



FOREST SERVICE BAER TEAM BEGINS POST-FIRE ASSESSMENT OF WILDFIRES

A Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team was established by the Angeles National Forest to begin burned area assessments of the Ranch2 and Lake Fires. The BAER team is being led by Forest Service Watershed Specialist Todd Ellsworth. The team is coordinating with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Weather Service (NWS), US Geological Survey (USGS), Los Angeles County DPW-Stormwater Division and other federal, state and local agencies as they assess potential post-fire impacts to the burned watersheds.

BAER surveys are rapid assessments that evaluate the burned area to identify watersheds having increased potential for post-fire flooding, sediment flows and rock slides. Since the BAER survey is a rapid assessment to assist land managers prepare the burned area for rainstorms, the team will focus on potential emergency impacts to life, and safety on National Forest System (NFS) land and share the team's findings with the responsible downstream agencies.

BAER teams may consist of scientists and specialists including hydrologists, geologists, soil scientists, road engineers, botanists, wildlife biologists, recreation specialists, archeologists and geographic information specialists. BAER teams collect data during their burned area surveys to analyze through GIS and computer models and presents their findings along with recommended BAER emergency stabilization treatments in a BAER assessment report.

BAER teams utilize satellite imagery and specialist data to analyze and produce a map that shows the levels of burn severity on the watersheds. This is the first step in assessing potential watershed impacts from wildfires to any NFS values that may be at-risk from potential increased flooding, sedimentation, debris flows and rock slides. BAER teams produce a report that describes threats associated with the burned area's post-fire conditions along with recommended emergency stabilization measures and actions. BAER emergency response efforts are focused on the protection of human life, safety and property, as well as critical cultural and natural resource values such as the water quality of streams and wetlands on NFS lands.

BAER reports are shared with interagency cooperators who work with downstream private home and land owners to prepare for potential post-fire flooding and debris flow impacts. Homes or businesses that could be impacted by flooding from federal land that resulted from wildfires may be eligible for flood insurance coverage from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Information about NFIP is available through FEMA at www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program or www.fema.gov/wildfires-you-need-flood-insurance. Other flood preparedness information is available at www.ready.gov/floods at www.floodsmart.gov/.

SPECIAL NOTE: *Everyone near and downstream from the burned areas should remain alert and stay updated on weather conditions that may result in heavy rains over the burn scars. Flash flooding may occur quickly during heavy rain events-be prepared to take action. Current weather and emergency notifications can be found at the National Weather Service website: www.weather.gov/lox/.*

Ranch2 Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7114/>.
Lake Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7115/>.

