



2018 FIRE SEASON AFTER ACTION REPORT



Fires burn on a hillside in the Stanislaus National Forest and Yosemite National Park. Source: Stewart Palley

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Caroline Thomas Jacobs
Director
Governor's Office of Emergency Services

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FOREWORD

Per the Emergency Services Act, Article 9.5, Government Code Section 8607 subdivision (f), the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), in cooperation with involved state and local agencies, shall complete an After Action Report (AAR) after each gubernatorial-proclaimed disaster. This report shall provide a review of public safety response and disaster recovery activities and conclusions and recommendations based on the findings. Cal OES shall make the report available to all interested public safety and emergency management organizations.

An After Action Report serves the following essential functions:

- Provides a source for documenting response and early recovery activities
- Identifies successes and areas needing improvement during emergency operations
- Analyzes the effectiveness of the different components of the Standardized Emergency Management System
- Describes and defines a plan of corrective action for implementing recommended improvements to existing emergency response efforts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report is an overview of the response to the 2018 Fire Season. Since the Camp Fire was a significant event in 2018, a stand-alone AAR was developed specifically for it. Governor Jerry Brown proclaimed 12 States of Emergency for the Carr, Cranston, Delta, Ferguson, Hill, Holiday, Holy, Klamathon, Mendocino Complex, Pawnee, West, and Woolsey Fires. On August 4, 2018, Governor Brown requested a major disaster declaration for Shasta County due to the impacts of the Cranston and Carr Fires, which was approved by President Donald Trump later that same day.

At the time, the 2018 Fire Season was the deadliest and most destructive season on record in California. From June 2018 to September 2018, a series of large wildfires erupted across the state, including the Mendocino Complex Fire, which burned more than 459,000 acres and became the largest complex fire in California's history at the time. In November 2018, another round of large, destructive fires flared up, which included the Woolsey Fire in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties and the Hill Fire in Ventura County. Thirteen Operational Areas (OAs) proclaimed a local emergency during this period for fires that burned in Colusa, Lake, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Mendocino, Orange, Riverside, Santa Barbara, San Diego, Shasta, Siskiyou, Trinity, and Ventura Counties.

The Unified Coordination Group (UCG) served as the primary strategic decision making body, to manage the multi-jurisdictional complexity of the season. Comprised of senior leadership from state and federal agencies, the UCG established unified objectives to ensure that local, state, and federal resources were prioritized and deployed effectively across multiple simultaneous incidents. UCG set priorities and objectives that allowed incident command to distribute personnel and equipment in a high-demand environment where resources were stretched thin by concurrent fires in Northern and Southern California. UCG further resolved policy conflicts regarding disaster assistance and recovery programs to ensure a seamless delivery of services to affected individuals and local governments.

On November 12, 2018, President Trump declared a major disaster for California and authorized the Individual Assistance program, making recovery resources available to affected individuals and households in Butte, Los Angeles, and Ventura Counties. The Public Assistance program was also authorized in these

counties, making local, tribal governments, and state eligible for assistance for emergency work and repair or replacement of facilities damaged by these fires.

SUMMARY OF KEY SUCCESSES

- For the first time, the Procurement Task Force operated from a centralized location at Cal OES. This ensured timely and effective collaboration between those who were conducting vendor outreach to fulfill the high volume of resource requests generated by this event, leading to the adoption of this approach as a best practice.
- For the first time, an Animal Care Task Force (ACTF) was established in the State Operations Center (SOC) to provide a coordinated animal care response.
- State mutual aid systems were robustly used for a broad use of law enforcement, fire applications, and emergency management personnel needs.
- The Medical and Health Coordination Center (MHCC) enhanced their data and intelligence gathering, communication with stakeholders, and use of Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping which, in turn, improved their reporting both to the SOC Planning Section and to the Unified Coordination Group .
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS) created new roles and added Mass Care and Shelter Task Force liaison positions to facilitate direct communication with CDSS leadership and their field staff.
- Cal OES' Situational Awareness and Collaboration Tool was utilized by San Diego County to visually share repopulation area maps between the field and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).

SUMMARY OF KEY AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

- Cal OES Fire and Rescue reported that process improvement was needed in deploying fire resources to better meet surge capacity in affected operational areas.
- Information sharing between the state and the local government was not sufficient during the event. Communication from the field to the EOC needs improvement to ensure proper information flow.

- There was some unfamiliarity among counties with the state resource requesting process, which impacted the timely delivery of state resources.
- Local law enforcement experienced challenges with deployment and management of mutual aid resources for road closures and establishing an interoperable communications system.
- Local government needs to provide proper training in Incident Command System (ICS) and EOC to improve operations.

DESCRIPTION OF EVENTS

DECLARATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

LOCAL

Lake County	June 24, 2018	(Pawnee Fire)
Shasta County	July 26, 2018	(Carr Fire)
Trinity County	July 29, 2018	(Carr Fire)
Siskiyou County	July 5, 2018	(Klamathon Fire)
San Diego County	July 6, 2018	(West Fire)
Santa Barbara County	July 7, 2018	(Holiday Fire)
Mariposa County	July 15, 2018	(Ferguson Fire)
Riverside County	July 25, 2018	(Cranston Fire)
Mendocino County	July 27, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Lake County	July 28, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Colusa County	August 7, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Riverside County	August 9, 2018	(Holy Fire)
Glenn County	August 19, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Shasta County	September 7, 2018	(Delta Fire)
Los Angeles County	November 13, 2018	(Woolsey Fire)
Ventura County	November 13, 2018	(Woolsey and Hill Fires)

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Lake County	June 25, 2018	(Pawnee Fire)
Siskiyou County	July 5, 2018	(Klamathon Fire)
San Diego County	July 6, 2018	(West Fire)
Santa Barbara County	July 7, 2018	(Holiday Fire)
Mariposa County	July 26, 2018	(Ferguson Fire)
Riverside County	July 26, 2018	(Cranston and Carr Fires)
Shasta County	July 26, 2018	(Cranston and Carr Fires)

Lake County	July 28, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Mendocino County	July 28, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Riverside County	August 9, 2018	(Holy Fire)
Los Angeles County	November 9, 2018	(Woolsey and Hill Fires)
Ventura County	November 9, 2018	(Woolsey and Hill Fires)
Colusa County	November 29, 2018	(Mendocino Complex Fire)
Shasta County	November 29, 2018	(Delta Fire)

FEDERAL DECLARATIONS

FEMA-4382-DR	August 4, 2018	(Cranston and Carr Fires)
FEMA-4407-DR	November 12, 2018	(Woolsey and Hill Fires)

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

ACRES BURNED

Mendocino Complex: 459,123	Pawnee Fire: 15,180
Carr Fire: 229,651	Cranston Fire: 13,139
Woolsey Fire: 96,949	Hill Fire: 4,381
Ferguson Fire: 96,901	West Fire: 504
Delta Fire: 63,311	Holiday Fire: 113
Klamathon Fire: 38,008	TOTAL: 1,040,396
Holy Fire: 23,136	

STRUCTURES DAMAGED

Woolsey Fire: 364	Klamathon Fire: 12
Carr Fire: 279	Pawnee Fire: 6
Mendocino Complex: 27	Hill Fire: 2
	TOTAL: 690

STRUCTURES DESTROYED

Woolsey Fire: 1,643

Carr Fire: 1,614

Mendocino Complex: 246

Klamathon Fire: 83

West Fire: 48

Delta Fire: 42

Holiday Fire: 24

Holy Fire: 24

Pawnee Fire: 22

Cranston Fire: 12

Hill Fire: 4

TOTAL: 3,762

FATALITIES

Carr Fire: 7

Woolsey Fire: 3

Ferguson Fire: 2

Klamathon Fire: 1

Mendocino: 1

TOTAL: 14

INCIDENT BACKGROUND

PAWNEE FIRE

The Pawnee Fire began burning in Spring Valley, Lake County, during the early evening of June 23, 2018. The fire was located on a ridge, making it difficult for fire crews to access. Dry conditions, high temperatures, and gusty winds caused the fire to grow to 2,500 acres overnight, destroying structures and homes. The Spring Valley community was evacuated.

By the evening of June 25, 2018, the fire had grown to 10,500 acres with only five percent containment. Various intersections were closed along California State Route 20. The

fire was contained on July 8, 2018, with the burn area totaling 15,180 acres.



Figure 1 Helicopters work to extinguish the Pawnee Fire burning east of Spring Valley in San Diego County. Source: Karl Mondon / Bay Area News Group

KLAMATHON FIRE

The Klamathon Fire began as a vegetation fire on July 5, 2018, near Hornbrook in Siskiyou County. The fire consumed 9,600 acres with only five percent containment by the evening of July 6, 2018. The fire behavior was reported as erratic, spreading to public lands, national timber lands, and communities, and closing roads near Interstate 5 (I-5). The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) reported concerns with the fire impacting cell phone towers on Horn Peak. The areas surrounding Iron Gate Dam on the Klamath River and the communities of Hornbrook and Hilt in California and Colestin in Oregon were evacuated. The fire burned 38,008 acres before full containment on July 21, 2018. The Siskiyou County Sheriff's Office reported one civilian fatality.

WEST FIRE

The National Weather Service (NWS) issued excessive heat warnings and advisories for San Diego County desert, valley, mountain, and coastal areas for the morning of July 6, 2018. The NWS forecasted record-breaking heat and

warned of elevated fire danger due to low humidity, high winds, and the potential for dry lightning.

In the early afternoon of July 6, 2018, the West Fire ignited in the community of Alpine near I-8 and West Willows Road. The fire spread quickly due to dry, combustible vegetation. The West Fire burned 400 acres, and over 3,700 households had evacuated by the evening of July 6, 2018. Although the fire was fast-moving, there was no loss of life. On July 10, 2018, the fire was fully contained.

HOLIDAY FIRE

The Holiday Fire started on July 6, 2018, near Holiday Hill Road in Goleta, Santa Barbara County, and burned 113 acres. High winds and extreme heat forced residents to evacuate the Goleta foothills. The fire destroyed 24 structures before it was contained on July 12, 2018.

FERGUSON FIRE

The Ferguson Fire began the evening of July 13, 2018, in the South Fork Merced River drainage area in the Sierra National Forest in Mariposa County. The Southern Central Sierra Interagency Management Team managed the fire and set up an Incident Command Post (ICP) at Ahwahnee Hill Regional Park near Oakhurst. Jerseydale and surrounding communities evacuated under the recommendation of the unified command between the U.S. Forest Service, CAL FIRE, and the Mariposa County Sheriff.

On July 19, 2018, the fire's management transitioned to the California Interagency Incident Management Team (IMT), with Yosemite National Park joining the unified command. The communities of Old El Portal, Rancheria Flat, Foresta, and Yosemite View Lodge were under a mandatory evacuation order issued on July 21, 2018, with Yosemite West, Old Yosemite Road, and the Anderson Valley area evacuating the day after.

As fire weather became more extreme, officials closed all access to Badger Pass and the Highway 140 corridor, with evacuations issued for Wawona and Yosemite Valley. The National Park Service closed Yosemite National Park on August 5, 2018.

The Ferguson Fire resulted in the death of two firefighters and burned 96,901 acres – the fourth largest of the fire season – and was fully contained on the evening of August 18, 2018. The U.S. Forest Service determined that a vehicle

caused the fire. According to investigators, a heated catalytic converter ignited dry vegetation and started the fire.

CARR FIRE

The Carr Fire began burning in the afternoon of July 23, 2018, at Highway 299 and Carr Powerhouse Road in the Whiskeytown – Shasta – Trinity National Recreation Area. The wind-driven fire quickly spread, causing the French Gulch community to be under a mandatory evacuation. Redding Electric Utility shut off power to residents in north Redding. On July 26, 2018, extreme wind resulted in a “fire whirl” with speeds exceeding 143 miles per hour, spreading the fire, hampering firefighting efforts, and causing extensive tornado-like damage.

Happy Valley and Anderson communities were placed under mandatory evacuation, while an evacuation center was opened at Trinity High School. By the evening of July 29, 2018, containment had grown from 5 percent to 17 percent. Repopulation began in western Redding, Shasta Lake, and Happy Valley, followed by Summit City and Buckeye two days later. The Carr Fire resulted in seven deaths, including two firefighters, burned 229,651 acres, and was fully contained on August 30, 2018. CAL FIRE reported that a vehicle ignited the fire.

CRANSTON FIRE

The Cranston Fire in southwest Riverside County started on July 25, 2018, and burned 13,139 acres. The fire impacted the communities of Idyllwild and Mountain Center, including recreational areas in Lake Hemet, San Bernardino National Forest, and Mount San Jacinto State Park. Cedar Glen, Fern Valley, Mount San Jacinto State Park, Pine Cove, and Garner Valley were evacuated.

On August 10, 2018, the fire was fully contained. It was caused by an individual who deliberately set multiple fires in Riverside County.

HOLY FIRE

The Holy Fire began burning in the early afternoon of August 6, 2018, at Holy Jim Canyon in Orange County. The blaze threatened lives, structures, and wildlife and moved into neighboring Riverside County. The fire burned 23,136 acres, and 24 structures were destroyed. On September 13, 2018, the fire was fully contained.

DELTA FIRE

The Delta Fire ignited two miles north of Lakehead in Shasta County on September 5, 2018. The fire rapidly grew, crossing I-5 between Lakehead and the town of Castella and eventually shutting down the interstate in both directions. By September 11, the fire was only a few miles from burning into the Carr Fire.

By September 24, 2018, the Delta Fire had grown to 60,751 acres, with containment at 98 percent. However, on September 25, 2018, a spot fire broke out in Bear Gulch, outside the southwestern perimeter of the Delta Fire, which quickly reached 1,000 acres by the following day. By September 29, 2018, the spot fire grew 2,376 acres in size, increasing the total burn area of the Delta Fire to 63,311 acres. The Delta Fire was fully contained on October 7, 2018, with 42 structures destroyed.

HILL FIRE

The Hill Fire began on November 8, 2018, in the Hill Canyon area of the Santa Rosa Valley in Ventura County. Due to high winds, the fire threatened lives and infrastructure and quickly spread. Camarillo Springs, Dos Vientos, California State University Channel Islands, and areas along the Pacific Coast Highway received evacuation orders. On November 16, 2018, the Hill Fire was fully contained with 4,381 acres burned. Two structures were reported damaged, and four were destroyed.

WOOLSEY FIRE

On November 8, 2018, the Woolsey Fire started at the Santa Susana Field Laboratory in Ventura County. High winds and low humidity caused the fire to spread south. The residents of Thousand Oaks, Oak Park, Westlake Village, and Bell Canyon, including unincorporated areas of Malibu and Los Angeles County, were evacuated.

The location, topography, and weather patterns presented challenges for initial response. Early November sunset grounded non-night flying aircraft. Wind shifts spread the fire to heavily populated areas. The freeway between the San Fernando Valley and the Conejo Valley was closed as the fire crossed the highway and headed into the Santa Monica Mountains. Hundreds of homes were destroyed or damaged along the Pacific Coast Highway. Defending both sides of Highway 101 consumed fire resources as the fire began moving to Malibu. Minimal initial resources in Malibu, unfilled mutual aid requests, and road

damage blocking Santa Monica Mountain roads impacted evacuation routes. Due to hazardous conditions, thousands of residents in neighborhoods along the Ventura Freeway and communities along the Malibu coast could not return home for several days.

The Woolsey Fire's proximity to Los Angeles County meant potential impacts across jurisdictional lines to communities in Ventura County, Los Angeles County, and the City of Los Angeles. Threats to this shared area activated the Mutual Threat Zone Plan, a mutual aid response agreement between Ventura County, Los Angeles County, and the City of Los Angeles Fire Departments. During the Woolsey Fire, the Chumash Fire Department was vital in protecting cultural sites, assisting with fire suppression, and supporting recovery efforts. Their contributions were especially crucial in repairing damage to sensitive ecological and historical landmarks on their reservation land.

The Woolsey Fire was fully contained in the early evening of November 21, 2018. The fire resulted in three fatalities. An investigation by the California Public Utilities Commission determined that electrical equipment owned and operated by an investor-owned utility caused the Woolsey Fire.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES – STATE AGENCIES

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (CAL OES)

SUCSESSES

1. Cal OES Fire and CAL FIRE collaborated with federal firefighters and tactical teams, who brought in the field experience, capability, and professionalism needed for an all-hazard response.
2. The Cal OES Law Enforcement Branch (LEB) and Fire and Rescue Branch successfully coordinated search and rescue efforts: LEB coordinated teams to search surrounding property and terrain, while the California FEMA Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Task Force and California Regional US&R Task Force searched impacted structures.
3. Cal OES LEB coordinated both the use of the Coroner's Mutual Aid System to provide personnel from throughout the state to assist with the identification of remains and Law Enforcement Mutual Aid to fill the need for over 100 officers daily from over 40 counties to provide security, set roadblocks, and conduct evacuations.
4. Cal OES successfully supported mass care and shelter needs by identifying and securing shelter sites and providing life-sustaining commodities.
5. Established relationships between the Cal OES Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Region Assistant Chiefs and regional law enforcement agencies provided seamless coordination.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Ensure local government has the proper training in ICS and EOC operations.
2. Cal OES Fire and Rescue deployed a single Assistant Chief to direct fire resources for all regions, which was insufficient for the timely and effective movement of mutual aid resources for multiple fires burning statewide.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cal OES regions to work with local government for necessary training to improve operations.

2. Supplement assigned Assistant Chiefs with additional personnel to support resource coordination.

DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES (DGS)

SUCCESSSES

1. The coordination between DGS, California Emergency Support Functions (CA-ESFs) 3 and 7 streamlined the acquisition of resources because of prior knowledge of state agency resources, existing contracts, and other courses of action.
2. For the first time, the Procurement Task Force operated from a centralized location at Cal OES. This ensured timely and effective collaboration between those who were conducting vendor outreach to fulfill the high volume of resource requests generated by this event, leading to the adoption of this approach as a best practice.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. No areas needing improvement were reported.

CALIFORNIA CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC)

CCC reported that 118 fire and camp support crews, consisting of approximately 1,200 personnel, responded to the various fires. CCC assisted with erosion control and logistical support for the state staging area and assisted the California Emergency Services Medical Authority (EMSA) with constructing medical hospital tents.

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. No areas needing improvement were reported.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (CDE)

During the 2018 Fire Season, CDE response activities focused primarily on the Carr Fire (Shasta County) and the Mendocino Complex Fire (Lake County). CDE staffed a State Agency Representative at the SOC, maintained situational awareness of schools, provided regular situational status reports, and participated in the UCG. CDE's role in this response was limited because most schools were not in session during the events.

SUCCESSSES

1. Established early and frequent contact with the County Superintendents of Schools.
2. CDE worked with the California Environmental Protection Agency to organize and conduct a smoke and ash advisory teleconference to develop and provide guidance to schools.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Data on school status did not flow automatically from the Operational Area to the state, so CDE had to reach out and retrieve local information.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase in-house GIS mapping capacity to better visualize data during a disaster and continue building resources for local schools and districts to use during response.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (CDFA)

SUCCESSSES

1. An ACTF was established for the first time to provide animal care response.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. CDFA could not reassign personnel from Southern California to assist with animal care due to their response to the Virulent Newcastle Disease (VND), previously known as Exotic Newcastle Disease. Reassignments would have a significant impact on California's poultry industry. They also did not have enough experienced staff available, since eight personnel were already activated to the ACTF.
2. CDFA reported miscommunication between incident management and ACTF staff. Management decisions were not communicated to the ACTF when they worked on the same problem.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create an IMT at CDFA to support counties requesting animal care needs separate from animal health emergencies.
2. Establish clear lines of communication between incident management and the ACTF to prioritize response efforts.

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL (CHP)

The California Highway Patrol (CHP) worked with local law enforcement agencies to assist with law enforcement duties, traffic control, and the establishment of evacuation routes and road closure points.

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. No areas needing improvement were reported.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (CDPH)

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and EMSA activated the MHCC on July 27, 2018, in response to statewide wildfires.

The CDPH Duty Officer Program, MHCC, and CDPH Centers/Programs responded to several wildfires, including but not limited to the Mendocino Complex, Camp, Hill, and Woolsey wildfires. CDPH provided representatives to the SOC, analyzed and compiled critical emergency information, including various reports and deliverables, and provided situational information to public health and medical stakeholders.

CDPH maintained awareness of emerging illnesses or disease outbreaks in the general population shelters through constant communication with appropriate partners and stakeholders within CA-ESF 6 (Mass Care and Shelter). CDPH provided guidance and assistance when requested, following established policies and protocols.

CDPH Office of Public Affairs worked closely with local and state partners to develop news releases and respond to media requests.

SUCCESSSES

1. CDPH developed methods to provide real-world training for newer members of the MHCC during the event, such as assigning experienced staff members to assist newer staff members.



Fire retardant drop from a plane, California/Oregon Border, Source: Wildcoastcompass.com

2. The MHCC enhanced their data and intelligence gathering, communication with stakeholders, and use of GIS mapping, which, in turn, improved their reporting both to the SOC Planning Section and to the UCG.
3. To streamline information sharing between the MHCC Operations Section and the MHCC Planning/Intelligence Section, an email rule was established to automatically forward all emails received from MHCC Operations to MHCC Planning/Intelligence. This eliminated the need for manual forwarding, enabling more efficient analysis of incoming information.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Staffing was challenging with the increasing demands of complex emergency activations. Staff with diverse skill sets were needed in multiple sections of the MHCC.
2. During the 2018 wildfires, timely and accurate information dissemination within MHCC was needed to ensure clear and concise communication between all partners.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No corrective action recommendations were reported.

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION (CEC)

The California Energy Commission (CEC) Emergency Coordinator worked with pre-identified staff to gather information and report on incident impacts on relevant energy systems and infrastructure. The Emergency Coordinator or designated staff provided daily situation reports to CEC leadership and Cal OES and coordinated support efforts through CA-ESF 12 partners.

Designated staff and management supported 24-hour emergency response activities, with one Emergency Coordinator deployed to the SOC to support CA-ESF 12.

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Improve and refine internal data information gathering and reporting processes and procedures.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CEC has since developed new internal policies and procedures to support reporting activities. No further corrective actions recommended.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES – OPERATIONAL AREAS

LAKE COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Because the unified command was located in another county, an hour away from the EOC, critical information was not relayed to the EOC promptly. Additionally, there was a significant delay in assigning a CAL FIRE representative to the EOC.
2. There is no NWS radio system coverage in the southern part of Lake County.
3. Water supplies for firefighting were impacted as evacuating residents left their water systems running.
4. The area affected by the Pawnee Fire is an isolated valley with only a single road for access. Initial responders were impacted by residents attempting to evacuate via the single-road access.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a dedicated liaison system to ensure timely communication between the Unified Command and the EOC. This includes pre-designating a CAL FIRE representative to be deployed to the EOC immediately upon activation and implementing a standardized communication protocol, such as real-time digital updates or scheduled briefings, to ensure critical information is relayed without delay.
2. Work with NWS to install weather radio transmitters in areas without coverage.
3. No corrective action recommendations were reported.
4. No corrective action recommendations were reported.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. The Los Angeles County pre-positioned resources due to extreme fire weather the morning of November 8.

2. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services team provided in-home services to access and functional needs (AFN) population during power outages in the evacuation area.
3. The sheriff's departments of Los Angeles and Ventura counties evacuated more than 250,000 people.
4. Nine shelters and six animal shelters opened to support the health care needs of displaced populations in the shelters and to provide significant care for displaced animals of all types.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. There is a need for public policy discussion to address the significant fire behavior in very high or high fire hazard severity areas.
2. Camp Fire and Hill Fire consumed significant mutual aid resources and exhausted local resources as the Woolsey Fire grew.
3. Some of Incident Command's mutual aid requests went unfilled. Of those filled, the majority arrived after the fire reached Malibu.
4. Local law enforcement's limited training and planning for effective deployment and management of mutual aid resources led to challenges in road closures and establishing an interoperable communications system.
5. Public Information Officers need more in-depth training for their roles, to work together under a multi-agency, common incident communications strategy.
6. Slow situational reports and intelligence gathering on the fast-moving Woolsey Fire shortened Incident Command's decision timeframes.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No corrective action recommendations were reported.
2. County should develop strategic plans on resource prioritization for local emergencies and work with regional mutual aid partners to address any gaps in resources.
3. County should work with local, regional, and state mutual aid partners to address gaps in resource needs for life safety.

4. Develop mutual aid guidelines for local law enforcement to address the issues associated with road closures and interoperable communications.
5. Develop a training plan for county PIOs and exercise a multi-agency incident to address gaps.
6. County leadership should strive for a collaborative mindset and rely on situational updates that are data-driven for a unified command operation.

MARIPOSA COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Mariposa County needed a more robust resource tracking function within the EOC.
2. Mariposa County identified a need for an Evacuation Group Standard Operating Procedure to help complement Law Branch/SAR Unit evacuations of individuals with AFN, particularly those with special transportation needs.
3. Animals not evacuated posed logistical issues for Response Operations, as these animals needed food and water during the evacuation period.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No corrective action recommendations were reported.
2. A formalized plan and SOP are recommended to evacuate AFN populations during emergencies and disasters.
3. Consider developing a formal animal evacuation plan to include a comprehensive plan to support sheltered animals.

MENDOCINO COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The county Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is insufficient to meet the needs of large-scale fire emergencies.
2. Staff involved in evacuation planning, repopulation planning, and alert and warning did not possess sufficient training for the incident.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Mendocino County updated its EOP in 2025 to meet the needs of large-scale fire emergencies.
2. Staff should engage in a more robust level of training and exercises related to evacuation planning, repopulation planning, and alert and warning.

ORANGE COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The established hotline received over 10,000 calls during its activation, overwhelming the staff on duty.
2. Procedures that define evacuation, alert and warning areas need clarification.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Add hotline operator positions as call volume increases.
2. Pre-identify evacuation areas or clarify instructions on defining evacuation, alert and warning areas.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The county did not have a suitable resource tracking system.
2. County personnel did not know sufficiently about smaller utility co-operatives' capabilities before a disaster.

3. Some county personnel were unfamiliar with the process of requesting state resources.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a county resource workgroup intended to aid departments in developing detailed resource lists and a comprehensive overview of the SEMS resource ordering process.
2. Coordinate with smaller utility companies at Mutual Aid Regional Advisory Committee meetings and other venues before disasters.
3. Utilize the California Specialized Training Institute to garner training for requesting resources from regional and state partners.



*Fully engulfed trailer, West Fire, San Diego,
Source: HuffPost*

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

SUCCESS

1. When San Diego Gas and Electric issued an Extreme Fire Potential Index outlook, the County Planning & Development Services and Damage Assessment Teams were notified in advance.
2. Early deployment of the field liaison was beneficial. Agencies recognized the importance of having a county OES representative at the ICP.
3. Staff identified a new way to visually share repopulation area maps between the field and EOC, utilizing the Situational Awareness and Collaboration Tool, commonly called "SCOUT."

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Front desk personnel experienced heavy call volume related to the response.
2. People attempted to access the EOC facility without credentials.
3. Requests inundated the GIS Team, causing delays in infographic production.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enhance front desk training to include awareness and handling of the different types of calls that may come in during a response.
2. Establish a check-in at the entrance to verify credentials.
3. Create a GIS priority actions checklist for the EOC, including prioritization of infographics.

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

SUCCESS

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The fire's spread rate was so fast that structures were fully engulfed before alerts could be sent and first responders could arrive. This gave the public a false impression that the alerting system had failed. Residents in adjacent communities who could smell the smoke and see the flames' glow from afar felt they should have received the alerts, even though incident command and unified command determined their communities were not at risk.
2. While no individuals with access and functional needs were injured or killed, the fire was swift-moving, and individuals with AFN were at an increased risk. In addition, the county public health department (PHD) received several calls regarding people leaving their homes without having access to power for their oxygen tanks.



Holiday Fire, Helicopter water drop, Source: syvnews.com

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Alerting procedures should be revised to build capacity, speed up the alerting process, and expand the alert notification footprint to include adjacent areas on a case-by-case basis.
2. Santa Barbara County PHD and the American Red Cross (Red Cross) resolved this issue for individuals who went to the Red Cross shelter seeking power for their oxygen machines. Those who did not go to the shelter

were directed to contact their medical device service provider to identify alternate power sources.

SHASTA COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. Volunteers were consistently used throughout the Carr Fire, from donation management to delivering items to staff in the field.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The county did not have enough appropriately trained staff to fill various positions within the EOC or ICP.



Destroyed neighborhood, Carr Fire, Source: Fox News

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify additional staff throughout the county and provide EOC and ICS 300 training. Regular exercises should be conducted to improve familiarity with EOC operations.

SISKIYOU COUNTY

SUCCESSSES

1. Livestock evacuation was successful due to the large number of volunteers.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. The EOC was too small for operations.
2. Training deficiencies were identified in the use of Incident Command System (ICS) Forms.
3. The Red Cross was overwhelmed by the scope of work required to set up the shelter at the Jackson Street School Gymnasium.
4. The absence of a Red Cross representative at the EOC hampered coordination efforts with Red Cross shelter personnel.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In February 2019, the EOC was moved to the Siskiyou County Administration building in Yreka, nearly double the previous size.

2. Emphasize training with multiple ICS classes, including EOC classes, that allow for more hands-on training opportunities.
3. Develop and hold exercises so response partners can become familiar with the expectations of setting up a shelter.
4. Hold quarterly meetings with representatives from the Red Cross and volunteers, and encourage more collaboration. Consider requesting a Red Cross representative for the EOC during events.

VENTURA COUNTY

SUCSESSES

1. Discussion with the IMT ensured advanced coordination between law enforcement and authorities regarding evacuation and repopulation.
2. Available fire resources were obtained for immediate and sustained use through established inter-agency relationships and the California Mutual Aid System.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT

1. Communication diminished between the county and city emergency operations centers during the onset of the incident and was exacerbated by internet outages.
2. Some partner agencies assisting the county retained their public information responsibilities, making it challenging to maintain Ventura County's commitment to providing timely bilingual incident information and press releases.
3. Due to limited resources, local agencies were required to operate evacuation shelters.
4. Local law enforcement's limited training and planning for effective deployment and management of mutual aid resources led to challenges in evacuations, road closures, and establishing an interoperable communications system.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Explore options for alternate internet services, such as satellite, at critical locations.

2. Ensure the EOC's Joint Information Center, including county departments and partner agencies, receives ongoing training.
3. Partner with the Ventura County Human Services Agency and the Red Cross to train cities on sheltering operations.
4. Encourage local law enforcement agencies to establish plans and train them to manage mutual aid resources. Ensure full integration of all law enforcement resources into the Incident Action Plan.

INITIAL RECOVERY ACTIVITIES – STATE AGENCIES

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (CAL OES)

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE (PA)

Six requests for California Disaster Assistance Act assistance were approved at the state level for 12 impacted counties: Colusa, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Mendocino, Napa, San Bernardino, Shasta, Siskiyou, Ventura, and Yolo Counties.

Ten Federal Management Assistance Grants were approved at the federal level, with five rolled into a Major Declaration. An Area Field Office was opened in Los Angeles County.



Wildfire relief / Disaster relief, Source: Red Cross

SUCSESSES:

1. No successes were reported.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT:

1. Staff turnover posed an issue for continuity.
2. Improved coordination between state agencies is needed.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No corrective action recommendations were reported.
2. Enhance coordination, networking, and situational awareness with partner agencies by establishing pre-planned communication protocols, such as participation in the Statewide Emergency Planning Coordination group, joint training exercises, and a centralized information-sharing system.

INITIAL RECOVERY ACTIVITIES – OPERATIONAL AREAS

LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTERS/DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS

Cal OES Individual Assistance established various Local Assistance Centers (LAC) throughout the state. They served as a one-stop shop with critical government services for residents impacted by the fires, such as replacing lost or destroyed vital documents (ID, financial information, etc.) and getting connected with support services. In coordination with FEMA, Cal OES Individual Assistance integrated state services at their Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC) and Mobile Disaster Recovery Centers (MDRC).

Local Assistance Centers

San Diego County (West Fire) – LAC: 1

Santa Barbara County (Holiday Fire) – LAC: 1

Siskiyou County (Klamathon Fire) – LAC: 1

DR4382

Lake County – LAC: 1 DRC: 1

Shasta County – LAC: 1 DRC: 1

DR4407

Alameda County – MDRC: 1

Butte County – DRC: 3

Contra Costa County – MDRC: 1

Los Angeles County – DRC: 2

Sacramento County – MDRC: 2

Shasta County – MDRC: 1

Tehama County – MDRC: 1

Ventura County – DRC: 1

LOS ANGELES COUNTY

During the initial Recovery Phase, LA County Fire, Department of Public Health, County Public Works, and later CAL FIRE IMT deployed teams of engineers, inspectors, and personnel certified in the Safety Assessment Program to survey the Woolsey Fire damage to residential, commercial, and county-owned buildings. Initial damage assessment began while the Woolsey Fire was actively burning, allowing County Public Works to begin analysis of potential drainage damage, mud/debris flow concerns, and mitigation preparation for the upcoming storm season.

- There are approximately 200 county public works personnel trained and certified in the Safety Assessment Program.
- Within two weeks, over 400 residential and commercial sites were surveyed, with 658 structures classified as demolished, moderately damaged, or lightly damaged.
- A rapid evaluation report accompanied by pictures was developed for every site surveyed.
- County public works also provided substantial assistance to the affected cities, especially to the City of Malibu, to assess the damage to private property.

SUCSESSES:

1. New private property debris removal practices were effectively implemented by the county.
2. Disaster Assistance Centers were operational very early in the Recovery Phase.

AREAS NEEDING IMPROVEMENT:

1. No areas needing improvement were reported.

CORRECTIVE ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. No corrective action recommendations were reported.

CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES

STATE AGENCIES

Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES)

California Conservation Corps (CCC)

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

California Highway Patrol (CHP)

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

California Department of Education (CDE)

California Energy Commission (CEC)

California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA)

Department of General Services (DGS)

LOCAL AGENCIES

Colusa County

Lake County

Los Angeles County

Mariposa County

Mendocino County

Orange County

Riverside County

San Diego County

Santa Barbara County

Shasta County

Siskiyou County

Trinity County

Ventura County

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAR	After Action Report
ACTF	Animal Control Task Force
AFN	Access and Functional Needs
CA-ESF	California Emergency Support Function
Cal OES	California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
CAL FIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCC	California Conservation Corps
CDE	California Department of Education
CDFA	California Department of Food and Agriculture
CDPH	California Department of Public Health
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
CEC	California Energy Commission
CHP	California Highway Patrol
DGS	Department of General Services
DRC	Disaster Recovery Center
EMSA	Emergency Medical Services Authority
EOC	Emergency Operation Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
GIS	Geographic Information System
IC	Incident Commander
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
LAC	Local Assistance Center
LEB	Law Enforcement Branch
MHCC	Medical Health Coordination Center

MDRC	Mobile Disaster Recovery Center
NWS	National Weather Service
OA	Operational Area
OES	Office of Emergency Services
SAR	Search and Rescue
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System
SOC	State Operations Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
VND	Virulent Newcastle Disease
UCG	Unified Coordination Group
US&R	Urban Search & Rescue

DRAFT