



PACIFIC SWIMMING COMMITTEE REPORT

To be submitted to Marie Lin (secretary@pacswim.org) the Sunday prior to the next BOD meeting

To: Board of Directors

From: David Benjamin, General Chair

Re: Assistance to Zone 3

What Pacific has done so far

Since the wildfires struck the North Bay the night after our House of Delegates meeting, Pacific Swimming has been discussing what we can do to help our Zone 3 teams and athletes who have been affected by the fires.

At its meeting in October, the Executive Committee collected a variety of ideas on how to help; there is a discussion of those ideas in the Committee's minutes. Because several meets were cancelled in Zone 3 because of poor air quality from the fires, the Executive Committee adopted two motions: (1) All meets in Pacific in October and November that close early due to the number of entries are allowed to remain open to Zone 3 swimmers up to the closing date; (2) All meets in Pacific in October and November are allowed to take deck entries from Zone 3 swimmers who present proof of registration. Many meet hosts have allowed their meets to remain open for Zone 3 swimmers and/or accepted deck entries from Zone 3 swimmers, including TERA, OAPB, NVST, SUNN, MCSD, BSW, LAC, OAQ and SSS (thank you all). The Executive Committee also discussed extending the Meet Entry Financial Assistance Program (MEFAP) and outreach registration to Zone 3 swimmers affected by the fires. Laurie, Mary and Pacific staff have been reaching out to Zone 3 teams to make sure they are aware of these programs and at least one team has expressed gratitude for these programs and found them helpful. Finally, thanks to Mary raising the issue and after our discussion, I approved a waiver of Pacific's fees from the SRN Superleague Quad Invitational in September.

Pacific has reached out to all Zone 3 teams to hear what would be most helpful to them. Five teams have responded. Vallejo Aquatic Club (Jennifer Thiem) estimates that their team lost about \$14,000 when it had to cancel its meet on October 13-15; they would like Pacific to waive their meet fees for their next two meets in January and May 2018. The Mendocino Coast Sea Dragons (Derek Hutchinson) would like to see a fund set up for families who have lost their homes. Marin Pirates (Warren Lager) offer two suggestions: First, creating a "family dues grant" to cover one year of monthly team dues for swimmers who have lost their homes or suffered catastrophic financial losses; Warren estimates the cost of such a grant at \$50,000 to \$60,000. Second, creating a team grant for each team in the fire zone; he envisions a fund of \$25,000 to \$50,000 divided proportionally among teams in the fire zone based on their membership. Neptune Swimming (Dan Greaves) writes that they are taking advantage of Pacific's outreach and MEFAP program. He goes on to state that right now they are doing well, but that if needs arise in the next few months he would like the opportunity to request assistance from Pacific. Westside Aquaducks (Dea Ann Joslin) did not report any immediate needs, but they are proud of the way Zone 3 teams have been supporting one another; WA has made direct contributions to the SRN Go Fund Me site and that Zone 3 teams have been working hard to support one another.

Our auditors have reminded us that expenditures by Pacific must support its mission, which is the "education, instruction and training of individuals to develop and improve their capabilities in the sport of swimming." (Bylaws, 1.2) Pacific cannot give money to individuals.

Pacific's Investment Committee has approved setting aside \$50,000 for wildfire relief.

Zone 3 teams should be aware that USA Swimming offers disaster relief grants to teams of up to \$5,000. **The application form states that grant applications are due by November 27, 2017.** Here's the link to the application form:

<https://usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/governance/lsc-managementdocuments/policies-and-procedures/disaster-relief-fillable-form.pdf>

Tentative conclusions

I draw a few conclusions from these discussions:

To make sure our efforts are effective, we should tailor Pacific's response to the needs of Zone 3 teams and athletes, in a manner that is consistent with Pacific's mission.

There is no single form of relief that will be helpful to all the teams and athletes who need assistance. We need to be prepared to investigate and implement different forms of relief.

The needs of Zone 3 teams and athletes are likely to change over time, even over the next three to six months, and so Pacific needs to be flexible and responsive in changing or redirecting our efforts.

Any efforts we make should be fully transparent, based upon policy, and fully accountable.

Whatever structure we agree on to deliver our relief efforts, we should keep track of what works and what doesn't so that, if we're ever confronted with a similar situation in the future, we have a model to draw on.

Next steps

Outreach and MEFAP efforts will continue.

Zone 3 teams are reminded of the opportunity to apply to USA Swimming for a disaster relief grant. Do it now, as there appears to be a closing date of November 27.

Ask staff to investigate whether extending meet entry deadlines for Zone 3 swimmers has been helpful and whether it should be continued.

Ask staff to investigate VJO's request to waive future meet fees based on the loss of its October meet. This request has unknown financial implications and it also raises policy issues for Pacific: meets are cancelled from time to time based on different circumstances. I may be wrong, but I don't think Pacific has accepted responsibility for "consequential" damages from those cancellations in the past.

Ask staff to investigate the grant recommendations made by MP.

Continue to encourage Zone 3 teams and athletes to communicate with Pacific regarding their needs.

It will be difficult for a BOD that meets every other month to respond rapidly to changing needs of Zone 3 teams and athletes. The BOD should authorize the Executive Committee to develop and implement relief efforts over the next three- to six-months, with authority to make expenditures up to a certain amount without further approval of the BOD; the EC could call special meetings as necessary. Alternatively, the BOD could create a short-term task force with the same authority. A natural structure for the task force would be the five at-large board members, the Zone 3 chair, and the treasurer.