

Burn Area Recovery Task Force (BARTF) Report Riverside County Rosa Fire

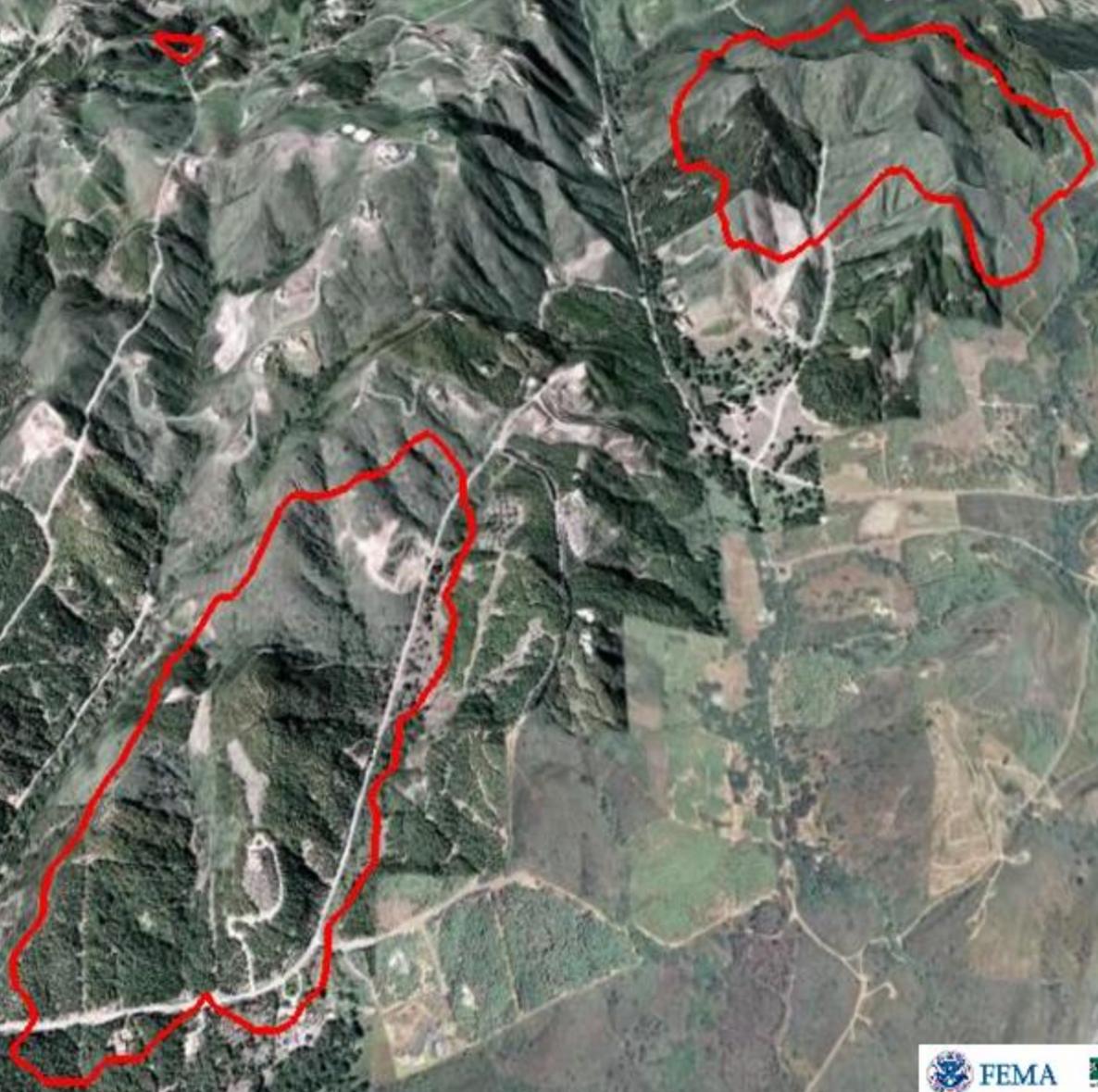


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Executive Summary

The Rosa Fire burned 411 acres within the foothills west of Temecula. The land within the fire perimeter is characterized by modified landscape of avocado orchards surrounded by chaparral and riparian habitats. There were three small segments of the fire that burned at a low to moderate severity. The fire segments include the locations of:

- Via Santa Road and Via Tornado Road, west of I-15;
- Via Vaquero Road, Calle la Paz Road; and
- Via Barranca Road.

No apparent potential for serious risk to life or property was identified as a result of the Rosa Fire.

Potential protective measures included the installation of erosion control, cleaning out of clogged culverts, and removal of debris from drainages.

Purpose

This report will identify and prioritize emergency protective measures to address post-fire flooding, erosion, and debris flow hazards. The Rosa Fire 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 conflicts that may slow or interfere with the proposed emergency protective measures.

Information has been derived from the State Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) report, the USDA - Forest Service Burned-Area Report, and local government requests for public assistance.

Environmental permits may be required for many of the proposed projects identified in this BARTF. 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).

Introduction

The Rosa Fire burned approximately 411 acres within Riverside County, west of the city of Temecula. The fire occurred on private land. The fire occurred within two Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC-6) watersheds; the Santa Margarita River/Sandia Canyon and Lower Murrieta Creek Watershed. Within the Rosa Fire, only minimal threats to property were identified. Risks to property could result from inadequate or clogged culverts.

Environmental permits may be required for many of the proposed projects identified in the BARTF report and the BARTF project matrix. Many of these proposed projects can be completed under emergency conditions or under the waiver process identified in the 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 BARTF report will summarize the major issues and recommendations of the BAER report in addition to issues identified from other sources. The report is organized by HUC-6 watersheds. Threats to life safety and infrastructure will be discussed under each HUC-6 watershed identified within the fire perimeter and areas covered in the Post-Fire Hazard Awareness Maps. Proposed emergency protective measures will be evaluated along with any issues that may impede the progress of these measures. Potential funding sources will be discussed and gaps in funding will be identified.

For any cultural resource concerns refer to the Archaeological Appendix.

Santa Margarita River/Sandia Canyon and Lower Murrieta Creek

Background

Values at risk in the Santa Margarita River/Sandia Canyon and Lower Murrieta Creek Watershed are minimal. There is the potential for debris to move down-slope in a heavy rain event with the potential to block culverts and cause degradation of watercourse. Except in the case where a landowner could become isolated due to a culvert being blocked with debris and the driveway washing away, there did not appear to be any potential for serious risk to life or property as a result of the fire.

Additionally, plastic culverts were used by one of the orchard operations within the burned area for roadway and orchard drainage. In the orchard, it appears plastic culverts were installed down the natural watercourses and the watercourses subsequently filled with dirt and debris. The fire melted many of the plastic culverts and the drainages are now littered with this debris. In a heavy flow event, there is a likelihood culverts could be blocked resulting in fill failures and degradation to the watercourse, road damage, and in some cases potential for isolation to landowners with driveways that cross drainages.

The following sensitive species have the potential to be impacted by debris and poor water quality within drainages downstream of the fire; Western spadefoot (*Spea hammondi*), arroyo chub (*Ghila orcuttii*), Southwestern pond turtle (*Actinemys marmorata pallida*), and Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*).

Analysis

The BAER reports did not identify any serious risk to life. However, there was a low risk to flooding of property due to clogged or damaged culverts.

Potential Emergency Protective Measures

- Install silt fences or other site appropriate erosion control measures to control ash and sediment flow to stream and floodplain.
- Clean culverts and remove debris from stream and floodplain at burn area.
- Clean culverts and basins downstream of burn area to confluence with Santa Margarita River.
- Notification to wetland permitting agencies for in-stream work should occur prior to conducting emergency and exigent work in all water courses.

Table 1 – Possible Funding Sources

Yes	No	Funding Sources
X		FEMA/OES Public Assistance Emergency Work (Cat A & B)
	X	FEMA/OES Public Assistance Permanent Work (Cat C-G)
	X	406 Hazard Mitigation
	X	404 Hazard Mitigation
	X	Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
	X	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
	X	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
	X	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
X		California Disaster Assistance Act
	X	Other funding Source

Appendices

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