

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**USDA Forest Service**  
**Lincoln National Forest**  
**Smokey Bear Ranger District**  
901 Mechem Drive  
Ruidoso, NM 88345



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### **Burned Area Emergency Response Team Begins Assessment of Little Bear Fire Area**

**Ruidoso, NM (June 20, 2012)** As the Little Bear fire reaches 60% containment, a Forest Service Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team is working in cooperation with the Southwest Area Type 1 Incident Management Team to initiate a thorough but expedited assessment of the burn area. The Forest Service BAER program addresses the key goals of protecting life, property, water systems, and deteriorated ecosystems in anticipation of the potential for heavy rains during the coming monsoon season.

The BAER assessment team is staffed by specially trained professionals including hydrologists, soil scientists, engineers, biologists, silviculturists, range conservationists, archeologists, and other technical specialists. Satellite imagery and on-the-ground assessments will be used to determine the severity of burned areas and potential for damage to values at risk. The BAER Team is working with numerous organizations including local, state and federal agencies to exchange technical information and coordinate emergency response efforts.

Burned area treatments will be recommended by the BAER assessment team and a request for funding will be submitted to implement such treatments. The BAER objectives are to: 1) identify significant threats to health, safety, life, property and values downstream; and, 2) implement treatments that will stabilize the soil, restore ground cover, reduce runoff, and protect water systems. Although BAER treatments have proven to be very effective in reducing runoff, the effects from rain events cannot be entirely prevented.

For more information on the US Forest Service BAER effort for the Little Bear fire, please contact us via email at [littlebear.baer@gmail.com](mailto:littlebear.baer@gmail.com). A public information phone line will be set up at this time and information will be posted on [www.inciweb.org](http://www.inciweb.org) as soon as possible.

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