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**San Manuel Awards \$1.1 Million for California Wildfire Recovery Efforts**

*Recent awards to nonprofits and tribes support critical needs in aftermath of destruction*

**San Bernardino, Calif., (December 17, 2019)** – The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, in partnership with government agencies, a coalition of nonprofits, and tribal governments are supporting broad wildfire relief efforts to ensure Indian tribes, communities, and displaced animals find the support they need this holiday season.

The immediate effects of wildfires on individuals and their property can be distressing, but the crisis is not over after the flames are out. Property losses, structural damages, displaced families, lost animals, economic shocks, and a variety of unknown consequences can arise once the flames are put out.

“With the \$1.1M in Wildfire Relief, San Manuel is providing support to communities who have been affected by the wildfires,” Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena said. “While an immediate influx of funding may flood into communities in the days and weeks following the disaster, the recovery efforts often take years to be completed. We continue to stand with survivors in communities affected by these wildfires with this support for recovery as they endeavor to rebuild their lives.”

In October, wildfires in California scorched thousands of acres, prompted mass evacuations, and caused millions of dollars in damage and property losses. The fires especially impacted vulnerable tribal communities that often face an increased risk due to their proximity to wildlands.

San Manuel will be partnering with the following tribes and non-profit organizations:

**American Red Cross - \$600,000:** The Red Cross will provide additional supportive services and financial assistance for those in the impacted regions. Reaching out directly to residents using a combination of Red Cross damage assessment information and FEMA inspection data, the Red Cross has already begun providing recovery assistance to the most severely impacted households.

“As an Annual Disaster Giving Program (ADGP) member, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians also pre-invests in emergency response, enabling the Red Cross to help when it’s needed most before, during and after disasters,” said Yvette Baysinger, Executive Director of the American Red Cross serving San Bernardino.

**California Fire Foundation - \$100,000:** The California Fire Foundation’s programs provide on-site emergency financial aid to those affected by fire and natural disaster. This aid is administered by frontline firefighters in the form of gift cards that help the victims of fire and natural disasters by providing them with the immediate means to purchase necessities such as food, clothing or medicine.

**California Community Foundation (CCF) - \$100,000:** The CCF has prioritized support around the highest need for vulnerable and low-income individuals and families affected by wildfires through the Wildfire Relief Fund. The CCF will be involved in relief and recovery efforts across the State including the Getty, Tick, and Saddleridge Fires in Southern California, and the Kincade Fire in Northern California. The funding will support affordable and supportive housing options for low-income individuals and families; free or low-cost mental and behavioral health care; economic recovery and workforce development; and continuity or expansion of other vital safety net services.

**Kashia Band of Pomo Indians and Dry Creek Rancheria - \$100,000:** Provides emergency financial assistance to tribal members directly impacted by the Kincade Fire.

**Sonoma County Animal Services - \$50,000:** The Sonoma County Animal Services was able to respond to approximately 1700+ calls and inquiries for services since the fires began – nearly 4.5-times the normal call volume. Animal Services along with partner agencies provided thousands of welfare checks during the wildfires for livestock, equine, and other animals left behind in evacuation areas. After evacuation orders, Animal Services took in 105 animals, 48 of those animals were provided at no-cost, temporary boarding was also provided to those families who had been evacuated.

**Family Service Association of Redlands - \$100,000:** Families who lost their home and/or need financial assistance are eligible to receive emergency motel vouchers, rental assistance, and emergency financial assistance resources at Family Services.

“Family Service Association of Redlands recognizes that losing everything in a fire is traumatic and devastating. We are pulling efforts together to rebuild the lives of the Inland Empire fire victims not only physically, but also for their mental health after of losing everything,” said Kyra Stewart, Family Service Association of Redlands. “Through the partnership with San Manuel Band of Mission Indians we are hosting a series of service orientations; the opportunity to provide move in deposits; motel vouchers; and supplies as well as vital mental health support.”

“San Manuel is committed through all phases of emergency from immediate disaster response to recovery,” said Yvette Baysinger, Executive Director of the American Red Cross serving San Bernardino. “We appreciate San Manuel’s understanding that we need partners who will go beyond the first few days to help communities rise out of the ashes.”

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#### **About San Manuel Band of Mission Indians**

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians is a federally-recognized Indian tribe located on the San Manuel Indian Reservation near Highland, California. San Manuel exercises its inherent sovereign right of self-governance and provides essential services for its citizens by building infrastructure, maintaining civil services, and promoting social, economic and cultural development. As descendants of the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys, mountains and high deserts, the Serrano people of San Manuel have called this area home since time immemorial and are committed to remaining a productive partner in the San Bernardino region.