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News Release

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August Complex-South Post-Fire BAER Soil Burn Severity Map Released

WILLOWS, Calif. – Oct. 11, 2020 – Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) specialists recently completed their data gathering and verification field work of the August Complex-South burn area. The Soil Burn Severity map has been finalized. Soil Burn Severity levels are Unburned/Very Low, Low, Moderate, and High.

The map shows that in the August Complex-South fire area, approximately 52% of the 521,256 acres analyzed by the BAER team is either unburned/very low (9%) or low (43%) soil burn severity, while 44% sustained a moderate soil burn severity, and only 4% burned at high soil burn severity.

The BAER post-fire assessment team uses soil burn severity data to identify if there are areas of concern where increased soil erosion, accelerated surface water run-off, and debris flows have the potential to impact human life/safety, property, and critical natural and cultural resources from storm events. The BAER team consists of Forest Service scientists and specialists that are considering emergency stabilization options for those critical resources on National Forest System lands. The BAER team shares their analysis and findings with interagency cooperators who work with private land and business owners to help them prepare for upcoming rain events.

BAER Team Leaders Luke Rutten and Kendal Young said, “The BAER team expects erosion and run-off within the August Complex-South fire area to moderately increase as a result of the fire because 48% of the burned area experienced moderate or high soil burn severity.” In specific areas that experienced moderate to high soil burn severity, there is concern for increased post-fire run-off from steep hillslopes and resultant increases in post-fire soil erosion and debris flows.

The August Complex-South soil burn severity BAER map can be downloaded at the interagency “August Complex Post-Fire BAER” InciWeb site (<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7228>) as a JPEG or PDF version under the “maps” tab.

A “*Field Guide for Mapping Post-Fire Soil Burn Severity*” can help with interpreting the map and can be found online at http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/pubs/rmrs_gtr243.pdf.

SAFETY MESSAGE: *Everyone near and downstream from the burned areas should remain alert and stay updated on weather conditions that may result in heavy rains over the burn scars. Flash flooding may occur quickly during heavy rain events-be prepared to take action. Current weather and emergency notifications can be found at the **National Weather Service** websites:*

www.weather.gov/sto/, and <https://www.weather.gov/eka/>.

August Complex Post-Fire BAER Assessment information is available at:
<https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7228/>.