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**FEMA**

# Recovery News

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## **FIRST BURNED AREA REPORTS OUT TODAY**

**COLTON, Calif.** — Today, the first Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team reports containing evaluations designed to assist federal, state, and local officials in creating a comprehensive remediation plan and guide restoration efforts as a result of the October wildfires are now available.

Officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, California Governors Office of Emergency Services, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, (CALFIRE), U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of the Interior jointly announced the availability of the BAER assessment reports.

This work and many additional projects are part of a concerted effort by federal, state and county officials to protect citizens from potential floods and debris flows associated with upcoming winter rains. The work is possible because of detailed assessments of the impacts of the fires.

Post-fire erosion control work has begun throughout Southern California communities ravaged by wildfires, with thousands of sand bags filled and placed, barriers constructed to protect homes and hundreds of culverts and miles of stream beds and canyons cleared. In addition, warning systems are being designed and installed to alert residents in at-risk communities.

Reports compiled by the State of California can be viewed by visiting [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov). Forest Service reports can be viewed by visiting the U.S. Forest Service web page at [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us) and selecting the forest name from the pull down menu. The report by the U.S. Department of the Interior can be viewed at [www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings.html).

The fires assessed by state BAER teams include the Santiago, Canyon, Rice, Witch, Poomacha, and numerous smaller fires.

Forest Service and Department of Interior BAER teams assessed fires in four national forests and on tribal lands. Fires assessed on the Cleveland National Forest included the Harris, Santiago, Witch and Poomacha. In the San Bernardino National Forest, BAER teams assessed the Grass Valley and Slide wildland fires. Angeles National Forest teams assessed the Buckweed and Ranch wildland fires while in the Los Padres National Forest, teams assessed a portion of the Ranch wildland fire.

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The Department of the Interior report deals with the Harris, Poomacha and Witch fires and represents the joint efforts of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

Conclusions and recommendations from the reports identify potential threats to life, property, and infrastructure. Potential threats to water quality and recreational resources, wildlife, botanical species, fisheries, and cultural resources are also reviewed. Federal, state and local officials will use this information for funding remediation project requests. Recommendations included in the reports are sand bagging, road stabilization, water diversion projects, culvert repair, soil stabilization, and hydro mulching.

Additional reports will be released when they are analyzed and approved.

*FEMA coordinates the federal government's role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.*

*The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state-agency response to major disasters in support of local government. OES is also responsible for maintaining the State Emergency Plan and coordinating California's preparedness, mitigation and recovery efforts.*

*Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, you should call FEMA toll-free at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). For TTY call 1-800-462-7585.*

*SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations. For information about SBA programs, applicants may call 800-659-2955.*

*Temporary housing assistance from FEMA does not require that an applicant file for an SBA loan. However, an applicant must complete an SBA loan application to be eligible for additional assistance under the part of the Other Needs Assistance (ONA) program that covers personal property, vehicle repair or replacement, and moving and storage expenses. There are other ONA grants such as public transportation expenses, medical and dental expenses, and funeral and burial expenses that do not require individuals to apply for an SBA loan to be eligible. FEMA will process applications for housing assistance regardless of whether the applicant has applied for an SBA loan, and eligibility determinations for applicants requesting FEMA's temporary housing assistance will not be held up because the applicant has or has not filled out an SBA application.*

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