

Butte Strong approves grant to fight mosquitoes

By [Paradise Post](#) |

PUBLISHED: June 3, 2019 at 3:44 pm | UPDATED: June 3, 2019 at 3:44 pm

The Butte Strong Fund announced on Monday that it has approved a grant of more than \$300,000 to help combat the public health threat of mosquitoes in the Camp Fire burn scar area.

The fund, managed by the North Valley Community Foundation, approved Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District's request of \$310,434. The mosquito district asked for the financial help for increased labor costs and insecticides needed to address mosquito breeding sources in the Paradise area.

The Butte Strong Fund Committee, composed of nine community members, granted its unanimous approval of the proposal at a meeting Friday.

Matt Ball, district manager of the Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District, the Paradise Town Council at its May meeting that this summer the mosquito issue would be a much bigger one than it has been in past years.

He also said at the meeting that his small staff was doing the best they can to get ahead of the problem.

"We learned two weeks ago that state and federal funding was not readily available to support the massive increase of work in our Butte County Mosquito and Vector Control District in the aftermath of the Camp Fire," said Alexa Benson-Valavanis, president and CEO of the North Valley Community Foundation. "This is exactly the sort of gap in resources and time delays that can cause real danger to not only the people already deeply impacted by the Camp Fire, but the entire region. As I've said over and over again, the NVCF will play whatever role we need to help us recover from this disaster. The last thing we need is another crisis."

Mosquitoes can carry West Nile virus and other blood-borne diseases, such as encephalitis. They transmit the disease to humans, horses, and other animals after feeding off infected birds.

West Nile virus is present in mosquitoes in Butte County every summer. The best way to avoid the virus is not to get bit, which includes minimizing mosquitoes. That will be a new challenge this summer on the ridge. After the fire, new mosquito breeding sources are prevalent on properties where nobody is living. That includes stagnant swimming pools, septic tanks, ponds and miscellaneous containers that hold water like flower pots, clogged rain gutters, wheelbarrows, birdbaths and burned boats.

"With the generous financial assistance provided by the Butte Strong Fund, the district will be able to increase staff, purchase highly effective products, and plant more mosquitofish," Ball said

in a statement. “All of this will allow the district to be more effective and quicker locating and treating mosquito-breeding grounds within the Camp Fire burn scar.”

Organizations interested in applying for Butte Strong Fund grants can visit ButteStrongFund.org to determine if they qualify for funding. Those that do can submit a brief grant inquiry before being invited to submit a full application. Staff at NVCF will facilitate the application process.

The Butte Strong Fund is still receiving donations. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to Butte Strong Fund, 240 Main St., Suite 260, Chico, CA 95928 or by visiting www.buttestrongfund.org.