

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
SANTA FE COUNTY
RESOLUTION NO. 2019 – 53**

**A RESOLUTION URGING THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PRIOR TO COMMENCING THE SANTA
FE MOUNTAINS LANDSCAPE RESILIENCY PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service), along with the Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition (Coalition), has designated 168 square miles (107,520 acres) of National Forest and private lands in northeastern Santa Fe County and surrounding areas as the Greater Santa Fe Fireshed (Fireshed); and

WHEREAS, the Coalition's mission is to use a proactive, collaborative approach to improve the health and long-term resilience of forested watersheds and communities by addressing wildfire; and

WHEREAS, the Fireshed is a focus for mechanical thinning of trees and other vegetation and prescribed burning in order to reduce fuels and protect resources including critical water sources; and

WHEREAS, the Fireshed provides recreation and outdoor enjoyment to more than 100,000 Santa Fe County residents and thousands of visitors each year and is home to the Santa Fe Ski Basin, Hyde Memorial State Park, Santa Fe Municipal Watershed, portions of the Pecos Wilderness and Tesuque and Nambe Pueblos, extensive inventoried roadless areas and high value habitat for breeding birds and other wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Service is in the early stages of planning a 50,000-acre forest resiliency project within the Fireshed called the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project, during which the likelihood of substantial impacts will be determined; and

WHEREAS, the Santa Fe County Board of County Commissioners (Board) passed a resolution in 2010, Resolution No. 2010-110, in support of Wilderness designation for Inventoried Roadless Areas which are adjacent to the Pecos Wilderness that may be impacted by the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project; and

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WHEREAS, the Forest Service is part of the Fire Research Consensus project that includes collaboration between the University of California, The Nature Conservancy, the USGS, the Forest Service and others, and in 2017 published a “Consensus Statement on the role of wildfire in forested landscapes of the western United States” that can inform the proposed Santa Fe Mountain Landscape Resiliency Project; and

WHEREAS, National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) is our national charter for the environment, intended to help public officials make decisions based on comprehensively understanding environmental consequences before actions are taken and mandating, to the fullest extent possible, citizen involvement in such decisions; and,

WHEREAS, the Project may have a significant effect on the environment and should not qualify as a categorical exclusion under NEPA; and

WHEREAS, under NEPA, “significance” requires consideration of both context and intensity of potential effects, 40 CFR 1508.27; and

WHEREAS, context refers to the geographic, biophysical, and social context in which effects would occur, and intensity refers to the severity of impact, and includes consideration of a number of variables, such as effects on public health and safety, potential for adverse effects on threatened and endangered species, the degree to which effects are uncertain, and others; and

WHEREAS, the NEPA analysis process must include analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Project on a variety of resources, including the impacts of the prescribed burning on air quality and public health, threatened and endangered species, inventoried roadless areas, water quality, soils, vegetation and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, unless the Forest Service determines at the outset that a full environmental impact statement (EIS) is necessary to analyze the Project’s impacts, the Forest Service should complete a thorough environmental assessment and, if warranted by the findings of the EA, a full EIS; and

WHEREAS, the Board understands that the Forest Service is committed to conducting substantially more public outreach than what is necessarily required under its NEPA regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board as follows:

1. The Board supports and encourages the Forest Service to conduct a comprehensive and objective NEPA analysis prior to commencing the Santa Fe Mountains Landscape Resiliency Project.

2. The Forest Service should provide effective notice to the public through multiple means, conduct public outreach, and assure that the public is otherwise well-informed about the proposed Project and has multiple and convenient opportunities to fully participate in the NEPA process.

3. The Forest Service should complete the NEPA analysis, which should incorporate a broad range of forest and fire ecology research and an evaluation of all reasonable alternatives to the proposed Project, before taking any action in the Fireshed.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED ON THIS 9th DAY OF APRIL, 2019

THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SANTA FE COUNTY

By: Anna T. Hamilton
Anna T. Hamilton, Chair

ATTEST:

Geraldine Salazar
Geraldine Salazar
Santa Fe County Clerk

Date: 4-9-2019

Approved as to form:

R. Bruce Frederick
R. Bruce Frederick
Santa Fe County Attorney

COUNTY OF SANTA FE)
STATE OF NEW MEXICO) ss

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I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for
Record On The 10TH Day Of April, 2019 at 10:12:38 AM
And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1883444
Of The Records Of Santa Fe County



Deputy

Estrella Martinez

Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office
Geraldine Salazar
County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

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