

Jesusita Fire Site Recommendations

Monday, July 27 – Friday, July 31
Santa Barbara, CA



Preparing For This Winter

Protect existing plant cover & establish vegetative cover on all bare or disturbed soil on your property before the rains.

Plants, especially grasses, & mulches can be used to protect soil & slopes from raindrop impact & some storm water runoff.

Permanent Plantings should be designed with future fire safety and fire engine access to your property in mind.

Please consider safety as your top priority.

Grass is better than mulch, Mulch is better than bare soil

- Mimic natural vegetated conditions.
- A slope well covered with grass will erode less.
- Use mulch to establish vegetation.
- Mulch protects against raindrop impact but not concentrated flows.
- Mulch can be expensive to apply.
- Mulch and Grass can fail too.

Recommendations for a bare slope above a house:



- Seed & Mulch the entire slope. Irrigate lightly and frequently to promote vegetative establishment.
- In the long term, consider slope stabilization measures such as terraces or a higher retaining wall.

Steep slopes above a house pad



- Consider mulch with seed to establish erosion control protection. Ensure drainage down slope and behind wall is carried to a safe outlet.
- Existing retaining wall may be compromised due to fire damage. Consult a geotechnical engineer.

Wood mulch application



Slope treated with wood mulch



Protecting against Sheet Erosion



- ◆ The best protection for this slope is to get grass growing on it.
- ◆ The jute blanket protects seed & seedlings from rain-drop impact & sheet erosion.
- ◆ Straw-rolls or Waddles slow down small flows of water & detain small amounts of sediment.

Plan well, before installing.

Use emergency/temporary practices such as sand bags, straw bales, brush & slash, plastic sheeting, straw rolls & hand dug drainage ditches with extreme caution.

Do not install without professional guidance. Covering slopes with plastic sheeting or dumping brush into gullies or other eroded areas is almost always the wrong thing to do.

Choose proper materials & install them well.



- ◆ An improperly designed or placed emergency practice can be worse than no practice at all.
- ◆ New hazards or problems may be created, or worsening problems covered up, creating a false sense of security.

Don't Unnecessarily Remove Vegetation



Burned, possibly dead vegetation

- Don't remove vegetation unnecessarily, especially before the rainy season is over.
- Root systems hold soil & slopes in place. Tree cover protects soil from raindrop impact, & slows & reduces runoff.



“No Action” Alternative



- No action required.
- Adequate existing seed bank and ground cover.
- Mulch with or without seeds/irrigation may offer additional erosion protection and promote vegetative growth.

70% Slope below house, above road



- Too steep for mulch
- Oak canopy provides good cover to reduce raindrop impact.
- Consider the “no action” alternative.

Divide & Conquer



Drainage ways
converge and flow
toward the property
below.

Be aware of how
water flows
through/around/
under your
property

Monitor and Maintain

- Monitor and maintain all existing and planned runoff, erosion and sediment control measures (including vegetative cover) before and throughout the rainy season.
- In some areas, leaf litter and burned debris can be a serious problem for roof, driveway and landscape drainage systems.



(Properly) install & maintain debris racks upstream of drains



Monitor drain outlets and keep them clear



and when is the BBQ?



Call For Help, early.



Get professional help with design and installation of any temporary or permanent practices to control runoff and/or prevent erosion.

Love Thy Neighbor

- Runoff usually extends beyond property lines.
- Work with neighboring property owners when determining permanent solutions for drainage and runoff issues.
- You may be liable for runoff onto down slope neighboring properties if you decide not to be concerned with potential off-site impacts.

Be Prepared

- ! Don't stay in your home when it becomes unsafe.
- ! Have a home and neighborhood evacuation plan.
- ! Have an emergency plan for your pets and livestock.



Continue to Be Prepared

- Stockpile emergency supplies including sandbags, a supply of sand, straw, etc.
- Pay close attention to weather forecasts, flash flood and storm warnings, water levels in nearby creeks, etc. throughout the winter.
- Evacuation plans should always include at least one alternative escape route and a list of important/emergency numbers, including numbers of neighboring property owners.

Summary

- Apply mulch or hydromulch to bare slopes to slow runoff & reduce the potential for damaging erosion.
- Lightly irrigate slopes to promote vegetative regrowth.
- When landscaping slopes, include measures to ensure proper drainage & reduce erosion, including outsloping, terracing, & planting fire- & drought resistant species.
- Consider surface or subsurface drains to reduce erosion.
- Certain situations might require boarding up windows.
- Call for professional help for structural solutions.
- Work with neighbors to develop & implement erosion control measures.
- Monitor all areas of concern before and after every rain event.
- Have an emergency plan.

Contact Information

Natural Resources Conservation Service
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