UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE

FOREST
SERVICE R5

REPLY TO: 2520/6520

DATE: AUG 2 0 1992

SUBJECT: Authorization for Expending Burned-Area Emergency Rehabilitation Funds (FFFS-FW22) - Cienega and Seco Fires

TO: Forest Supervisor, Los Padres National Forest

Attached are approved Burned-Area Emergency Rehabilitation Reports for the Cienega and Seco fires. You are authorized to expend FFFS-FW22 funds for the cost of burned-area emergency rehabilitation team evaluations up to the amounts shown in part VI of the enclosed reports.

The teams did excellent work in evaluating and describing post-fire watershed conditions and presenting rationale for why emergency watershed treatments are not warranted.

To be consistent with the charge-as-worked policy, the Chief issued direction in 1988 that allowed certain inter-disciplinary team and support costs to be chargeable to FFFS-FW22. Specifically, this covers actual time spent by ID team members in evaluating and prescribing treatment for emergency rehabilitation of burned areas, and for actual time spent by administrative personnel when assigned directly to the ID team or when working overtime exclusively on emergency rehabilitation activities.

When emergency treatments are prescribed, planned and implemented, a variety of inter-disciplinary team skills can appropriately be charged to the emergency watershed funding authority (FFFS-FW22). However, when no emergency treatments are needed, there can be fewer ID team skills that qualify for FFFS-FW22 funding. In these cases, appropriately funded skills are those necessary to determine if an emergency watershed situation exists, and if emergency watershed treatments are needed. This typically includes skills in soils, hydrology, geology, and those related to vegetative regrowth. Other skills can be included if they directly contribute toward determining if emergency watershed treatments are needed. Skills used only to evaluate fire effects on other resources (e.g., wildlife, archaeology, timber and range) do not qualify for FFFS-FW22 funding.

Please make sure that ID team charges meet the conditions described above.

/s/ Dale N. Bosworth

FOR RONALD E. STEWART
Regional Forester

Enclosures

cc: RF Office
H.Chan (PB)
R.Erwin(SPF)
WSA (W01A)

USDA-FOREST SERVICE

Date of Report: 8-12-92

BURNED-AREA REPORT
(Reference FSH 2509.13, Report FS-2500-8)

PART I - TYPE OF REQUEST

A. Type of Report

[X] 1. Funding request for estimated FFFS-FW22 funds
[ ] 2. Accomplishment Report

B. Type of Action

[X] 1. Initial Request (Best estimate of funds needed to complete eligible rehabilitation measures)

[ ] 2. Interim Report
  [ ] Updating the initial funding request based on more accurate site data and design analysis
  [ ] Status of accomplishments to-date

[ ] 3. Final report - following completion of work

PART II - BURNED-AREA DESCRIPTION

A. Fire Name: CIENEGA

B. Fire Number: LPF 995

C. State: CALIFORNIA

D. County: Monterey

E. Region: R-5 Pacific Southwest

F. Forest: Los Padres

G. District: Monterey

H. Date Fire Started: 8-5-92

I. Date Fire Controlled: 8-12-92

J. Suppression Cost: $ 4,000,000

K. Fire Suppression Damages Repaired with FFFS-PF12 Funds:
  1. Fireline waterbarred (miles) 0 see narrative, PART V (H)
  2. Fireline seeded (miles) 10.5 see narrative,,PART V (H)
  3. Other (identify) _____

L. Watershed Number: 1806000602

M. NFS Acres Burned: 910 Total Acres Burned: 910
Ownership type:
( )State ( )BLM ( )PVT ( )_____

N. Vegetation Types: Chaparral, Oak woodland, Ponderosa & Sugar Pine, Coast redwood, white fir, chamise chaparral.

O. Dominant Soils: Gravelly sandy loam, stony sandy loam

P. Geologic Types: Granite, schist, gneiss, sandstone, shale, serpentine

Q. Miles of Stream Channels by Order or Class: CLass
II 1.9 III 2.9 _____ _____

R. Transportation System:
Trails: 1.6 (miles) Roads: 0 (miles)

PART III - WATERSHED CONDITION

A. Fire Intensity (Acres): 255 (low) 75 (moderate) 580 (high)

B. Water Repellant Soil (Acres): 655

C. Soil Erosion Hazard Rating (Acres):
170 (low) 85 (moderate) 655 (high)

D. Erosion Potential: N/A tons/acre
E. Sediment Potential: N/A cu. yds/sq. mile

PART IV - HYDROLOGIC DESIGN FACTORS

A. Estimated Vegetative Recovery Period: _____ years.
B. Design Chance of Success: _____ percent.
C. Equivalent Design Recurrence Interval: _____ years.
D. Design Storm Duration: _____ hours.
E. Design Storm Magnitude: _____ inches.
F. Design Flow: _____ cfsm.
G. Estimated Reduction in Infiltration: _____ percent.
H. Adjusted Design Flow: _____ cfsm.

PART V - SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS

A. Describe Emergency:
The fire burned 910 acres of the Ventana Wilderness. Area burned was primarily within the Redwood Creek watershed directly above Redwood Camp. Redwood Creek drains into North Fork Big Sur River 0.7 miles below the burn area. Beneficial uses of Redwood Creek and Big Sur River are: cold water fisheries, recreation, wildlife, and domestic water for Big Sur community use. The majority of the drainages within the fire have their riparian zones unburned, 35% of the burn has a light to moderate burn intensity. 70% of the area has water repellent soils. The soil erosion hazard rating is low to moderate for 30% of the area. For the low to moderate burn intensity areas, it is expected that adequate native seed source still remains to reseed those areas with native plants. This is not expected to be the case for portions of the upper portion of the East Fork of Redwood Creek where 80% of the drainage has a high burn intensity. Sediment and/or runoff from the fire area is not expected to have a long term impact on the beneficial uses of water. It is possible that sediment production will increase from the fire area and that a minimal amount of sediment will be placed into the river. This increase and impact on the river should be for a few years.

B. Emergency Treatment Objectives: N/A
C. Probability of Completing Treatment Prior to First Major Damage Producing Storm:
Land _____ % Channel _____ % Roads _____ % Other _____ %
D. Probability of Treatment Success

	<----Years after treatment-----> 1	3	5
Land			
Channel			
Roads			
Other			

E. Cost of No-Action (Including Risk): $_____

F. Cost of Selected Alternative (Including Risk): $_____

G. Skills Represented on Burned-Area Survey Team ("x" appropriate boxes):

[X] Hydrology	[X] Soils	[X] Geology	[ ] Range
[ ] Timber	[X] Wildlife	[X] Fire Mgmt.	[ ] Engineering
[ ] Contracting	[X] Ecology	[ ] Research	[X] Archaeology
[ ] _____	[ ] _____	[ ] _____	[ ] _____

Team Leader: Bob Blecker
Phone: (805) 683-6711 DG Address: R05F07A

H. Treatment Narrative:

The 910 acre fire burned in the Ventana Wilderness. The Redwood creek drainage has 1,760 acres of which 840 acres did not burn. Within the burn 330 acres burned with a low to moderate intensity. The area that did not burn were the headwaters of the west and middle forks and the area below Redwood Creek Camp. Cienega Creek with a area of 1,230 acres received a burn of 25 acres of which 15 acres burned at high intensity. Redwood Creek enters the North Fork Big Sur River approximately 0.7 mile below the burn area. The Big Sur River watershed has a area of 46 square miles (29,400 acres) in its upper basin, upstream of Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Approximately 94% of the watershed burned in the 1977 Marble-Cone Fire. The Cienega Fire occurred primarily in an area of granite, gneiss, schist, sandstone, shale and serpentine bedrock. Soil textures are primarily gravelly sandy loam and stony sandy loam. Slopes in the upper watershed range from 50 to 70 percent. Slopes in the lower watershed are 30 to 50 percent. The majority of the burned area had chaparral fuel types. Some redwoods were burned within drainages. Small unburned islands, 5 acres or less, are located throughout the burn area. Some areas of the burn have only the understory of redwood riparian areas burned. The upper drainages (430 acres) of the East Fork of Redwood Creek were severely burned resulting in the complete loss of vegetative ground cover. All drainages from the northern watershed divide except the upper end of the East Fork of Redwood Creek have their riparian zones intact. This will enhance the ability of the stream to filter out sediment and reduce peak flows into the Big Sur River. There are 780 acres of unburned vegetation above the burn area which will buffer runoff rates onto the fire area from the upper reaches of the watershed.

Redwood Creek and the North Fork Big Sur River are significant cold water fisheries. These fisheries will be adversely impacted by the fire within a localized area for 4 to 5 years. Impacted streams are Redwood Creek and the North Fork Big Sur River from Redwood Creek to its confluence with Main Fork Big Sur River. A fish/stream survey in 1981, following the 1977 Marble Cone Fire which burned all of Redwood Creek and North Fork Big Sur River watersheds at a high or moderate intensity, identified abundant resident rainbow trout present in the North Fork and at the mouth of Redwood Creek. The 1981 survey indicated that adequate breeding gravels and pools existed. After 4 to 5 years mud and silt was not significant. The survey did not included Redwood Creek proper.

In 1990 a pair of Spotted owls were confirmed nesting near Redwood Camp. Sufficient spotted owl habitat is left unburned.

Other listed threatened and endangered animals that may be impacted by the fire include:

Monterey Dusky-footed Woodrat; found in chaparral.
Mountain Quail; found in throughout chaparral, within travel distance to water.
South West Pond Turtle; found along the North Fork Big Sur River.
Foothill Yellow-Legged Frog; found along North Fork Big Sur River.

Threatened and Endangered plants that may be impacted by the fire include:

California Bedstraw, GaCalLu; low perennial herb, under trees.
Santa Lucia Bedstraw, GaCle; low perennial herb, exposed peaks in chaparral.
Arroyo Seco Bush Mallow, GaPalLu; perennial, rocky west facing slopes.
Santa Lucia Lupine LuCer; perennial herb, dry rocky slopes in pines.
Sickle-leaved Fritillaria (FrFa).
Dudley's Lousewort (PeDu); occurs in redwood forest canyons.
Muir's Raillardella (RaMu).

Justification for not seeding - Burn Rehabilitation Team:

1. The estimated 30 percent of the burn area is composed of low burn intensity and/or unburned islands of vegetation. Together with these two burn characteristics, the fire is expected to have impacts to the watershed and fishery resources within Redwood Creek and adjacent areas on the North Fork Big Sur River for a duration of 4 to 5 years. In some respects fire has a benefit to some wildlife species. The soil erosion potential will be diminished slightly because of the burn characteristics.

2. Within the low to moderate burn intensity areas surface litter duff deposits contain sufficient amounts of partially burned or charred organic materials that will reduce the risk of rain splash erosion impacts on the soil surface. This will also help to reduce runoff.

3. There should also be substantial amounts of leaf drop from vegetation types in the low burn intensity areas. This will also provide significant cover protection going into the winter storm season. This should help to replace that portion of the litter cover that was destroyed by the fire.

4. A cursory examination of the charred litter deposits within low and moderate burn areas indicates there should be a sufficient native seed bank remaining. They appear to be mostly annual herbaceous species and chaparral that may provide some ground cover. This seed source is probably due to the large areas of chaparral fuel types that were present before the fire. In essence this seed bank will provide some of the necessary seeds to help provide ground cover for protection of on-site soil productivity.

5. There are no significant downstream values in close proximity to the burn area. There is storage capacity available within the existing channels to contain limited amounts of sediment deposits. The channel filling process is expected to be significantly increased by dry ravel movement in the East Fork of Redwood Creek resulting in additional sedimentation and channel scouring. Heating at the soil surface has reduced liter deposits in high burn intensity areas and has formed hydrophobic soils.

The Burn Rehabilitation Team recommends no channel treatment or construction of structures for the protection of downstream values or improvements.

Burn Rehablitation Team recommendations for fire suppression hand lines:

All suppression line were handlines. These lines will be reseeded by taking the top 1-2 inches of the soil and litter material that is on the non-burned part of the line and placing over the hand line. This method will allow the local native plants to reseed the lines. Handlines had light to moderate soil disturbance. No water barring is recommended. Berms along the handlines will be removed when the soil and litter is replaced on the lines. All hand lines with ground slopes greater than 15 percent should be treated accordingly. The use of a McCloud tool, shovel or rake should be adequate.

Big Sur River is not expected to be significantly impacted by this fire. This is because the riparian areas are not burned severely; unburned islands remain; large areas with a light to moderate intensity are present, and the seed source has not been destroyed over a large portion of the fire.

The beneficial uses of the Big Sur River are for recreation, wildlife, cold water fisheries, and local water supply for Big Sur and surrounding communities.