

# Support HB 334 & SB 281 - Rural Electric Cooperative Wildfire Liability Act



## SPONSORS:

Representatives – Meredith Dixon, Jack Chatfield, Harlan Vincent,  
Anita Gonzales, Joseph Sanchez, Cynthia Borrego  
Senator – Pat Woods

HB 334 and SB 281 are opportunities to address a large concern for rural electric cooperatives in New Mexico. As not-for-profit entities we are one wildfire away from bankruptcy. Insurance agencies are increasing rates exponentially and frequently no longer offer adequate wildfire coverage to utilities.

Not-for-profit electric cooperatives were formed to provide an essential service that is necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of its member-owners/consumers in our underserved rural communities.

- Almost 80% of the land area in NM is served by rural electric cooperatives and approximately 20% of NM residents receive power from a distribution cooperative.
- As cooperatives we already do substantial wildfire mitigation and are exploring new technologies, like early detection, to help prevent wildfires.
- Bankrupting cooperatives for a fire they are not liable for threaten the reliability of the electric grid, and threatens economic stability in rural NM.
- Skyrocketing insurance costs impact the affordability of electricity for communities that cannot afford it.
- Cooperatives have two main focuses when it comes to safely delivering power: reliability and affordability.

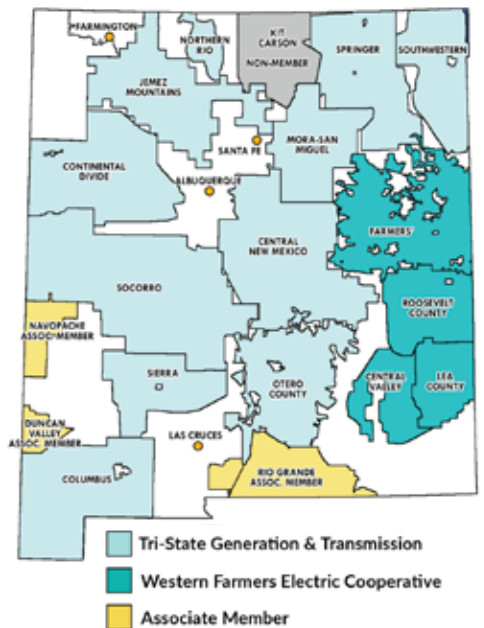
Cooperative leadership worked with the New Mexico Forestry Division and the Public Regulation Commission (PRC) to formulate these bills. All cooperative wildfire mitigation plans will be reviewed by the Forestry Division and ultimately approved by the PRC.

We are asking that you **support HB 334 & SB 281**. Help protect our state's land and energy grid, while supporting not-for-profit electric cooperatives serving the citizens of rural New Mexico.

## Tri-State's New Mexico Membership

- Central New Mexico Electric
- Columbus Electric
- Continental Divide Electric
- Jemez Mountains Electric
- Mora-San Miguel Electric
- Northern Río Arriba Electric
- Otero County Electric
- Sierra Electric
- Socorro Electric
- Southwestern Electric
- Springer Electric

## Rural Electric Co-ops in New Mexico



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