

# Claims Office Partners with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service to Provide Conservation Restoration Planning to Claimants at No Charge

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**Release Date: Me 22, 2023**

SANTA FE, N.M. -- The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office has partnered with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to offer landowners the opportunity to request a NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan for their property, tailored to recovering from the Hermit's Peak Calf/Canyon Fire and subsequent floods. NRCS plans will be provided to claimants at no charge and will be utilized by the Claims Office to streamline the claims review process. Payments based on NRCS plans will be made directly to the claimant.

## **How This Partnership Can Benefit You**

The Claims Office has partnered with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to offer claimants the opportunity to request a comprehensive NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan, tailored to recovering from the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and subsequent floods, at no cost. Under this partnership, NRCS plans will include cost estimates for recovery actions eligible for compensation under the Claims Office. Plans will be developed by experienced certified planners here in New Mexico and will be developed faster and in more detail than what may be available in the private market.

The Claims Office and NRCS have coordinated to ensure that NRCS plans under this partnership will streamline the claims review process, ensuring claimants receive final compensation that is comprehensive, fair, and transparent. NRCS can provide plans to landowners and properties of all sizes, but plans are specific to natural resource restoration. Payments based on NRCS plans under this partnership will be made directly to the claimant.



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Page 1 of 4

Any landowner with impacts to their property as a result of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire or subsequent flooding is eligible to receive a NRCS plan under this partnership.

### **What is Included in a NRCS Restoration Plan**

NRCS Conservation Restoration Plans are comprehensive natural resource plans that provide a holistic approach to recovery. Under this partnership, NRCS plans will give claimants a pathway to restore, rather than enhance, their property in line with best practices specific to northern New Mexico.

Conservation plans will address a variety of categories of NRCS-approved common practices, which include but are not limited to:

- Woody residue treatment (removing or laying down dead trees)
- Tree and shrub establishment
- Debris removal
- Access roads
- Fencing
- Soil erosion
- Pipelines
- Livestock wells
- Riparian (riverbank) damage

NRCS plans will include cost estimates to repair or replace resources impacted by the Fire and flooding. Landowners are not required to take action on their NRCS plan. Once complete, landowners can submit their NRCS plan to the Claims Office to support their claim for compensation.

### **How to Request a NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan**

Landowners have two options for requesting a NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan under this partnership.

The recommended first step is to submit a Notice of Loss to the Claims Office. Once you submit a Notice of Loss, your dedicated Claims Navigator will contact you to discuss your claim and the full scope of your loss. Your Claims Navigator



will help you determine if you would benefit from a NRCS plan. If you have already submitted a Notice of Loss and are interested in a NRCS plan, we encourage you to mention this to your Claims Navigator. If you determine that you would benefit from a NRCS plan, the Claims Office will share your contact information with the NRCS, and a staff member will contact you directly to schedule a visit to your property.

Landowners may also choose to contact the NRCS directly to request a Conservation Restoration Plan. If you contact the NRCS directly, NRCS staff will notify the Claims Office to ensure a Claims Navigator contacts you to discuss the process. To request a plan from NRCS directly, you can email [ConservationRestorationPlan@usda.gov](mailto:ConservationRestorationPlan@usda.gov), or visit one of the two local service centers.

<b>NRCS Las Vegas Field Office</b> 1927 A 7Th St Las Vegas, NM 87701 (505) 425-3594 Ext.3	<b>NRCS Mora Field Office</b> 523 State Highway 518 Mora, NM 87732 (575) 387-2424 Ext. 3
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We encourage all landowners whose natural resources were impacted the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire to take advantage of this partnership. The focus of the Claims Office is to ensure all claimants receive full compensation under the law.

### **When Will This Partnership Be Available?**

Claimants may make the request for an NRCS plan under this partnership beginning May 22, 2023. NRCS will meet with claimants to produce Conservation Restoration Plans on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Claims Office and NRCS have a three-year Memorandum of Understanding in place. NRCS plans to offer this service to claimants as long as the partnership is in place.

### **How to Submit a Notice of Loss to the Claims Office**

Notice of Loss forms can be found at [fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema\\_notice-loss-hermits-peak-fire-](https://fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_notice-loss-hermits-peak-fire-)



[form.pdf](#). You can submit your Notice of Loss via email at [fema-hermits-peak@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-hermits-peak@fema.dhs.gov), or by mail to FEMA Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office, or by visiting one of our three Claims Offices. Claims Offices are open Monday – Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

<b>Mora Claims Office</b> Mora County Courthouse 1 Courthouse Drive Mora, NM 87732	<b>Las Vegas Claims Office (Temporary Location)</b> 366 Luna Drive, Las Vegas Las Vegas, NM 87701  General Studies Building, Room 109  (Located on the campus of Luna Community College)	<b>Santa Fe Claims Office</b> 1711 Llano Street, Suite E  Santa Fe, NM 87505  Next to Mucho Gourmet Sandwich Shoppe)
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