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KCEC Wildfire Mitigation Update: June 19, 2025

Taos, NM - As of mid-June 2025, Northern New Mexico is experiencing heightened wildfire activity, with several large wildfires affecting both forested and rural communities. The **Trout Fire**, currently the most active in the state, has scorched over **38,000 acres** in Grant County and remains **0% contained**.

“At Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC), wildfire mitigation is more than a utility responsibility—it’s a commitment to the safety, sustainability, and strength of our communities. From advanced grid technologies to aggressive vegetation management, every step we take is rooted in protecting lives, empowering resilience, and honoring our duty to Northern New Mexico members,” says KCEC CEO Luis Reyes.

In response, KCEC continues to step up its wildfire preparedness efforts within its service territory. KCEC has ramped up vegetation management, strategic tree trimming near power lines, and infrastructure maintenance—such as hardware tightening, hazard-tree removal, and system hardening, including setting reclosers to non-reclose in high-risk mountain zones—to reduce ignition downsides.

Reclosers in the mountain areas have been placed on non-reclose due to dry conditions to mitigate any potential fires from trees or other debris that may come into contact with the electrical lines. Consumers may experience more outages due to the reclosers being non-reclose. The outages will be more extended since crews will patrol the line prior to closing the reclosers. The following areas have been placed on non-reclose:

- Rockwall to Mora County Line
- Chamisal to El Valle and Ojo Sarco
- Idlewild
- Lake View Pines
- Elizabeth Town
- Eagle Nest into Ute Park
- Green Mountain
- Upper Red River
- Hidden Lake
- Black Lake Resorts
- Vallecitos, Canon Plaza
- La Peta, Servilleta, Las Tablas
- Taos Canyon and Valle Escondido

The cooperative is also investing in resilience through microgrids and battery energy storage systems in Taos, Penasco, and El Rito West to sustain critical power during fire events and public safety shut-offs. Together, these measures aim to protect both infrastructure and communities as the wildfire season intensifies.

Northern New Mexico remains in the grip of a challenging wildfire season, with significant fires fueling regional concern. Persistent hot, dry, and windy conditions—often under Red Flag warnings—are exacerbating fire behavior and leading to evacuations, trail and road closures, and air quality advisories across multiple counties. Smoke from these wildfires has significantly impacted local air quality, prompting health recommendations for residents in Taos and surrounding areas to monitor forecasts and limit outdoor exposure as necessary. Smoke from active fires is impacting air quality across Northern New Mexico, prompting health advisories in several counties. Local and federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service and the New Mexico State Forestry, are urging residents to stay alert, prepare evacuation kits, and avoid activities that increase the risk of fire.

KCEC is committed to ensuring the safety of its members by implementing comprehensive measures to prevent wildfires caused by electrical systems. We are actively collaborating with key stakeholders, including local fire departments, environmental organizations, and community leaders, to develop and enhance strategies aimed at fire prevention in the region. Through regular inspections, upgraded infrastructure, and community outreach programs, KCEC is dedicated to mitigating the risks associated with wildfires and protecting our landscapes and communities from potential hazards. With forecasts suggesting little relief from current weather patterns, officials emphasize that wildfire risk will likely remain elevated through the remainder of June and into early July.

Information from Taos County and the Town of Taos

"We have received numerous calls about small brush fires near highways and roads. Many of these incidents are linked to vehicles towing trailers with chains and idling for long periods. The chains can produce sparks, and overheated engines can ignite fires if they come into contact with arid brush. We advise everyone to exercise caution when pulling over to the side of roads or highways", says Eddie Joe Abeyta, Fire Chief for Taos Fire Rescue.

"Taos County is prepared for a wildfire. We take significant steps behind the scenes to ensure readiness for a wildfire or natural disaster. Attached are helpful resources to prepare residents," says Bobby Lucero, Taos County Emergency Management Director.

Members have access to proactive forest fire prevention resources and information. Taos County recommends having "go bags" ready in case of an emergency. A list of resources is available to assist residents of our communities.

KCEC Service Territory Essential Community Resources

[ENCHANTED CIRCLE WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS SERIES](#) - The Enchanted Circle Wildfire Preparedness Series is designed to equip community members with essential resources and information to enhance preparedness for potential wildfires.

[Taos County Wildfire Plaza Website](#) - Taos County Wildfire Plaza is a place for people to share news, information and resources related to forest and watershed restoration and wildfire risk reduction.

[Be Prepared for Wildfires – Ready.GOV](#) - Wildfires are unplanned fires that burn in natural areas like forests, grasslands or prairies. These dangerous fires spread quickly and can devastate not only wildlife and natural areas but also communities.

Taos County Emergency Checklist Information- The following checklists are helpful guides for stocking up on essential items and preparing for emergencies.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WILDFIRES

Wildfire risk reduction steps that can make your home safer during a wildfire

Fire Prevention Programs - Your Personal Wildland Fire Action Guide

Ready, Set Go New Mexico

This page has information about embers, insurance, Ready Set Go, and other aspects of fire prevention and education.

Living With Fire page

Ready Set Go page

These resources can help members prepare for wildfire events and provide steps homeowners can take to protect their properties. KCEC encourages members to review this information and take the necessary precautions for their families and homes. This guidance will also be beneficial when dealing with homeowners' insurance applications or renewals. KCEC encourages members to contact family and friends in rural areas, as many individuals in our communities require medical assistance.

KCEC Green Hydrogen Safety Assessment Project

KCEC Green Hydrogen Project

KCEC Microgrid Project

KCEC owns and operates 20 solar arrays across its service area to ensure system reliability. This June, KCEC will begin constructing its second-largest solar array in Amalia, NM, adding 8.75 MW of solar generation and battery storage. Once completed, KCEC's total solar generation will be approximately 52 MW and 25 MW of battery storage.

KCEC has three battery storage microgrid projects scheduled to begin construction this year, located in Penasco, El Rito West and Taos Ski Valley. These projects will help support KCEC's electrical system during extreme weather events and emergencies.

On April 29, 2025, KCEC announced the launch of the KCEC Hydrogen Safety Assessment project in partnership with ENTRUST Solutions Group. This initiative aims to demonstrate the safety and various applications of hydrogen as a reliable source of electricity, focusing on Questa, NM, Penasco, NM, and the Town of Taos. KCEC is committed to ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to construct these hydrogen facilities, emphasizing safety and quality.

Once completed, these clean hydrogen, solar, and battery facilities will significantly enhance the sustainability and resilience of KCEC's entire electrical system, providing affordable, reliable, and safe energy generation. For more information on these projects, please visit kitcarson.com.

KCEC would like to thank Taos County, the Town of Taos, the Forest Service, NM State Forestry, the Taos County Chamber of Commerce, Taos Ski Valley, Taos Community Foundation and UNM-Taos for their input and collaboration. For further information, please contact CEO Luis Reyes at lreyes@kitcarson.com or COO Richard Martinez at rmartinez@kitcarson.com. Visit us at kitcarson.com for more details.