

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Granted for Maria Fire

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Oakland, Calif. – The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has authorized the use of federal funds to assist the State of California in combatting the Maria Fire burning in Ventura County.

On Nov. 1, 2019, the State of California submitted a request for a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) for the Maria Fire. At the time of the request, the fire threatened 1,800 residences in and around the communities of Santa Paula, Somis, and Saticoy, with an approximate population of 17,133. The fire also threatened 100 businesses, oil and natural gas fields, an oil pipeline, and the primary communications network for the threatened communities. Mandatory evacuations were taking place for approximately 7,500 people.

The fire started on Oct. 31, 2019 and has burned in excess of 9,800 acres of state and private land. Currently, there are eight other large fires burning uncontrolled within the state.

The FEMA Region IX regional administrator determined that the Maria Fire threatened such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. The state's request was approved on Nov. 1, 2019 at 11:51 a.m. PDT.

FMAGs provide federal funding for up to 75 percent of eligible firefighting costs. The Disaster Relief Fund provides funding for FMAGs through FEMA to assist in fighting fires that threaten to cause major disasters. Eligible costs covered by FMAGs can include expenses for field camps, equipment use, materials, supplies and mobilization, and demobilization activities attributed to fighting the fire.

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