

# DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

MARCH 2023

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## CLIENT SUCCESSES

During the month of February, Plumas Rural Services (PRS) and its Disaster Recovery programs worked diligently to help all their Dixie Fire clients, but particularly those residing in the FEMA trailers who were up against a move-out deadline of February 24.

We received Stable Housing Opportunities Program (SHOP) funding for two clients to purchase their FEMA trailers, ensuring these two families had safe, stable housing and did not need to go through the upheaval of moving and finding new housing. Another FEMA trailer client had secured low-income housing and had furniture for it held on lay-away 9 months ago, but the apartment had to be prepared for move-in. She was finally able to accomplish this just before the FEMA deadline.

One Disaster Case Management client needed Section 8 housing before the fire; the fire complicated his application due to loss of paperwork. This resident was also able to secure housing in February with our program's aid; we provided a portion of the first month's rent, the security deposit, and a pet deposit to enable him to move in, and the Section 8 voucher will take over next month.

On the rebuilding front, we had several successes with our clients this past month. One client received advocacy from their DCM to get their well drilled, allowing the client to close their recovery case. Our Construction Cost Analyst has been working diligently to get power established for clients in the rebuild process, helping put through 5 permit applications in the last month. Even though the process can take up to 120 days after the permit, we successfully advocated with PG&E to get a power pole put in for one client, just in time to move out of her FEMA trailer, in addition to getting water reestablished on her property.

It was a busy month all around, and we're thrilled for those clients who are making progress with their recovery plans.

# RESPONSIVE FUNDING

## DOLLARS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PRS was the recipient of a generous grant from American Red Cross to help Dixie Fire survivors in the process of recovery, including a portion of funding to help stabilize clients who were facing critical needs that prevented them from effectively taking part in the recovery planning process. These 'client stability' requests were generally small enough and immediate enough to make a long application and review process a barrier to getting served. Thus a short application and simple review process was implemented for these Client Stability needs.

Though the grant PRS received runs through August 2023, the Client Stability funding was fully expended as of February. But Disaster Case Managers continue to see many clients who have needs that require funds that can be reviewed and approved in a nimble, time-sensitive way without significant barriers in the request process.

It is typical for a long-term recovery group like Dixie Fire Collaborative (DFC) to establish a Simple Unmet Needs (SUN) funders' roundtable to consider requests for funding that help survivors get through their recovery plans. However the Dixie Fire is unique in that our survivors have a mixture of insurance claims, PG&E settlement funds, and/or outstanding litigation that may impact the amount of funding they eventually have for their recovery and rebuilding. Charitable dollars that are designated to help survivors recover are not meant for those who have other funding and/or assets that they can draw from; they are meant for those needs that cannot be otherwise met.

The DFC, North Valley Community Foundation (NVCF) and partners in the Wildfire Relief & Recovery Fund established a generous SUN fund for the roundtable to start with when considering client requests. To date, however, there have not been many requests, due in part to the availability of other (future) funds clients will have from insurance, settlement and/or litigation. Unfortunately, much of this eventual funding makes it challenging for clients

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to afford elements critical to the recovery and/or rebuild process today. As we know, there is a very limited window for construction work in our region; if our clients must wait for these future funds to begin the preparation, it can delay their entire rebuild by another full year.

PRS and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service (NVCSS) sat down with representatives from the NVCF and DFC in February to discuss funding allocated for Dixie Fire recovery and how to make it more responsive to our clients' unique situations. Through this collaborative approach, we were able to repurpose some of the initial SUN funding to be available for two types of requests: smaller needs that move clients towards the recovery goals they have established with their DCM and limited rebuilding preparation needs that are time-sensitive (permitting, inspections, etc.). Larger needs will continue to be managed through the SUN funders' roundtable which convenes weekly to review cases for funding.

We remain grateful for the financial support provided by donors for our community's recovery, and we are confident that we continue to steward those dollars in a manner that meets both donor intent and recipient needs.





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Outside of work, Adam is affiliated with Boy Scouts of America, having started as a Tiger Cub in 1991, working through his Eagle Scout in 2001 and serving now as an Assistant Scout Leader and a Vigil Member of the Order of the Arrow. He is also a member of the American Legion and a lifetime member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW).

When he's not in the office, Adam loves to spend time outdoors camping, hiking, or just being in nature. He enjoys fishing, hunting, playing around the Sierra Buttes, and hiking parts of the Pacific Crest Trail and other mountain trails in the region.

## ON THE FRONT LINES

*ADAM TOLER,  
DISASTER CASE MANAGER*

Originally from West Virginia, Adam Toler moved to Plumas County in December 2020 to be with family here. Out of high school, Adam entered the military where he served for more than a decade before a medical discharge due to combat injuries. He transitioned into a position as a Crisis Intervention/Prevention Coordinator for a mobile crisis unit.

When Adam saw the announcement seeking Disaster Case Managers, he realized he would be a good fit considering his background with crisis response, case management, and support for those dealing with the aftermath of trauma. He knows recovery is a long process for folks, filled with daily challenges and frustrations that are demoralizing. "Even if I can't meet the needs of a client for that day," he says, "if I can divert a client's mind away from the crisis and the mental struggle involved - if I can make a client smile and step into a happier place for a moment, that's a win. If I can lift their spirits, then that's something important, too."

Adam recognizes the importance of getting to know his clients, listening to their stories, and connecting with them in order to help them with their cases, but also to make sure they know they're more than just their case file.

## PERMITTING WORKSHOP

As many Dixie Fire survivors are moving into the rebuilding phase of recovery, there are a great number of processes that can be confusing and time consuming. To help survivors better understand the permitting process for their rebuilds, there will be a Permitting Workshop in March presented by Charles White - Plumas County Director of Building Services, Tracey Ferguson - Plumas County Planning Director, Kevin Naylor - Construction Cost Analyst for Northern Valley Catholic Social Service, and Dan Litchfield - Construction Cost Analyst for Plumas Rural Services.

The Permitting Workshop will address the following kinds of information for attendees:

- What is a building permit, when is it required, and who is responsible?
- Description of the building permit process
- Interagency cooperation for permits
- Review of planning and inspection

The workshop is free and open to the public on Saturday, March 11th, from 12 - 2 PM in the Greenhouse at The Spot (205 Pine St) in Greenville. Join us to learn more about the permitting process, and come prepared with questions if you have them.

# CONSTRUCTION CORNER

The construction of a new home is a daunting task. Our Disaster Case Management Program's Construction Cost Analyst, Dan Litchfield, can help you understand, prepare for and make your way through the rebuilding process. He provides preconstruction assistance in the form of site visits to assess your site and the improvements that need to be made prior to applying for a building permit.

Phase 1 infrastructure covers septic/sewer, well/water, debris/tree removal, grading and power. Some basic costs to remember for the Plumas County Building Department are:

- New electric service - \$166
- Standard septic system - \$457
- Engineered septic system - \$589
- New well - \$514
- Reinspection fee - \$66.25

Dan can assist with finding debris and tree removal programs, applying for power pedestals, and connecting with local utilities. He also provides consultation on rebuild options based on project site, budget and other needs. This can include identifying architects, engineers, general contractors and subcontractors/specialist trades for your project.

As your rebuild progresses, Dan can offer assistance with reviewing your plan, understanding new energy and building codes, and guiding you through the permitting process. He can help you review bids for completeness, fair market value, and compliance with plans, codes and project scope. He can also communicate with contractors on your behalf about construction costs and schedules and vet contractors based on licensing and past projects completed.

During the construction phase, Dan can provide overview and monitoring of the construction progress on your rebuild and conduct walk-throughs with you during the course of construction to identify any items that need to be addressed.

[A list from the Contractors State License Board of licensed contractors in this area is available here.](#)

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Dan holds office hours at the Dixie Fire Resource Center in Crescent Mills on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 AM – 3 PM, or he can be reached at [dlitchfield@plumasruralservices.org](mailto:dlitchfield@plumasruralservices.org).



## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity of Butte County has new Homeownership Applications coming soon. They can accept renters from Plumas County, particularly those who are disaster survivors. The program's qualification criteria include income qualifications, a need for affordable housing, an ability to pay an affordable mortgage, and a willingness to partner with Habitat by providing 250 sweat equity hours. These hours are typically done on build sites in Paradise or at Habitat's ReStore in Chico.

Potential applicants are encouraged to attend one of three upcoming orientations:

- Thursday, March 2nd, 5:30 – 7PM at Paradise Library (5922 Clark Road, Paradise)
- Saturday, March 11th, 1:30 – 3PM at Chico Library (1108 Sherman Avenue, Chico)
- Thursday, March 16th, 5:30 – 7PM at Oroville Library (1820 Mitchell Avenue, Oroville)

Those unable to attend one of the orientations may contact Elizabeth Polivka, Homeowner Services Coordinator, at 530-343-7423 ext. 6 with questions.

More information about the Habitat for Humanity program and the Homeownership Application can be found on the agency's website: [www.buttehabitat.org](http://www.buttehabitat.org).

# MARCH EVENTS

## Thursday, March 2, 5:30 - 7:00 PM

Habitat for Humanity, Homeownership Program  
Paradise Library, 5922 Clark Road, Paradise

## Saturday, March 11, 12:00 - 2:00 PM

Permitting Workshop  
The Spot, 205 Pine St, Greenville

## Saturday, March 11, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Habitat for Humanity, Homeownership Program  
Chico Library, 1108 Sherman Avenue, Chico

## Tuesdays, March 14th & 28th, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Circle of Light Gathering  
Plumas Bank Building, 121 Crescent Street, Greenville

## Thursday, March 16, 5:30 - 7:00 PM

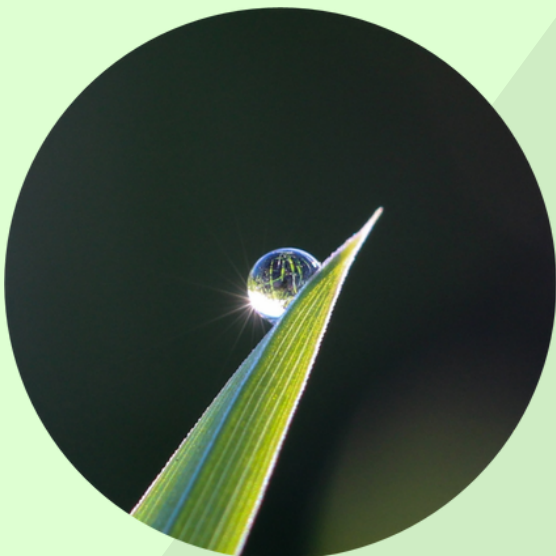
Habitat for Humanity, Homeownership Program  
Oroville Library, 1820 Mitchell Avenue, Oroville

## Saturday, March 18, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Dixie Fire Collaborative Community Meeting  
Greenville Elementary Cafeteria, 225 Grand Street

## Wednesday, March 22, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Connect the Dots: Running on Empty Training  
Online ([register here](#))



# CONNECT THE DOTS

## TRAINING: RUNNING ON EMPTY

Connect the Dots is a series of interactive trainings on a variety of mental health topics. On Wednesday, March 22nd, from 10-12 join PRS's Community Training Manager, Dana Nowling, and Trauma Recovery Specialist, Julie Hatzell, for this 2-hour event. "Running on Empty" explores signs of stress, burnout and compassion fatigue; discusses internal and external resources and distress indicators; and identifies ways to refuel personally and professionally with self-care practices. [Register online here.](#)

PRS offers a wide variety of trainings on mental health and other topics, both online and in person. More information available [here.](#)

# 5-4-3-2-1

## GROUNDING TECHNIQUE

This grounding exercise is an excellent option for those moments when thoughts are crowded in your head, increasing your anxiety and making it hard to be calm and focused.

Begin with several deep, long and slow breaths.

- **5 - SEE** Spot 5 things you can see around you. Big or small, next to you or out the window, anything in your visual field.
- **4 - TOUCH** Identify 4 things that you can touch around you. From parts of your body to the ground to items on your desk - anything you can reach out and feel.
- **3 - HEAR** Note 3 things you can hear around you. Try to focus on external sounds rather than your thoughts or sounds from your own body.
- **2 - SMELL** Find 2 things around you that you can smell. The outdoors has plenty of smells, but so does your bathroom soap, your kitchen, your furniture, even your pets.
- **1 - TASTE** Pinpoint 1 thing around you that you can taste. Toothpaste, minty floss, your last meal, and drinks all work here.

End this exercise with a long, deep breath.

# FEBRUARY SERVICE STATISTICS

## DIXIE FIRE RESOURCE CENTER

Households Provided Heating Assistance - 2  
Clients Given Winter Clothing - 5  
Stabilization Funds Requests Filled - 7  
Value of Stabilization Support - \$4,223

## DISASTER CASE MANAGEMENT

Clients Triageed - 95  
Survivors Served - 254 *(438 total to date)*  
Cases Closed - 39  
Client Referrals Provided - 67  
Value of Client Referrals - \$8,748  
Clients Approved for SUN Funds - 1  
SUN Funds Awarded - \$2,489  
Clients Approved for SHOP Funds - 2  
SHOP Funds Awarded - \$9,318

## FUNDS DISTRIBUTED as of 2/28/23

SHOP Funds - \$53,061  
Stabilization Funds - \$172,692  
Simple Unmet Needs (SUN) Funds - \$17,966



# A BIG THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

## CONNECT WITH US

530-283-2735

[www.PlumasRuralServices.org](http://www.PlumasRuralServices.org)

Facebook: @prs.social

Instagram: @plumasruralservices\_inc

Twitter: @PRS\_Inc



American Red Cross



Thank you to  
Dixie Fire funders

Thank you to the 13 organizations that have jointly funded grants totaling nearly \$200,000 for Dixie Fire relief. We are working together to stretch the dollars that were donated to help relief and recovery efforts in affected communities. Together we are stronger.



  
**Plumas Rural Services**  
*Serving people, Strengthening families, Building communities*