



FOR LANDOWNERS OF BURNED STRUCTURES AND/OR VEHICLES

Emergency Watershed Protection

WHY

Houses and structures that burned in the recent fires have left behind toxic ash and debris that includes sulfates, nitrates, asbestos, and heavy metals. This toxic waste can wash into our waterways during heavy rains, so keeping the ash and debris in place until it can be properly removed is very important to watershed health, wildlife, and public safety.

Government authorities are following their procedures for removing toxic ash and debris from burned sites with structures and vehicles. It is a complex multi-step process that won't be complete before heavy rains come this winter.

WHAT

SEC is engaging landowners, volunteers, and donors to strategically protect Sonoma Valley streams and public health.

Prioritize: SEC is using maps and science to prioritize and sequence the work, targeting first the sites where structures and/or vehicles burned in proximity to creeks supporting steelhead and salmon.

Assess: SEC staff and volunteers will assess the site and determine which containment and protection methods to use. More than one method may be used on a single site.

Install: Primary methods will be sandbags, wattles, and hydromulch. Wattles and sandbags are primarily used immediately around burned structures and vehicles, to contain toxics. Hydromulch is applied over a broader area, to protect the ground surface from the erosive power of rain.

Maintain: Wattles and sandbags need maintenance to remain effective throughout the rainy season. Accumulated sediment needs to be shoveled out and disposed of as toxic waste. This can be done by the landowner or by SEC and volunteers.

Remove: Sandbags and wattles will be removed along with other toxic waste when either the Army Corps of Engineers or the privately contracted clean-up crew completes that task. Hydromulch biodegrades on its own.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION

- While we always try to reach you before entering your property, even after you sign the consent form, we urge you to consider allowing SEC and volunteers to conduct work on your property without confirmation. This will ease the challenging task of coordinating supplies, volunteers, and landowners.
- More volunteers are needed. Email volunteers@sonomaecologycenter.org with your interest.
- SEC is seeking additional contributions of money, supplies, and skilled time to complete emergency watershed protection as quickly as possible. To contribute, please visit <https://www.sonomaecologycenter.org/sonoma-valley-fires-fund/>.

For questions about what will be installed on your property, please email info@sonomaecologycenter.org or call 707-996-0712 ext 124.