

Shasta-Trinity & Klamath National Forests

Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)

Post-Fire BAER Assessment



July 21, 2021

BAER Information: (707) 853-4243

FOREST SERVICE BAER TEAM BEGINS POST-FIRE ASSESSMENTS OF LAVA, SALT & TENNANT WILDFIRES

Often after a large wildfire, special actions are necessary to provide for public safety and protect critical natural and cultural resources on National Forest System (NFS) lands. For example, loss of vegetation exposes soil to erosion, runoff may increase and cause flooding, and sediment may move downstream damaging roads and infrastructure or put endangered species and cultural resources at risk. The Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) program addresses these situations on NFS lands with the goal of guarding the safety of Forest visitors and employees and protecting federal property, and critical natural or cultural resources from further damage.

A BAER team has been established by the Shasta-Trinity and Klamath National Forests to begin burned area assessments of the Lava, Salt and Tennant wildfires. BAER assessments are rapid evaluations of the burned area to identify unacceptable risks on NFS lands from post-fire threats and assist land managers prepare burned areas for rainstorms. The team's focus is on the emergency actions necessary to protect life and safety, property and critical natural and cultural resources on NFS lands. The team also shares burned area information from the assessments with other federal, state and local agencies with post-fire responsibilities on state and private lands both within and downstream of burned areas, including USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), National Weather Service (NWS), and US Geological Survey (USGS).

BAER teams consist of scientists and specialists including hydrologists, geologists, soil scientists, engineers, botanists, biologists, archeologists and geographic information specialists. The teams collect data during ground surveys and complete GIS and modelling to evaluate the post-fire risks. The first step in the BAER assessment process is taking satellite imagery and data collected during ground surveys to produce a soil burn severity map. The soil burn severity provides the baseline information to determine changed watershed conditions for assessing potential watershed impacts from wildfires. This information is then compiled and presented to Forest leadership along with recommended BAER emergency stabilization treatments in a BAER assessment report. The BAER team will complete three separate assessment reports for each of the wildfires.

Rainstorm run-off is sometimes, but not always, increased on burn scars. 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, or www.floodsmart.gov/wildfires. 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** websites: <https://www.weather.gov/sto/> and <https://www.weather.gov/mfr/>.*

Lava Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7693/>
Salt Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7697/>
Tennant Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7699/>

