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Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Wildfire Mitigation Update September 18, 2025: Returning to Normal Operation

Taos, NM – September 17, 2025 – Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) continues its progress in wildfire mitigation and grid resilience programs. All electrical infrastructure is operating normally, and vegetation management remains a priority. KCEC is accelerating the deployment of community microgrids alongside AI-enabled cameras and weather stations in the most fire-prone areas.

“By pairing microgrids with privacy-preserving edge-AI detection, we’re building a smarter, more resilient grid that protects people, communities, and our forests,” said Luis Reyes, CEO of KCEC. “This is about early detection, faster response, and keeping essential services online when they’re needed most. Fire risk never goes away. That’s why KCEC stays vigilant every day, enhancing safety measures, upgrading infrastructure, and standing ready to respond when our community needs us most.”

KCEC continues to implement work in the following areas:

Infrastructure & Vegetation Management

- **All electrical systems** have resumed regular operation after the forecasted cold weather season.
- **The Internet division** is still doing routine maintenance and system upgrades.
- **Substation maintenance** is nearly complete, further enhancing system reliability.
- **Tree trimming and vegetation management** remain ongoing priorities to reduce ignition risk from overhead lines and maintain safe clearances.

Technology Deployment:

KCEC is advancing its wildfire defense strategy with the installation and utilization of **Edge AI cameras, weather stations, satellite imagery tools, community microgrids** in the most fire-prone areas:

Overall Benefits of KCEC Tools (AiDash, Firescape, Edge AI cameras, Weather Stations and Microgrids)

- Uses **satellite imagery and AI** to track and predict vegetation growth around power lines and substations.
- Provides **real-time vegetation status** to guide predictive trimming cycles.
- Helps **prioritize high-risk areas**, reducing the likelihood of vegetation-related outages and minimizing fire potential.

- Employs **high-resolution satellite data, weather inputs, and AI algorithms** to map wildfire risk and model fire spread
- Supports **precision EPSS (Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings)** and PSPS (Public Safety Power Shutoffs) to limit fire risks while minimizing customer impact.
- Sends **early-warning alerts** for approaching wildfires and enables **scenario planning** for community preparedness
- Provides **24/7 fire weather monitoring** to reduce ignition likelihood and safeguard communities
- Balances **safety with reliability** by reducing outages while protecting members.
- Transforms complex wildfire risk data into **actionable insights** for proactive response.
- Strengthens community resilience against wildfire threats through predictive, data-driven management.
- **24/7 wildfire smoke and flame detection** using edge AI systems
- **Autonomous alerts** – no staff required, transmissions only when risk is detected
- **Predictive risk insights** combining weather and wildfire data for proactive forecasting
- **Microgrids** – providing backup power to critical community facilities, schools, and emergency centers during PSPS events or wildfire emergencies
- **Privacy-first local processing** – no raw video sent to the cloud

Community, Environmental, and Economic Benefits

- **Public Safety First:** Early detection and predictive modeling reduce evacuation risks.
- **Resilient Communities:** Neighborhoods, HOAs, and schools gain real-time wildfire awareness and backup energy options.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** Protects forests, watersheds, wildlife, and natural resources.
- **Economic Stability:** Reduces wildfire damage costs, protects property values, and supports local economies.
- **Insurance Support:** Supplies transparent risk data to mitigate premium hikes and coverage withdrawals.

Tree trimming and vegetation management remain ongoing priorities to reduce ignition risk from overhead lines and maintain safe clearances. Substation maintenance ensures the cooperative can deliver safe and reliable electricity to its members while reducing the risks associated with aging infrastructure and potential wildfire hazards. This work is an essential part of KCEC's Wildfire Mitigation Plan, which focuses on vegetation management, system hardening, and preventative maintenance in fire-prone areas.

KCEC crews are continuing maintenance work on the Ranchitos Circuit and performing tree trimming along the Ranchos Circuit along NM State Road 240. In addition to this scheduled work, various service orders are being addressed throughout the service territory, with a particular focus on streetlight repairs and other miscellaneous tasks to improve reliability and safety across the system.

As part of this effort, lane closures will take place on Siler Road and Paseo de Pueblo Norte to allow for tree trimming activities. The work performed on Siler Rd is scheduled for Tuesday at 9 a.m. and will be carried out in coordination with local law enforcement and the Department of Transportation. Notifications will be sent out in advance to ensure that residents and travelers are aware of the temporary traffic impacts.

KCEC will continue to provide regular updates to keep our members informed about wildfire conditions, weather impacts, and any operational changes that may affect service. Clear and timely communication is essential, especially during periods of elevated fire risk, and KCEC is committed to ensuring that members have the latest information available. Through our website, social media channels, and member alerts, we will share updates on

safety measures, outage responses, and wildfire mitigation efforts. We thank our members for their patience and cooperation as we work together to protect our communities and maintain reliable service.

KCEC Project Status

KCEC is committed to safeguarding our communities and infrastructure through a comprehensive suite of projects focused on wildfire mitigation and grid resilience across our service territory. The current status of KCEC's projects includes:

Amalia II Solar and Battery Facility

KCEC has started construction on the Amalia II Solar + Battery Storage Facility in Amalia, NM. This project will deliver 8.75 megawatts of solar power paired with 8.75 megawatts of battery storage, significantly boosting local energy independence and grid resilience.

The Amalia II Solar project made steady progress during the reporting week of September 15, 2025. Key accomplishments included pier driving, racking installation, module placement, concrete pours, and inverter pad work. Civil work and the BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) area are nearly complete at 95%, marking major milestones. However, other components remain in earlier stages, with pier driving at 39%, racking at 19%, and modules at 14%. No safety incidents were reported, but thunderstorms created some delays. Tariff-related changes are anticipated, and new modules were delivered to the site, supporting upcoming installation activities.

Looking ahead, the focus for the next two weeks will remain on continuing pier driving, racking, and module installation, along with the BESS delivery and inverter pad pours. Progress photos document the advancement of structural and foundation work, as well as aerial views that show mounting structures and rows of modules taking shape. Overall, the project is moving forward on schedule, with strong momentum in civil and storage components, while module and racking installation will be the critical path for the coming weeks. **Commercial operation date of December 15, 2025**

KCEC Microgrid Projects Update

Sites: Taos Ski Valley, El Rito West, and Peñasco

KCEC has reached a significant milestone with 60% of the engineering designs completed as scheduled by the end of September 2025. These designs include key adaptations for high-elevation conditions specific to the Taos Ski Valley (TSV) site. All site surveys have been completed in collaboration with Taos Ski Valley and Northern New Mexico College. Based on the findings, KCEC and its partner, PowerSecure, have incorporated important design updates to improve site layout and access.

A major milestone was also achieved with the **procurement of batteries and other long-lead items**, ensuring construction schedules remain on track. Like all DOE GRIP projects, the KCEC initiative is undergoing review by the DOE. KCEC has fully collaborated with this ongoing process, which is expected to conclude soon.

Looking ahead, KCEC expects to:

- Complete **final 100% designs by early 2026**.
- Begin **initial site construction in December 2025**, using the completed 60% designs to move forward.

KCEC Hydrogen Project (Questa, Taos and Penasco)

ENTRUST has begun conceptual design of the proposed solar and hydrogen facilities and associated equipment. Major components of the hydrogen facilities include electrolyzers (hydrogen production), compression (for large quantity on-site hydrogen storage), and fuel cells (or similar technology for converting stored hydrogen to electricity). In parallel, ENTRUST has been gathering data and specifications from various hydrogen technology manufacturers to better understand their potential application within the Kit Carson Hydrogen project.

ENTRUST has also begun developing the hydrogen-specific safety elements framework that will be the backbone for Kit Carson's hydrogen safety plan. ENTRUST has been working closely with Kit Carson to understand existing safety procedures and operations, which will allow ENTRUST to integrate hydrogen-specific safety considerations into Kit Carson's day-to-day activities as seamlessly as possible.

For further information on wildfire mitigation, KCEC projects or updates, 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.