

1 A MEMORIAL

2 HONORING THE HEROIC EFFORTS OF FIREFIGHTERS IN THE DAYS
3 DURING, AND THE RECOVERY FOLLOWING, THE LAS CONCHAS WILDFIRE.

4
5 WHEREAS, on June 26, 2011, the Las Conchas wildfire
6 unexpectedly ignited in the Jemez mountains surrounding
7 Los Alamos, the Valles Caldera national preserve and
8 Bandelier national monument; and

9 WHEREAS, in the first hours after the fire erupted, the
10 rapid response of the La Cueva volunteer fire department, the
11 United States park service and the United States forest
12 service preempted the fire from growing in ferocity and
13 shifting direction, and those efforts should be commended, as
14 the fire would have been much worse had the response not come
15 so quickly; and

16 WHEREAS, despite valiant efforts, the flames were
17 extraordinarily wind-driven on June 26 and 27 and quickly
18 raced toward Los Alamos national laboratory, exploding
19 overnight from four thousand acres to over forty thousand
20 acres and, in the days that followed, scorching one hundred
21 fifty-six thousand five hundred ninety-three acres of
22 beautiful northern New Mexico land before finally being fully
23 contained on August 3, 2011; and

24 WHEREAS, across the state, people were deeply saddened
25 and concerned as they watched the out-of-control wildfire

1 burn across the beautiful and sacred lands of the Santa Fe
2 national forest in Sandoval, Los Alamos and Rio Arriba
3 counties; the Pueblo of Santa Clara; the Pueblo of Jemez; the
4 Pueblo of Cochiti; the Pueblo of Santo Domingo; Bandelier
5 national monument; and the Valles Caldera national preserve;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the Las Conchas wildfire destroyed sixty-three
8 homes and forty-nine other buildings, forever changing the
9 lives of the people that owned those residences and
10 buildings; and

11 WHEREAS, thousands of residents in the Jemez mountains,
12 including residents of Los Alamos, were forced to evacuate
13 for their safety, and Los Alamos national laboratory closed
14 during this enormous, uncontained wildfire, the largest in
15 New Mexico's history; and

16 WHEREAS, one hundred twenty-eight of Los Alamos' finest
17 firefighters were called upon to battle the blazes; and

18 WHEREAS, the heroic fight of the Los Alamos firefighters
19 would not have been possible without the help of other
20 resources; and

21 WHEREAS, Los Alamos county was assisted by numerous
22 local, state and federal agencies, including firefighters,
23 police, emergency services and support personnel from Rio
24 Arriba, Santa Fe and Sandoval counties; Cimarron, Tatumcari,
25 Abiquiu, Chamita and Santa Fe; the Pueblo of Santa Clara; the

1 Agua Sana volunteer fire department; the state fire marshal;
2 the United States forest service and the United States park
3 service; and Los Alamos national laboratory; and

4 WHEREAS, the sight of the flames on the mountainside
5 reminded New Mexicans of the Cerro Grande wildfire just
6 eleven years prior; and

7 WHEREAS, lessons learned from the Cerro Grande wildfire
8 and protective and proactive projects undertaken by
9 Los Alamos county and Los Alamos national laboratory
10 benefited firefighters' efforts in 2011; and

11 WHEREAS, although the Las Conchas wildfire devastated
12 many homes and a significant amount of land and property, no
13 lives were lost; and

14 WHEREAS, the fire is a testimonial to the resilience of
15 New Mexico residents, and their ability to survive these
16 experiences has only made them stronger in their resolve to
17 stand together during their greatest times of need, which is
18 proof that New Mexico residents shall always persevere;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the firefighters, and all of those
21 who assisted in fighting the blaze, be honored for their
22 service and resolve to contain the flames and protect the
23 people and the lands of New Mexico; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the council of the incorporated county of

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Los Alamos and the governor.



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