



2017-2018

**ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
REDWOOD COMPLEX FIRE**

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



**MENDOCINO-ROC  
REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY**

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The Community Foundation of Mendocino County  
204 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, California

# Letter to the Community

On the night of October 8, 2017, friends and neighbors climbed into bed amidst the rattle of high winds, only to be awakened hours later by the honking horns of neighbors and a growing glow sweeping down the hillsides. Over 7,000 residents fled from Redwood Valley and Potter Valley, leaving behind homesteads and livestock in an effort to save their lives. Within days reports began counting one house, and then another, that were lost to the flames. By the time the fire was extinguished a week later, 406 households had nowhere to return to, their lives left in cinders. Our hearts bled for our community and motivated everyone to leap into action.

In the immediate weeks following the disaster, the Mendocino County VOAD (Volunteer Organizations Active in a Disaster) convened an initial meeting, gathered partners and initiated a long-term recovery group. The group was formalized on December 4, 2017 – Mendocino-Rebuilding Our Community (M-ROC) was born. The Community Foundation of Mendocino County stepped into the role of chair, with the partnership of North Coast Opportunities (NCO) and the County of Mendocino providing guidance and support. Over 30 organizations came to the table to create a long-term recovery group, rolled up our sleeves, and got to work.

A year later we reflect on our successes, lessons learned, and the path that still lies before us. Moving from immediate relief efforts into recovery, and now rebuilding, we express our gratitude daily to the thousands of donors who stepped forward in the wake of the fires to raise the funds necessary to support our efforts. We have been honored to do this important work and are committed to be here for the long haul.

Warmly,

*Mendocino-ROC Leadership*

Megan Barber Allende, Chair, The Community Foundation

Patty Bruder, Vice-Chair, North Coast Opportunities

Tammy Moss Chandler, Executive Leadership, The County of Mendocino

January 2019

*To identify, prioritize, and coordinate fulfillment of unmet disaster-related needs of individuals and families directly affected by the Redwood Complex Fire.*

**THE COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**  
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY



California H.O.P.E.  
Catholic Charities  
Christine Price, MFT  
City of Ukiah  
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church  
Hope Crisis Response Network  
Jo Ann Rosen, MAMFT  
Kirsten Johnson  
Mendocino Coast Children's Fund  
Mendocino County Office of Education  
Mendocino Forest Products  
MendoLake Complex Fire Relief - Ukiah Unit  
Potter Valley Disaster Resource Center  
Red Cross  
Redwood Community Services

Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council  
Redwood Valley Rancheria  
Salvation Army  
Slam Dunk Pizza  
South Ukiah Rotary  
Tzu Chi  
Ukiah Unified School District  
Ukiah United Methodist Church  
United Methodist Committee on Relief  
(UMCOR)  
United Way of the Wine Country  
West Company  
FEMA  
California Governor's Office of Emergency  
Services (CalOES)

**MISSION**

**LEADERSHIP**

**PARTNERS**

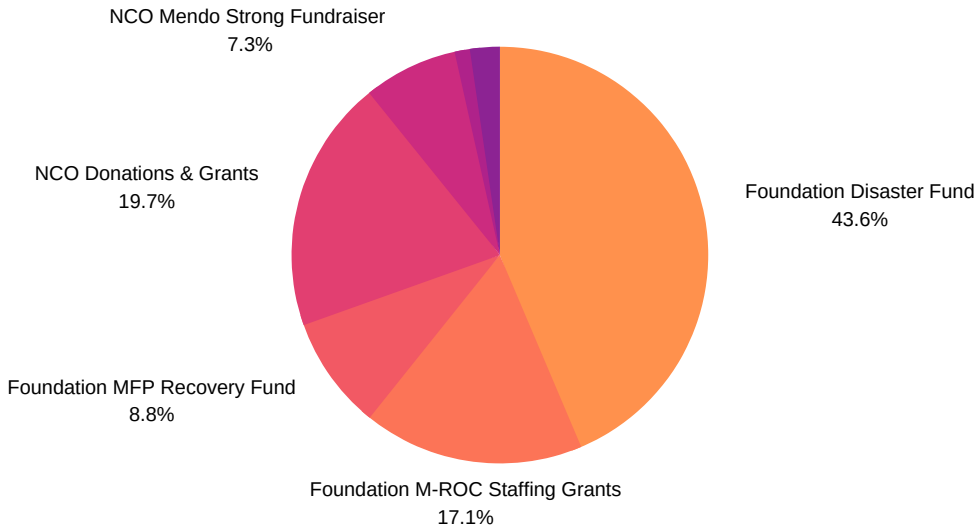


As of December 15, 2018

# RECOVERY FUNDS RAISED

Community Foundation of Mendocino County Disaster Fund.....	\$2,452,044
Community Foundation of Mendocino County - Mendocino Forest Products Community Recovery Fund.....	\$494,645
NCO Individual Donations & Grants.....	\$1,105,115
NCO Mendocino Strong Fundraiser.....	\$410,640
M-ROC Partners: United Way of the Wine Country & South Ukiah Rotary.....	\$130,000
<b>Total Funds Raised for Individual Assistance.....</b>	<b>\$4,592,444</b>
Community Foundation of Mendocino County M-ROC Staffing & Admin Grants.....	\$963,107
NCO M-ROC Staffing & Admin Grants.....	\$66,560
<b>Total Funds Raised for Infrastructure.....</b>	<b>\$1,029,667</b>

**\$5,622,111**



## FUND MANAGEMENT

North Coast Opportunities, Inc. administers the grants for all M-ROC individual assistance and case management staffing. Funding partners transfer their contributions to NCO to distribute out to fire survivors. These funding partners include The Community Foundation, Mendocino Strong Fundraiser, Redwood Credit Union, United Way of the Wine Country, Lutheran Social Services and South Ukiah Rotary. The County of Mendocino facilitated GSFA and other government funding sources.

## INFRASTRUCTURE CONTRIBUTORS

Infrastructure, including staffing and administrative overhead, are the unglamorous yet critical pieces to a successful recovery. With the goal of directing all donations to survivors, M-ROC partners have sought grants and sponsorships to cover these expenses. Some of the major contributors to infrastructure costs include: Tipping Point Emergency Relief Fund, Genentech, Inc., Silver Giving Foundation, California Community Foundation, May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust, Joseph and Vera Long Foundation, Rebuild Wine Country, Red Cross, Redwood Credit Union, County of Mendocino, City of Ukiah, Mendocino Forest Products, Community First Credit Union, California Endowment, and State Dept. of Community Services & Development.

## IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

### Staffing & Administration:

Community Foundation.....	\$78,047
County of Mendocino .....	\$1.2M
North Coast Opportunities .....	\$102,565

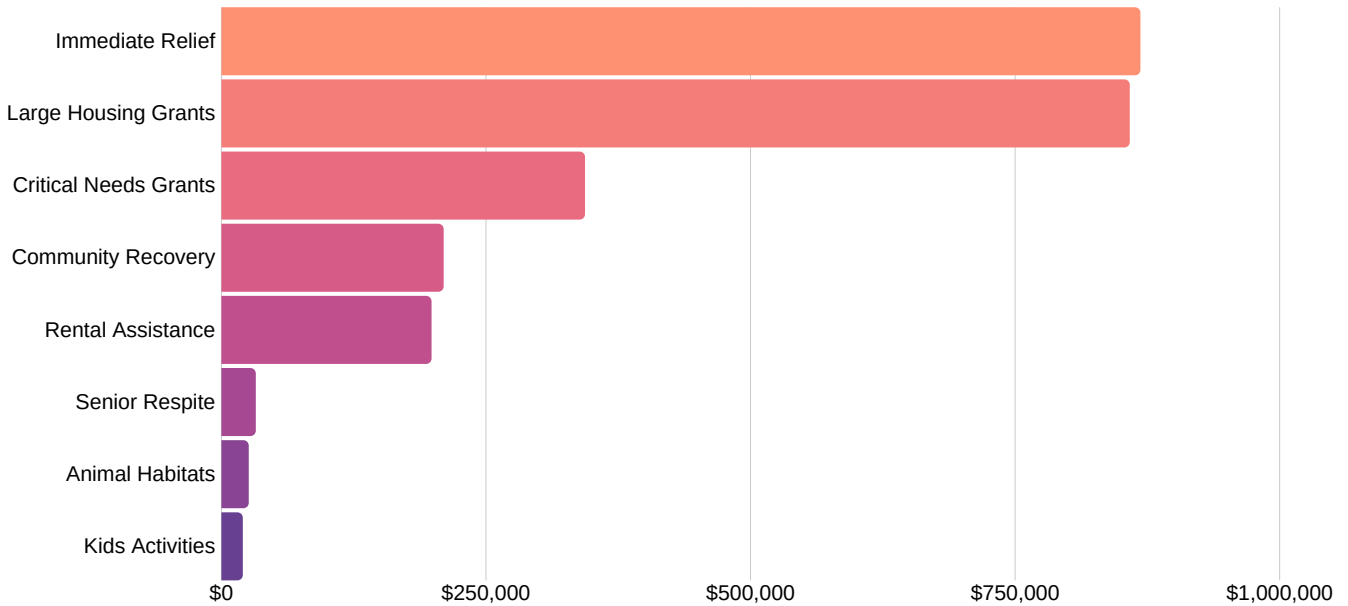
### Infrastructure & Support

City of Ukiah .....	\$8,400
Pear Tree Center .....	\$60,200

**\$1,449,212**

As of December 15, 2018

# FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

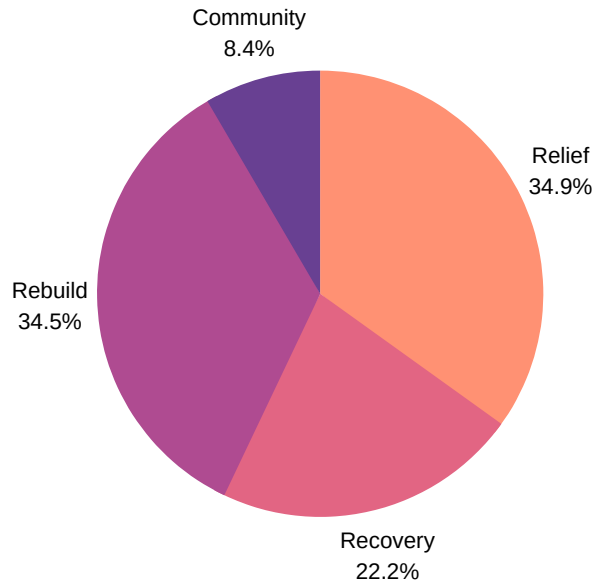


Making a difference through

# INDIVIDUAL GRANTS

Immediate Relief.....	\$867,941
Large Housing Grants.....	\$857,891
Critical Needs Grants .....	\$343,134
Community Recovery Grants.....	\$209,580
Rental Assistance .....	\$198,117
Senior Respite .....	\$32,054
Animal Habitats .....	\$25,388
Kids Activities .....	\$19,773

**\$2,376,721**





## Immediate RELIEF

When disaster strikes, its impact dominates the news. Images and accounts of the Redwood Complex Fire briefly captured local and national attention, but the media soon turned to other topics leaving the local community to come together and forge a path forward. As a result the media only caught the beginning of the first phase of the disaster – Immediate Relief. However, long-term disaster recovery unfolds over several phases lasting months and years.

*"We left in our pajamas. I didn't even realize how much I needed. The outpouring of support in those first weeks was incredible."*

The first phase of Immediate Relief meets basic needs simply to keep people alive and safe. People need food, water, shelter, transportation, and medicine. Having over 7,000 residents evacuated, generous and immediate contributions from Redwood Credit Union and the Community Foundation's Disaster Fund enabled Mendocino-ROC to distribute gas and grocery cards, N-95 masks, motel stays, clothing, diapers, and holiday baskets since the devastation was so close to that time of year. Those with burnt structures received limited general assistance of \$2,000 per family. 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 MendoLake Complex Relief Center.

The phase of Immediate Relief is an important first step to ensure a community is safe before any progress can be made towards recovery or rebuilding. Once these supports were in place and people were no longer primarily worried about survival, Mendocino-ROC was able to turn towards the next phase – Recovery.

## RELIEF GRANTS

- Groceries
- Gas Cards
- \$2,000 Checks
- Medical Assistance
- Other

**\$867,941**

## Disaster RECOVERY

Much of the first year has been devoted to helping survivors move through the Recovery phase. This period is one of greater stability than the days and weeks following the disaster, yet still a long stretch from feeling at home.

Mendocino-ROC has approached the Recovery phase with an eye towards removing roadblocks to stable housing and the ability to earn income, while also trying to offer some sense of normalcy. This has been done through a multi-pronged approach of grant-making and creating community resources.

The first level is to help survivors find a new sense of normal. This takes form through smaller grants focusing on Senior Respite, Children's Activities, and Animal Habitat Restoration. Aware of the need to support emotional wellness as part of the recovery process, we have also provided support groups, one-on-one therapy grants, and a summer camp to help children build resiliency.

*"With the help of a Critical Needs grant I was able to purchase my tools lost in the fire and start earning an income again to take care of my family."*

The second level takes shape as Critical Needs Grants designed to remove a barrier to stable, safe, long-term housing or work. These have been some of our most successful grants in helping families get back home. These are complimented with the Golden State Finance Authority Immediate Housing Assistance Grants secured through our partnership with the County of Mendocino. These funds allowed Mendocino-ROC to give small grants for rental deposits and mortgage payments.

The Recovery Phase is still underway as survivors are in many different stages of their own personal recovery. However, as the first year draws to a close, Mendocino-ROC has begun the next stage of Rebuilding to support fire survivors on this last leg of the journey to truly get back home.



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## RECOVERY GRANTS

- Critical Needs
- Rental Assistance
- Kids Activity Fund
- Animal Habitats
- Senior Respite
- Therapy

**\$550,901**



## Community REBUILDING

We are now in the phase of Rebuilding. By supporting the work of building permanent homes to replace trailers or rentals, we begin to restore our community. As permanent housing is being rebuilt, the social fabric of our community is strengthened. Children have returned to school, adults have returned to work, and life is finally beginning to feel stable once more.

Mendocino-ROC has approached rebuilding with tiers of support. For many the first step is in the restoration of utilities and septic systems to properties that were destroyed in the fire. For those ready to build or buy, but without all of the means, the Housing Assistance Grant 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. Gap funding has been awarded to over 42 households rebuilding on their scorched properties, as well as to renters who have found opportunities to become homeowners. We anticipate rebuilding will comprise the bulk of our funding support and require the longest time commitment to see families return home.

Mendocino-ROC has partnered with Hope Crisis Response Network to offer volunteer-built homes to fire survivors. These homes are made possible by utilizing savings along with Housing Assistance Grants for gap funding. By using all-volunteer labor and negotiating material prices, Hope Crisis Response Network is helping families return home who have no other options.

*"We get to have our own home now! With a large housing grant we now have the down-payment to buy a new home and don't have to live in a friend's living room."*

## REBUILDING GRANTS

- Housing Assistance Grants
- Utility Restoration
- Septic Inspections

**\$857,891**



## Stories of **SURVIVAL**

In the early hours of October 9th, Rayna Freedman woke to the crackle of distant flames and a friend banging on her front door. Tucked deep into the hills of Redwood Valley, the family knew getting out quickly was their priority. Pulling on clothes and gathering her young son, Rayna jumped into her car and began to follow her parents, who live next door, down the winding rutted road. As they reached Tomki Road, the pathway was chaotic. They decided to turn south and quickly fled to the relative quiet of Ukiah. After three days of evacuation at her aunt's home in town, Rayna and her parents received the news they most feared. Both family homes were gone. Property destroyed. What lie ahead felt unbearable. Over time Rayna spoke with the Mendocino-ROC Resource Room case managers, piecing together options to long-term housing, and recently received a Large Housing Grant to install the foundation for her new modular home located on the family property.



Rayna Freedman and son Skyler



Nori Dolan

Local social worker, Nori Dolan, was preparing to retire when the fire swept through Redwood Valley and destroyed the little cottage she had been renting for the past two years. A cottage filled with precious memories, treasured artwork and family heirlooms. Yet, even as she faced these losses, she turned her attention to helping her community heal. Hers was the first call the Community Foundation received from a survivor, asking how we could help. It brought the reality of survivors that much closer and spurred us into action. In the months that followed, Nori turned to friends, family, and the healing nature of art. Leading fellow survivors through a mosaic workshop using items from the ashes, her healing journey coincided with support from Mendocino-ROC to restore the mobile home she was able to buy that required extensive repairs. With a housing grant, she was able to make repairs and begin to call it home.

## Demographic **SNAPSHOT**

59% Owner  
41% Renters

93% Redwood Valley  
4% Potter Valley  
3% Willits

52% Insured (most underinsured) 48%  
Uninsured

71% Below State Median Income (\$67k)  
26% Below Federal Poverty Level (\$20k)

*Based on collected data when meeting  
with fire survivors.*

## Stories of **GIVING BACK**

Recovering from wildfire is not only about building new homes. It asks us to reflect on everyone impacted and develop pathways to support their recovery. From early in the process we have been aware of the need to support children who lost homes in the fire. A disaster of this scale can leave a lasting impact on the young people who experience it. Fortunately, Mendocino-ROC had the opportunity to collaborate with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota to offer a fun-filled day camp for young children that also taught resiliency and preparedness skills.

Utilizing the story of Noah to teach young children they can be prepared for a disaster, the camp otherwise did not incorporate any religious content or perspectives. The goal was to help children explore their unique gifts and skills for resiliency in a fun and engaging way.

The Mendocino-ROC Emotional and Spiritual Support Committee coordinated the camp along with local volunteers, mental health professionals, local faith communities. The camp proved to be a success, with fifty kids attending for a week and is being planned again for the summer of 2019.



Camp Noah



Art from the Ashes mosaic

### Mendocino-ROC partner events and projects include:

- Coming Home Rebuilding Expo
- Camp Noah Summer Camp
- Senior Retreat Day
- Fire Storybook Project
- First Responder Appreciation BBQ
- First Person Plural Monologues
- Art from the Ashes
- Fire Storybook Project
- Yoga for Fire Recovery
- Therapist Matchmaking Project
- Rentals for Fire Survivors
- Redwood Valley 1st Annual Day in the Park



Operation Mailbox

### Giving Time

## **5,852 VOLUNTEER HOURS**

Mendocino-ROC Committee .....	1,162
Donation Centers.....	2,190
NCO Volunteer Network.. ..	2,500

## Labors of Love - Danilla Sands

# RELIEF

While enjoying dinner with her family at Slam Dunk Pizza, Danilla Sands overheard the commotion of trucks lining up to transport donations to Lake County for the 2015 Valley Fire. Little did she know that by pulling her truck up to be loaded this simple act of generosity would redirect her life in the coming years. A natural first responder, Danilla has given thousands of hours of her own time to create an information hub on Facebook for those affected by the Redwood Complex Fire, continuing on to create the MendoLake Complex Fire Relief Center in Ukiah with donations available to everyone impacted by the fire. Her dedication resulted in thousands of bags of clothing, food and diapers, household items, and furnishings to be given free of charge to families and individuals struggling to regain their footing after the fires. Danilla extended her impact through special projects including Project Mailbox, Project Gardenbox, and Project Playhouse, as well as organizing the Redwood Valley First Annual Day in the Park. The MendoLake Complex Relief Center has since relocated to Redwood Valley where it continues to serve fire survivors.



Danilla Sands  
©Chris Pugh

60 Mailboxes built & installed  
60 Gardenboxes built & installed  
14 Children's Playhouses built  
Over \$15,000 in gift cards distributed  
Over \$18,000 raised for rent  
95 Families adopted for the holidays

## Labors of Love - California H.O.P.E.

# RECOVERY



California HOPE

Mendocino-ROC has been fortunate to collaborate with California H.O.P.E., a local crisis-counseling program working in partnership with Redwood Community Services, Inc. to provide disaster recovery support to Mendocino County residents. Through active listening, providing resource referrals, facilitating resilience training, and liaising with community leaders and agencies, this team's goal is to reach as many members of the community affected by the wildfire as possible. Whether over a coffee at the local café or in a survivor's trailer, the California H.O.P.E. team have been working alongside Mendocino-ROC to provide emotional support, education, basic crisis counseling, and referrals to connect survivors to available resources. Funded through the County of Mendocino, the team is wrapping up their work yet leave behind a legacy of community connectedness and resiliency. Many of our community projects wouldn't have been possible without this team's tireless hours of outreach and support.

## Labors of Love - Hope City

# REBUILDING

Rebuilding is the home stretch. It means feeling safe enough to lay down new roots, and strong enough to withstand the process. Mendocino-ROC endeavors to help fire survivors reach this home stretch by working with partner organizations.

One such partner is Hope Crisis Response Network, or “Hope City,” a Northern Indiana-based non-profit organization dedicated to rebuilding after disasters using volunteer labor. Hope City is working closely with Mendocino-ROC to offer an affordable construction option for survivors. By utilizing volunteer labor and strategic material discounts, Hope City is offering pre-designed ‘stick-built’ homes at an affordable cost to survivors identified through the Mendocino-ROC case management process. These efforts are only achieved through the incredible labor of volunteers, near and far.

The first Redwood Valley Hope City home is nearing completion, a success for which credit must be given to the many volunteers who participated. From the local Mendocino Construction Corp graduates, to an Indiana-based Amish team, to the current crew of Americorp workers we are nearly able to hand over the keys and break ground on two or more additional homes.

Mendocino-ROC has been honored to lead the way in day-to-day recovery all the way through rebuilding. We are committed to be here for the long haul. We are over 80 members strong, a network of neighbors helping neighbors, strangers becoming friends, building a new community from the ashes.



©Chris Pugh



## The Face of Mendocino-ROC

# CASE MANAGEMENT

Many survivors only know the work of Mendocino-ROC through their interactions with our Case Managers. These exceptional individuals, a collaborative effort between North Coast Opportunities and the County of Mendocino, are the interface in which we can directly support survivors and understand their needs to develop new resources. Grants are still available to help fire survivors in their recovery and rebuilding efforts.

If you or someone you know is a fire survivor from the Redwood Complex Fire or Mendocino Complex Fire, please call or text 707-621-8817.



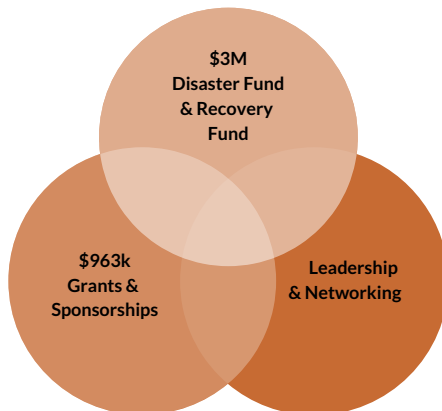
# THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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## OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

The Community Foundation of Mendocino County blossomed into a local community leader as the Disaster Fund, set up in advance to assist impacted individuals should a local disaster strike, began to receive over 2,600 donations following the October 2017 Redwood Complex Fire, raising over \$2.4M. With a focus on bringing together people and organizations that want to make a difference in Mendocino County, the Community Foundation agreed to step up as chair of Mendocino-ROC, the long-term fire recovery team.

As chair of Mendocino-ROC and stewards of the Disaster Fund and the Mendocino Forest Products Community Recovery Fund, the Community Foundation approaches long-term recovery responsibly to equitably support those disproportionately impacted by the firestorm. Primarily this means focusing 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. 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 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.



## FAST FACTS

- Chair of Mendocino-ROC
- Stewards of the Disaster Fund
- Raised over \$2.4M in over 2,600 individual donations
- Applied for and received \$963k in grants and sponsorships to cover M-ROC staffing, administration, and infrastructure
- Hired grant-funded Project Manager to oversee M-ROC collaborative recovery efforts



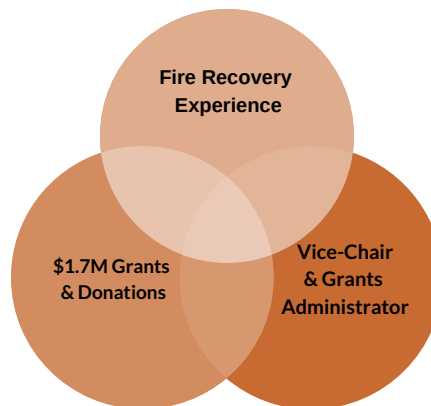
North Coast Opportunities, Inc. (NCO) has been a critical partner in the Mendocino-ROC long-term recovery, bringing a wealth of experience from their previous and ongoing support of Lake County wildfire survivors since 2015. With a half century serving Mendocino County as a community action agency, NCO joined not only as Vice-Chair of Mendocino-ROC but also as the grant administrator. Accepting these dual roles has meant helping guide the vision of Mendocino-ROC's efforts, building the infrastructure to serve the community, as well as processing every dollar that comes in and is sent out.

Since the October 2017 wildfires over 1500 checks have been mailed for individual fire survivor support. These include paying local hardware stores for building materials, summer camp enrollments for kids impacted by the fires, and paying for therapy. Above and beyond this, NCO has managed the funding and staffing of M-ROC case management. These two functions lie at the heart of the work we do.

Through their staffing and oversight of case management, in collaboration with County of Mendocino staff, NCO has allowed us to work directly with fire survivors to understand their needs and convey these back to Mendocino-ROC leadership. By understanding the needs of survivors first hand we can create resources to support their recovery.

## FAST FACTS

- Vice-Chair of Mendocino-ROC
- Grants administrator for Mendocino-ROC and program implementation
- Oversight of Case Management Staff
- Steward 'Mendo Strong' fundraiser dollars and other donors/ grants
- Organized the Redwood Coast Resource Center Senior Fire Survivor Retreat
- Implemented the VOAD volunteer registration





## COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

### *Fire Recovery Team*

The County of Mendocino has been instrumental in establishing Mendocino-ROC and serves as part of its executive leadership. Following the October 2017 Redwood Complex Fire, the County appointed a Disaster Recovery Director to work with Mendocino-ROC in a collaborative approach to recovery. The County also contributed countless staffing hours to create the case management infrastructure and systems drawing on the experience of Health and Human Services case management processes.

The collaboration between Mendocino-ROC and the County of Mendocino has created a two-way conversation on the needs of fire recovery. Calling community meetings to understand the needs of fire survivors and report on progress, while also leaning upon available resources through local, state and federal channels, the County has helped forge the path forward to ensure our community is recovered and resilient to future disasters.

### **FAST FACTS**

- Mendocino-ROC Executive Leader
- Designated Disaster Recovery Director and Staffing
- Developed Case Management infrastructure
- Open communication to collaborate on recovery efforts
- Facilitated Golden State Finance Authority grant for \$254,854 for housing.
- Funding provided for California HOPE





# LOOKING AHEAD

## YEAR TWO AND BEYOND

When we reflect on all the work we have done in Year-One it is with a sense of pride. From building the infrastructure from the ground-up to raising dollars, it has truly been a group effort. We did our best to reach out to all survivor households to understand its needs, to be responsive in developing resources when needs arose, and we held a long-term vision to help survivors secure permanent housing. In the coming year and beyond we will focus our energy on rebuilding and resiliency.

With roughly \$1.9M remaining, Mendocino-ROC partners will pair these funds with new Year-Two funding partners to help fire survivors. These include nearly \$400k from the American Red Cross, \$1M from a County collaborative with the Community Development Commission (CDC) for CalHome loans to qualifying survivors, new staffing funded through United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), a new Home Hardening grant to mitigate future damage, improvements to the Redwood Valley Water System through County funding support, and the Community Foundation's new Resiliency and Preparedness Fund. Together we are committed to helping our neighbors return home and become more resilient in the face of future disasters.

Sincerely,

*Mendocino-ROC Leadership*

Megan Barber Allende, The Community Foundation

Patty Bruder, North Coast Opportunities

Tammy Moss Chandler, The County of Mendocino

# MENDOCINO-ROC

## REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

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The Community Foundation of Mendocino County  
204 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, California