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Contact:
Michael Santistevan, PR
msantistevan@kitcarson.com

Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Wildfire Mitigation & Projects Report Update: April 10, 2026

TAOS, NM — Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) continues to accelerate wildfire mitigation efforts, infrastructure upgrades, and clean energy development across Northern New Mexico as the region faces intensifying elevated wildfire risk heading into the late spring and summer months.

Current conditions across the region remain unseasonably warm and dry, with critically low moisture, below-average snowpack, and highly volatile fuels contributing to dangerous fire conditions throughout KCEC's service territory. In response, KCEC is taking coordinated, proactive action to reduce system risk, protect communities, and strengthen long-term grid resilience.

These conditions have prompted statewide fire restrictions across New Mexico, which went into effect on April 6, 2026. The order prohibits smoking, fireworks, campfires, open burning, and other ignition sources on non-federal, non-tribal, and non-municipal lands due to extreme wildfire danger, and will remain in place until conditions improve.

“KCEC is taking an all-hands-on-deck approach as we face some of the most dangerous fire conditions we’ve seen in recent years,” said Luis A. Reyes, CEO of Kit Carson Electric Cooperative. “From aggressive vegetation management and planned system upgrades to major investments in hydrogen energy storage and microgrids, we are working every day to reduce risk, protect our communities, and build a more resilient and reliable energy future for Northern New Mexico.”

KCEC crews are deployed in high-risk areas, with vegetation management and maintenance underway in Taos Canyon as part of an expanded wildfire mitigation strategy. Planned outages in the Taos Canyon will begin the week of April 20th to allow crews to safely replace cross arms, perform critical system maintenance, and address infrastructure vulnerabilities identified through drone inspections. Additional work is ongoing as KCEC crews finish a circuit reconfiguration on the Ranchitos Substation to improve reliability and system performance.

KCEC's long-duration hydrogen energy storage project continues to advance, marking a significant milestone in regional energy innovation. This system will provide dispatchable, long-duration backup power during outages, extreme weather events, and wildfire-related disruptions, strengthening energy independence and grid flexibility across Northern New Mexico. Progress on the Questa solar infrastructure development continues, with materials, including piers and piles for panel installation, beginning to arrive on site on April 20th. Construction timelines remain aligned with upcoming project milestones as additional materials arrive.

KCEC is also continuing to coordinate operations in alignment with evolving state-level restrictions and fire-related regulations, ensuring all work is conducted safely and in compliance during periods of heightened wildfire risk.

“Coordination between agencies is critical during conditions like this,” said Bobby Lucero, Taos County Emergency Operations Manager. “With the state now under fire restrictions, it is essential that utilities, local governments, and the public work together to reduce ignition risks. KCEC's proactive approach to maintenance

and system improvements is a key part of protecting lives, property, and critical infrastructure across our communities.”

Microgrid projects in Taos Ski Valley, Peñasco, and El Rito West remain on track, expanding localized resilience through battery storage and distributed energy systems designed to support communities during outages and emergency events. Construction is anticipated to begin in June and July. On the systems side, SCADA-related upgrades are moving forward to enhance grid monitoring, operational awareness, and response capabilities.

KCEC will continue providing regular updates on wildfire mitigation activities, planned outages, and major infrastructure projects as work progresses across its service territory. Members are encouraged to stay informed through official communication channels and to follow all fire restrictions to help prevent human-caused wildfires.

KCEC encourages members who rely on life-supporting medical devices or medications that require refrigeration to contact the cooperative and update their account information. Having this information allows KCEC to make more informed operational decisions during planned and unplanned outages, prioritize communications, and better support vulnerable members during emergency conditions.

For more information, visit www.kitcarson.com

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About Kit Carson Electric Cooperative

Formed in 1944, Kit Carson is a member owned electric distribution cooperative in northern New Mexico and is the second largest cooperative in the state. Kit Carson is one of 16 electric cooperatives that serve rural New Mexico communities, serving nearly 30,000 members in Taos, Colfax and Rio Arriba counties. To learn more about Kit Carson, visit www.kitcarson.com.