



ONE YEAR DONOR UPDATE

# 2017 British Columbia Fires



**DEAR SUPPORTERS:**

One year ago, the fire season in British Columbia broke records, with devastating wildfires causing the largest evacuation the province has ever seen.

Thousands of families were forced to leave their homes for weeks, waiting to see whether they would be able to return, if there even was a house to return to.

But in the middle of the chaos, stress and uncertainty, Canadians like you were there.

Thanks to you, the Red Cross was able to respond immediately to support the thousands of families who were affected – running shelters, distributing essential supplies and providing financial assistance to individuals, families, and small businesses.

The Red Cross is committed to helping communities for the long-term – as businesses reopen, homes are rebuilt, and people come back together. We continue to provide that support today, and will remain by people's side in the months and years ahead.

I invite you to read more about the impact your support has made and the lives you have touched. I thank you for standing up for British Columbians when help was needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'C. Sauvé'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C'.

Conrad Sauvé  
President and CEO



**DEAR CANADIAN RED CROSS SUPPORTERS:**

A year after the most destructive wildfire season in our province's history, looking back on the hardships and resilience of so many British Columbians, and all that has since been accomplished, it is important to reflect on the critical role played by the Canadian Red Cross.

We were in a Provincial State of Emergency for an unprecedented 10 weeks, and an estimated 65,000 people were forced from their homes.

While the fires were still raging, evacuees received much needed assistance from our government, local authorities, First Nations, emergency social services volunteers, and the Red Cross – as well as donations from Canadians far and wide – and we are grateful for the outpouring of generosity in our province's time of need.

But our work is not over. The Province of British Columbia stands in solidarity with the Red Cross and individuals and families still recovering, and we will continue to provide support through our partnership now and into the future.

As we look to this year's wildfire season and beyond, our government will rely on the Red Cross's experience, systems, and technology to augment our local emergency social services to reach people as quickly as possible. The Red Cross fields thousands of phone calls, deploys teams on the ground, and is committed to continual improvement to ensure we reach every person in need of help, even those living in the most rural and remote locations.

We all need to work together in times of crisis. The Red Cross has proven time and again its immense contributions to our public safety. We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish together, and we look forward to what we will accomplish in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Honourable John Horgan  
Premier Of British Columbia

Honourable Mike Farnworth  
Minister Of Public Safety and  
Solicitor General



**DEAR SUPPORTERS:**

It was nearly a year ago that wildfires in B.C. uprooted individuals, families and businesses, impacting communities across the province.

While visiting a fire-impacted area recently, I saw how the land reflects the journey being traveled by those recovering from the devastating fires. The destruction is still shocking in its scope and severity, but in many areas new growth emerges.

As the landscape renews, so do communities. Families and individuals have begun to repair and rebuild their homes and we are supporting them in that process.

I am struck by the resilience of people as they move forward after this significant disruption in their lives. The spirit and collaboration in communities is reflected by the nearly 100 Red Cross Community Partnership projects ranging from the provision of traditional food and firewood for First Nations, to establishing additional resources for youth and families, to increasing supports for mental health, volunteer recognition celebrations, and more. All of these are vital for recovery.

Your generosity has made it possible for local agencies and businesses to continue serving their communities. As we move forward it is important to remember all we have done and learned together. At Red Cross, we are privileged to be working with you on this challenge.

Thank you for caring and for giving so generously.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kimberley Nemrava', written in a cursive style.

Kimberley Nemrava  
Vice President, British Columbia and Yukon

“I would like to say a huge thank you to the donors for helping people who are in need. Every penny that we see will be going directly to the kids and it’s worth it to see them smiling at the end of the day, it’s a sense of relief for them and their parents.”

When the wildfires affected local businesses, several families were impacted and kids started going without. Clearwater Secondary School approached the Red Cross Community Partnerships Program to help with hot lunches, school trips and team sports so that no one was left behind.



Pictured: Tammy Whelen



“It’s been hard, probably one of the hardest things I’ve ever been through in life and I am very thankful for all that anybody has done.”

When Holly Renz’s home was destroyed in the 2017 wildfires, Red Cross was able to provide financial assistance to help her while she was displaced.

Pictured: Holly Renz

---

# One year later:

## What your support has accomplished



### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**66,500+ distributions of financial assistance** (including electronic funds transfers, cash cards, and cheques) to impacted individuals and families to help during their evacuation and as they recover



### SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

**5,500+ consultations** to provide emotional support for people, both in person and over the phone

**1,200+ referrals** to external mental health and well-being supports

**220+ outreach visits** to impacted communities



### RE-ENTRY AND RECOVERY

**22,500+ households supported in their return** with help such as financial assistance and clean-up kits

**7,700+ one-on-one meetings** with individuals and families needing ongoing help to recover, both in person and over the phone

**4,400+ distributions of financial assistance** to support households with their ongoing recovery, support for temporary accommodations or mortgage payments, fuel to heat homes, mental health and well-being supports and replacement of medical prescriptions

**94 community partnerships** to support local organizations including 49 partnerships with Indigenous communities to provide emergency food and firewood

**2,500+ eligible small businesses, not-for profits and First Nations cultural livelihoods** received financial assistance

---

# How your support helped Barbara recover from a devastating loss

“My house didn’t burn, but my home did.”

---



When Barbara Hendricks returned after being evacuated for weeks from her Loon Lake home in the summer of 2017, she found that her house was still standing, but the fire had left its mark on everything else.

Trees and shrubs were burned, she lost her irrigation system, pump and garden shed, and her vegetable garden was devastated.

“My house didn’t burn, but my home did,” said Barbara, who turned 73 this year and does most of her planting herself.

With help from her family, Barbara started the cleanup, getting rid of the worst of the debris outside and removing the fridge and freezer filled with spoiled food from when the power was cut during the evacuations.

A whole growing season gone, she spoke with a Canadian Red Cross caseworker about her need to go buy an entire

summer’s worth of fruit and vegetables so she could can and freeze produce for the winter. The Red Cross was able to help with her request by providing financial assistance.

“I was very appreciative,” Barbara said, because, “I like to go to the farmers’ markets before they close to get food at a more reasonable rate and get it local, rather than having to pay the high rates in the winter months.”

In late April things were looking good for this summer’s growing season. A few bits of green were starting to poke out and areas in her new vegetable garden were marked off for lettuce, fennel and onions.

The new irrigation system is in place and the garden shed is rebuilt. And Barbara is looking forward to watching her garden grow back.



---

# Food for the Soul: How your support helped bring a community back together

“...thank you for all the work you’re doing. Thank you Red Cross.”

---

For France Lamontagne, summer used to mean one thing: a time of plenty. She can get lost in reminiscing about the bounty of food the season could bring to her community of Skeetchestn.

For the small community, hunting and gathering is not only a part of the culture, but a critical piece of everyday life. Food, and the sharing of food, brings this tight-knit community closer together.

But, in the summer of 2017, everything changed. Skeetchestn found itself under evacuation order due to the nearby wildfires.

Evacuations can take a toll on a community. However, it wasn’t until they were able to return home that the longer-term impacts of the wildfires quickly became evident.

The wild game that typically grazed the lands was gone. Bushes, normally filled with berries, were bare or burned.

“The impact was huge,” says France, who works as the Assistant Director of Operations and Social Development Manager at Skeetchestn. “It’s a lot for a community who still practices those activities on a regular basis.”



Pictured: Janet Deneault

Thanks to your support, Skeetchestn was able to receive funding from the Red Cross Community Partnerships Program for their *Food for the Soul* project. The project was to supplement the loss of traditional foods over the winter months with the delivery of beef, pork and salmon to community members.

The project was approved “almost instantly,” says France.

Skeetchestn wasn’t alone. At the same time, many First Nations communities impacted by the wildfires had identified a similar need. This launched a larger initiative of seasonal traditional foods assistance to affected First Nations.

For Skeetchestn and many other communities, the support made a big difference.

“They were so grateful,” says France. “Extremely grateful. Some people wrote notes in our newsletter saying thank you for all the work you’re doing. Thank you Red Cross.”

*The Canadian Red Cross Community Partnerships Program provides vital financial assistance to help communities recover from disaster – but we couldn’t do it without you.*

# Your generosity at work:

## Financial summary

To date, **\$119.3 Million** has already been spent or committed to assist those impacted by the fires.

Thanks to generous individuals, governments, community groups and corporate partners who donated funds in support of people impacted by the British Columbia Fires. Together, we continue to have a lasting impact on individuals, families and the entire community as they recover.

**TOTAL FUNDS  
DONATED TO DATE**  
**\$23.6 Million**

**GOVERNMENT FUNDS**  
**\$38.6 Million** thanks to the  
Government of Canada  
  
**\$100 Million** thanks to the  
Government of British Columbia

**GRAND TOTAL  
TO DATE**  
**\$162.2 Million**

### \$119.3 MILLION

SPENT AND COMMITTED AS OF JUNE 22, 2018

**Total spent and committed**

**73.6%**

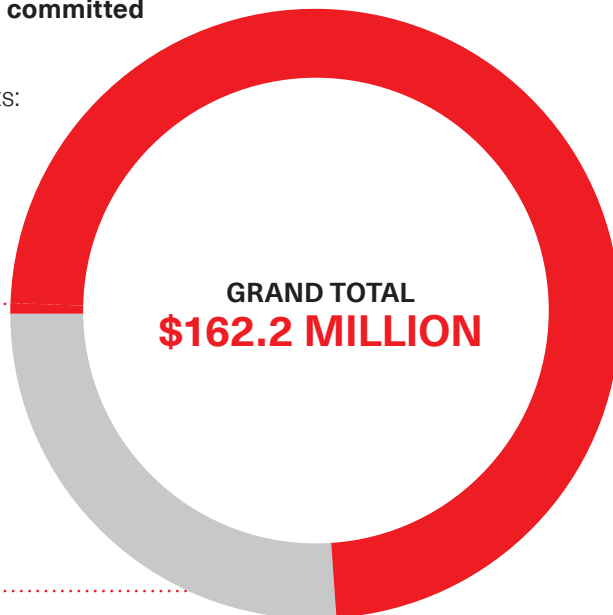
Fundraising costs:

**0.7%**

Spent and  
committed  
to date:

**72.9%**

**Multi-Year  
recovery**  
**26.4%**



**Funds spent or committed to date used to support individuals and families, community groups and small businesses, not-for-profits and First Nations cultural livelihoods.**

**Remaining funds allocated to multi-year recovery efforts including disaster risk reduction and mental health and wellness.**

#### UNDERSTANDING THE NUMBERS

**Spent and committed to date:** These are the funds that have been already spent to assist those impacted by the fires, as well as funds that have been committed with signed contracts or agreements for recovery projects or initiatives.

**Allocation of funds to date:** This is the projected budget across each area of spending for the grand total including the funds from the Government of British Columbia (\$100 million). The allocations reflect the needs of the people and the community that have been identified to date. Many needs emerge over time and the above allocation amounts may be adjusted accordingly.

**Fundraising costs:** The fundraising cost related to this emergency appeal will not exceed five per cent. Fundraising costs are associated to the total funds donated to date (\$23.6 million), not the grand total including the funds from the Government of British Columbia. These costs can include donation processing fees; credit card and bank fees; service fees for call centres and digital platforms; and, ongoing communications and reporting to donors.

# Your generosity at work:

## Financial details

**TOTAL ALLOCATED TO DATE**  
**\$162.2 Million**

**TOTAL SPENT/COMMITTED TO DATE:**  
**\$119.3 Million**



### TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

**Allocated  
to Date**

**\$90  
MILLION**

**Spent and Committed  
to Date**

**\$62.1  
MILLION**

Providing help such as: food, water, winter clothing, items for babies or children, personal services such as hygiene products, and items to help people return to work. Other assistance may be provided for: mental health and well-being supports, debris removal, temporary accommodations or mortgage payments, firewood or fuel to heat homes, home reconstruction and repairs and replacement of prescription medication or dentures.



### TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY GROUPS

Ensuring needs of the community are reflected in relief and recovery activities. This has included funding a variety of projects and initiatives such as welcome back gatherings for the community, support for emotional and psychological well-being, and support to First Nations communities with traditional food for the winter months as well as firewood. Further information regarding Red Cross funding for community organizations can be found online by visiting: [www.redcross.ca/CommunityPartnershipsBC](http://www.redcross.ca/CommunityPartnershipsBC).

**Allocated  
to Date**

**\$29.1  
MILLION**

**Spent and Committed  
to Date**

**\$15.6  
MILLION**



### TO SUPPORT ELIGIBLE SMALL BUSINESSES, NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL LIVELIHOODS

**Allocated  
to Date**

**\$41.9  
MILLION**

**Spent and Committed  
to Date**

**\$40.5  
MILLION**

Experience has shown us that support for small businesses, not-for-profit organizations and cultural livelihoods that support First Nations communities are essential to the full recovery of the people and communities affected by a disaster. A second phase of funding helped small businesses with fixed and new expenses they incurred when they lost business due to the fires. These funds could help business owners with things like: uninsured losses, deductibles, equipment, minor repairs to property, and clean-up of property.

**Fundraising Costs: \$1.2 Million** allocated to date. **\$1.1 Million** spent or committed to date.

**Thank you for your  
kindness and generosity.**

---

**With your support, the Red Cross continues to be there  
for individuals and families recovering from these  
devastating wildfires.**

---

**1-800-418-1111 | [WeCare@redcross.ca](mailto:WeCare@redcross.ca) | [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)**