



Forest Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Santa Fe National Forest

Forest Service News Release

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Burned Area Emergency Response assessment underway on Frijoles Fire

Santa Fe, N.M., September 8, 2026— After a wildfire, the Forest Service's first priority is emergency stabilization in order to prevent further damage to life, property or natural resources. The Santa Fe National Forest Supervisor Shaun Sanchez has initiated a Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) assessment of the approximately 15,483-acre Frijoles Fire burned area even while the northeast edge of the fire continues to burn. The Frijoles Fire was started by lightning on August 4, 2026, approximately 3 miles east of Cundiyo, NM in the Española Ranger District of the Santa Fe National Forest.

A team of Forest Service specialists are assessing the effects of the fire on soil to prescribe treatments to reduce post-fire impacts to watersheds. Loss of vegetation and heating of soils may increase erosion and post-fire flooding, which in turn can impact habitat values and water resources such as rivers, reservoirs, and water supplies for homes and farms.

The BAER Team is using satellite imagery of the burned area and field work to classify the landscape into unburned, low, moderate, and high soil burn severity classes. This classification verified through field assessments provides the basis for models to predict hydrologic risks and other watershed effects, which then are used to identify the need for emergency response treatments to be implemented on National Forest System lands. The Forest Service assessments, including the soil burn severity map and post-fire flood risk models, are shared with other partners who may have responsibilities or opportunities to treat areas that are not National Forest System lands.

Updated information about the Frijoles Fire operations, maps, closure information, and the BAER effort are provided at <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/nmsnf-frijoles-fire>. Additional BAER information will be shared when the soil burn severity map is finalized, assessments are completed, and when the treatment plan is approved.

Public Safety Advisory: Fire suppression continues and smoke remains a concern in the area. A public safety closure order is still in effect due to fire operations. Monsoons can create hazards extending beyond the fire area. Everyone near and downstream from the burned area should remain alert and stay updated on weather conditions that may result in heavy rains and increased water runoff. Flash flooding may occur quickly during heavy rain events. Be prepared to act. Current weather and emergency notifications can be found at the National Weather Service website: www.weather.gññov/abq/.

About the Forest Service: The USDA Forest Service has for more than 100 years brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology– and rooted in communities–the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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