



Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)

BAER Information: (530) 303-2457

KING BAER ASSESSMENT UPDATE October 10, 2014

PLACERVILLE, CA (October 10, 2014) – The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team completed the soil burn severity map for the King Fire. The map shows that approximately 54% of the 97,717 acres within the King fire perimeter are either unburned or received low to very low soil burn severity, 23% sustained moderate soil burn severity, and approximately 23% burned at high severity to soils.

BAER specialists concluded that the amount of high soil severity burn is fairly consistent to other fires given drought conditions and late timing in the fire season. Areas with high soil burn severity have significant soil damage and will be “erosion source” areas with the coming rains. Low soil burn severity indicates slopes will respond fairly normally to rain events. Moderate areas are intermediate, and may produce significant erosion in larger storm events. The BAER map can be downloaded at the “King Post-Fire BAER” InciWeb page as JPEG or PDF version at inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4126/ under the “maps” tab.

Fire crews continue to clear the interior roads of trees and rocks and other obstacles within the King Fire burn area to ensure safe access for the BAER scientists and specialists who are continuing field surveys to validate and collect post-fire data.

As a result of this rapid evaluation and assessment, emergency stabilization projects designed to decrease possible impacts to values-at-risk (VAR) such as, human life and safety, property, critical natural resources and cultural resources, will be implemented as soon as possible, with a goal of completing priority projects before the first major storm arrives over the fire area. The BAER assessment team continues to meet with Eldorado National Forest staff, interagency cooperators, and interested stakeholders to identify potential values-at-risk within and downstream of the burn area, and further refine the VAR through its field work.

The BAER Soils Scientists and Hydrologists began their analysis of their field data for modeling predicted post-fire water run-off and erosion risk levels. The BAER team is also coordinating and sharing their field data with the US Geological Survey (USGS) who are modeling for debris flow potential, as well as other interested agencies and entities such as the National Weather Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Resource Conservation Districts, El Dorado and Placer Counties, local water agencies, public utility and irrigation districts, and the CA Central Valley Regional Water Quality Board.

BAER team leader, Randy Westmoreland said, “The BAER specialists for the King Fire expect to complete their burned area field surveys this weekend, compile their data to finalize findings, and recommend emergency stabilization treatments and actions.” Sometime during the beginning of next week, Westmoreland anticipates presenting the BAER team’s findings and recommended treatments in an assessment report to the Eldorado Forest Supervisor for his review.

During the next phase of the recovery for the King Fire burned area, a specialized BAER implementation team will install the emergency stabilization measures such as, water and erosion control devices, temporary barriers to protect treated or recovering areas, warning signs, and appropriately sized drainage features on roads and trails.

King post-fire emergency response, restoration and recovery efforts by the Eldorado NF and its interagency cooperators will continue to be posted on the King Post-Fire BAER InciWeb page.

King Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at <http://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/4126/>.

