



# Flood Recovery Team

Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests  
and Pawnee National Grassland

## FLOODRECOVERYUPDATE

ISSUE#2

### FLOOD 2013: ONE YEAR LATER



Above: Taylor Mountain Road before and after repairs

As we approach the one year flood anniversary, the U.S. Forest Service is taking a moment to reflect. During this event, floodwaters moved through more than 230,000 acres of the Roosevelt National Forest. Roads, trails and recreation sites were heavily damaged or washed away. The landscape as we knew it changed in just a few days. Like many others in the community, we assisted with initial emergency response and started the damage assessment before the first snowfall.

In the year since the flood we have been amazed and proud of the people we serve and the dedication of our employees, cooperators and partners who have shown us that, just like the landscape, we are all resilient and on the path to a new future.

On National Forest System lands our work within the heavily impacted area is one-third complete as of this anniversary month. We have made great progress with the help of partners, cooperators and volunteers who have allowed us to stretch our funding, staffing and resources. Considerable work is still ahead of us as we continue our recovery work and address the future of treasured locations in this changed landscape. As we have worked across the impacted area, we have found some areas are not damaged as much as we thought and some are much worse than  
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### FLOOD DAMAGE 2013 FACTS

- The most heavily affected area is concentrated on 230,000 acres of National Forest System (NFS) lands which are interwoven with 144,000 acres of private lands.
- The flood damaged at least:
  - **232 roads (382 miles)**
  - **70 trails (236 miles)**
  - **4 bridges**
  - **42 facilities**
- Damage will take years to address and it is unlikely that all areas, roads and opportunities will be returned to pre-flood conditions.
- Total repair costs, including infrastructure and natural resource damage, were estimated at \$40 million.

### FLOODRECOVERY 2014 FOCUS

- Address public and employee **safety**.
- Prioritize work needed for facilities and infrastructures.
- Restoration of **ecosystems** within limits and opportunities.
- Provide community **public service** to resolve issues, leverage funds and expand recovery efforts.

## FORESTRECOVERY



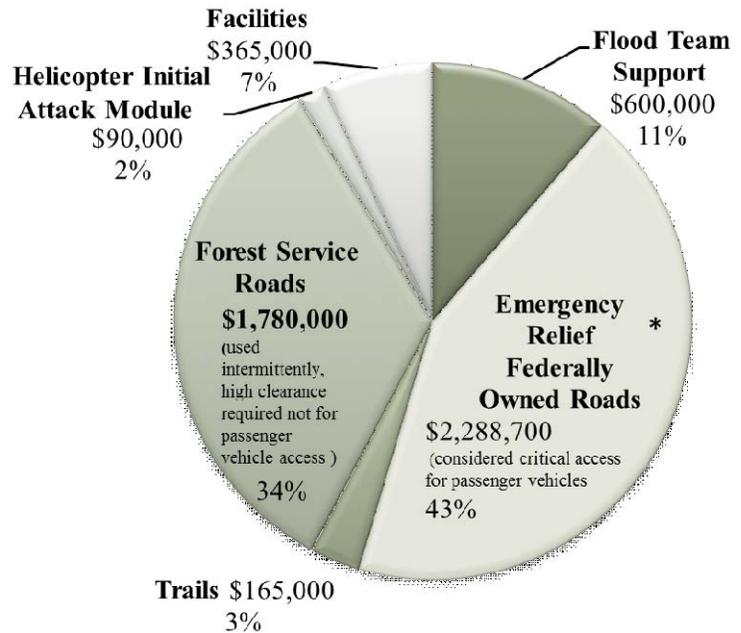
Above: Sevenmile Road after the flood



Above: Sevenmile Road after repairs

The Flood Recovery Team was initiated to address the 2013 flood damage and consists of a group of seven people that work arduously to repair National Forest lands. The team works together with organizations, like the Poudre Wilderness Volunteers, to improve the changed landscape in a timely manner.

To date, the Forest Service received \$5.2 million to be used for flood recovery efforts. The funds were broken down into these categories:



\* Emergency Relief Federally Owned Road funds were awarded to fix high-level roads. This funds multi-year projects administered and implemented by the Federal Highway Administration.

## RECOVERY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Numerous road crews repaired high priority roads providing access to numerous landowners and forest users.
- Idylwilde Dam was decommissioned and removed from the Big Thompson River in cooperation with the City of Loveland
- Repaired:
  - 145 miles of roads
  - 45 miles of trails
  - 2 campgrounds
  - 3 trailheads
  - 4 picnic sites
  - 1 boat access
- Three picnic sites were decommissioned and closed.
- An ecosystem resource assessment strategy for addressing rehabilitation and restoration solutions was developed.

Based on its initial assessment and a focused prioritization, the Forest developed a plan of work. These lists are available on the Flood Recovery Website at [www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/floodrecovery](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/floodrecovery).



Above: Trout Unlimited volunteers attended training with U.S. Forest Service hydrologist and fisheries biologist. Trout Unlimited has partnered with the USFS to assess stream corridors in flood-affected areas.

## ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHT: CAMP DICK



Above: Middle Saint Vrain Creek meanders through Camp Dick several days after flood waters have receded

Camp Dick, a popular campground just off of the Peak to Peak scenic byway, was inundated by waters from the Middle Saint Vrain Creek during the flood of 2013.

This campground, originally established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, attracts a wide range of recreationists due to its proximity to the Middle Saint Vrain Creek, the Sourdough and Buchanan Pass trails, the Middle Saint Vrain and Bunce School Off Highway Vehicle Roads, and the Indian Peaks Wilderness.

Much of the campground's gravel fill washed away, leaving uneven, rutted pathways and campsites. Replacing this gravel proved complicated, as neither of the two bridges leading into the campground could support the weight of a fully-loaded gravel truck. Completing the repair work in this case required the cooperation and coordination of a number of different crews and groups.



Above: A campsite at Camp Dick in post-flood condition

### All Hands on Deck!

- A Forest Service Enterprise crew delivered dump truck loads of crushed gravel to the site.
- Employees from Boulder and Canyon Lakes Ranger Districts operated skid steers to load gravel into trailers.
- A Boulder Ranger District firefighter towed trailer loads of gravel across the bridges that were too damaged to support the dump truck loads.
- Boulder and Larimer County Department of Labor Crews used wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes to distribute gravel throughout the campground.
- Campground hosts from American Land and Leisure directed campers away from the work sites, as undamaged portions of the campground remained open during repairs.



Above: Campers occupied the newly-repaired campsites within minutes of their opening

## FLOOD 2013: ONE YEAR LATER

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we had hoped. Some locations may never be the same. Some locations may need additional environmental analysis to relocate roads, trails and other infrastructure. Our flood recovery team will focus on ecosystem restoration while they continue their roads, trails and facility repair work. We appreciate the continued patience of those who value this area; the eager volunteers ready in wait for the next phase of recovery; our partners and cooperators who we have gotten to know even better and found creative and new ways to work together. As we move along in recovery, please know that we couldn't do it without you.

## ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHT: INITIAL ATTACK HELICOPTER MODULE



Above: Firefighters familiarize themselves with the helicopter

*A fully staffed, immediately available helicopter on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee Grassland has dramatically improved the response time by firefighters to locate, map and suppress wildfires throughout the Northern Front Range.*

The flood of 2013 damaged many roads throughout the Forest that firefighters relied upon for on-the-ground fire response. The USFS responded by combining and reconfiguring a Forest Service engine module and an initial attack firefighting squad into an eight-person helitack initial attack module with crew support from both Boulder County and the Colorado Department of Fire Prevention and Control. This partnership and the availability of a helicopter provide effective fire response in the face of limited road access.

The helicopter, a Eurocopter AS 350 B3, is a newer variant of what is commonly known as the "Astar" and is well-suited for high elevation service. It has five passenger seats, can carry 140 gallons of water at typical Colorado elevations, and is equipped to support fire needs by shuttling firefighters, hauling cargo, performing reconnaissance missions, mapping fire perimeters, evacuating patients, and delivering water from buckets for aerial firefighting.

During this season of moderate fire occurrence, the helicopter module has also been active supporting local search and rescue operations and firefighting efforts in other areas of the country.

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

- Remember, your safety is your responsibility. If you encounter an unsafe situation on a road or trail that is open, please stop and turn around. Emergency response access is limited due to flood damage.
- The flood has possibly made some trees less stable due to eroded soils. Use caution, especially on windy days.
- Use caution crossing dry streambeds and low area; sudden storms may cause flash floods.
- Climb to safety in case of flash flood warning.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For a listing of the status of flood-damaged roads, trails and facilities, visit :  
[www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/floodrecovery](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/floodrecovery)



## QUESTIONS?

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