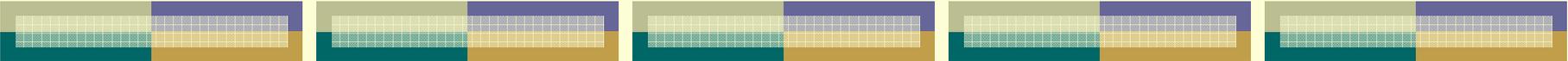


Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Program



Todd Ellsworth
Rim Fire BAER Team Leader
September 2013



Three Phases of Wildfire Rehab

There are three phases of rehabilitation following wildfires on federal lands:

- Fire Suppression Repair
- Emergency Stabilization-Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)
- Long-Term Recovery and Restoration



What is BAER?

A program to identify imminent post-wildfire threats to human life and safety, property, and critical natural or cultural resources on federal land and take immediate actions to manage unacceptable risks.



What BAER is not:

- Fire suppression damage repair
- Repair of fire damages
- Post-fire restoration
- Long-term fire recovery



The BAER Process

The BAER process has 3 phases:

1. Assessment
2. Implementation
3. Monitoring



BAER Assessment Team

- BAER teams are staffed by specially trained professionals who rapidly assess the burned area and prescribe emergency stabilization treatments.

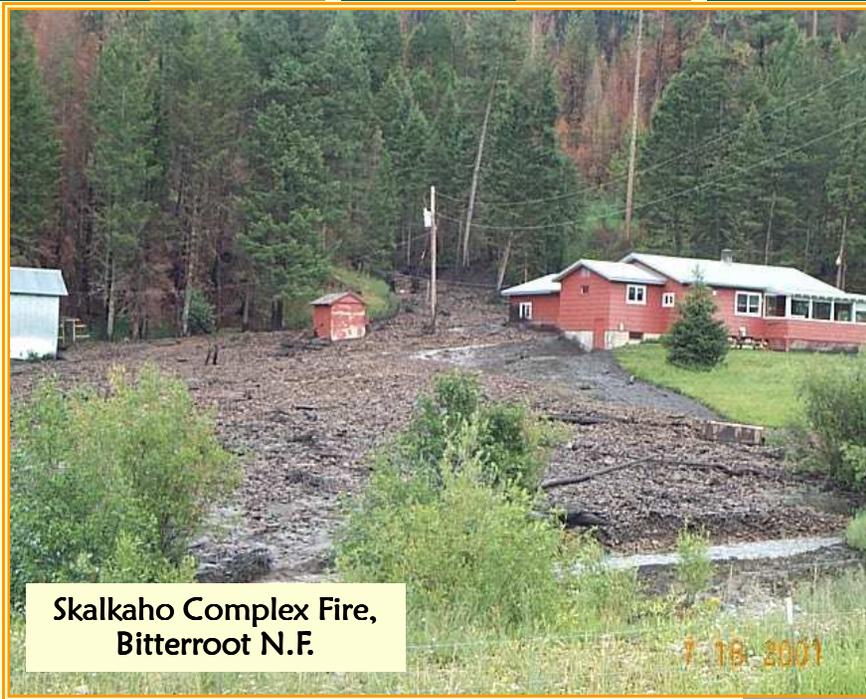
- Hydrologists
- Soil scientists
- Engineers
- Geologists
- Biologists (wildlife/aquatic)
- Botanists
- Archeologists
- Geographic Information Specialists (GIS)



Agency/Stakeholder Coordination

- BAER assessment and implementation are often cooperative efforts with federal, state and local agencies – especially important in Urban Interface situations.
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - National Park Service
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs
 - State Water Quality Control Boards
 - Local emergency service organizations (police, fire, flood control districts, public works, etc.)
 - Local Native American Tribal Representatives





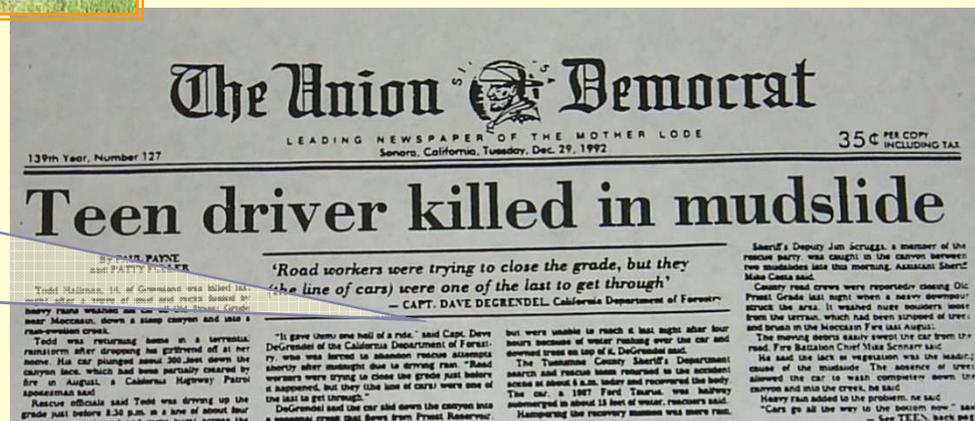
Skalkaho Complex Fire,
Bitterroot N.F.

Why is BAER Necessary?

Manage Unacceptable
Post-fire Risks to
Human Life or Safety

“...because the whole Priest Grade area was burned this summer...the danger level of storm and rescue work intensified.”

Moccasin Fire
BLM, Tuolumne Co., CA





Why is BAER Necessary?

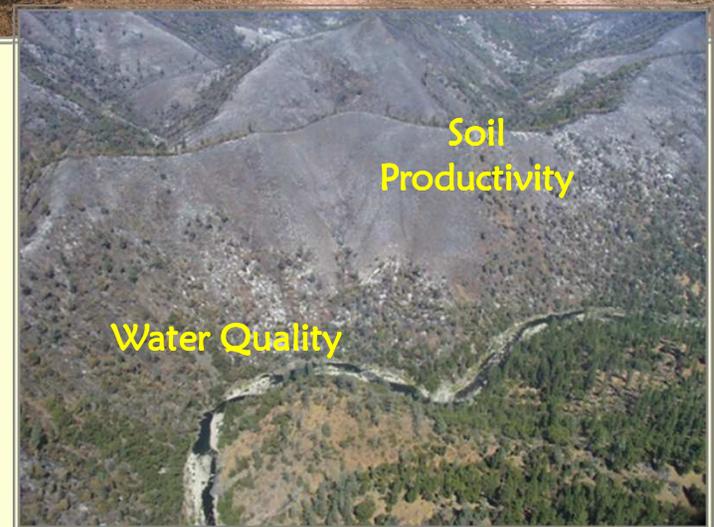
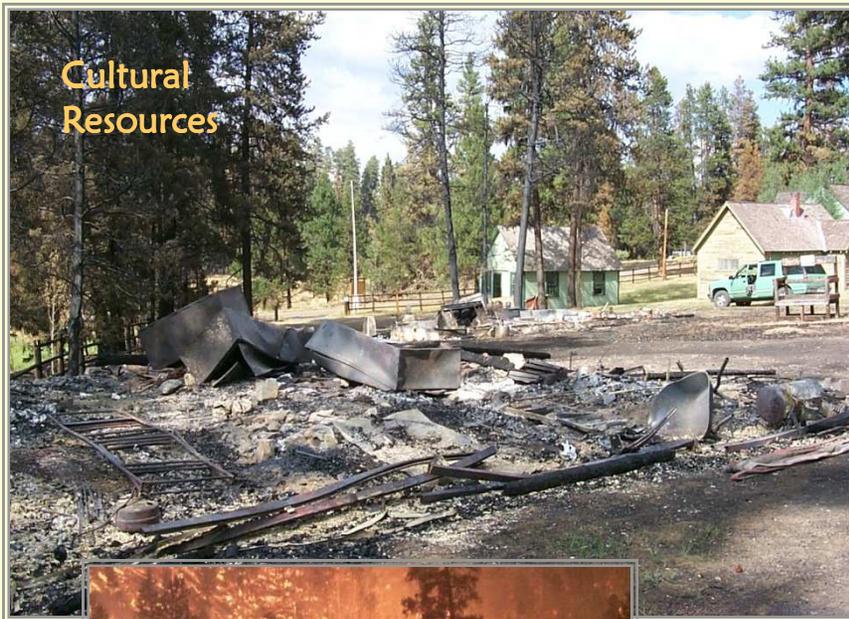
Manage Unacceptable Post-fire Risks to Property

- Roads/Trails
- Structures
- Facilities



Why is BAER Necessary?

Manage unacceptable post-fire risks to critical natural & cultural resources



BAER Assessment

- Finalize Soil Burn Severity
- Identify threats to BAER values
- Assess for unacceptable risks



Emergency Response Strategies

1. Closures/warnings
2. Treatments
 - Minimal action
 - Proven effectiveness
 - Substantially reduce risk in first year
 - Can be completed before damage is expected
 - Cost is economically justified
3. Limit actions to area with unacceptable risks



Emergency Response Examples

Flood mitigation (hillslope, channel)

- Value=life, property

Erosion prevention (hillslope, channel)

- Value=soil productivity, water quality

Storm proofing

- Value=roads, trails, buildings

Early detection/rapid response

- Value=noxious weed expansion

Safety hazard warning signs/ closure gates

- Value=human safety

Site stabilization/ hazard tree removal

- Value=cultural resources



BAER Approval Process

- Identify unacceptable risks to critical values
- Develop Treatment recommendations
- Line Officer approval
- Regional/National Approval
- Implementation



BAER Program Summary



BAER Mission:

- The BAER program addresses short-term post-fire emergency situations by MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE RISKS to life, property, natural or cultural resources.

The **EMERGENCY** caused by the fire is not over when the flames are out!

Program Limitations:

- Even with treatments, there is no guarantee that flooding or losses will be prevented.

For More Information

FS BAER Website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/biology/watershed/burnareas/>

DOI BAER Website:

<http://www.fws.gov/fire/ifcc/Esr/home.htm>

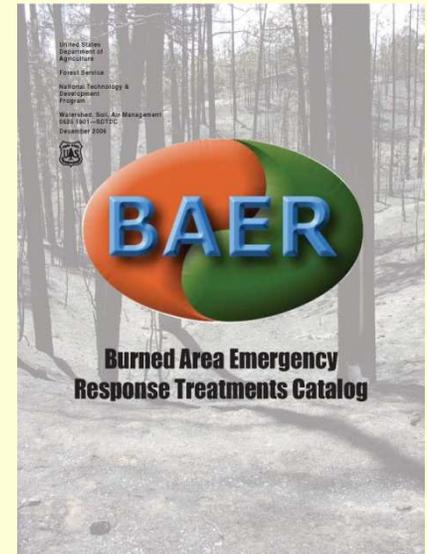
<http://www.nifc.gov/BAER/index.html>

BAER Catalog:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/eng/pubs/pdf/BAERCAT>

RMRS Treatment Effectiveness Monitoring:

<http://forest.moscowfsl.wsu.edu/engr>



NEXT STEPS

- Identification of Values at Risk (VAR)
- Communication w/each other



Questions?

