



New Mexico Wildland Urban Fire Summit

Wildfire Futures: Building Community Connections and Empowerment

UNM Valencia, Student Community Center – Los Lunas, NM

September 30 – October 2, 2025

Tuesday, September 30, 2025		Introduction to Place & Fire Ecology
1:00pm – 1:30pm	Welcome <i>Valencia County Commission Chair, Gerard Saiz</i>	
1:30pm – 1:50pm	Introduction to Fire Mitigation in the Bosque <i>Marina Hein, Grant, Research, and Program Coordinator, Socorro County OEM</i>	
1:50pm – 2:20pm	Field Trip Tour Overview & Load Vans	
2:20pm – 3:05pm	Drive to field trip site	
3:05pm – 5:10pm	Fire Suppression in the Bosque <i>Valencia County Fire Department</i> Restoration of the Bosque <i>Teresa Smith de Cherif, Board Chair, Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District</i> Mitigation and Collaborative Prevention in the Bosque <i>Jo Strange, Bosque Management Coordinator, Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District</i> <i>Willie Sommers, Urban Agriculture Program Manager New Mexico State University</i>	
5:10pm – 5:30pm	Return to UNM – Valencia meeting space	
Wednesday, October 1, 2025		Community Level Approach & Empowerment
8:30am	Breakfast	
9:00am – 9:10am	Welcome <i>Joy Esparsen, New Mexico Counties Executive Director</i>	
9:10am – 10:10am	Local Response and Recovery in the Bosque <i>Matt Propp Valencia County Fire Chief and Rob Barr, Valencia County Wildland Fire Captain</i>	
10:20am – 11:20am	Fire Department Collaboration with State Forestry <i>Rob Barr, Valencia County Wildland Fire Captain, Kevin Pacheco Bernalillo District Fire Management Officer</i>	
11:30am – 12:30pm	Grants and Partnerships <i>Laura Doth, Executive Director South Central Mountain RC&D</i> Post-disaster funding: A Case Study in Adaptive Framing <i>Teresa Smith de Cherif, Board Chair, Valencia Soil and Water Conservation District</i>	
12:30pm – 2:00pm	Lunch & Exhibitor Networking	
2:00pm – 3:00pm	Federal Partners, Local Opportunities, and Questions <i>Teresa Rigby, Fire Mitigation and Education Specialist, BLM</i> <i>Francesca Baca, Fire Prevention and Mitigation Specialist, BLM</i> <i>Matthew Brown, Fire Management Specialist, USFS</i> <i>Pete Rivera, Fire and Fuels Specialist, BLM</i>	
3:15pm – 4:45pm	Electrical Cooperators Panel <i>Thad Petzold, Associate Director of Wildlife Risk Management, PNM</i> <i>Luis Reyes, CEO, Kit Carson Electric Coop</i> <i>Janscen Davis, Vegetation Management Supervisor, Otero County Electric</i>	
5:30pm	Cash Bar Happy Hour Gathering at Sportsbook Bar, Isleta Resort	
Thursday, October 2, 2025		Insurance and Policy; Looking to the Future
8:30am	Breakfast	
9:00am – 9:30am	Welcome <i>Laura McCarthy, NM State Forester, Melanie Barnes, State Director, BLM</i>	
9:30am – 10:00am	Wildfire Prepared New Mexico and IBHS Standards Presentation <i>Laura McCarthy, NM State Forester, Steve Hawks, Senior Director for Wildfire, IBHS</i>	
10:15am – 11:45am	Perspectives on Wildfire Preparedness <i>Randy Varela, State Fire Marshal DHSEM</i> <i>Steve Hawks, Senior Director for Wildfire, IBHS</i> <i>Melissa Robertson, Property and Casualty Bureau Chief, OSI</i> <i>Hank Blackwell, Director of Wildfire Resiliency Training Center</i> <i>Dr. Erik Litzenberg, International Association of Fire Chiefs</i>	
11:45am – 12:30pm	Homeowners Perspective in the WUI <i>Ashley Dalton, Ashley Dalton Insurance Agency</i>	
12:30pm – 12:45pm	Wrap Up	