



## **County of Lincoln**

**300 Central Avenue**

**Carrizozo, New Mexico 88301**

### **For Immediate Release**

**June 28, 2012**

Contact Michele Caskey – 575-336-8604

### **For Additional Information**

[www.littlebearrecovery.org](http://www.littlebearrecovery.org)

Fire Recovery Help Line (575) 258-INFO (4636)

## **Little Bear Fire Recovery Assistance**

On Saturday, June 30, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Lincoln County and cooperating agencies will host an expo to provide information about recovery after the Little Bear fire, and preparedness for future fires and floods. Representatives from Lincoln County government, New Mexico Division of Forestry, NM Environment Department, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USFS BAER (Burned Area Emergency Response) team, Lincoln National Forest, Smokey Bear Ranger District, Village of Ruidoso, local service clubs, and numerous volunteer organizations are expected to be on hand to offer assistance, or to direct residents to sources of assistance. Information on available assistance for homeowners who have lost property, recovery of burned areas, and preparedness for flooding and future fires will be provided. The location of the expo is the Ruidoso High School Auxiliary Gymnasium, 100 Warrior Road, Ruidoso.

Lincoln County and cooperators are working on several projects to lessen the post fire impacts on Lincoln County residents and infrastructure. The Watershed Restoration and Protection Task Force continues its aggressive drainage evaluation and restoration process. Debris removal in Bonito Creek continues, and Eagle Creek is about 70% complete. An estimated three days of work remain before crews move to the east side of Hwy 48.

A permanent warning system is being installed at the Bonito Lake dam, and is expected to be completed on Monday, July 2. This warning system will send alerts via cell phone, landline phone and radio if water level reaches a critical level. The system will also record and transmit the current water level in the lake. The water level in Bonito Lake is being lowered to reduce potential for flooding as the monsoon season approaches. One drainage line is open, and divers will be in the lake today to attempt to open another line which is clogged.

The Little Bear Recovery Center on Hwy 48 has application forms available for property owners with private wells in the burned area who would like to have water from their private wells tested. The NMED will provide this testing service free of charge, and will be at the Expo on Saturday to assist with the application process. Aqua Water Laboratory, located at Ruidoso Plant #3 in Alto, on 103 Villa Aguilera Road (575-921-8330 or 575-336-1107) can also test drinking water.

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Free drinking water for homeowners affected by the fire is available at the Recovery Center (575-336-1584, 336-1068).

The New Mexico National Guard will pre-position 12 trucks at the Lincoln County Emergency Operations Center on Monday, July 2, for emergency flood response if it becomes necessary. A fifteen man crew of guardsmen will be able to respond to an event within one hour. Four helicopters will also be available if needed.

VOADs (Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters) and contractors working on the recovery effort are requested to attend the operational briefing and contractors' meeting at the Lincoln County Copper Ridge Emergency Operations Center on Friday, beginning at 8:00 a.m. We will be discussing rules of debris removal, and other pertinent topics.

A Recovery Guide, designed to provide citizens with information regarding various forms of assistance, has been developed and is available at the Little Bear Recovery website ([www.littlebearrecovery.org](http://www.littlebearrecovery.org)). The disaster recovery team has set up an information number, 575-258-INFO (4346), that is designed to put citizens in direct contact with an individual who can provide information regarding animal assistance, basic needs, health and wellbeing, insurance assistance, legal assistance, debris removal, and other services that may be needed. This information line will be staffed Monday- Friday 8:00 to 5:00

Lincoln County officials are working with the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, The New Mexico Environment Department and other agencies to ensure that the citizens of Lincoln County have all the information and resources needed to recover from this fire. Updated resource information will be available on a daily basis by calling the help line or visiting [www.littlebearrecovery.org](http://www.littlebearrecovery.org).

Please call the Fire Recovery Help Line at 575-258-INFO (4636) for more information regarding recovery assistance. This phone line will be staffed Monday- Friday 8:00 to 5:00

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