Helping Those Impacted by the California Wildfires (Fall 2019)

Multiple major wildfires broke out in Northern and Southern California towards the end of October and into November, 2019. With the fires less than 50% contained, California's largest utility provider, Pacific Gas & Electric, cut the electricity of about 206,000 homes and businesses to prevent further spreading. Overall, California's annual wildfire extent has increased fivefold since the early 1970s and detrimental fires are expected to continue as the Earth's temperature rises.

Below are some areas where you can make an immediate and ongoing impact for those affected. If you would like to discuss specific giving options or strategy, please call the Philanthropic Services Group at 303.300.1790.

California Community Foundation opened the Wildfire Relief Fund back in 2003 to support intermediate and long-term recovery efforts for major California wildfires. Since inception, the fund has granted out more than $22 million to those who were displaced or lost housing, belongings and/or employment, or suffered physical or mental health problems, as well as a variety of other negative impacts.

Community Foundation Sonoma County's Sonoma County Resilience Fund stands at the ready to support long-term recovery efforts. To date, the fund has granted over $4.5 million to individuals impacted by the fires to help heal the long-term effects of trauma, and fostering housing solutions for Sonoma.

The Center for Disaster Philanthropy's CDP 2019 California Wildfires Recovery Fund states that as of October 24th, there have been at least 5,819 fire incidents in California, burning more than 162,693 acres. The fund requests cash donations to allow for on-the-ground agencies to direct funds to the greatest areas of need.

United Way of Greater Los Angeles, in partnership with the United Way of Ventura County, have created the Southern California Disaster Relief Fund to help low-income individuals and families who have been effected by the fires. Over 110,000 acres in Los Angeles and Ventura counties have been devastated by the Hill and Woolsey Fires.

United Way of the Wine Country recently created the Kincade Fire Emergency Relief & Recovery Fund to help current relief and post-recovery efforts in the area. All gifts made through the United Way of the Wine Country website will be directed to the fund until further notice.

Direct Relief's California Fire Relief fund is providing N-95 masks, medicine, and other resources to healthcare agencies and first responders in wildfire-affected communities across California.

The California Fire Foundation's mission is to provide emotional and financial assistance to families of fallen firefighters, firefighters and the communities they protect. Formed in 1987 by California Professional Firefighters, the California Fire Foundation's mandate includes multiple assistance projects and community initiatives such as: California Firefighters Memorial, Firefighters and Their Families, Victim Assistance, and Community Improvement.

The American Red Cross is making donating simple by asking people to text the word “CAWILDFIRES” to 90999 to make a $10 donation, and all funds will be used to support the affected communities in California through emergency relief, recovery, and preparedness efforts.

Humane Society of Ventura County is continuing to take in animals who are seeking refuge from the Maria Fire.