

Those Waiting for an NRCS Conservation Restoration Plan Should File a Notice of Loss with Claims Office Before the Nov. 14 Deadline

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SANTA FE, NM – People impacted by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire who are awaiting conservation restoration plans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are encouraged to start a FEMA claim as soon as possible.

Affected individuals should not wait for the NRCS to inspect their properties before filing a Notice of Loss (NOL) with the FEMA Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office as they may risk missing the Nov. 14, 2024, deadline due to NRCS working through a heavy backlog.

NRCS has 1,288 requests for site inspections required to compensate people for damage to natural resources – a volume the agency estimates will take until spring 2025 to complete, well past the deadline for filing a new claim. Inspections are expected to slow when snowy conditions make higher-elevation sites in the burn scar less accessible and more hazardous to navigate.

Although NRCS handles inspections and produces conservation restoration plans, FEMA covers the losses and delivers compensation under the Fire Assistance Act. Impacted property owners must file an NOL through the Claims Office to receive compensation.

“NRCS teams have worked hard to create conservation restoration plans to address damage to the natural resources from the devastating fire and subsequent floods, but there’s only so much they can do in a limited time,” said Jay Mitchell, Director of Operations for the New Mexico Joint Recovery Office. “I encourage anyone who suffered damages to file a Notice of Loss before the November 14 deadline.”



FEMA

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NRCS and the Claims Office have cultivated a strong partnership, completing 1,277 conservation restoration plans. The Claims Office has paid for 989 NRCS claims for more than \$490 million.

Claims Office compensation is not taxable. Receiving payment from the Claims Office will not impact eligibility for government assistance programs. Contact a tax professional for specific tax-related questions. Questions and concerns can also be addressed by calling your claim Navigator or the Claims Office Helpline at 505-995-7133.

The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office is committed to meeting the needs of people impacted by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire and subsequent flooding by providing full compensation available under the law as expeditiously as possible. At the time of publication, the FEMA Claims Office has paid more than \$1.1 billion to claimants.

For information and updates regarding the Claims Office, please visit the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Office website at fema.gov/hermits-peak. For information in Spanish, visit fema.gov/es/hermits-peak. You can also follow our Facebook page and turn notifications on to stay up to date about the claims process, upcoming deadlines and other program announcements at facebook.com/HermitsPeakCalfCanyonClaimsOffice.

