DISASTER FUND FOR MENDOCINO COUNTY

"I recently asked a friend whose family lost everything in the fire, "What do you think you need most to begin recovering?" She looked me in the eyes and said, "That depends on what you mean by recovering – finding a place to live? Rebuilding the home we were raised in? Reforesting our barren lands? Or coming to terms with the grief and trauma of losing everything while escaping with our lives. What does recovering mean?" Her response is poignant and clings to my every thought as I contemplate how our long-term recovery work can best support fire survivors."

WHAT WE ARE FUNDING

RELIEF

Immediate relief and short-term needs during and following the evacuation was provided. This included gas and grocery cards, N-95 masks, motel stays, clothing, diapers, and holiday baskets as well as limited general assistance of \$1,000 per family for those with burnt structures. These funds were distributed through North Coast Opportunities (NCO), Potter Valley Youth & Community Center, and the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund in collaboration with the Ukiah Relief Center *totaling \$291,000 in grants.*

REBUILDING

Mendocino-ROC Housing Assistance Program

provides gap funding to homeowners and renters who need help to bridge the gaps that exist between personal savings and insurance and the actual cost of replacing lost homes. We anticipate this will comprise the bulk of our funding support. \$243,600 Disaster Fund dollars and \$141,741 matching dollars for a total of \$385,341 in grants to date.

Utility Restoration provides financial assistance and support through the process to replace damaged utilities. 68 households have received support to restore utilities totaling \$162,256.

Septic Inspection covers a home septic inspection to make sure the septic is in working condition. *10 families have utilized septic restoration assistance totaling \$24,536.82.*



RECOVERY

Critical Needs Grants remove a barrier to stable, safe, long-term housing or to replace the ability to earn income, and are available to homeowners and renters. *121 households have received critical needs support for a total of \$234,326.*

Immediate Housing Assistance (GSFA) provides small grants for immediate housing needs including rental deposits and mortgage payments. 51 families have received assistance with the cost of housing for a total of \$111,559.55.

Senior Respite Fund for seniors 60 and over to provide some respite care. This could be used to hire a landscaper to help with yard work or replanting, at home counseling, house cleaning, odds and ends, self-care, or exercise classes. 12 seniors have benefited from the program for a total of \$5,022.12.

Kids Activity Fund for children who were affected by the fire to help pay for art supplies, musical instruments, sports equipment, camp, or other activities. *47 children have benefitted from the kids fund totaling \$16,985.32.*

Emotional and Spiritual Support has been coordinated for survivors including support groups, one-on-one therapy, children's recovery-themed summer camp, and a series of anniversary events to remember, reflect, and recover.

DISASTER FUND DONORS TO DATE: 2,600+

TOTAL DISASTER FUND DONATIONS: \$2,478,939

TOTAL OTHER MATCHING DOLLARS: \$2,313,806

TOTAL DISASTER FUND DOLLARS GRANTED TO DATE: \$733,203

Data current as of 8.16.18

APPROACH TO RECOVERY

The Community Foundation approaches its role as stewards of the Disaster Fund with an eye towards equity, long-term recovery, and community resiliency. It is our hope that we can leverage dollars raised by the fund with matches from community partners to extend the impact we can make as neighbors helping neighbors.

STEWARDS OF THE DISASTER FUND

According to a December 1, 2017 report by the California Department of Insurance, insured wildfire losses for Mendocino County totaled \$183,109,706. Within and beyond these numbers are the many underinsured and uninsured losses. These have disproportionately impacted Native American, immigrant, and rental populations, many falling below the \$42,980 median income for the county with over 20% below the poverty line. Anecdotal estimates of \$8-10M have been suggested for rebuilding to support the uninsured and underinsured, of which the Community Foundation of Mendocino County has raised close to \$2.5M for all recovery needs. That is a gap of at least a \$6M.

As the stewards of these funds we must approach long-term recovery responsibly to equitably support those disproportionally impacted by the firestorm. Primarily this means focusing our resources on long-term housing solutions for the uninsured and underinsured, while offering other forms of recovery grant opportunities to the community as a whole. To do this we have tiered our levels of support in a flexible way. The first tier is small amounts which can allow a survivor to restore a sense of normalcy, including children's activity funds, senior respite care, and emotional and spiritual support. The second tier is through Critical Needs Grants which remove a barrier to beginning the housing process or restore the ability to work for survivors that lost homes in the fire, and restoration of utilities. Over 170 of these grants have been distributed to impacted families allowing them to secure rentals, install trailers on their properties to live in while rebuilding, or repurchase tools needed to restore home-based businesses. The final tier is in large housing grants that allow families to rebuild homes or purchase new or modular homes. These are limited by the amount of funds we have available; therefore we must give consideration to the most vulnerable populations without other pathways to long-term housing.

The Community Foundation blossomed into a local community leader as the Disaster Fund, set up in advance should a local disaster strike, began to receive countless gifts online, in-person and by mail. Foundation donations generally average under 500 per year, so accepting the over 2,000 donations that flooded in from daybreak to dusk in the first three months required over 150 volunteer hours and 95 hours of staff overtime to receive and process. As stewards of the Disaster Fund, the Community Foundation was committed to dedicating every penny to the recovery efforts and applied for other grants to cover the administrative costs.

Our goal is to support as many families as possible in the rebuilding process utilizing Disaster Fund dollars leveraged with community partner contributions. As Chair of Mendocino-ROC, the long-term recovery committee, the Community Foundation seeks partnerships that can bring dollars, volunteers, and in-kind contributions to the table that support the long-term recovery and rebuilding of our unique community.









IMPACT TO OUR COMMUNITY

Total Acres Lost: 36,523

Total Households That Lost Homes: 402

Renters: **162** Homeowners: **240**

Total insured losses: **\$183,109,706.00**

Percentage Housing Lost: 25%

Rebuild Permits Issued: **77 (12 additional under review)**

Mendocino-ROC Partner Organizations: **30**

Data current as of 8.16.18