

Burn Area Recovery Task Force (BARTF) Report Los Angeles County Buckweed Fire



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Executive Summary

The Buckweed Fire burned over 38,000 acres with the majority of the burn area in the Angeles National Forest. The rest burned private land between the Angeles National Forest and the City of Santa Clarita. The following features face some potential degree of threat from flooding or debris flows from the denuded burned slopes:

- Risk to lives and private property from debris flows and/or flooding in:
 - The city of Santa Clarita, including the communities of Valencia, Saugus, Rancho Santa Clarita, Bouquet Junction, Honby, Canyon Country, and Solemint unincorporated areas within Bouquet, Mint and San Francisquito Canyons (e.g., Forest Park, and Sleepy Valley).
- Los Angeles County Probation Department has two detention facilities (Camp Scott and Camp Scudder) that are at risk from flooding or debris flows; the county Dept of Public Works has estimated that in case of a rainfall-induced flash flood, these facilities may only receive 7 minutes advance notice of danger.
- Los Angeles County Department of Water and Power Powerhouse #2 is at risk of damage from rock fall or debris flows; it is located within the Angeles National Forest.
- County and USDA Forest Service (USFS) roads are at risk from flooding and debris flows.
- Drinkwater Reservoir is at risk of reduced capacity from accumulation of debris flow sediments.
- USFS facilities, including the Big Oaks Lodge and Texas Canyon Fire Station are at risk from flooding, rock fall or debris flows.
- Recreational private property on USFS lands is at risk from flooding and debris flows.

Purpose

This BARTF report will identify and prioritize emergency protective measures and hazard mitigation projects to identify post-fire flooding, erosion, and debris flow hazards. The Buckweed is one of the numerous Southern California wildfires included in the Presidential Disaster Declaration DR-1731-CA. This report will also identify gaps in funding, identify proposed funding sources for all projects, and identify potential issues related to recovery.

The information was gathered for this report by state and federal Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) reports, initial Post-Fire Hazard Awareness Maps, and meetings with various local, state, and federal officials.

Introduction

The Buckweed Fire burned over 38,000 acres, of which 72 percent was within the Angeles National Forest and the remainder was private land between Santa Clarita and the Angeles National Forest. The overall degree of burn severity was low-to-moderate. Habitat for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species found in the burned area includes: the Unarmored Three-Spine Stickleback (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*), California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*), San Diego Coast Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*), and the arroyo chub (*Gila orcuttii*) (see Environmental Permitting Requirements Appendix).

Communities at risk of flooding include: Rancho Santa Clarita, Saugus, the northeast area of Valencia, Bouquet Junction, Honby, Canyon Country, Solemint, Mint Canyon, Forest Park, and Sleepy Valley. In addition, any unincorporated neighborhoods within the Mint Canyon, Bouquet Canyon and San Francisquito Canyon may be at risk.

There are five watersheds directly or indirectly impacted: San Franciscito Canyon, Bouquet Canyon, Mint Canyon, Upper Santa Clara River, and Santa Clara River/Tapo Canyon. This report addresses the issues and potential protective measures associated with the burned area, or the areas at risk downslope/downstream according to each respective watershed listed above.

Several state and federal listed species are located within the risk areas. Project-related impacts to these species may require consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Environmental permits may be required for many of the proposed projects identified in the BARTF Report. Many of these proposed projects can be completed under emergency conditions or under the waiver process identified in State Executive Order (S-13-07). Projects that do not fall under these classifications would need to follow the regular permit process (see Environmental Permitting Requirements Appendix).

The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) report for the Buckweed Fire is included in the BAER Small Fires report. It can be viewed or downloaded from the California Office of Emergency Services web site: www.oes.ca.gov

For any cultural resource concerns refer to the Archaeological Appendix.

San Franciscito Canyon

Background

Communities that may be at risk within this watershed include Rancho Santa Clarita, Saugus, and the northeast area of Valencia. These communities fall within the city limits of Santa Clarita.

Analysis

A preliminary assessment of the flood and debris flow potential exiting the burned area located at the far north of the watershed indicates that although there is some debris flow hazard in the

north, that area is natural lands within the Angeles National Forest. A potential flood hazard exists along the Francisquito Creek, and increases in area at the mouth of the creek, where it joins the Santa Clara River.

- Up to 230 homes, businesses, roads, and other features located within the floodplain may be at risk;
- Most of these are congregated in the communities of Rancho Santa Clarita, Saugus and the northeast area of Valencia (all within the city boundaries of Santa Clarita);
- Other homes and structures at risk are in the unincorporated area along the Francisquito Creek channel;
- A risk of rock fall, debris flow and flood damage exists to the Los Angeles County Department of Water & Power (LA DWP) Powerhouse #2;
- The Drinkwater Reservoir may lose some of its storage capacity as debris and silt carried by runoff is deposited in the reservoir.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

- Install barriers/deflective devices around structures, including LA DWP Powerhouse #2, such as concrete K-rails, or sand bags;
- Install erosion control measures on burned slopes (e.g., hydro-mulching) where feasible.

Bouquet Canyon

Background

This watershed is a large area and contains more than two-thirds of the burned area. Much of it is within the Angeles National Forest, although a portion of northeastern Rancho Santa Clarita is situated at the southern end of the watershed. All of the high-intensity burned area is within this watershed, as are burned areas of low and moderate intensity.

Analysis

There are multiple drainages throughout the watershed; the main one is Bouquet Creek.

- Camp Scott and Camp Scudder (Los Angeles Probation Department detention facilities located in Bouquet Canyon) are at high risk of flooding and debris flows;
- The county Dept of Public Works has estimated that if rainfall causes a flood event within the canyon, the warning notice given to the two camps may only be 7 minutes;
- As this is not enough time to evacuate the detention facilities, the DPW has recommended installing a 6-10 ft berm or some other deflective feature around the perimeter of each camp;
- Up to 200 homes, businesses, and public buildings (including one fire station and one school), situated in or near the flood plain may also be at risk from debris flows;
- At risk US Forest Service structures include: Texas Canyon Fire Station, Big Oaks Lodge, and various recreational (day use) facilities;

- Private recreational cabins situated on US Forest Service lands are at risk from flooding and debris flows.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

- Los Angeles County Probation Department detention facilities (Camp Scott and Camp Scudder): install a 6-10ft berm or other deflective feature to reduce the risk of harm to occupants and structures from flooding or debris flows;
- Install barriers/deflective devices around structures, such as concrete K-rails, or sand bags;
- Install erosion control measures on burned slopes (e.g., hydro-mulching) where feasible.

Mint Canyon

Background

This watershed is northeast of greater Santa Clarita.

Analysis

Communities of Mint Canyon, Forest Park and Sleepy Valley within Mint Canyon are at risk from debris flows or flooding up to 160 homes, businesses, and public buildings in or near the floodplain may also be at risk. Recreational areas within Angeles National Forest are at risk of degradation and increased erosion.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

- Install barriers/deflective devices around structures, such as concrete K-rails, or sand bags;
- Install erosion control measures on burned slopes (e.g., hydro-mulching) where feasible.
- Install fencing and gates to restrict access to specific off highway vehicle areas for one year.

Upper Santa Clara River

Background

This watershed is east of downtown Santa Clarita.

Analysis

Communities of Bouquet Junction, Honby, Solemint and Canyon Country within the City of Santa Clarita are at risk from debris flows. These areas are along the shores of the Upper Santa

Clara River. Up to 450 homes, businesses and public buildings; which include one fire station and two schools in or near the flood plain may also be at risk from debris flows.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

- Install barriers/deflective devices around structures, such as concrete K-rails, or sand bags;
- Install erosion control measures on burned slopes (e.g., hydro-mulching) where feasible.

Santa Clara River/Tapo Canyon

Background

This watershed includes the community of Valencia, within the city of Santa Clarita. This is the only impacted watershed that does not have any burned area within it. All impacts are from potential debris flows or from increased flooding.

Analysis

Parts of the communities of Valencia and Saugus within the City of Santa Clarita are at risk from flooding or damage from debris flows. The area is along the shores of the South Fork of the Santa Clara River. Up to 600 homes, businesses, and public buildings; which include, one fire station, one sheriff’s station, one library, one Red Cross Center, and one school, are situated in or near the flood plain may be at risk from flooding.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

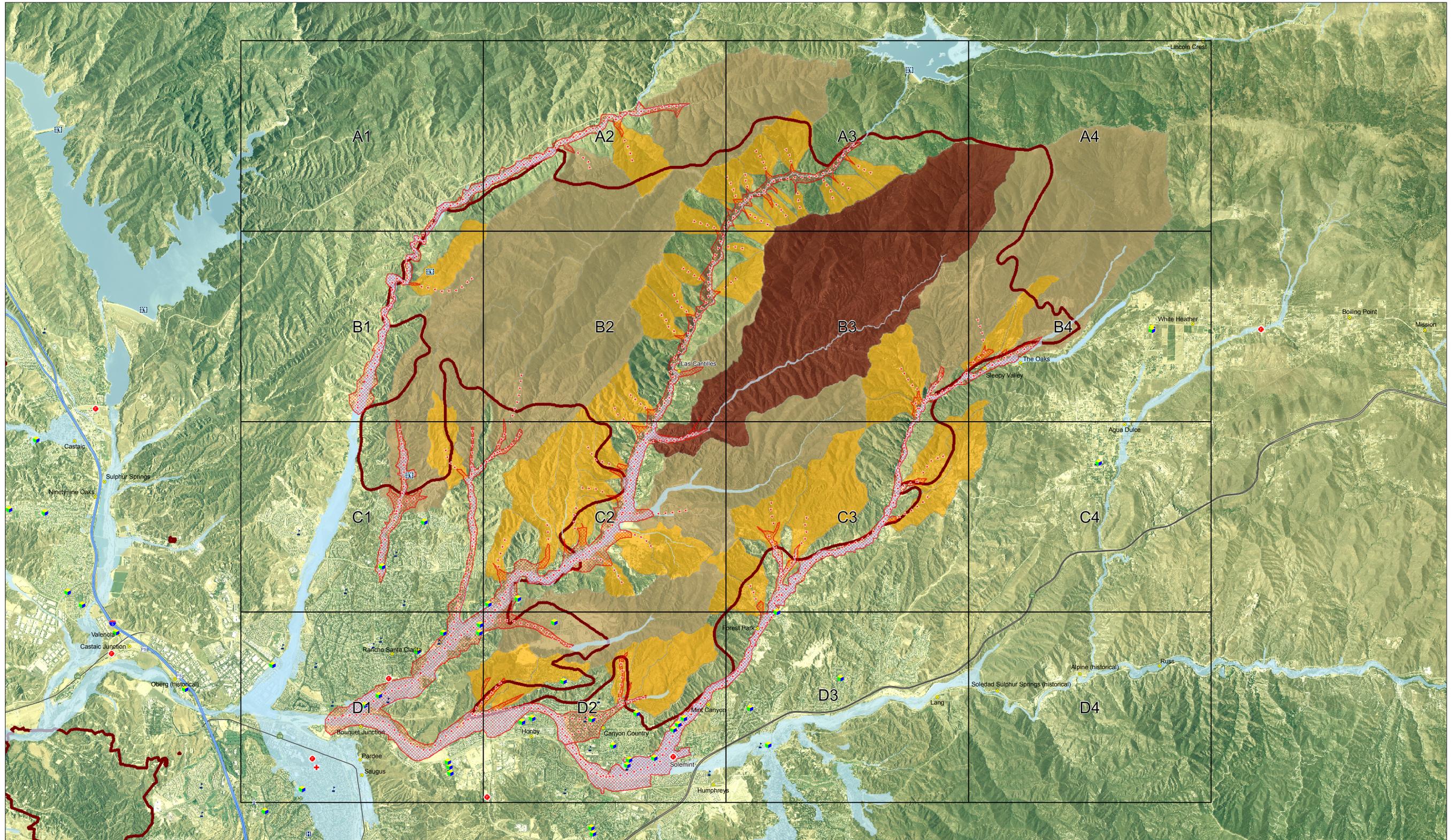
- Install barriers/deflective devices around structures, such as concrete K-rails, or sand bags;
- Install erosion control measures on burned slopes (e.g., hydro-mulching) where feasible.

Table 1 – Possible Funding Sources

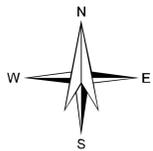
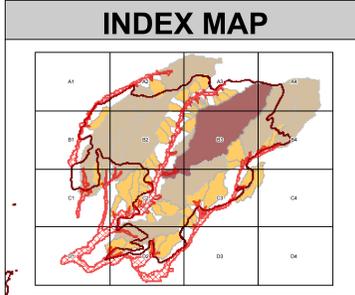
Yes	No	Funding Sources
X		California Disaster Assistance Act
X		FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Program
X		Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
X		Federal Highway Works Administration (FHWA)
	X	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
	X	Department of Interior (DOI)
	X	Insurance
	X	Other funding:

Appendices

- Appendix A – Environmental Permitting Requirements
- Appendix B – Archaeological
- Appendix C – Descriptions of State and Federal Program Funding
- Appendix E – Preliminary Suggested Projects



LEGEND	
	Populated Places
	Hospital
	Dam
	Convention Centers
	Daycare Facilities
	Fire Stations
	Red Cross
	Schools
	State Police
	Buckweed Debris Flow Lines
	FEMA Flood Hazard Areas
	Fire Perimeters
	FEMA Potential Debris Flow Areas
USGS Potential Debris Volume	
	0 to 1,000 cubic meters
	1,001 to 10,000 cubic meters
	10,001 to 100,000 cubic meters
	>100,000 cubic meters



0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Kilometers

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles

Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Date Created: 11/29/07
Author: MASG - Colton
Version: V 1.0

MAPS FOR ADVISORY PURPOSES ONLY. NOT FOR INSURANCE RATING PURPOSES. For insurance rating purposes, please refer to the Flood Insurance Rate Map currently in effect. Debris flow information is PRELIMINARY. Debris flow volumes calculated in response to a 10 year recurrence based on 3 hour duration storm producing 2.25 inches of rainfall. Volumes based on a model currently being tested. Debris flow behavior is highly unpredictable and this map shows the best available information at the time of printing. Populations estimated using 2000 Census data and are calculated for those areas only within grid index.