



## 2018 California Wildfires

SIX-MONTH UPDATE | JUNE 2019



### Red Cross Brings Vital Aid to Residents Following Deadly Wildfires

In 2018, multiple destructive fires swept through California, including November's terrifying Camp Fire in Butte County—which took at least 85 lives. The deadliest and most destructive wildfire in state history, this fast-moving inferno devastated the town of Paradise and other nearby communities, destroying thousands of homes.

Meanwhile, the Woolsey Fire in Southern California killed three people and burned over 96,000 acres in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, forcing more than 295,000 residents from their homes. These tragic fires capped a devastating wildfire season in California, which also saw thousands impacted by the Carr Fire and the massive Mendocino Complex fires.

Amidst this overwhelming destruction, thousands of American Red Cross volunteers and employees worked

alongside local teams to deliver vital aid for stricken residents, many of whom had lost everything to the blazes. They helped open and staff shelters, offering refuge for thousands of people who fled their homes as the fires threatened, and provided meals, relief supplies and emotional and spiritual care for traumatized survivors and heartbroken families.

Since the Camp and Woolsey Fires ignited, the Red Cross has provided ongoing support and resources for impacted individuals and families. Hundreds of people—many of whom lost their homes—remained at Red Cross and community shelters across California for months as they tried to find permanent housing solutions. Through this difficult ordeal, our workers continued to provide meals, hygiene supplies and other necessities for displaced residents.

#### Response at a Glance

More than 2,600 American Red Cross volunteers and employees helped tens of thousands of people impacted by the deadly 2018 wildfires.



More than **382,100 meals and snacks** served with partners



More than **81,200 relief items** distributed



More than **66,800 health, mental health and spiritual care** contacts made



More than **61,300 overnight shelter stays** provided with partners



More than **10,000 severely affected households** provided with recovery financial assistance

— Cumulative figures as of May 8, 2019

Above: At a shelter in Chico, California, Red Cross volunteers Pamela Harris and Vicki Eichstaedt listen and offer comfort as a shelter resident remembers friends who perished in the November 2018 Camp Fire. Photo by Daniel Cima/American Red Cross

Along with food, shelter, relief supplies and comfort, the Red Cross also offered financial assistance to thousands of survivors following the devastating 2018 wildfires. Thanks to the generosity of compassionate donors, we provided immediate financial assistance of \$900 each to

thousands of severely impacted individuals and families. This timely support helped support urgent needs, such as replacing lost clothes, buying groceries and other expenses.

## Providing Ongoing Recovery Assistance for Wildfire Survivors

With our strong local presence and national network of volunteers and supporters, the Red Cross delivered on-the-scene relief for Californians as they coped with mandatory wildfire evacuations and heartbreaking losses. Six months after the Camp and Woolsey Fires, we continue to stand with survivors in communities affected by these and other 2018 wildfires, offering ongoing support for recovery as they pick up the pieces and rebuild their lives.

To help the most severely affected households, the Red Cross provided additional financial assistance for people across the impacted regions. Reaching out directly to residents using a combination of Red Cross damage assessment information and FEMA inspection data, we have already provided recovery assistance of \$2,500 each to more than 10,000 of the most severely impacted households. This financial assistance will allow people to prioritize their family's needs, such as home repairs and other housing expenses, purchase of specialized medical devices, transportation costs and more.

Along with financial assistance for severely impacted households, the Red Cross is also providing strategic grants to non-profit organizations with specialized expertise in areas like home reconstruction, health and mental health services, and advocacy and support. Community grants will be prioritized to support needs in the hardest-hit and most economically vulnerable communities.

### Red Cross Helps Harner Family 'When We Needed It Most'

While she had experienced enough evacuations to make them seem routine, nothing could have prepared Paradise, Calif., resident Brandi Harner for the terror about to unfold as she started her day on November 8, 2018. Doug, Brandi's husband, was on the way to check



The Harner family received Red Cross financial assistance after losing their Paradise, Calif., home to the Camp Fire. Photo courtesy of the Hardin family.

on a job south of the still-sleeping town when he noticed smoke ominously crawling toward them.

He called home and told his wife to be ready to leave. Brandi recalled the paralyzing fear she felt when the reality of the situation became clear. "The sky was black," she said. "It was raining down ashes. There were explosions coming from different directions." Fleeing Paradise with her young son, Gabe, and the family dogs, Brandi wondered if the people behind her would make it.

"We knew pretty quickly that everything was lost, our home and everything in it," she said. Her husband, a self-employed flooring contractor, lost his home office and tools as well. While insurance provided a temporary

trailer for housing, not much else has been settled. “It can be really overwhelming,” Brandi said.

The family was grateful to have received immediate and recovery financial assistance of \$3,400 from the Red Cross. “This assistance from Red Cross came when we needed it most,” she said.

A lot of uncertainty remains, but at least the Harners know they won’t have to go it alone. “Please, please,” said Brandi, “tell Red Cross thank you. We are so grateful for what the Red Cross has given us.”

### Mother and Daughter Receive Recovery Support after Losing Home to Woolsey Fire

It wasn’t until they smelled smoke on the morning of November 9 that the approaching danger dawned on Malibu residents Felicia Hansberry and her daughter, Dominique. On their way to a wedding in Northern California, they were caught in an hours-long standstill on the Pacific Coast Highway as the Woolsey Fire grew ever closer. The entire town was being evacuated.

Finally escaping traffic, mother and daughter made their way to the wedding, thinking they’d escaped the worst of it. With Malibu still under evacuation orders, the pair stayed on with friends in Northern California. While she learned that over 1,000 homes in Los Angeles county had burned, local friends assured Felicia that her rented cottage in the Malibu Hills—a small guest house at the side of a larger home—was safe. Then, on November 15, her landlord called to share sad news: Her home was gone, taken by the fire.

In that moment, Felicia knew that she needed help. And thanks to generous support from our donors, the Red Cross was there for Felicia and Dominique in the fire’s devastating aftermath—first with \$900 in immediate financial assistance and later \$2,500 in recovery financial assistance. In addition to financial assistance, Red Cross



After the Woolsey Fire destroyed their small home in the Malibu Hills, Felicia Hansberry and her daughter, Dominique, received financial assistance and recovery guidance from the Red Cross. Photos by American Red Cross.

volunteer case workers also helped Felicia locate other available resources to get back on her feet.

## Generous Donors Support Relief and Recovery

Thanks to our compassionate supporters, the Red Cross has raised \$65.2 million, including the value of critical donated goods and services, to help people impacted by the 2018 California wildfires. As of May 8, 2019, the Red Cross had already programmed approximately \$48.3

million on relief and recovery efforts for people affected by the California wildfires of 2018. With the remaining funds, we will continue to provide and support services for both individual and community long-term recovery in the impacted communities.

**California Wildfires 2018 Expenses and Commitments (in millions)<sup>1</sup>**

as of May 8, 2019 (\$65.2 million raised)

Expense Categories	Food, Shelter and Relief Items	Health and Emotional Support	Immediate Financial Assistance	Individual and Community Recovery	Total	Expense %
Financial assistance, food and other relief items	\$1.8	\$0.2	\$8.6	\$25.2	\$35.8	74%
Deployment of volunteers and staff (includes airfare, lodging, meals and vehicles)	\$3.2	\$0.6	\$0.1	\$0.1	\$4.0	8%
Kitchen, shelter and other logistics that enable service delivery	\$1.2	—	—	—	\$1.2	3%
Full-time Red Cross employees	\$0.6	\$0.1	\$0.1	\$0.2	\$1.0	2%
Freight, postage and warehousing	\$0.8	—	—	—	\$0.8	2%
IT, communications and call centers	\$0.2	—	\$0.4	\$0.1	\$0.7	1%
Temporary disaster hires	\$0.1	—	—	\$0.2	\$0.3	1%
Equipment, maintenance and fueling of Red Cross emergency vehicles and rented trucks	\$0.2	—	—	—	\$0.2	0%
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$8.1</b>	<b>\$0.9</b>	<b>\$9.2</b>	<b>\$25.8</b>	<b>\$44.0</b>	<b>91%</b>
Management, general and fundraising <sup>2</sup>					\$4.3	9%
<b>Total Expenses</b>					<b>\$48.3</b>	<b>100%</b>
Program dollars remaining to be spent					\$15.3	
Management, general and fundraising remaining to be applied					\$1.6	
<b>Total Budget</b>					<b>\$65.2</b>	

<sup>1</sup> Dollar figures in all tables are rounded to the nearest \$100,000; therefore, expenses \$49,999 and below are represented as zero.

<sup>2</sup> 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 20,000 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 2018 California Wildfires will be spent on our services to people affected by the 2018 California Wildfires.

*Thank you!*

The Red Cross must be ready for every disaster, big or small, and we respond to an average of more than 62,000 disasters per year—including single-family or apartment home fires, severe weather, mass casualty events and wildfires. Those in need turn to the Red Cross in their darkest hours because they know they can depend on us right after the disaster and through their recovery. Your donation helps us fulfill this promise. We are grateful for your trust.