

D 006 04

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Declaring a Disaster Emergency Due to the Imminent Threat of Wildfires

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado and, in particular, Colorado Revised Statute § 24-32-2101 *et seq.*, I, Bill Owens, Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order making certain funds available from the Emergency Management Fund for wildfire preparation and suppression activities.

1. Background and Purpose.

On March 24, 2004, I signed Executive Order D 003 04, making disaster emergency funds available to prepare for the 2004 wildfire season. The majority of these funds are being used to strategically pre-position 3 Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATS) in Colorado. As set forth in my previous Executive Order, pre-positioning air tankers has proven to be an extremely effective tool for extinguishing wildfires before they grow out of control.

On May 10, 2004, the United States Department of Interior and the U.S. Forest Service grounded all heavy firefighting air tankers. This decision was based upon a recent National Transportation Safety Board report that questioned the safety of these planes.

Although the federal government is providing replacement air resources on a regional national basis, Colorado needs to ensure that adequate air resources are exclusively dedicated to fires within this state. By this Executive Order, I am making funds immediately available for the state to contract additional private air resources to suppress wildfires within the State of Colorado during the 2004 wildfire season.

2. Directive.

I hereby declare that the imminent threat of wildfires constitutes a disaster for purposes of C.R.S. §24-32-2103.

Pursuant to C.R.S. § 24-32-2106, I order \$1.3 million in disaster emergency funds be made immediately available to contract two additional Single Engine Air Tankers and one helicopter specifically equipped to fight wildfires. These funds shall remain available for this purpose until December 31, 2004.

3. Duration.

This Executive Order shall expire thirty (30) days from its date of signature unless extended by Executive Order.

GIVEN under my hand and
the Executive Seal of the
State of Colorado, this 27th day
of May, 2004.

Bill Owens
Governor