



# 2020 Oregon Wildfire Recovery

## ETART Fact Sheet

Nov 6, 2020

### **The big fires are over. Now what? Can rebuilding begin immediately?**

Before we can safely start rebuilding we need to be aware of the dangers that normally follow wildfires: increased soil erosion, potential flash flooding or landslides, structural weaknesses in roads and bridges and much more. It is critical to any post-fire recovery effort that these and other threats are identified to prioritize actions that protect human health and safety while addressing other ecological concerns such as water quality and fish habitat conservation, especially as winter weather arrives in Oregon.

### **How has fire changed the landscape? Why is it still dangerous?**

Soils once held together by vegetation and protected by ground cover no longer have the ability to retain water and the root support to prevent erosion. The most common threats include accelerated soil erosion, increased water runoff with flooding and debris flows, and expansion of invasive plants and noxious weeds. These threats have varying levels of risk and impair water quality; damage water systems, roads and bridges, campgrounds, and archeological features; and impact fish habitat and native plant communities.

### **What is ETART?**

To address these post-fire concerns and to protect people and restore ecosystems, the State of Oregon and federal partners, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), formed the Erosion Threat Assessment and Reduction Team (ETART). The ETART is an interagency team of experts—biologists, engineers, hydrologists, foresters, botanists, soil scientists, geologists, mapping experts, archeologists, and support staff—who know the threats that exist in burned areas. The ETART will assess post-fire changes on the landscape to identify the threats and potential risks, and provide recommendations to protect human life and safety, assets and infrastructure, and important natural and cultural resources.

### **Where will ETART assessments take place? When will the work begin?**

ETART is already working in several areas impacted by the 2020 Oregon Wildfire event. The work is progressing rapidly so the results can be used before winter weather triggers potential dangers like floods and landslides. The team itself will work on a larger watershed scale rather than looking at individual properties.

It is hard to determine exactly how many acres will be evaluated in this assessment because it includes both the burned areas and hazards created by the fires outside of the fire perimeters. Risks increase for areas downstream or downhill of the fire's footprint especially since there could be difference responses once rains start.

The maps and analyses they create can be used to look at individual properties and will be shared widely. People seeking assistance for assessments of private lands can find resources on the [Oregon Department of Forestry's Help After a Wildfire page](#).

#### **How can I find out what the assessments determined?**

The results and findings from the ETART will be presented to the State's Wildfire Recovery efforts including State Recovery Function 7, Natural and Cultural Resources Recovery Task Force. This information will help the state determine priority resource distribution and make the findings accessible for the public. The findings will be posted on the state's wildfire recovery site when they are complete.

#### **Who is in charge of ETART? Is it the same as BAER?**

The ETART effort for the 2020 Oregon Wildfires is a cooperation of state and federal agencies. The Oregon Department of Forestry is serving as the state agency liaison to the effort, in cooperation with FEMA as the lead federal agency. The cost for this effort is shared between state and federal public assistance sources. However, this effort requires participation and support from many local, federal and statewide partners. Federal and Tribal partners have designated Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) assessment teams who have completed similar assessments to ETART focused on federal and tribal trust lands. Information from these analyses will be rolled into ETART.

#### **Who is involved?**

ETART participants include: Oregon Emergency Management, Oregon Department of Forestry, FEMA, U.S. Forest Service, National Weather Service, Lane County, Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District, Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, Oregon Department of Transportation, U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, and will include more partners as the studies expand.

For more information, please reach out to the Wildfire Recovery Information Center at [fire.info@oregon.gov](mailto:fire.info@oregon.gov). For specific questions about the ETART, please email [2020wildfiresetart@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:2020wildfiresetart@fema.dhs.gov).