



OPERATION CARMEL RENEWAL: FROM BLACK TO GREEN



On December 2, 2010 the deadliest forest fire in Israel's history broke out on the Carmel Mountain Range near Haifa. For more than 82 hours the blaze spread rapidly across northern Israel—fanned by strong winds and dry conditions—killing 42 people, forcing the evacuation of 17,000 residents from dozens of towns, and destroying or severely damaging 250 homes.

The wildfire burned more than five million trees across 12,500 acres of natural woodlands and planted forests, an area comparable to 7,142 football fields or 40% of the entire city of Jerusalem. Thousands of animals were also killed in the blaze.

After four days of battling intense flames that at times reached 100 feet, firefighters finally succeeded in bringing the fire under control. Now, the long road to recovery has begun. The total damage is estimated to be about \$75 million.

JNF's Operation Carmel Renewal: From Black to Green campaign is raising emergency funds to repair the vast ecological damage caused by the fires, replace depleted firefighting supplies, and provide firefighters with much-needed equipment to battle future fires.

The restoration of the Carmel Forest will take many years, but your donation can have an immediate and long-lasting effect on the region. Show your support for Israel's firefighters and the State of Israel.

FOREST REHABILITATION



Unlike the arid landscape characteristic of much of the country, northern Israel is dotted with lush forests. The Carmel Mountains soar high above the Mediterranean coast from Caesarea to Haifa, forming a breathtaking, dense strip of green against an azure backdrop. A large portion of the Carmel Forest was hand-planted by Israel's early pioneers through donations collected in JNF Blue Boxes around the world. Some of the trees that burned were between 50 and 100 years old. In a country where only 7% of the land is forested, the Carmel Forest is a natural treasure that local residents have fought to protect from development on numerous occasions. Hundreds of thousands of visitors flock to its hiking and recreation spots each year, many of which were severely damaged by the wildfire.

JNF foresters are responsible for maintaining and protecting 20,000 acres of the Carmel and making it accessible to the public. One hundred twenty JNF foresters, familiar with every trail and road, fought the Carmel blaze alongside the fire department.

“We are now ready to channel our energies to the long and arduous work of bringing the color green back to the Carmel forests.”

Dr. Omri Bonneht, director of Forestry in the Northern Region



“There aren’t enough words to describe the help we are getting from JNF. The need is great, but we have a great partner.”

Shimon Romach, Israel Fire Commissioner

ment. Now those same foresters have begun the long, arduous rehabilitation process.

Because of the scope of the ecological damage, the renewal of the Carmel Forest will take decades to complete. Drawing upon lessons learned after the Second Lebanon War, JNF will rely heavily on natural regeneration, an extremely labor-intensive and costly process. Regenerating trees grow very densely, requiring foresters to monitor every square foot of the forest and perform frequent thinning operations to ensure tree health and create a space suitable for recreation. In some regions, new trees will be planted so that the public will be able to enjoy the forest again without having to wait 50 years for natural regrowth. All new plantings will be native species.

The renewal process will also include clearing debris and restoring infrastructure; preventing soil erosion in the absence of the vegetation that usually stems the flow of water; and preventing the spread of future fires by creating firebreaks, thinning woodlands, and removing burnt vegetation. In addition, JNF will fund beautification projects at youth villages and kibbutzim that were severely damaged.

FIREFIGHTING EQUIPMENT

As the U.S. fundraising arm of Friends of Israel Firefighters (FIF), JNF is dedicated to providing Israel’s Fire and Rescue Services with safety equipment, firefighting supplies, new trucks, and upgraded command stations. To date, JNF donations have purchased more than 50 fire trucks for communities throughout Israel.

As soon as the magnitude of the Carmel fire became clear, JNF launched an emergency fundraising campaign to answer the immediate needs of firefighters. Now that the fire has been contained, Operation Carmel Renewal will help replenish depleted supplies as well as prepare for the future to ensure a robust fire service.

Immediate Needs

- 50 hoses (\$120 each) - \$6,000
- 50 nozzles (\$680 each) - \$34,000
- 24 thermal cameras (\$7,500 each) - \$180,000
- 100 forcible entry tools (\$7,500 each) - \$750,000
- 1,500 helmets (\$500 each) - \$750,000
- 1,500 air tanks (\$1,000 each) - \$1.5 million
- 1,500 sets of fire protective gear (\$2,000 each) - \$3 million
- 1,500 masks (\$3,700 each) - \$5.5 million

Long-Term Needs

- 140 state-of-the-art fire trucks, ranging from \$125,000 to \$750,000, to replace an aging fleet of fire engines; these specialized vehicles include trucks designed to fight forest fires, compact fire trucks able to navigate narrow streets and rough terrain, and crane-and-ladder trucks that reach up to 150 feet
- 10 firefighting motorcycles, which can navigate heavy traffic in urban areas to provide immediate rescue support - \$50,000 each
- 10 alternative rescue vehicles able to easily access forests, agricultural sites, and areas like the Old City of Jerusalem that large trucks cannot reach - \$36,000 each

To help JNF turn the Carmel from black to green, visit www.jnf.org.au/emergencyfire.