



THE SONOMA COUNTY RESILIENCE FUND

A LONG-TERM APPROACH TO RECOVERY



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
SONOMA
COUNTY

A Long-Term Approach to Recovery

In the weeks following the deadly wildfires that started on October 8, 2017 and continued to burn through October 31, it became clear very quickly that the scale of this fire was like no other, devastating the lives, homes, and businesses of tens of thousands of residents overnight. For our community to recover, support would be needed for many years to come.

With this in mind, Community Foundation Sonoma County immediately established the Sonoma County Resilience Fund, a disaster fund addressing our community's mid- to long-term recovery needs.

The Resilience Fund is the largest long-term recovery fund in Sonoma County. To identify where our support will be needed most, our grantmaking team engaged in a comprehensive community needs assessment, including meetings with hundreds of local nonprofit leaders, surveys to over 450 nonprofit organizations across Sonoma and Napa counties, and interviews with foundations in New Orleans, Houston, San Diego, and other areas impacted by disasters. Based on this work, the Foundation has identified three key areas of greatest need and will be investing in these areas starting in the summer of 2018.



SONOMA COUNTY RESILIENCE FUND



Helping

individuals impacted
by the fires



Healing

the long-term effects
of trauma



Housing

solutions for our
community

Helping individuals impacted by the fire

- **5,300 homes and 126 businesses were completely destroyed**, with thousands more partially damaged.
- Thousands of people lost wages or jobs.
- **16,654 FEMA cases** were filed in Sonoma County; an estimated 10% of these cases will have financial needs not covered by insurance or disaster assistance programs.
- FEMA data does not include people who are undocumented. UndocuFund has received applications for assistance from **2,000 families** who are undocumented.



Photo: The Press Democrat

Our **Investment** Rationale

The fires affected people of all incomes and backgrounds. They are our neighbors, the teachers in our schools, the construction workers building and remodeling our homes, the doctors and nurses caring for us. They are staff of our favorite restaurants, the nonprofit workers supporting our community, the landscapers and domestic workers taking care of our homes, and so many more.

Without outside support, the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community will not be able to return to their homes, work, and lives. Investing in their unmet needs means taking care of the people who make this community a diverse and vibrant place to live.

Our Approach

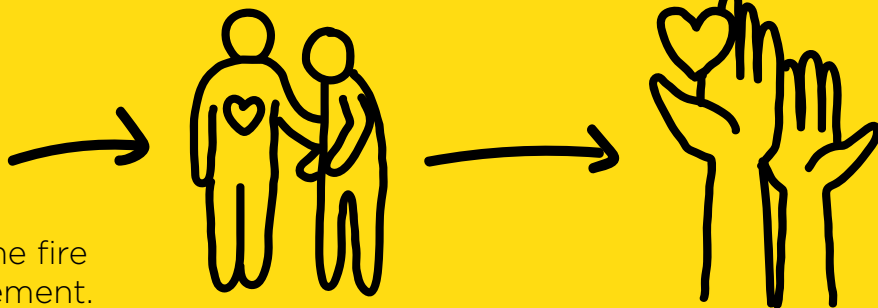
Our grantmaking team is working to identify funding opportunities to help people impacted by the fires get back on their feet. This could include: working alongside the long-term recovery committee, assistance with navigating the legal and insurance systems, and connecting neighbors to neighbors to help them prepare for future disasters.

As one example, our grantmaking team will work with case managers from the long-term recovery committee, Rebuilding our Community Sonoma County, to identify those in need of support and quantify their unmet needs, which may include:

- Temporary housing
- Rebuilding homes
- Repairing damaged homes
- Replacing lost or damaged tools and equipment
- Disaster-related medical and dental costs
- Other disaster-related financial burdens



1. People impacted by the fire sign up for case management.



2. Case managers determine eligibility, conduct a needs assessment, and help people navigate government, insurance, and nonprofit resources.



3. When other resources have been utilized, case managers quantify unmet needs and work with philanthropic partners to meet those financial needs.

Healing the long-term impacts of trauma

- 100,000 residents were evacuated or displaced during the fire.
- 24 people tragically lost their lives in the Sonoma County fires.
- **People who lost loved ones, lost their home, or feared for their lives during the fire are at higher risk of developing PTSD, depression, and anxiety.**
- Symptoms of trauma often **show up six months to a year after** the event.
- **Young children are particularly vulnerable to trauma**, often experiencing helplessness and fear of continued danger, even after the disaster is over.



Photo: The Press Democrat

Our **Investment** Rationale

The wildfires caused emotional distress as well as physical damage. In the chaotic days that the fires spread uncontained, entire neighborhoods were on high alert. People feared for their own lives and for their loved ones. Over 100,000 residents were temporarily displaced. The stresses of panic, fear and confusion, and now, for those who lost homes, the decisions of whether to rebuild and how to find help, are cumulative and overwhelming.

Unaddressed trauma has long-term effects on children's performance in schools, on adults struggling to maintain steady employment, and on relationships. For

those who lost homes and businesses, reminders of loss of pets, livestock, and valuables, including sentimental items, will increase feelings of sadness and vulnerability.

While many people are able to move past trauma independently, others will need help to address the effects of PTSD, depression, and anxiety resulting from this disaster. Signs of distress may become evident even months after the fires, as the work of getting back to “normal” becomes daunting.

Our Approach

It will take time to fully understand the cascading effects the fires had on our community’s well-being, but we know that unaddressed trauma will have long-lasting impacts. There are opportunities to start the healing process now. Healing will be as varied as someone seeking individual counseling to community members coming together to learn and practice self-care techniques.

The Resilience Fund will identify community needs, seek partners to host programs for fire survivors, and invest in those partners to scale up their programs to meet the increased demand for support.

We will also work to identify key populations where support is most needed, and find interventions that will help facilitate healing. Some examples are:

- Children and young adults
- First and second responders
- Populations that have limited access to services
- Individual counseling
- Developing self-healing practices
- Trauma informed trainings for service providers



1. Identify community mental health needs and potential service providers and partners.



2. Invest in programs and services targeting mental health and healing for individuals and the community.

Housing solutions for our community

- **5,300 homes and 126 businesses were destroyed.** Over 2,000 additional structures were damaged or destroyed.
- By late March of 2018, **only 26 homes were under construction** in Santa Rosa.
- Builders estimate that the county is on track to rebuild about 3,500 of the 5,300 burned homes within six years.
- Housing shortages existed before the fires. It is estimated that **30,000 homes are needed in the next five years** to replace the homes destroyed in the fires and address the pre-existing housing crisis.



Photo: The Press Democrat

Our **Investment** Rationale

Housing is the most basic and fundamental of needs. The ripple effects of losing 5,300 homes overnight have been overwhelming. Renters and home buyers are struggling to find housing they can afford.

People are facing the heartbreaking reality that they may not be able to continue living in the community they have lovingly called home unless their housing needs are addressed.

Our Approach

Investing in housing solutions is a broad mandate, and offers opportunities to make a community-wide impact. While the housing crisis in Sonoma County has only been made worse by the fires, solutions are at the forefront of every discussion about fire recovery.

Solutions to our community's housing problems present a wide range of philanthropic investment opportunities. To best leverage our investments, we will identify partnership opportunities and places where our grantmaking can be matched with outside funding.

Investing in housing solutions will require creativity, partnerships, and a unique approach to what is possible. Our grantmaking team will explore innovative solutions, and identify partnership opportunities at every stage of our process.



1. Explore innovative solutions and identify partnership opportunities for investment in housing initiatives.



2. Invest in housing solutions that will support economically vulnerable individuals.





Resilient **Together**

Our commitment to being there for our community for the long-term would not be possible without donors who share our commitment and vision.

We are incredibly grateful to the thousands of generous donors from across the county and the country who have offered their support.

Thank you.



120 Stony Point Road, Suite 220
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

707-579-4073
resilience@sonomacf.org

www.sonomacf.org/fire



Photo: George Rose