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New Mexicans encouraged to give space to wildlife affected by New Mexico fires

SANTA FE – The Department of Game and Fish encourages the public to be mindful of wildlife displaced by fires.

Like humans, wild animals are also fleeing wildfires burning around the state. Wildlife is incredibly resilient to fire, but need space to find new habitat while the fire is burning.

It is normal during wildfires to see wildlife in areas where they do not typically occur. There is no need to report these sightings to the Department. However, if wildlife appears to be injured, please contact local conservation officers through the New Mexico State Police non-emergency number at (505) 841-9256. **The Department recommends you do not feed, approach or handle wildlife.** Under stressful situations like those currently being experienced, wild animals can be even more unpredictable.

“Conservation officers across the state are working closely with local fire officials and the New Mexico State Police to ensure public safety during these horrific fires, while also responding to, and handling, wildlife calls. Conservation officers have received extensive training in handling wildlife to ensure public safety and safety for the animal as well,” said Colonel Tim Cimbal.

While full impacts on wildlife will not be known until after the fires are out, wildlife and fisheries biologists will continue to monitor species found in the fire areas. You can help wildlife by allowing them room to move to suitable habitat.

“We know that folks want to help in any way they can during this emergency, including helping animals that have been affected. The Department strongly encourages people not to feed and water wildlife,” said Elise Goldstein, Assistant Chief of Wildlife. “It may

seem like you are helping them, but this can encourage them to start relying on humans for these resources. If they do not find these resources in town, they tend to move to a more natural environment.”

For the most up-to-date information on fire in New Mexico, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) has established a Joint Information Task Force (JIC) in coordination with multiple state agencies. They have launched an updated wildfire page on the [DHSEM webpage](#). This webpage is the most reputable, up-to-date site for anything related to wildfires in New Mexico. DHSEM and the JIC have also established a [Facebook account](#) to share information.

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