



Office of the President

MSC 3Z
New Mexico State University
P. O. Box 30001
Las Cruces, NM 88003-8001
575-646-2035, fax: 575-646-6334
president.torres@nmsu.edu

DATE: June 19, 2024

TO: Our NMSU Community

FROM: Mónica Torres, Interim President

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Torres'.

SUBJECT: South Fork and Salt Fires

Like others in our community, my heart is hurting for our friends in and around Ruidoso and Mescalero. In New Mexico, our mountains are special places where we can find adventure as well as respite and peace. The photos and video of these wildfires over the past day and a half – and the damage left in their aftermath – make me deeply sad, particularly because so many of our students, faculty and staff members are from the areas most impacted by these fires. As announced by the governor yesterday, at least one person has lost their life. More than 1,000 structures have been damaged and thousands of acres have burned.

Yesterday I reached out to Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso President Ryan Trosper. Their campus was evacuated and another ENMU campus in Roswell has served as a location for those needing help as a result of the fires. I let our friends at ENMU know that we were with them during this trying time and would provide any support we could.

In true Aggie Spirit, our NMSU community has also swung into action to support those in need. American Indian Programs, the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, including our Cooperative Extension Service and Ag Experiment Station offices, and the NMSU Foundation through their Aggie Emergency Fund are just a few of the organizations with efforts already underway to help.

The College of ACES is accepting donations in the Academic Programs Office, Room 221, in Gerald Thomas Hall, and at the Otero County Extension Office, 401 Fairground Road, in Alamogordo, through 9 a.m. Monday, June 24. Items needed include bottled water, non-perishable food, new or gently used clothing and shoes, toiletries, new undergarments and socks, and pet food.

NMSU's American Indian Program is seeking donations of water, snacks, Gatorade, coolers, hygiene items like deodorant, toothpaste, undergarments, shampoo and conditioner for the Mescalero community. You can drop off donations at American Indian Student Center by Thursday at 10 a.m.

It's painful to watch this tragedy unfold, but I take comfort in knowing that the Aggie community is stepping up to support our neighbors. Together, we'll help our communities get through this.