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Las Conchas BAER Team Update July 15, 2011

North Zone-Santa Clara Canyon and North

Yesterday Santa Clara Canyon received rain causing two mud slides, one between ponds #2 and #3. The earthen dam on pond #1 was in danger of being overtopped when the water level rose to within six inches of the rim. Crews were shocking fish and preparing to drain the ponds when they were stranded by the mud slide. The crew was able to come out safely to the top. The bridge was collecting woody debris as the water rose. The decision was made to cut out the bridge to allow material to flow more freely. Approximately five feet of mud is covering the road closing it indefinitely. Watershed specialist will try to access the ponds from the top down today.

Totavi Gas Station at San Ildefonso Pueblos is slated to have concrete barriers placed around it to redirect flows. The Bureaus of Reclamation, North Zone BAER Team Liaison and the Nambe Pueblo will meet today to create an agreement to do work to maintain the storage capacity of the reservoir.

Archeologists consulted the State Historical Preservation Office on the site reviews that have been taking place. The Office is responsible for complying and storing all records on cultural resource and historical sites. While there the specialist visited the repository to examine cultural resources records pertaining to Santa Clara Canyon.

Specialist continued to write assessments yesterday for the Santa Fe National Forest.

The Las Conchas North BAER group expects to have their initial assessments and recommendations completed by July 17, and written assessments finished by July 21. Agency closeout meetings are tentatively scheduled to take place with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Northern and Southern Pueblos on Monday July 25.

South Zone-South of Santa Clara Canyon

BAER continues to work on reports. Team members met with National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) to discuss transition to implementation.

Daryl Martinez, BIA tribal liaison for the South Zone, identified a historic flood control berm system which wraps around the southwest side of Cochiti. This system was repaired. K-rails have been ordered directly from the state of New Mexico. Up to 600 sticks of K-rails are targeted for Cochiti; this should provide over a mile for the area. Currently, 10-15 percent of these K-rails were implemented. The projects for this area are on-going.

Point protection continues in Frijoles Canyon by the National Park Service. Public Information Officers escorted media through Frijoles Canyon in Bandelier National Monument. A reporter filmed crews sandbagging and interviewed a member of the Incident Command All Risk Team on BAER activities. Resource specialists reiterate that point flood protections at Tyuonyi would likely cause more damage than projected flood waters.

North and South BAER Team members shared data and mapping creating a draft burn severity map. GIS specialists continue to export data and accept requests added to map. Six sub-watersheds are now visible on this draft. Once finalized, the burn severity map will be handed to the National Incident Management Organization overseeing the North and South Zone BAER efforts, who will then distribute the burn severity map to agencies. BAER team members faced challenges creating the map since many of the lands assessed are still burning or smoky.

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