

# **California's Camp Fire now 100 percent contained, officials say**

The most destructive and deadly wildland inferno in California history has been fully wrangled into submission by firefighters, who have been battling the ferocious blaze for 18 days, authorities announced on Sunday.

The catastrophic Camp Fire in Northern California's Butte County that ignited on Nov. 8 and indiscriminately devoured thousands and thousands of homes and structures and claimed at least 85 lives was fully contained by firefighters Sunday morning, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, also known as Cal Fire.

The welcome news came just days after firefighters in Southern California reported that the Woolsey Fire — which started the same day as the Camp Fire, killed three people and destroyed 1,500 structures as it swept through Los Angeles and Ventura Counties — was 100 percent contained.

The Camp Fire has destroyed 13,972 residences and 528 commercial buildings as it burned 153,336 acres, according to the latest Cal Fire incident report. At least 296 people remain unaccounted for, according to the Butte County Sheriff's Office.

At least three firefighters were injured battling the Camp Fire.



NASA Worldview/EPA via Shutterstock - Smoke from the Camp Fire spreading over Northern California towards the Pacific Ocean, Nov. 16, 2018.

The Woolsey Fire also injured three other firefighters and burned 96,949 acres as it swept through such celebrity enclaves as Malibu and Calabasas, according to Cal Fire.



Satellite image/DigitalGlobe via Reuters - A Sept. 10, 2018, image of the Kilcrease circle community in Paradise, Calif., compared to a Nov. 17, 2018 image this area was destroyed by the deadly Camp Fire.more +

In all, the pair of wildfires laid waste to a total area of nearly 400 square miles. Officials said the remains of at least 54 people have been positively identified so far.





Marcus Yam/Los Angeles Times/Polaris – A search and rescue team combs through the debris for possible human remains at Paradise Gardens, Nov. 16, 2018 in Paradise, Calif.[more +](#)

Search and rescue crews were continuing to comb through the rubble of the Camp Fire Sunday for remains specifically in the town of Paradise, which was almost completely destroyed by the blaze.

A multi-agency task force, at the request of the Butte County Sheriff's Office, has captured detailed aerial imagery maps of damaged properties in most of the burn areas in the town of Paradise, as well as video surveys and 360-degree drone panoramas of all major roads in the area, according to the sheriff's office.

Officials hope the maps will provide valuable information to the search and recovery teams on the ground and to the residents of the community impacted by the Camp Fire.



Gene Blevins/Reuters – A home is engulfed in flames during the Woolsey Fire in Malibu, Calif., Nov. 9, 2018.

“This has been a tough situation for all of us,” Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said in his video message Thursday. “We’re in this together. We are Butte County strong.”

Much-needed rain doused the scorched areas on Friday and Saturday, though the heavy rain did bring new dangers to the burn scar areas in the form of flash floods and mudslides.

The National Weather Service had issued a flash flood watch for the burn areas in Northern California.

Here is more about the fires that have been devastating Northern and Southern California.

### **The Camp Fire in Northern California**

The Camp Fire ignited Nov. 8 near Pulga, a tiny community in Butte County

nestled in the Plumas National Forest. The blaze exploded as strong winds fanned the flames southwest, enveloping Paradise, a bucolic community of 27,000 people in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

The fire has virtually decimated the entire town.

Melissa Schuster, a Paradise town council member, said her house was among those leveled by the Camp Fire.

“Our entire five-member council is homeless,” Schuster said in a Nov. 13 interview on ABC News’ “Start Here” podcast. “All of our houses have been destroyed.”

The death toll from the Camp Fire increased to 85 on Saturday after officials found still more bodies in the burned-out rubble of homes and melted cars, according to the Butte County Sheriff’s Office, which has warned that the remains of some of the missing may never be recovered due to the severity of the fire. Thom Porter, chief of strategic planning for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, said the body count is expected to climb higher as search crews continue sifting through the destruction.

“It is by far the most deadly single fire in California,” Porter has said of the Camp Fire.

Many of the deaths occurred in Paradise.

“The entire community of Paradise is a toxic wasteland right now,” Schuster said on Nov. 13, holding back tears.

“In addition to that, and this is the hardest part for me to even talk about, the number of fatalities is [among] things that we don’t know at this moment and that’s something that has to be determined before people can move back in,” she said.

Two prison inmate firefighters were among a total of three firefighters who have been injured while battling the Camp Fire, officials told ABC News.

(MORE: ‘It’s just a recipe for destruction,’ fire chief says of conditions on front lines of California fires)

Last week, Gov. Jerry Brown toured the devastation caused by the Camp Fire

along with Brock Long, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as well as U.S. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke.

“This is one of the worst disasters I’ve ever seen in my career, hands down,” Long told reporters at the scene Nov. 14.

## **The Woolsey Fire in Southern California**

The Woolsey Fire also ignited Nov. 8 near the city of Simi Valley in Ventura County and rapidly spread south to Los Angeles County. The wind-driven flames jumped the 101 Freeway before sweeping through the celebrity enclaves of Malibu and Calabasas.

The entire city of Malibu and a sprawling naval base near the seaside city of Oxnard were among the areas under mandatory evacuation orders, as officials warned the blaze could potentially spread all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

(MORE: 5 things to know about California’s and other wildfires)

Evacuation orders have since been lifted for some areas, including parts of Malibu, as firefighters successfully stretched containment levels.

The Woolsey Fire, which torched a total of 96,949 acres in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties, was fully contained by Wednesday night, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

In addition to the 1,500 structures that were destroyed, another 341 were damaged.

The blaze burned down a portion of Paramount Ranch in Agoura Hills known as “Western Town,” where hundreds of movies and television shows, including HBO’s “Westworld,” have been filmed.

The Woolsey Fire has been blamed for the deaths of at least three people and three firefighters sustained injuries while battling the flames, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

## **A public health emergency**

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar has declared a public health emergency in California, where the wildfires forced the evacuation of at least two



hospitals and eight other health facilities.



Robyn Beck/AFP/Getty Images - Firefighters knock down flames in the Point Dume neighborhood of Malibu, Calif., on Nov. 10, 2018, after the Woolsey Fire tore through the neighborhood overnight.more +

“We are working closely with state health authorities and monitoring the needs of healthcare facilities to provide whatever they may need to save lives and protect health,” Azar said in a Nov. 14 statement. “This declaration will help ensure that Americans who are threatened by these dangerous wildfires and who rely on Medicare, Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program have continuous access to the care they need.”

The smoke from the flames descended across the Golden State and choked the air in major cities.

Smoke advisories were issued for the affected region amid concerns that smoke from the fires could present a “significant health threat” for people with asthma and other lung conditions, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Residents were advised to stay indoors as much as possible and



to wear a protective mask when venturing outside.

Berkeley Earth, a California-based nonprofit that analyzes air quality in real-time, ranked San Francisco, Stockton and Sacramento as the world's three "most polluted cities" on Nov. 16.



David Mcnew/AFP/Getty Images - The Santa Monica Mountains are seen left blackened by the Woolsey Fire near Malibu, Calif., Nov. 14, 2018.

Meanwhile, there has been an outbreak of norovirus at a shelter in Butte County housing evacuees, according to Lisa Almaguer, public information officer for Butte County Public Health.

(MORE: Deadly California wildfire leaves entire Paradise town council homeless)

Almaguer said the presence of the contagious virus is "not uncommon" especially at this time of year and "with hundreds of people living in close quarters."



Soel Loeb/AFP/Getty Images - President Donald Trump greets California Governor Jerry Brown and Governor-elect Gavin Newsom, left, as he arrives at Beale Air Force Base in California, Nov. 17, 2018.more +

### **President Trump tours unprecedented devastation**

President Donald Trump arrived in California on Nov. 17 to survey the scene of surreal devastation and meet with firefighters, alongside Gov. Brown and the state's governor-elect, Gavin Newsom.

The president stopped first in the town of Paradise, where he called the damage "total devastation."

"We've never seen anything like this in California, we've never seen anything like this yet. It's like total devastation," Trump told reporters. "I think people have to see this really to understand it."

The president later visited Malibu to tour the destruction from the Woolsey Fire.

Trump pledged federal assistance to California following his visit, just days after

he threatened to withhold funds from the state due to what he described as “gross mismanagement of forests.”

*ABC News’ Karine Hafuta, Marilyn Heck, Julia Jacobo and Bonnie McLean contributed to this report.*

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