



United Way of Lane County's

Wildfire Response Efforts

September 2020-August 2021

On September 7, 2020, the Holiday Farm Fire ignited in Oregon's McKenzie Valley, burning over 170,000 acres and devastating the communities of Blue River, Nimrod, Vida and the surrounding watershed. As the fire spread, thousands were evacuated and hundreds of people lost their homes, businesses, and livelihoods.

United Way of Lane County responded with what it does best: raising and leveraging resources to support the programs and people on the frontlines of a crisis. Within a few days, United Way of Lane County launched a Wildfire Response Fund, mobilized hundreds of volunteers, raised thousands of dollars and began making emergency grants to programs and initiatives serving those most impacted by the wildfires.

Thanks to immense support from community members throughout Lane County and across the country, **United Way of Lane County has invested over \$830,000 to-date** for programs addressing immediate needs and long-term recovery efforts for people impacted by fires in the McKenzie Valley.

“United Way has provided so much to the McKenzie’s initial disaster response and now our recovery. United Way invested funds into devastated communities immediately, providing not only access to funds, but an infusion of hope for survivors. Those early funds were so critical to help people build hope and begin to understand they could recover.”

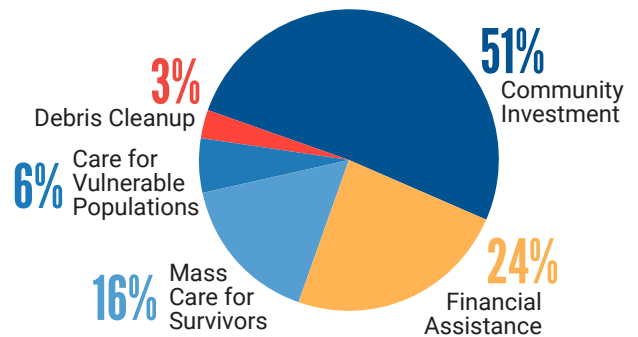
Marilyn Cross, Board Member, McKenzie Valley Long-Term Recovery Group

\$832,810

invested to-date

in **46 Programs**

serving those most impacted



How Donor Contributions Were Invested

Financial Assistance: soon after the fire ignited, donor funds purchased prepaid debit cards for families to help meet their immediate needs

Mass Care for Wildfire Survivors: grants helped programs provide survivors with basic needs such as food, shelter, trauma care and counseling

Care for Vulnerable Populations: funds allowed nonprofits to provide wraparound services to those impacted by the fire and hazardous air quality in their communities

Debris Cleanup: grants allowed groups like Northwest Youth Corps to remove debris and prepare community relief centers

Community Investment: most donor funds went directly to community-based organizations in the McKenzie region such as school districts, food pantries, health clinics and more



Disaster Recovery: The Long Road Ahead

Given the scope of the Holiday Farm Fire, the process of recovering survivors to safe and stable homes is estimated to take 5-10 years. United Way is committed to partnering with the community as they re-envision their future in this long-term recovery.

Rebuilding efforts are being led by the McKenzie Valley Long-Term Recovery Group, a collaborative partnership of over 20 organizations, including United Way, contributing resources to meet the long-term needs of Holiday Farm Fire survivors. As recently as August 2021, United Way invested another \$88,000 to organizations requesting assistance to provide food security, community resources, and housing support to families still rebuilding from the fires.

The road to recovery is difficult, but the work is possible thanks to the support of thousands of donors and volunteers over the past year.



“Throughout this year, United Way has been a stabilizing influence by making funds available as they are needed and by always encouraging us to achieve more than we thought possible a year ago.”

Marilyn Cross, Board Member, McKenzie Valley Long-Term Recovery Group

What Wildfire Response Donations Made Possible

For a complete list of grants distributed, visit www.unitedwaylane.org/wildfire-report



McKenzie Community Development Corporation received \$125,000 to support staffing and operation of three Relief Centers in Vida, Blue River and Rainbow, as well as other community needs.



McKenzie School District Education Foundation received \$20,000 to support school district students and families affected by the fire.



Orchid Health received \$20,000 to provide telehealth and mobile services to clients of the Blue River Health Clinic after it was lost in the fire.



Catholic Community Services received \$200,000 to provide prepaid debit cards to survivors to meet their immediate needs in the days following the fire.



McKenzie River Food Pantry received \$10,000 to support their operations during the community recovery from the fire.



McKenzie Fire & Rescue received \$25,000 to provide hand tools and power tools to fire survivors to assist with debris clean-up.

Greenhill Humane Society provided a 24/7 hotline for people in the evacuation zones, boarding, free pet food and supplies, and a lost-found network.

Center for Community Counseling provided no-cost crisis counseling to low income and underinsured community members impacted by the fire.

Every Child Lane County supported foster families, recently adoptive families and other vulnerable families displaced by the fires.

Green Cross Trauma Care provided trained Disaster Mental Health specialists to work with first responders and those experiencing fire-related trauma.

Sheds Of Hope *Living Waters Family Fellowship*

With grant funding, Sheds of Hope provides wildfire survivors with needed storage for their properties while teaching students valuable technical skills to build sheds.



McKenzie School District, Lane ESD, and Lane Community College partnered with **PIVOT Architecture** and other companies to train students in construction, allowing them to build connections with local businesses and play an integral role in community-wide recovery efforts.

“We’re getting students out of the classroom, getting them into problem solving and in an applied learning environments... ‘your job is to build a shed, there’s a pile of stuff. Here’s how long you have, here’s the plan.’ And then we bring them industry mentors, and the kids really get to learn and connect.”

– John Stapleton, PIVOT Architecture

Thank You

While the dollars invested are measurable, the impact your support has for the individuals, families, and communities affected by the fires is invaluable. Thank you to the many hundreds of foundations, businesses and individuals who helped United Way invest over \$830,000 for the McKenzie Valley communities.

Companies That Gave \$5,000 or More:
Collins Foundation
Equilon Enterprises, LLC
Meyer Memorial Trust

*Goodwill Industries of Lane & South
Pacific Source Health Plans
First Interstate Bank*

*The Caddis Fly Angling Shop
Carl’s Jr.
Sheppard Motors
Oregon Pacific-Cascade Chapter of NECA*

*Reynolds Specialty Contracting
Eugene Area Radio Stations - EARS
Bigfoot Beverages
and more*

United Way of Lane County | www.unitedwaylane.org/wildfires