

Sierra National Forest

# Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)

Post-Fire BAER Assessment



August 15, 2022

BAER Information: (707) 853-4243

## FOREST SERVICE BAER TEAM BEGINS OAK POST-FIRE ASSESSMENT

A Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team has been established by the Sierra National Forest (NF) to begin a joint burned area assessment of the Oak Fire that recently burned on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) federal lands, and private lands. The Oak BAER team leader is Kendal Young, Forest Service Natural Resources Staff Officer, and Co-Team Leader is Marcos Rios, Forest Service Engineer. Personnel from California State Office of Emergency Services (CALOES) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) are evaluating burned private and county lands and infrastructure. CALOES and NRCS and the Forest Service BAER Team will be sharing information and data as they complete their assessments and subsequent reports. Forest Service BAER team assessments typically take approximately two weeks to complete.

In addition to working and coordinating with Sierra NF staff, NRCS and CALOES, the team is coordinating with the National Weather Service (NWS), US Geological Survey (USGS), 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 rockslides, and assist land managers prepare the burned area for the upcoming monsoon rains. The team focus is on potential emergency impacts to life, and safety on federal land but model hydrologic response throughout the burned area 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, biologists, archeologists, and geographic information specialists. BAER teams collect field data during their burned area surveys to analyze through GIS and computer models and present 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 runoff map that shows the levels of hydrological potential flows during rain events. This is the first step in assessing potential watershed impacts from wildfires to any federal values that may be at-risk from potential increased flooding, sedimentation, debris flows, and rockslides. BAER teams produce a report that describes potential threats associated with the burned area's post-fire conditions sometimes including 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 federal lands.

BAER reports are shared with interagency cooperators who work with downstream private home and landowners 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](http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program), or [www.floodsmart.gov/wildfires](http://www.floodsmart.gov/wildfires). Other flood preparedness information is available at [www.ready.gov/floods](http://www.ready.gov/floods) at [www.floodsmart.gov/](http://www.floodsmart.gov/).

**BAER SAFETY MESSAGE:** *Everyone near and downstream from the burned areas should remain alert and stay updated on weather conditions that may result in heavy rains and increased water runoff. Flash flooding may occur quickly during heavy rain events – be prepared to act. Current weather and emergency notifications can be found at the **National Weather Service** websites: [www.weather.gov/sto/](http://www.weather.gov/sto/) and [www.weather.gov/hnx/](http://www.weather.gov/hnx/).*

Oak Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/8325/>

