



Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office



Date: 11/16/2018

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Kelly Hoover
Public Information Officer
(805) 681-4192

News Release

Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team in Butte County Helping Search for Hundreds of Missing Camp Fire Victims

Butte County – The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Search and Rescue (SBCSAR) Team has ten team members assigned to help the Butte County Sheriff's Department search for victims who perished in the devastating Camp Fire. There are 63 confirmed fatalities and hundreds of people still reported missing. The SBCSAR team is among the group of approximately 500 Search and Rescue personnel from across the state that are part of the mutual aid effort to locate people who were not able to escape the deadly fire and to provide closure for their families.

Our team members arrived on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 and have been spending long days with rakes and shovels searching through burned structures, vehicles and rubble for the remains of victims. The group has been doing targeted searches with dog teams to look at addresses of people who are reported missing and where there is a high probability that they may be found. While there is more than 50 miles of ground to cover, SBCSAR has been searching residences mainly in the town of Paradise, which was largely destroyed by the Camp Fire.

Our SBCSAR team is assigned to a division of about eighty people that includes a team made up of other County Search and rescue personnel, a forensic anthropologist and a fire strike team to help demolish structures where the teams need to search.

The team members are staying on cots in a high school gymnasium floor or in tents they brought from home. The group is planning to return on Sunday, but the memories of the work they did and what they saw will last a lifetime.

Nelson Trichler, the SBCSAR Incident Commander said, "I have been involved in many disasters throughout my life and thought the Debris Flow in Montecito was the worst thing that I would ever see. But the magnitude and scope of this disaster is something you could never imagine. This is really hard, but we are fortunate that we have the training, knowledge and experience from other disasters we have responded to in order to help bring closure to the families."

SBCSAR is made up of volunteers who are on call 24 hours a day 365 days a year. This group is highly trained and provide an incredibly important service to our communities and outside communities as well. For find out more about SBCSAR, visit www.sbcsar.org.





