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State welcomes Hotshot Crew Leaders

State Forestry recruiting for these elite wildland firefighting units

SANTA FE – The Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department’s [Forestry Division](#) is pleased to welcome two new superintendents, Candice Kutrosky and Christopher Moore, who will lead the Eagle Peak and Pecos River hotshot wildfire crews. Based in Socorro and Las Vegas, respectively, these seasoned, dynamic crew leaders will bring a wealth of experience as they supervise the formation of New Mexico’s first-ever, full-time wildfire response crews.

Candice Kutrosky will lead the Eagle Peak crew, based in Socorro. Superintendent Kutrosky has held numerous wildfire management leadership positions with the USDA Forest Service and Department of the Interior agencies. “For me, this position is about giving back,” said Kutrosky. “Over my career, I’ve been fortunate to have great supervisors and mentors who helped me to succeed. Now I feel like it’s time to take that position myself and pass along that knowledge and experience to the next generation.”

Christopher Moore will head the Pecos River crew, based in Las Vegas. Superintendent Moore, who has worked for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the USDA Forest Service and the National Park Service, has extensive experience working on hotshot crews in the northwestern and southwestern states. “It’s a unique challenge to build a crew from the ground up – to find yourself at the beginning of something,” said Moore. “But with support from the state and department leadership, I’m excited to expand New Mexico’s ability to respond to wildfires. The next step will be finding young men and women to build and add momentum to these crews.”

In addition to hiring the superintendents, the Forestry Division is actively recruiting men and women to staff the two crews, which will consist of 22 to 22 members each. Information on the crews and how to apply for the positions can be found [here](#).

“We are growing our division one step at a time to meet the challenges ahead,” said **State Forester Laura McCarthy**. “With the addition of Chris and Candice, we are well on our way towards building something completely new in this state. These crews will develop into elite firefighting crews and greatly expand our firefighting capacity, but as far as I’m concerned, they’re already ‘hotshots.’”

After the disastrous fire season of 2022, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the State Forestry Division identified the need to focus on and amplify the state’s wildfire response capacity. This led to a legislative budget allocation for the creation of the state’s first-ever hotshot crews.

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The Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department provides resource protection and renewable energy resource development services to the public and other state agencies.
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A wildland fire crew responding in the Socorro District. Photo by: Victor Lujan



The QR code links directly to the Forestry Division's wildfire jobs page.