

- a. Feature the grant award in any newsletters, donor update letters, or notifications your organization has with its constituents.

### Inform your government representatives

- a. Letters from community organization help legislators understand the importance of investing public funds in the Wildfire Risk Reduction Program.
- b. You may utilize the Sample Letter attached for your local, state and federal officials

### Photos

- a. This is a requirement of all projects.
- b. For treatments, please submit before and after images
- c. For planning and CWPPs, please submit images of collaborative processes, meetings, etc.

### Logos

- a. Public events and /or materials are expected to have an official NMAC logo clearly visible.
- b. Include the NMAC logo and URL link on your website.
- c. Please contact Joy Esparsen to obtain an electronic copy of the NMAC logo.

*Acceptance of this award including the Terms and Conditions is acknowledged by the grantee upon signature of the governing body (i.e. County Commission, City Council, Board of Directors, Tribal Council) and return of the attached grant acknowledgement form to NMAC by July 15, 2010.*