



Tony La Russa's
**Animal
Rescue
Foundation**

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Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation Evacuating Pets from Creek Fire's Path

Shelter animals impacted by California wildfires find safety in Walnut Creek

WALNUT CREEK, CA – Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) deployed September 9, 2020 for the second time in the past month to assist shelter animals impacted by raging wildfires. The two dozen dogs and cats were previously available at Fresno Humane Animal Services. Taking these animals into ARF's program is making room for lost or evacuated family pets in affected areas. This allows for quicker reunification with families and greater flexibility for who must utilize temporary housing.

"The dangers of fires this year are being amplified due to the pandemic; having catastrophic effects for these communities," said Elena Bicker, executive director of ARF. "With 2.5 million acres burned across California so far this year, ARF has been in close communication with our shelter partners to assist with emergency evacuations." By clearing shelter space at municipal shelters, they can more efficiently respond to recovery efforts and focus on reuniting local families with displaced pets.

Recent wildfires present a reminder of how quickly emergency situations can tax animal shelters, already affected by reduced staffing and volunteer levels due to shelter-in-place orders. Bicker noted previous fires left animal shelters or rescues without electricity for several days.

"Our goal now is to find these homeless dogs and cats loving families here in the Bay Area," Bicker said.

ARF has previously assisted shelters during emergencies such as the Camp and Carr wildfires, Hurricane Irma and the Joplin, Missouri tornadoes.

"ARF's rescue team and veterinary clinic have years of experience responding to disasters, but it's always amazing how quickly and efficiently these operations come together to provide relief," Bicker said.

Those looking to help in this situation may do so by adopting an animal from ARF through their new virtual adoption process or contributing to the transport, care and placement costs at www.arflife.org/help/disaster. ARF cannot accept drop-offs of donations. To protect their staff, adopters, and volunteers, ARF's campus remains closed except by appointment. A wish-list of items to ship directly to ARF is available at www.arflife.org/help/wish-list.

About Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF)

ARF's core mission is the rescue of dogs and cats who have run out of time at public shelters, giving them a chance at life until a new home can be found. ARF couples this focus with innovative programs strengthening the human-animal bond for children, seniors, veterans, and people in disadvantaged circumstances. Through ARF, people experience the unconditional love and acceptance of dogs and cats to fulfill a mission of People Rescuing Animals ... Animals Rescuing People®. www.arflife.org

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