



Waldo Canyon Fire Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) Preparing For Rain Storms

7.13.2012

- ✓ The recent **Waldo Canyon Fire** on the **Pike National Forest** changed the watersheds within the burned area and increased the potential for flooding and mudflows that could impact several communities adjacent to and downstream from the Forest.
- ✓ Although mudflows can be a frequent occurrence after a wildfire, the effects of the **Waldo Canyon Fire** on the watersheds needed to be determined and analyzed.
- ✓ The Forest Supervisor for the **Pike & San Isabel National Forests, Cimarron & Comanche National Grasslands**, assembled a **Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER)** team to assess the condition of the watersheds that were burned in the **Waldo Canyon Fire**.
- ✓ One of the most effective **BAER** treatment is interagency coordination with local cooperators who assist affected landowners prepare for rain events. The **U.S. Forest Service** and the **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)** work together and coordinate with local agencies that assist affected landowners prepare for rain events.
- ✓ Multiple Agencies worked with the **BAER** team looking at the full scope and scale of the situation to reduce the potential threats to life and property; however, residents need to take steps to protect themselves and their property from a flood event:
 - For their safety, communities need to monitor local weather reports and public safety bulletins, along with local road closures, emergency notifications, weather alerts, follow local county advisories, and act accordingly.
 - Prepare for the monsoon rainstorms by being prepared to evacuate if county officials determine that flash floods and mudflows are expected which could pose an increased threat to life and property.
 - Know and be alert to environmental signs of dangerous weather conditions and be prepared to take action that can save lives.
 - Understand that all canyons along the Front Range and those associated within the burned area can produce flash floods.
 - And, if you find yourself in a flash flood, climb to safety (seek higher ground).

The **Pikes Peak Regional Building Department's Floodplain Management Office** prepared a brochure that can assist the public with flood readiness and contains key contact information. It is available at: http://www.pprbd.org/flood_files/flood.pdf.

The **Colorado Department of Natural Resources and Colorado Water Conservation Board – Watershed & Flood Protection Section** prepared documents that can assist the public with information about flood preparedness, hazards associated with floods, and what you can do to save life and property:
<http://cwcb.state.co.us/water-management/flood/documents/floodbrochure.pdf>; and
http://cwcb.state.co.us/water-management/flood/documents/floodstage_spring_2012.pdf.

The **Colorado Geological Survey** prepared a brochure that provides information about what you need to know about post-wildfire hazards:
<http://geosurvey.state.co.us/hazards/Fires/Documents/Post-wildfire-mudslides-brochure-final.pdf>.

Private landowners in Colorado impacted by the **Waldo Canyon Fire** may be eligible for assistance from the **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**. For more information, visit: http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov/news/pas/2012_Fires/2012_Fires.html.