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Kit Carson Electric Cooperative Wildfire Mitigation Update August 14, 2026.

Kit Carson Electric Continues Proactive Wildfire Mitigation as Fire Danger Escalates Across New Mexico

TAOS, N.M. – As New Mexico experiences another period of extreme heat, elevated wildfire danger, and multiple active wildfires, Kit Carson Electric Cooperative (KCEC) continues to implement proactive wildfire mitigation strategies while advancing major grid resilience projects designed to protect its members and the communities it serves.

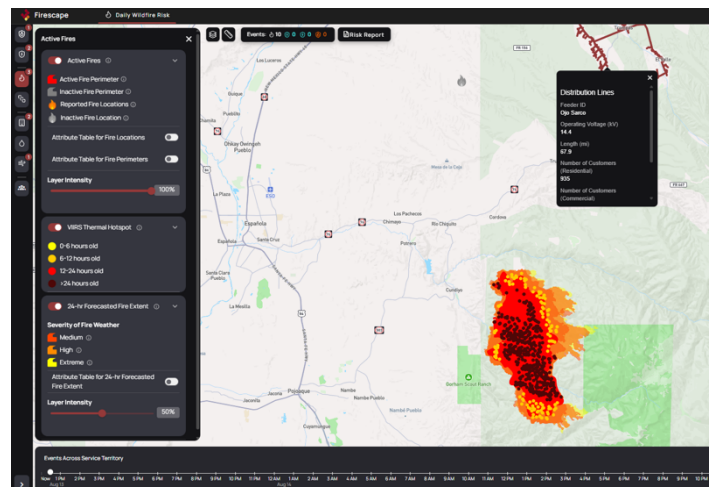
Across the state, persistent hot, dry conditions and active wildfires have placed emergency responders, land managers, and utilities on heightened alert. The recent Frijoles Fire, along with smoke that has affected much of northern New Mexico, serves as a reminder that wildfire impacts extend well beyond the fire perimeter. These conditions reinforce the importance of KCEC's continued investment in wildfire mitigation, operational readiness, and resilient electric and broadband infrastructure.

"Every wildfire reminds us why preparation matters," said Luis A. Reyes Jr., CEO of KCEC. Wildfire mitigation is no longer seasonal; it is a year-round responsibility. The extreme weather and fire conditions we are seeing across New Mexico reinforce the importance of the investments we've made in technology, operational practices, and system resilience to better protect our members and the communities we serve."

One of KCEC's most effective wildfire mitigation measures continues to be its non-reclose operating strategy during periods of elevated fire danger. Under these conditions, automatic reclosing is disabled on designated circuits to reduce the potential for repeated electrical faults that could ignite dry vegetation. While this operational strategy may occasionally result in longer outage restoration times, it significantly reduces the risk of wildfire ignition and remains one of the Cooperative's most effective wildfire prevention tools. KCEC has placed many of its high-forested, remote areas on non-reclosed operation.

KCEC also continues to utilize the Firescape wildfire intelligence platform, which provides real-time weather information, fuel moisture conditions, fire danger indices, and situational awareness. These advanced tools allow system operators to continuously monitor changing conditions and make informed operational decisions that enhance public safety and system reliability.

"Technology is transforming how utilities respond to wildfire threats," Reyes said. "Firescape provides our operators with the situational awareness needed to make informed decisions before conditions become critical. Combined with vegetation management, system inspections, infrastructure improvements, and our non-reclose operating procedures, these tools strengthen our ability to reduce wildfire risk while maintaining reliable essential services."



KCEC's wildfire mitigation program is built upon a comprehensive strategy that includes enhanced vegetation management, routine system inspections, infrastructure hardening, operational changes during periods of elevated fire danger, advanced weather monitoring, and close coordination with local, state, and federal emergency management partners.

reduce wildfire risk and improve system reliability in the following areas:

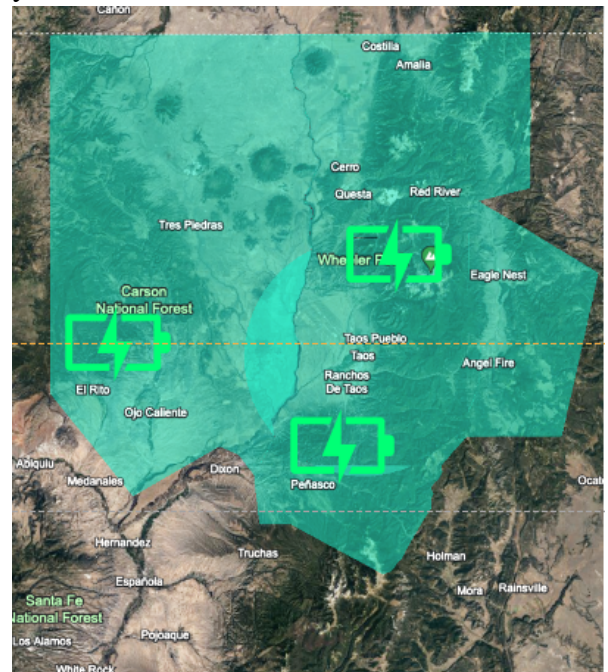
- **Taos Canyon** – Tree trimming and vegetation maintenance
- **Questa** – South Kiowa and Old Red River Road areas
- **Taos Area** – Tree trimming and vegetation maintenance

In addition to its wildfire mitigation initiatives, KCEC continues to make significant progress on three Department of Energy-funded microgrid projects in Peñasco, Taos Ski Valley, and El Rito West that will enhance electric reliability and resilience throughout its service territory.

Current efforts are focused on securing battery energy storage systems that meet both the operational needs of these communities and the technical requirements of KCEC's U.S. Department of Energy grant.

Like many infrastructure projects across the country, evolving global supply chain conditions have required KCEC to update the battery technology originally identified during project planning. KCEC is working closely with its engineering and construction partner, PowerSecure, to identify battery systems that fully comply with DOE grant requirements while meeting the performance needs of each microgrid.

KCEC is coordinating procurement activities, contractor mobilization, and construction planning at all three project sites to ensure the projects remain on schedule for completion in June 2027.



Once operational, the microgrids will provide localized backup power capability, improve service reliability during outages, support critical infrastructure, and strengthen community resilience during emergencies and other grid disruptions. These projects represent an important component of KCEC's long-term strategy to modernize the electric grid while preparing for the increasing challenges posed by extreme weather and wildfire conditions.

For more information, please visit kitcarson.com

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About Kit Carson Electric Cooperative

Formed in 1944, Kit Carson is a member owned electric distribution cooperative in northern New Mexico and is the second largest cooperative in the state. Kit Carson is one of 16 electric cooperatives that serve rural New Mexico communities, serving nearly 30,000 members in Taos, Colfax and Rio Arriba counties. To learn more about Kit Carson, visit www.kitcarson.com.