



### PREPARING FOR RAINSTORMS

While many wildfires cause minimal damage to the land and pose few threats to the land or people downstream, some fires cause damage that requires special efforts to prevent problems afterwards. Wildfire increases the potential for flooding, post-fire soil erosion and debris flows that could impact homes, structures, campgrounds, aquatic dependent plants and animals, roads, and other infrastructure within, adjacent to, and downstream from the burned area.

Post-fire watershed conditions will naturally receive and transport water and sediment differently than during pre-fire conditions. Monsoonal storms bring heavy rain and rapid runoff from burned areas. Residents and visitors should remain alert to weather events and plan ahead when travelling along roads and trails within and downstream from the burned areas on the Angeles National Forest (NF).

The Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team working with the Angeles NF to assess post fire conditions of the watersheds on federal land that were burned in the Ranch2 and Lake Fires. The BAER assessment team identifies potential emergency threats to critical values-at-risk and recommends emergency stabilization response actions that are implemented on federal lands to reduce potential threats.

For values and resources potentially impacted off National Forest System lands, one of the most effective BAER strategies is its interagency coordination with local cooperators who assist affected businesses, homes, and landowners prepare for rain events. The Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) work together and coordinate with other federal, state, and local agencies, and counties that assist private landowners in preparing for increased run-off and potential flooding.

Federal assistance to private landowners is administered by NRCS through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program ([www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/ewpp/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/landscape/ewpp/)). NRCS and the Resource Conservation Districts work with local governments (sponsors) to implement emergency measures in the wake of natural disasters to safeguard human lives, property, and natural resources.

NRCS and local sponsors prepare damage survey reports for eligible sites on private lands adjacent to and downstream from affected areas. NRCS uses these reports, along with the BAER team's assessment report, to develop emergency measures to reduce the impacts from potential increased water and debris flows, and assist sponsors to implement recommended emergency measures ([www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1045263.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb1045263.pdf)).

Multiple agencies work with BAER teams and look at the full scope and scale of the situation to reduce the potential threats to human life and safety, and property; however, BAER emergency stabilization actions on federal lands cannot prevent all of the potential flooding or soil erosion impacts, especially after wildfires change the landscape.

#### **It is important that residents take steps to protect themselves and their property from flooding and debris flows:**

- For their **safety**, communities need to monitor local weather reports and public safety bulletins, local road closures, emergency notifications, weather alerts, follow local county and city advisories, and act accordingly.
- Use a "weather radio" or smart phone "weather app" that monitors "all hazards" alerts issued by the **NOAA-National Weather Service** ([www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/)).
- **Prepare for rainstorms** by being prepared to evacuate if county or city emergency officials determine that flooding and mudflows are expected which could pose an increased threat to human life, safety, and property. Practice evacuations prior to real events.
- Know and be alert to environmental signs of **dangerous weather conditions** and be prepared to take action that can save lives.
- Understand that all drainages within and downstream of the burned areas can produce flooding.
- If you find yourself in a flood, climb to safety (**seek higher ground**).
- Even if the water appears shallow enough to cross, don't try it by vehicle or foot. Water hides dips in the road – worse yet, there may be no road left under the water as flooding can scour away the entire road surface and ground beneath the road.

## Local Counties

The following local County Offices of Emergency Services and Management promote preparedness through its emergency services programs to assist the public to prepare for, respond appropriately to, and quickly recover from natural emergencies that may impact county residents and visitors:

- [Los Angeles County Flood Control District](#)
- [Los Angeles County Flood Information](#)
- [Los Angeles County Emergency Alerts](#)
- [Los Angeles County Rainfall Network](#)
- [Los Angeles County Emergency Preparedness](#)
- [Los Angeles County Rain Resources](#)
- [Los Angeles County DPW—Flood & Fire Resources](#)
- [Los Angeles County-Debris & Mudflow Potential Forecast](#)

## State Agencies

The California Department of Water Resources (Cal DWS) provides information about emergency preparedness, flood and storm preparation in partnership with the California [Governor's Office of Emergency Services \(CalOES\)](#):

- [Cal DWS-Flood Preparedness](#)
- [Cal DWS-Flood After Fire Video](#)
- [CalTrans & CA Highway Patrol \(CHP\)-Be Storm Ready Video](#)

## Other Federal Agencies

The US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) coordinates its Emergency Management program with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and local governments to provide engineering services to respond to national and natural disasters in order to minimize damages and help in recovery efforts. Public Law 84-99 enables the Corps to assist state and local authorities in flood fight activities and cost share in the repair of flood protection structures. Public Law 93-288 authorizes FEMA to task the Corps with disaster recovery missions under the Federal Response Plan:

[www.usace.army.mil/Missions/EmergencyOperations/NationalResponseFramework/FloodControl.aspx](http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/EmergencyOperations/NationalResponseFramework/FloodControl.aspx).

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/wildfires-you-need-flood-insurance](http://www.fema.gov/wildfires-you-need-flood-insurance) or [www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program). Other flood preparedness information is available at [www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods) at [www.floodsmart.gov/](http://www.floodsmart.gov/).

The NOAA National Weather Service (NWS)-San Diego office created a website featuring information about flash flooding and debris flows, precipitation forecast and a flash flood potential forecast dashboard, and is located at: [www.wrh.noaa.gov/sgx/hydro/ffpd.php](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/sgx/hydro/ffpd.php). The NWS-San Diego and Forest Service discuss Monsoon Storm Awareness in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgK0GVrJyRo>.

**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/](http://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/>**

