

At least 30 killed and 200 missing in California wildfires



Sacramento, November 12 (RHC)-- In the U.S. state of California, at least 31 people are dead and more than 200 remain missing as three massive wildfires fueled by easterly winds and a historic drought continue to rage.

In Northern California's Butte County, the Camp Fire has become the state's deadliest in 85 years, after at least 29 people died as the town of Paradise was almost completely destroyed. Recovery workers say some victims were reduced to bone fragments, raising the prospect of a much larger death toll, as some 228 Butte County residents remain unaccounted for.

In Southern California, a quarter-million residents of Los Angeles and Ventura counties were ordered to evacuate the Woolsey Fire, including the entire city of Malibu and parts of the San Fernando Valley. The fire tore through oceanside homes as panicked residents sought to escape through a massive traffic jam along the Pacific Coast Highway.

The Woolsey Fire began near the Santa Susana Field Laboratory, site of a partial nuclear meltdown nearly 60 years ago. California's Department of Toxic Substances Control said it did not believe the flames kicked up any radioactive materials.

On Sunday, Governor Jerry Brown said the fires were driven by climate change and that California needs

to learn to adapt. The fires are so large they can be clearly seen from space. Smoke and ash have left millions of Californians exposed to air quality rated at “unhealthy” or “very unhealthy” levels, with residents of Los Angeles, Sacramento and the Bay Area warned against spending time outdoors.

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