



**Southern California
Burned Area Emergency Response
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Agencies Release First Assessment Reports on October Wildland Fires

Colton, California, November 20, 2007 ... The Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) assessment reports designed to help create a comprehensive remediation plan and wildfire restoration effort in Southern California are complete.

BAER Assessment Reports are completed for each fire or group of fires. State reports being released are the Santiago fire, Small Fires, and Rice fire. The Forest Service released BAER reports on the Harris, Buckweed, Ranch, Grass Valley and Slide wildland fires. The Department of Interior report released a report on the Harris, Witch and Poomacha fires. Additional BAER reports will be released as they become available.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE), U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior deploy BAER Teams to assess the restoration and remediation needs following wildland fires. Reports compiled by the State of California can be viewed by visiting www.oes.ca.gov. Forest Service reports can be viewed by visiting the U.S. Forest Service web page at www.fs.fed.us and selecting your Forest from the pull down menu. The Department of the Interior report can be viewed at www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/palmsprings.html.

State of California, Forest Service and Department of the Interior BAER Teams coordinated and shared information on fires where the teams were present throughout the assessment process to ensure the accuracy of data and to develop treatment recommendations that are integrated across jurisdictional boundaries.

Fires assessed by State BAER Teams include the Santiago, Canyon, Rice, Witch and Poomacha, and numerous smaller fires.

Forest Service BAER Teams assessed seven fires on four National Forests. Fires assessed on the Cleveland National Forest included the Harris, Santiago, Witch and Poomacha wildland fires. On the San Bernardino National Forest, BAER teams assessed

the Grass Valley and Slide wildland fires. On the Angeles National Forest, teams assessed the Buckweed and Ranch wildland fires. On the Los Padres National Forest a team also assessed a portion of the Ranch wildland fire.

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.

The conclusions and recommendations from the reports identify potential threats to life, property, and infrastructure along with potential threats to water quality and recreational resources, wildlife, botanical species, fisheries, and cultural resources. Federal, State and Local Officials will use this information for funding requests and to determine the allocation of funds to on the ground projects.

A few recommended treatments included in the reports are; sand bagging, road stabilization, hazard warning signs, culvert repair, soil stabilization, and hydro-mulching.

There were six State of California, six Forest Service, and one Department of the Interior, Burned Area Response Teams assessing conditions and developing reports for fire incidents. A State of California BAER Assessment Team is currently working to complete the assessment on the Harris Fire located in San Diego County. A Forest Service BAER Assessment Team is currently working to complete the assessment report on the Ammo Fire at the request of the Department of Defense at Camp Pendleton.