

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Yellowpine Mudslide Update

On Tuesday around noon, the National Weather Service issued a flash flood warning for Eastern Valley County. An isolated thunder storm tracked across the South Fork Salmon River Basin in the area of last summer Cascade Complex and East Zone Fire Complex. Mud and debris flows occurred in approximately 2 dozen small tributaries to the East Fork South Fork Salmon River (EFSFSR). About 10 drainages cross the EFSFSR Road, which provides access to the community of Yellow Pine from McCall. About 6 culverts were plugged and the road is impassable. First reports came in yesterday from loggers working in the Parks Creek area west of Yellow Pine. Park Creek severely scoured from the very head of the drainage to the confluence with the EFSFSR. A large open bottom culvert was completely plugged with an alluvial fan spreading over 1000 feet up and down the road. Mud and debris at Parks Creek is reported at about 7 feet deep. The Forest Service and Valley County Roads are working together to clear debris and provide access to Yellow Pine along the EFSFSR Road. Access is currently limited to road equipment and crews. The Forest can expect further damage in fire areas if isolated summer storm develop and produce rainfall amounts that exceed one inch per hour. No reports of damage to the community of Yellow Pine, homes, ranches, or other property have been reported.

- Valley County will take the lead on clearing debris off road, opening access, and restoring flows through the culverts.
- NOAA-Fisheries has been contacted for emergency consultation.
- Debris jams in the EFSFSR need to be assessed for potential risk to road and downstream bridges. Action will be taken where needed by County and FS.
- This type of event was foreseen and funding has already been acquired and programmed.

The drinking water supply for the community of Yellow Pine was cut off for one day following this week mud flows. Boulder Creek is Yellow Pine's surface municipal water supply. Yesterday recon indicates surface and rill erosion. High water and mud flow lines were indicated across the steep boulder field in the mid section of the drainage. The flows eventually dissipated into the boulder field. This boulder field protects the community from large debris. However, the surface water treatment plant did receive a large amount of very fine sand and organics which required the community to shut the system down and clean screens and refurbish sand filters.