

American Legion Auxiliary
New Mexico Girls State
Memorial Instruction Sheet

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY



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Memorial No: _____ Committee: _____

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Simple Title of Memorial: New Mexico Wildfire Prevention Week

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MEMORIAL

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70TH SESSION – AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NEW MEXICO GIRLS STATE – 2017

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INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

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TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT WILDFIRES AND THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON THE

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COMMUNITIES, HUMAN HEALTH (POLLUTION), AND THE ECOSYSTEM; PROMOTING

10

THE PRACTICE OF FIRE PREVENTION MEASURES; ADVOCATING SAFER AND

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MORE FREQUENT CONTROLLED BURNS; DECLARING THE FIRST WEEK OF APRIL

12

"NEW MEXICO WILDFIRE PREVENTION WEEK" (NMWPW).

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WHEREAS, WHEREAS, 99% of the state is in drought with the worst conditions

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being in northern New Mexico; and

1 WHEREAS, New Mexico's dry climate sets the stage for large scale, uncontrollable
2 wildfires that can potentially lead to economic and environmental issues; and

3 WHEREAS, Especially this year coming off of a dry winter, fire season started with
4 the Stateline Fire on March 8 in New Mexico; and

5 WHEREAS, Abandoned campfires account for 44% of the human caused wildfires
6 since 2001, and U.S. Forest Service officials report that they have found at least 120
7 abandoned campfires, including 84 over Memorial Day weekend this year; and

8 WHEREAS, The Buzzard Fire in the Gila National Forest fire that started on May 22,
9 2018 was fueled by an abandoned camp fire and has already burned over 24,300 acres
10 and was only 34% contained by June 1, 2018; and

11 WHEREAS, Fenton Lake, Hyde Memorial, Morphy Lake State Parks, Bandelier
12 National Monument, Pecos National Historical Park, Valles Caldera National Preserve, and
13 1.6 million acres of Santa Fe National Forest have been closed to the public; and

14 WHEREAS, Effective on June 1, 2018, the Los Alamos County Fire Department
15 issued Stage III Restrictions which prohibit public access to all unpaved trail systems,
16 building or maintaining a campfire, and charcoal or stove fires on public and private land;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, There are more than a thousand homes within the Jemez Forest that
19 can only be reached by one road and an uncontrollable wildfire could trap residents
20 including firefighters in those neighborhoods; and

21 WHEREAS, Wildfires have destroyed community structures in the past and this year
22 have already burned down 19 structures, with 16 from the "246 Fire" and three from the
23 "206 Fire"; and

24 WHEREAS, The Cerro Grande Fire in May 2000 burned over 280 homes and
25 damaged 40 Los Alamos Laboratory structures causing \$570 million in

1 damages, the Little Bear Fire in June 2012 burned 242 buildings in the Ruidoso area
2 causing \$12 million in damages, and the Los Conchas Fire in June 2011 burned 63 homes
3 in the communities of Cochiti Mesa and Los Conchas; and

4 WHEREAS, Recently, the Ute Park Fire in Colfax County began on May 31, 2018,
5 and by June 1, it had destroyed 13 structures at the Philmont Scout Ranch and
6 approximately 296 structures including homes are in danger.

7 WHEREAS, The smoke from wildfires can travel across the entire state and cause
8 eye irritation, lung irritation, and respiratory issues; and

9 WHEREAS, Residents with heart disease, asthma, or young children and pregnant
10 women need to be aware of the hazards of smoke in their area and take appropriate action;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Wildfires damage soil and destroy all the vegetation which then loosens
13 the ground and causes erosion, debris flows, and flash floods especially during the
14 monsoon season; and

15 WHEREAS, The aftermath of wildfires can be detrimental to the ecosystem because
16 the ash and debris kill fish and animals; and

17 WHEREAS, The use of fire retardant chemicals to extinguish wildfires contaminates
18 water quality if it is dumped near a stream and can kill aquatic life due to the large amounts
19 of ammonia; and

20 WHEREAS, The Cerro Grande Fire was caused by a control burn that escaped its
21 boundaries and ended up becoming one of the most devastating fires in New Mexico, and
22 the more recent Diener Canyon Fire in April 2018 which also started out as a control burn
23 became a wildfire;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
25 AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY NEW MEXICO GIRLS STATE that that the

1 state recognize the need to raise awareness about the devastating effects wildfires cause
2 and promote the use of safer and more frequent control burns to reduce the risk of a large
3 scale fire that could potentially destroy homes and wildlife; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it henceforth
5 declare the first week of April "New Mexico Wildfire Prevention Week".

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that

