



The San Diego Foundation

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The San Diego Foundation Releases Update on 2007 Wildfire Disaster

Community Assessment Report Update Provides Accomplishments and Challenges of Recovery Efforts

September 23, 2008 — San Diego, Calif. — Nine months after its initial assessment, The San Diego Regional Disaster Fund has released an update to the *2007 Community Needs Assessment Report*, which reviews and assesses the current situation that fire survivors face. The report breaks down recovery progress to date, priority needs going forward, and calls to action for the public to enhance recovery work.

With the number of impacted households conservatively estimated at 2,000, the report presents a number of findings on progress to date. These include:

- As with the 2003 recovery process, the pace of rebuilding is proving to be slow and challenging for most fire survivors. To date, out of 1,600 homes lost to the fires, only 65 have been rebuilt. Past experience has shown that it takes an average of three years for a home to be rebuilt.
- A considerable number of homeowners are underinsured, including 500 significantly underinsured homeowners — underinsured at a level that would prohibit rebuilding without financial assistance.
- Preparedness is critical, as the majority of homeowners are significantly underinsured and will not be prepared in the event of a future disaster.

The study also outlines various achievements thus far. One example is the creation of seven locally-based, long-term recovery centers in San Diego County established by The San Diego Regional Disaster Fund. Staffed by Community Recovery Team members, they coordinate emotional, physical, financial, and spiritual resources to help rebuild survivors' homes and lives. The centers are located in Fallbrook, Valley Center, the La Jolla Reservation (serving all impacted tribal communities), Escondido, Rancho Bernardo, Ramona, and Dulzura (serving southeast San Diego County communities).

The update goes on to list priority needs into the future, including continued funding for the community-based recovery team infrastructure, resources for the unmet needs and rebuilding processes, and continued access to recovery support services.

“The disaster funds are at work today assisting with recovery and rebuilding projects across the county,” said Ted Chan, M.D., chair of the San Diego Regional Disaster Fund Board of Directors. “As we continue with recovery, we anticipate a move into an intense rebuilding period over the next two to three years.”

Significant funding dollars have been committed thus far, and will continue to be used to meet prioritized needs. To date, the San Diego Regional Disaster Fund Board of Directors has committed \$7.5 million, and works in close partnership with other local and regional funding organizations to support the rebuilding effort.

“As evidenced in this report, San Diegans from all communities and all walks of life have stepped forward as leaders,” said Bob Kelly, president and CEO of The San Diego Foundation. “Individuals, corporate entities, service agencies and foundations have contributed resources and time. Much has been accomplished, but the reality is that much more remains to be done.”

“The study also suggests a number of ways that the public can help with the recovery process,” said Daniel Beintema, director of the San Diego Regional Disaster Fund. “Understand that recovery is a multi-year process and that families and communities will be dealing with the aftermath for years to come. Donate to the San Diego Regional Disaster Fund or any agency currently assisting in the recovery and rebuilding process. Volunteer your time to help families return home. Contact your neighbors and offer direct support on a personal level. Prepare yourself and your family for future disasters: know your local disaster service resources, review and update your insurance policies, and know what to in the event of another disaster.”

The San Diego Foundation has made the complete fires update report freely available on its Web site. To view the *2007 Community Needs Update*, visit www.sdfoundation.org or call (619) 235-2300.

About the After-the-Fires Fund 2007

The *After-the-Fires Fund: Respond, Recover, Rebuild* is an initiative of the San Diego Regional Disaster Fund — a supporting organization of The San Diego Foundation — which was established to prepare for regional crises as well as to make grants to nonprofit organizations that provide relief to the San Diego region during and after a disaster.

About The San Diego Foundation

Founded in 1975, The San Diego Foundation is a broad-purpose community foundation helping individuals, families and organizations carry out their charitable plans, with the common goals of improving the quality of life in the greater San Diego region, now and for generations to come.

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