

December 18, 2012

Approved 
Christopher Stone

TO: Christopher Stone

FROM: Patricia Wood
Facilities Section
Water Resources Division

LOPEZ FIRE BURNED AREA REPORT

Recommendations

1. Authorize us to send a copy of this report to the City of Los Angeles (Bureau of Engineering) to inform them of the potential impacts to their facilities.
2. Authorize us to send a copy of this report to Flood Maintenance Division (FMD) as confirmation of the potential sediment impacts to Lopez Inlet Debris Basin below the burned area.

Background

Fire Name: Lopez Fire
Date of Fire: October 2, 2012
Burned Area: 4 Acres
Location: The fire occurred on a hillside northeast of the intersection at Lopez Canyon Road and Paxton Street in the City of Los Angeles, and is located within the Los Angeles County Flood Control District boundary. The burned area is entirely within the Lopez Canyon Landfill property, owned and operated by the City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation. Thomas Guide Page: 482-F6.

Fire History

Public Works' fire history records indicate that there have been three significant fires that have previously occurred in the Lopez Fire burned area. The 1979 Whitehorse Fire burned approximately 59 acres and overlapped approximately 70 percent of the Lopez Fire burned area. The 1975 Mill Fire burned approximately 49,200 acres and overlapped 100 percent of the Lopez Fire burned area. The 1970 Bailey Lopez Fire burned approximately 517 acres and overlapped 100 percent of the Lopez Fire burned area.

Vegetation Types Before Burn

Vegetation in and around the watershed subareas prior to the burn consisted of grasses and coastal sage scrub.

Summary of Potential Sediment Impact

On October 10, 2012, Water Resources Division (WRD) staff conducted a field reconnaissance of the burned area to determine if residential properties and/or Public Works maintained facilities could potentially be impacted by the debris flows during severe storms. The Lopez Fire burned approximately four acres within the City of Los Angeles. The burned area (See Attachment A – Burned Area Map) is divided into a total of six subarea watersheds across one Debris Producing Area (Zone 1). During moderate to severe storms, debris may potentially flow from the burned hillsides onto Lopez Canyon Road (maintained by the City of Los Angeles), causing flooding and sediment deposition. The debris is also expected to flow into the Lopez Inlet Debris Basin (maintained by Public Works).

Subarea 1

Subarea 1 consists of a total of 2.7 acres and was 37 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 700 cubic yards (cy). During moderate to severe storms, debris from the burned subarea may plug the existing culvert inlet at the toe of the subarea, overtop the headwall, and reach Lopez Canyon Road, causing flooding and sediment deposition along the roadway. Lopez Canyon Road is maintained by the City of Los Angeles and is under its purview. The flooding may extend into the Lopez Channel Inlet (maintained by FMD), causing damage to the perimeter fence and increased sediment deposition within the collection area behind the inlet. FMD has established criteria to monitor and clear the area as needed. The monitoring should continue for the next four to five years until the watershed has significantly recovered from the burn.

Subareas 2 and 3

Subarea 2 consists of a total of 1.1 acres and was 80 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 350 cy. Subarea 3 consists of a total of 1.1 acres and was 80 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 350 cy.

During moderate to severe storms, debris from the burned subareas may potentially flow directly from the burned hillside onto the Lopez Canyon Road (maintained by

Christopher Stone
December 18, 2012
Page 3

the City of Los Angeles), causing flooding and sediment deposition along the roadway. Lopez Canyon Road is maintained by the City of Los Angeles and is under its purview. The flooding may extend into the Lopez Channel Inlet (maintained by FMD), causing damage to the perimeter fence and increased sediment deposition within the basin. FMD has established criteria to monitor and clear the area as needed. The monitoring should continue for the next four to five years until the watershed has significantly recovered from the burn.

Subarea 4

Subarea 4 consists of a total of 1.75 acres and was 29 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 400 cy. During moderate to severe storms, debris from the burned hillside is expected to settle on the wide flat open area at the toe of the subarea. Flooding and sediment deposition may potentially extend beyond the subarea and deposit within the intersection of Lopez Canyon Road and Paxton Street (both maintained by the City of Los Angeles and under its purview).

Subarea 5

Subarea 5 consists of a total of 4 acres and was 18 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 900 cy. During moderate to severe storms, debris from the burned hillside is expected to settle on the flat open area at the mouth of a small canyon within the Lopez Canyon Landfill property. Lopez Canyon Landfill is owned by the City of Los Angeles.

Subarea 6

Subarea 6 consists of a total of 1.5 acres and was 7 percent burned creating an adjusted debris potential of 300 cy. During moderate to severe storms, debris from the burned slopes may potentially flow onto Lopez Canyon Road (maintained by the City of Los Angeles), causing localized flooding and sediment deposition along the paved road. The mud and sediment may overflow the road and deposit in Lopez Canyon Creek, a natural watercourse.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Kenneth Rickard at Extension 6154.

SC:vt

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 Attach.

cc: Flood Maintenance