



**American
Red Cross**

California Wildfires

Six-Month Update | April 2018

Red Cross Supports Recovery for Californians after Historic Wildfires

“The American Red Cross continues to serve people across California who suffered heartbreaking losses during the most destructive wildfire season on record. Along with our community partners, we continue to assess the current needs of wildfire survivors and determine ways in which we can leverage our collective resources. We are striving to begin our next distribution of financial assistance in the coming weeks. The Red Cross is also working closely with the affected communities to identify additional recovery projects that we may support.”

Anne Reynolds, Executive Director, California Wildfires Recovery

In October 2017, rapidly growing wildfires kindled across several Northern California counties—including the deadly Tubbs Fire, which swept through neighborhoods in Santa Rosa, California, with little warning in the early morning hours of October 9. These conflagrations were the first in a series of devastating blazes that—along with subsequent catastrophic debris flows—impacted residents across Northern and Southern California through the fall and early winter.

The American Red Cross, with our strong community presence, local knowledge and national network of volunteers and supporters, provided on-the-scene relief for Californians as they coped with mandatory

evacuations and heartbreaking losses. As the smoke cleared, we have continued to stand with wildfire survivors throughout the affected regions, providing ongoing support for recovery as they pick up the pieces and rebuild their lives.

Trained case workers met with impacted individuals and families, giving them a chance to share their most urgent needs and ask questions. In some situations, the Red Cross also provided financial support for necessities like apartment deposits, clothes and food, or to cover immediate transportation expenses. We are currently helping affected residents locate available services and resources to get back on their feet, as well as working with partner case managers that can help them create individual recovery plans.

Recovering from disasters of this magnitude can be a challenging and time-consuming process. In the months ahead, the Red Cross will continue working alongside our partners, including government agencies, other non-profit groups, faith-based organizations, area businesses and others, to coordinate ongoing relief and recovery efforts for people with unmet needs.

The Red Cross is supporting local Long-Term Recovery Groups across California to identify the most pressing concerns of the impacted communities. We are also planning to make additional financial assistance available for wildfires survivors with the greatest needs and identifying potential grant partnerships to support community-based longer-term recovery efforts, such as funding housing opportunities for affected individuals and families.

Red Cross Emergency Response Helped Thousands in Need

For Sam and Mickie Orchard, last fall's wildfires came with little warning. On Sunday, October 8, the Santa Rosa residents had just packed their bags for a vacation. Instead, shortly after 2 a.m. that Monday morning, upon learning that a fast-moving wildfire was threatening their Neilson Ranch neighborhood, the couple made an unplanned trip to a local Red Cross shelter.

Not everyone got out in time. October's devastating wildfire outbreak in Northern California took more than 40 lives and damaged or destroyed thousands of homes. Raging fires engulfed entire communities and forced more than 90,000 people across several counties to evacuate.

In December, another series of wildfires struck—this time in Southern California. More than 230,000 people fled their homes, and the blazes caused significant damage across the region. The record-breaking Thomas Fire consumed more than 280,000 acres and claimed two lives.

What's more, subsequent heavy rains caused debris flows on fire-scorched hillsides, bringing even more destruction to Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties. These fast-moving flows of mud and debris caused at least 21 confirmed deaths, mostly in and around hard-hit Montecito.

Thousands of residents like Sam and Mickie Orchard fled these disasters with little more than the clothes on their backs. To help residents coping with stressful

evacuations and heartbreaking personal losses, Red Cross volunteers and employees joined our local partners to open safe shelters where displaced residents could find food, relief items, information, health services and emotional support.

And when residents could safely return to their homes or sift through the ashes that remained, Red Cross disaster workers visited impacted communities in emergency response vehicles, delivering food, water and wildfire relief kits with rakes, shovels, masks, gloves and more cleanup essentials.

Though they didn't know at the time if their home was still standing, Sam and Mickie Orchard were grateful for the help they received from the Red Cross following their harrowing escape. "My lord, they've done everything for us," Mickie said. "They gave us a place to sleep, food to eat, and even helped us with our prescriptions."

"Everybody here has been so wonderful," Sam added.

"My lord, they've done everything for us. They gave us a place to sleep, food to eat, and even helped us with our prescriptions."

Mickie Orchard

Response at a Glance

More than 4,400 American Red Cross volunteers and employees have mounted a massive response to help hundreds of thousands of people impacted by the 2017 wildfires in both Northern and Southern California and the subsequent debris flow in 2018.



More than **278,000 meals and snacks** served with partners



More than **202,000 relief items** distributed



More than **39,300 overnight shelter stays** provided with partners



More than **26,700 health and mental health services** provided



More than **4,500 cases** opened to help over **11,300 people**

—Cumulative figures as of April 9, 2018

Generous Donations Power Red Cross Response

The Red Cross has raised \$28.8 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help people impacted by the 2017 California Wildfires. As of April 9, 2018, the Red Cross had already spent or made commitments to spend approximately \$12.5 million on emergency relief and recovery efforts for people affected by the California Wildfires—including \$9.1 million for the October wildfires that impacted Northern California and \$3.4 million for the December wildfires and subsequent debris flows in Southern California. We will continue to provide and support services for individual and community long-term recovery across the affected communities in both regions.

California Wildfires Relief and Recovery: Expenses and Commitments

California Wildfires (Northern California) Spent and Committed (in millions)*					
As of April 9, 2018					
Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Immediate Financial Assistance	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$1.8	\$0.3	\$2.2	\$4.3	47.3%
Deployment and maintenance of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$1.5	\$0.4	\$0.2	\$2.1	23.1%
Freight and warehousing	\$0.8			\$0.8	8.8%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.3		\$0.1	\$0.4	4.4%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.3			\$0.3	3.3%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.2			\$0.2	2.2%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$0.2			\$0.2	2.2%
Temporary disaster employees					0%
Total Program Expenses	\$5.1	\$0.7	\$2.5	\$8.3	91%
Management, general and fundraising**				\$0.8	9%
Total Spent and Committed				\$9.1	100%

*Dollar figures are rounded to the nearest \$100K; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

**Management, general and fundraising expenses support our work at its core and are indispensable to running the organization and helping people in need. They include the people and systems to maintain our enterprise-wide computer and telecommunications, HR and payroll systems to support our more than 21,000 employees and approximately 300,000 volunteers, fundraising and communications functions, and other support services across all program lines. 91 cents of every dollar received for the California Wildfires will be spent on our services to people affected by the California Wildfires.

California Wildfires and Debris Flows (Southern California) Spent and Committed (in millions)*
As of April 9, 2018

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Immediate Financial Assistance	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$0.5	\$0.1	\$0.6	\$1.2	35.3%
Deployment and maintenance of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$0.7	\$0.3	\$0.1	\$1.1	32.4%
Freight and warehousing	\$0.4			\$0.4	11.8%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.1		\$0.1	\$0.2	5.9%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.1			\$0.1	2.9%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.1			\$0.1	2.9%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery					0%
Temporary disaster employees					0%
Total Program Expenses	\$1.9	\$0.4	\$0.8	\$3.1	91%
Management, general and fundraising**				\$0.3	9%
Total Spent and Committed				\$3.4	100%

California Wildfires (Total)	
\$28.8 raised (in millions) as of April 9, 2018*	
Expense Categories	Total
Total Program Expenses	\$11.4
Management, general and fundraising**	\$1.1
Total Spent and Committed	\$12.5
Program Dollars Remaining	\$14.8
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied	\$1.5
Total Budget	\$28.8

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Ventura County Family ‘Rises from the Ashes’ with Help from the Red Cross

As the Thomas Fire approached her Ventura Skyline home, Dawn Reilly decided to take her family to the Red Cross shelter at the Ventura County Fairgrounds. They were greeted by Red Cross volunteers who provided cots and a safe place for her family to sleep. Dawn, a former Humane Society employee, immediately went to work through the night, helping set up an animal shelter next door and supporting other families that came to the shelter with their pets.

The next morning, Dawn looked up at the hillside in the direction of her home and knew it was gone. When she was able to visit her neighborhood, her fear was confirmed. An artist, Dawn had not only lost her home, but also her livelihood—decades of work and sketchbooks were reduced to ash.

We came around the corner and completely lost it with anger, fear and every emotion you can think of,” said Dawn. “We were walking around our house; my daughter was crying about losing her ballet shoes.”

Once the shock wore off, Dawn and her family began the long and painful road to recovery—with support from their loved ones, the community and the Red Cross. They visited a local Red Cross Service Center to see what resources would be available.

“Having a place to talk and get information and be surprised at the fact that you’re eligible for assistance is so helpful,” Dawn said. “You’re at a loss for what to do and how to start. It’s overwhelming. To have someone know what the next steps are and what to do is a godsend,” she added.

Generous donations to the Red Cross and United Way helped provide critical financial assistance to families like Dawn’s as they began to recover. With these funds, Dawn

purchased new art supplies to revive her business, as well as other important resources for her family.

Despite losing almost everything but the clothes on her back, Dawn is now giving back to the community that supported her. She is working on a poster that represents the strength and resilience of the Ventura County community. She plans to donate the proceeds from the poster sales to the Red Cross and other organizations that she felt gave so much to her.

“Out of the ashes rises the phoenix. It’s like rebirth,” said Dawn. “I feel like a different person.”



Dawn Reilly's father sifts through the ashes of her Ventura Skyline home, looking for anything that can be saved. Photo courtesy of Dawn Reilly.

The American Red Cross must be prepared to respond quickly when disasters occur. From home fires that affect a single family to hurricanes that impact millions, those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us with vital relief when it's needed most. Your donation helps us fulfill this trust.

Thank you!