



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the  
Interior

Coronado National  
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## CORONADO NATIONAL MEMORIAL – EXTENDED NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release*

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Flash floods and debris flows are a regular occurrence in the drainages of the Huachuca Mountains, but their intensity at Coronado National Memorial has increased remarkably after this summer's major wildland fire that burned through the area. More than ever, monsoon downpours pose a threat to the visiting public, vehicle traffic on FR 61 (Montezuma Canyon Road), and neighboring land owners downstream.

Until now, park rangers and visitors alike could only look to building thunderstorms and make guesses about the flood danger that might be approaching. But with the help of high-tech equipment and the Internet, some of this uncertainty has been addressed.

To quickly alert the public when conditions are turning for the worse, the National Park Service, in cooperation with the United States Geological Survey (USGS), has completed the installation of automated, real-time flood gauge and rain sensors in Montezuma Creek, the principal watershed of the memorial. What makes this equipment so special is that it instantly reports rainfall amounts and flood levels to the public via a web page, where anyone can register to receive email or SMS cell phone text message alerts, sent immediately to them when precipitation or flood levels exceed a specified amount.

Acting Superintendent Mark Ruggiero is relieved to see this equipment installed. "We've really hustled to get this in place with the monsoons and terrible flooding already impacting our neighbors, park operations, and road travel over Montezuma Pass," he said. "Now we can send warnings to the public, and also figure out how much rain causes mild or severe flooding. That's really good to understand, with the vegetation so dramatically changed by the fire."

This and other USGS stations can be accessed at <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/> where visitors can subscribe to alerts from whichever locations are most important to their vacation plans, property, or personal safety.

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