



# ***CENTRAL PLUMAS FIRE MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FINAL***

*Adopted December 9, 2013*

Prepared for the  
Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission  
by Policy Consulting Associates, LLC.



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# ACRONYMS

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ADWF:	Average dry weather flow
af:	Acre-feet
afa:	Acre-feet per annum
BLS:	Basic Life Support
BOD:	Biological oxygen demands
BOE	California Board of Equalization
CAL FIRE:	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
ccf:	Hundreds of cubic feet
CC&R	Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
CEQA:	California Environmental Quality Act
cfs:	Cubic feet per second
CHP:	California Highway Patrol
CIWMB:	California Integrated Waste Management Board
CIP:	Capital improvement plan
CMFPD:	Crescent Mills Fire Protection District
CSA:	County Service Area
CSD:	Community Services District
CSDA:	California Special District Association
CY:	Calendar year
DFG:	California Department of Fish and Game
DME:	Durable Medical Equipment
DOF:	California Department of Finance
DPH:	California Department of Public Health
DWR:	California Department of Water Resources
EMS:	Emergency Medical Services
EMT:	Emergency Medical Technician
EPA:	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ERAF:	Educational Revenue Augmentation Fund
FDAC-FASIS:	Fire District Association of California- Fire Agency Self-Insurance System
FEERAM:	Fire Engine Equipment Replacement and Maintenance
FEMA:	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FD:	Fire District
FF:	Firefighter
FPD:	Fire Protection District
FRA:	Federal Responsibility Area
FTE:	Full-Time Equivalent
FY:	Fiscal year
GCCSD:	Greenhorn Creek Community Services District
GIS:	Geographic Information Systems
GM:	General Manger
gpd:	Gallons per day
gpm:	Gallons per minute
GP:	General Plan

I/I:	Infiltration and inflow
ISO:	Insurance Services Organization
IRWMP:	Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
IVCSD:	Indian Valley Community Services District
JHA:	Jurisdiction having authority
JPA:	Joint Powers Authority
LAFCo:	Local Agency Formation Commission
LEMSA:	Local Emergency Medical Service Agency
LPPFD:	La Porte Fire Protection District
LRA:	Local responsibility area
LVFPD:	Long Valley Fire Protection District
MCL:	Maximum Contaminant Level
mg:	Millions of gallons
mgd:	Millions of gallons per day
MSR:	Municipal services review
MS4:	Municipal separate storm sewer systems
MVFPD:	Meadow Valley Fire Protection District
NA:	Not applicable
NFPA:	National Fire Protection Association
NP:	Not provided
NPDES:	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
OASA:	Out-of-Area Service Agreement
OES:	Office of Emergency Services
OIT:	Operator in training
OPR:	Governor's Office of Planning and Research
PSAP:	Public Safety Answering Point
PWWF:	Peak wet weather flow
QFPD:	Quincy Fire Protection District
RWQCB:	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCADA:	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SDMRA:	Special District Risk Management Authority
SDWA:	Safe Drinking Water Act
SOI:	Sphere of influence
SSMP:	Sewer System Management Plan
SSO:	Sewer System Overflow
SWP:	State Water Project
SR:	State Route
SRA:	State Responsibility Area
SWRCB:	State Water Resources Control Board
TDS:	Total dissolvable solids
TMDL:	Total maximum daily load
TSS:	Total suspended solids
USDA:	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS:	United States Forest Service
UWMP:	Urban Water Management Plan
WWTP:	Wastewater treatment plant
WTP:	Water treatment plant

# ***PREFACE***

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Prepared for the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), this report is a regional service specific municipal services review—a State-required comprehensive study of certain municipal services within a designated geographic area. This MSR focuses on local agencies in the central region of Plumas County that provide fire protection services. Some of the districts reviewed here are multi-service districts and provide some services in addition to fire services, including water, wastewater, parks and recreation, and street lighting services. These services are also covered where appropriate in each agency’s chapter.

## **CONTEXT**

Plumas LAFCo is required to prepare this MSR by the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code §56000, et seq.), which took effect on January 1, 2001. The MSR reviews services provided by public agencies whose boundaries and governance are subject to LAFCo. Those agencies providing fire services in the central region of Plumas County are the focus of this review.

## **CREDITS**

The authors extend their appreciation to those individuals at many agencies that provided planning and financial information and documents used in this report. The contributors are listed individually at the end of this report.

Plumas LAFCo Executive Officer, John Benoit, provided project direction and review. Dennis Miller prepared maps and provided GIS analysis. This report was prepared by Policy Consulting Associates, LLC, and was co-authored by Jennifer Stephenson and Oxana Wolfson. Jennifer Stephenson served as project manager. Oxana Wolfson provided research analysis.

The local agencies have provided a substantial portion of the information included in this document. Each local agency provided budgets, financial statements, various plans, and responded to questionnaires. The service providers provided interviews covering workload, staffing, facilities, regional collaboration, and service challenges.

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is a Municipal Service Review (MSR) report on fire services provided in Central Plumas County prepared for the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). An MSR is a State-required comprehensive study of services within a designated geographic area, in this case, Central Plumas County. The MSR requirement is codified in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code §56000 et seq.). After MSR findings are adopted, the Commission will begin the process of updating the spheres of influence (SOIs) of the agencies covered in this report.

## SERVICE PROVIDERS

This report focuses on fire service providers in Central Plumas County. As shown in Figure 1-1, seven special districts were reviewed as part of this Municipal Service Review. There are 20 fire providers in Plumas County, out of which 13 were reviewed in the Eastern Plumas and Lake Almanor Area MSRs. Three of the agencies reviewed during this cycle provide multiple services. Other services provided are water, wastewater, park and recreation, road maintenance, and lighting.

**Figure 1-1: Fire Service Providers in Central Plumas County**

Agency	Fire & EMS	Water	Wastewater	Parks & Rec	Streets	Lighting
Crescent Mills Fire Protection District	✓					
Greenhorn Creek Community Services Dist	✓	✓			✓	
Indian Valley Community Services District	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
La Porte Fire Protection District	✓					
Long Valley Community Services District	✓			✓		
Meadow Valley Fire Protection District	✓					
Quincy Fire Protection District	✓					

## SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Following the adoption of the MSR, LAFCo will update the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each agency. The existing SOI for each agency covered in this MSR is shown in Figure 1-2. A coterminous SOI is the same as the agency's bounds. An annexable SOI means that the SOI extends beyond the district's bounds where LAFCo previously anticipated annexations may occur. A detachable SOI is smaller than the agency's bounds, meaning the territory extending outside the SOI is anticipated to be detached at some point.

**Figure 1-2: Existing Sphere of Influences**

Agency	Boundary Area (square miles)	SOI Area (square miles)	SOI Description
Crescent Mills FPD	3.5	3.5	Coterminous
Greenhorn Creek CSD	0.4	1.2	Annexable
Indian Valley CSD	18.6	N/A	None
LaPorte FPD	0.4	2.1	Annexable
Long Valley CSD	2.7	3.8	Annexable
Meadow Valley FPD	34.8	2.5	Detachable
Quincy FPD	11.7	16.1	Annexable

## **GROWTH**

Over the last decade, the County has experienced overall negative growth of four percent, as a result of a decline in available jobs and migration to more urban areas. This slow/negative growth and unstable economy pose a challenge for agencies to adequately plan for future needs and anticipate demand.

Projections for future growth made by three separate agencies (California Department of Finance, Plumas County and the Plumas County Transportation Commission) conservatively anticipate minimal population growth over the next two decades of between negative 0.01 and positive 0.9 percent average annual growth.

There are several constraints to growth that are identified in this report, including the lack of a designated fire provider in several areas and a heavy reliance on volunteer personnel.

## **PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall, many agencies demonstrated a heavy reliance on volunteers, which allows them to provide services at a minimal cost. The fire departments are comprised largely of volunteer firefighters, most of them with minimal or no paid staff.

There are several challenges to relying heavily on volunteers to provide services, including 1) heavy volunteerism among board members can lead to burn out or a lack of interest in serving on the board, which may lead to heavy turnover rates among board members, 2) should long-term volunteers choose to stop offering their time, the agencies will need to find a means to cover the additional expenditures to pay competitive prices to personnel, 3) fire departments are struggling to find dependable volunteer firefighters and retain them long enough to capitalize on the time intensive training. Due to a struggling economy, volunteerism is on the decline as people leave the County or are working more at paid jobs.

There are several areas of planning and management practices where providers could make improvements. Specifically, there is a general lack of tracking of demand and other service indicators, which inform remaining capacity and level of services, in particular for fire services. La Porte FPD and Meadow Valley FPD do not track their response times for each incident. Response times are the primary indicator of an agency's ability to provide emergency services, and as such, each of the fire agencies should make efforts to track their response times and analyze the results to identify where improvements can be made.

Pre-planning for future capital improvement needs is considered a best management practice, which is recommended for all public agencies regardless of size. All of the agencies reviewed here either entirely lacked a capital improvement plan (CIP) or the plans were lacking in some manner. CIPs can be tailored to the needs of the agency, but should include a list of anticipated replacement and improvement needs with an anticipated timeline for completion and a financial plan for achieving those goals. It is recommended that a CIP have a planning horizon of at least five years and be updated annually to reflect current conditions. An adequate CIP can minimize deferred maintenance, ensure that rates are set to cover anticipated costs, and curtail the need for indebtedness.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Of the seven agencies reviewed, three maintain websites where documents and information are made available to the public— Greenhorn Creek CSD, Indian Valley CSD and Quincy FPD. It is a recommended practice that districts maintain a website where all district information is readily available to constituents.

Generally, the districts in the region face a lack of public interest in district activities as demonstrated by little to no attendance at board meetings, vacancies on boards, and a lack of contested elections. Many boards face challenges in maintaining a full governing body and are plagued with fairly high turnover and frequent vacancies. This struggle is amplified in areas with very low populations. For example, there are 26 permanent residents within La Porte FPD's bounds, creating a limited pool of potential board members (and volunteer firefighters) from which the Districts may draw.

Overall, all districts reviewed demonstrated accountability by performing outreach activities beyond what is required, and having a system in place to address customers' complaints. In addition, all seven districts cooperated with Plums LAFCo's municipal service review process and requests for information. While most agencies faced challenges in responding to requests in a timely manner, all requested information was ultimately received.

## FIRE & EMS

While not all territory within the County has a designated local fire protection provider, all territory within the County has a determined first responder for dispatch and response as staffing resources allow. These fire agencies have agreed to respond outside of their LAFCo-approved boundary to provide fire and medical emergency response when an incident is not within the purview of the U.S. Forest Service. Providers do not receive compensation for these responses outside of their bounds unless the agency has a fee system in place to charge the caller for the response.

Each of the seven fire service providers reviewed here has a service area larger than its boundaries. Two of the seven providers—Indian Valley CSD and Quincy FPD—have adopted fee schedules for responding to incidents outside of their bounds. However, there are no records of Indian Valley CSD billing and receiving payment for its services, and Quincy FPD reported challenges in collecting the funds for a majority of its responses. The other five providers only charge when responding to fires in State Responsibility Areas or Federal Responsibility Areas. In the MSR area, there are approximately 215 square miles where agencies are providing services outside of their bounds without compensation—Crescent Mills FPD (5.5 square miles), Greenhorn Creek CSD (20.6 square miles), Indian Valley CSD (16.1 square miles), La Porte FPD (150.6 square miles), Long Valley CSD (4.2 square miles), Meadow Valley FPD (9.8 square miles), and Quincy FPD (8.4 square miles).

It is recommended that the districts start charging fees for services outside of their boundaries to recoup costs or, as an alternative, annex these territories. To encourage annexation and thus countywide fire service coverage, the County should adopt a master tax sharing agreement with fire districts. Currently, when a fire district annexes territory the tax sharing agreement is negotiated on a case-by-case basis. A master tax sharing agreement would promote efficiency by eliminating the need for multiple negotiations. In

addition, it would encourage annexation of unserved areas, as the agreement would provide certainty in the process and the shared tax amount.

A majority of the agencies reviewed reported that financing was a challenge to providing effective fire and emergency medical services. Each agency reported that their revenues had declined, due to difficult economic conditions. There is less grant money available and fewer people are willing to donate or to buy items from district-run stores or auxiliaries. People are moving out of the County in search of jobs and most planned or proposed developments are on hold; therefore, property tax income or income from assessments is either staying the same or declining. In an effort to cut or minimize costs many agencies are deferring any significant capital purchases or improvements. Some are also looking into sharing administrative expenses, equipment and facilities with other fire providers to save money and promote efficiency.

## **GOVERNANCE OPTIONS**

Several governance options were identified over the course of this study, including:

- ❖ Reorganization of fire services in Indian Valley.
- ❖ Formation of a countywide lighting district.
- ❖ Reorganization of park services in Indian Valley.
- ❖ Annexation of the Pancake, Burbon and Water, and Answering Meadows subdivisions into La Porte FPD.
- ❖ Annexation of Bucks Lake into Meadow Valley FPD.
- ❖ Annexation to Quincy FPD of the areas currently within its SOI but outside its bounds to eliminate islands.
- ❖ Formation of an assessment district in Greenhorn Creek CSD to formally complete the transition of street maintenance services from two road associations to the CSD.
- ❖ Annexation of Two Rivers Soccer Camp into Long Valley FPD or Graeagle FPD.
- ❖ Formation of a joint powers authority, possibly consisting of Meadow Valley FPD, Buck Lake private fire department, Greenhorn Creek CSD, and Long Valley CSD, to enhance resource sharing.

## ***2. LAFCo AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEWS***

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This report is prepared pursuant to legislation enacted in 2000 that requires LAFCo to conduct a comprehensive review of municipal service delivery and update the spheres of influence (SOIs) of all agencies under LAFCo's jurisdiction. This chapter provides an overview of LAFCo's history, powers and responsibilities. It discusses the origins and legal requirements for preparation of the municipal services review (MSR). Finally, the chapter reviews the process for MSR review, MSR approval and SOI updates.

### **LAFCo OVERVIEW**

After World War II, California experienced dramatic growth in population and economic development. With this boom came a demand for housing, jobs and public services. To accommodate this demand, many new local government agencies were formed, often with little forethought as to the ultimate governance structures in a given region, and existing agencies often competed for expansion areas. The lack of coordination and adequate planning led to a multitude of overlapping, inefficient jurisdictional and service boundaries, and the premature conversion of California's agricultural and open-space lands.

Recognizing this problem, in 1959, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr. appointed the Commission on Metropolitan Area Problems. The Commission's charge was to study and make recommendations on the "misuse of land resources" and the growing complexity of local governmental jurisdictions. The Commission's recommendations on local governmental reorganization were introduced in the Legislature in 1963, resulting in the creation of a Local Agency Formation Commission, or "LAFCo," operating in every county.

Plumas LAFCo was first staffed by the County Planning Department, which undertook the first Spheres of Influence in 1974. The Department had more pressing priorities and as a result LAFCo was maintained at a minimally acceptable level for the time.

LAFCo was formed by the Legislature as a countywide agency to discourage urban sprawl and encourage the orderly formation and development of local government agencies. LAFCo is responsible for coordinating logical and timely changes in local governmental boundaries, including annexations and detachments of territory, incorporations of cities, formations of special districts, and consolidations, mergers and dissolutions of districts, as well as reviewing ways to reorganize, simplify, and streamline governmental structure. The Commission's efforts are focused on ensuring that services are provided efficiently and economically while agricultural and open-space lands are protected. To better inform itself and the community as it seeks to exercise its charge, LAFCo conducts service reviews to evaluate the provision of municipal services within the County.

LAFCo regulates, through approval, denial, conditions and modification, boundary changes proposed by public agencies or individuals. It also regulates the extension of public services by cities and special districts outside their jurisdictional boundaries. LAFCo is empowered to initiate updates to the SOIs and proposals involving the dissolution or consolidation of special districts, mergers, establishment of subsidiary districts, and any

reorganization including such actions. Otherwise, LAFCo actions must originate as petitions or resolutions from affected voters, landowners, cities or districts.

Plumas LAFCo consists of five regular members: two members from the Plumas County Board of Supervisors, two city council members, and one public member who is appointed by the other members of the Commission. There is an alternate in each category. All Commissioners are appointed to four-year terms. Any member appointed on behalf of local government shall represent the interests of the public as a whole and not solely the interest of the appointing authority Government Code Section 56325.1

**Figure 2-1: Commission Members, 2013**

<i>Appointing Agency</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Alternate Members</i>
Two members from the Board of Supervisors appointed by the Board of Supervisors.	Kevin Goss Terrell Swofford	Jon Kennedy
Two members representing the cities in the County. Must be city officer and appointed by the City Selection Committee.	John Larrieu Phil Oels	Pat Morton
One member from the general public appointed by the other four commissioners.	John Hafen	Robert Meacher

## MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW ORIGINS

The MSR requirement was enacted by the Legislature months after the release of two studies recommending that LAFCOs conduct reviews of local agencies. The “Little Hoover Commission” focused on the need for oversight and consolidation of special districts, whereas the “Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century” focused on the need for regional planning to ensure adequate and efficient local governmental services as the California population continues to grow.

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### Little Hoover Commission

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In May 2000, the Little Hoover Commission released a report entitled Special Districts: Relics of the Past or Resources for the Future? This report focused on governance and financial challenges among special districts, and the barriers to LAFCo’s pursuit of district consolidation and dissolution. The report raised the concern that “the underlying patchwork of special district governments has become unnecessarily redundant, inefficient and unaccountable.”

In particular, the report raised concern about a lack of visibility and accountability among some independent special districts. The report indicated that many special districts hold excessive reserve funds and some receive questionable property tax revenue. The report expressed concern about the lack of financial oversight of the districts. It asserted that financial reporting by special districts is inadequate, that districts are not required to submit financial information to local elected officials, and concluded that district financial information is “largely meaningless as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of

services provided by districts, or to make comparisons with neighboring districts or services provided through a city or county.”<sup>1</sup>

The report questioned the accountability and relevance of certain special districts with uncontested elections and without adequate notice of public meetings. In addition to concerns about the accountability and visibility of special districts, the report raised concerns about special districts with outdated boundaries and outdated missions. The report questioned the public benefit provided by healthcare districts that have sold, leased or closed their hospitals, and asserted that LAFCOs consistently fail to examine whether they should be eliminated. The report pointed to service improvements and cost reductions associated with special district consolidations, but asserted that LAFCOs have generally failed to pursue special district reorganizations.

The report called on the Legislature to increase the oversight of special districts by mandating that LAFCOs identify service duplications and study reorganization alternatives when service duplications are identified, when a district appears insolvent, when district reserves are excessive, when rate inequities surface, when a district’s mission changes, when a new city incorporates and when service levels are unsatisfactory. To accomplish this, the report recommended that the State strengthen the independence and funding of LAFCOs, require districts to report to their respective LAFCOs, and require LAFCOs to study service duplications.

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### Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century

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The Legislature formed the Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century (“21st Century Commission”) in 1997 to review statutes on the policies, criteria, procedures and precedents for city, county and special district boundary changes. After conducting extensive research and holding 25 days of public hearings throughout the State at which it heard from over 160 organizations and individuals, the 21st Century Commission released its final report, *Growth Within Bounds: Planning California Governance for the 21st Century*, in January 2000.<sup>2</sup> The report examines the way that government is organized and operates, and establishes a vision of how the State will grow by “making better use of the often invisible LAFCOs in each county.”

The report points to the expectation that California’s population will double over the first four decades of the 21st Century, and raises concern that our government institutions were designed when our population was much smaller and our society was less complex. The report warns that without a strategy open spaces will be swallowed up, expensive freeway extensions will be needed, job centers will become farther removed from housing, and this will lead to longer commutes, increased pollution and more stressful lives. *Growth Within Bounds* acknowledges that local governments face unprecedented challenges in their ability to finance service delivery since voters cut property tax revenues in 1978 and the Legislature shifted property tax revenues from local government to schools in 1993.

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<sup>1</sup> Little Hoover Commission, 2000, page 24.

<sup>2</sup> The Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century ceased to exist on July 1, 2000, pursuant to a statutory sunset provision.

The report asserts that these financial strains have created governmental entrepreneurship in which agencies compete for sales tax revenue and market share.

The 21st Century Commission recommended that effective, efficient and easily understandable government be encouraged. In accomplishing this, the 21st Century Commission recommended consolidation of small, inefficient or overlapping providers, transparency of municipal service delivery to the people, and accountability of municipal service providers. The sheer number of special districts, the report asserts, “has provoked controversy, including several legislative attempts to initiate district consolidations,”<sup>3</sup> but cautions LAFCos that decisions to consolidate districts should focus on the adequacy of services, not on the number of districts.

Growth Within Bounds stated that LAFCos cannot achieve their fundamental purposes without a comprehensive knowledge of the services available within its county, the current efficiency of providing service within various areas of the county, future needs for each service, and expansion capacity of each service provider. Comprehensive knowledge of water and sanitary providers, the report argued, would promote consolidations of water and sanitary districts, reduce water costs and promote a more comprehensive approach to the use of water resources. Further, the report asserted that many LAFCos lack such knowledge and should be required to conduct such a review to ensure that municipal services are logically extended to meet California’s future growth and development.

MSRs would require LAFCos to look broadly at all agencies within a geographic region that provide a particular municipal service and to examine consolidation or reorganization of service providers. The 21st Century Commission recommended that the review include water, wastewater, and other municipal services that LAFCo judges to be important to future growth. The Commission recommended that the service review be followed by consolidation studies and be performed in conjunction with updates of SOIs. The recommendation was that service reviews be designed to make nine determinations, each of which was incorporated verbatim in the subsequently adopted legislation. The Legislature since consolidated the determinations into six, and most recently seven required findings.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW LEGISLATION**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires LAFCo review and update SOIs not less than every five years and to review municipal services before updating SOIs. The requirement for service reviews arises from the identified need for a more coordinated and efficient public service structure to support California’s anticipated growth. The service review provides LAFCo with a tool to study existing and future public service conditions comprehensively and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are provided efficiently.

Effective January 1, 2008, Government Code §56430 requires LAFCo to conduct a review of municipal services provided in the county by region, sub-region or other designated geographic area, as appropriate, for the service or services to be reviewed, and prepare a written statement of determination with respect to each of the following topics:

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<sup>3</sup> Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 2000, page 70.

- ❖ Growth and population projections for the affected area;
- ❖ Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- ❖ Financial ability of agencies to provide services;
- ❖ Status of, and opportunities for shared facilities;
- ❖ Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies; and
- ❖ Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, SB 244 signed by the governor on October 7, 2011 requires an additional written statement of determination to be included in a municipal service review regarding:

- ❖ The location and characteristics of disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the agency's SOI.

In addition, for those agencies that provide water wastewater and/or structural fire protection the new law mandates the determination on the present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services and infrastructure needs or deficiencies to include needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged unincorporated community within or contiguous to the sphere of influence.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW PROCESS**

For local agencies, the MSR process involves the following steps:

- ❖ Outreach: LAFCo outreach and explanation of the project
- ❖ Data Discovery: provide documents and respond to LAFCo questions
- ❖ Map Review: review and comment on LAFCo draft map of the agency's boundary and sphere of influence
- ❖ Profile Review: internal review and comment on LAFCo draft profile of the agency
- ❖ Public Review Draft MSR: review and comment on LAFCo draft MSR
- ❖ LAFCo Hearing: attend and provide public comments on MSR

MSRs are exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to §15262 (feasibility or planning studies) or §15306 (information collection) of the CEQA Guidelines. LAFCo's actions to adopt MSR determinations are not considered "projects" subject to CEQA.

The MSR process does not require LAFCo to initiate changes of organization based on service review findings, only that LAFCo identify potential government structure options. However, LAFCo, other local agencies, and the public may subsequently use the determinations to analyze prospective changes of organization or reorganization or to establish or amend SOIs. Within its legal authorization, LAFCo may act with respect to a recommended change of organization or reorganization on its own initiative (e.g., certain

types of consolidations), or in response to a proposal (i.e., initiated by resolution or petition by landowners or registered voters).

Once LAFCo has adopted the MSR determinations, it must update the SOIs for the agencies reviewed here. The LAFCo Commission determines and adopts the spheres of influence for each agency. A CEQA determination is made by LAFCo on a case-by-case basis for each sphere of influence action and each change of organization, once the proposed project characteristics are sufficiently identified to assess environmental impacts.

## **SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES**

The Commission is charged with developing and updating the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each city and special district within the county.<sup>4</sup>

An SOI is a LAFCo-approved plan that designates an agency's probable future boundary and service area. Spheres are planning tools used to provide guidance for individual boundary change proposals and are intended to encourage efficient provision of organized community services and prevent duplication of service delivery. Territory cannot be annexed by LAFCo to a city or district unless it is within that agency's sphere.

The purposes of the SOI include the following: to ensure the efficient provision of services, discourage urban sprawl and premature conversion of agricultural and open space lands, and prevent overlapping jurisdictions and duplication of services.

LAFCo cannot directly regulate land use, dictate internal operations or administration of any local agency, or set rates. LAFCo is empowered to enact policies that indirectly affect land use decisions. On a regional level, LAFCo promotes logical and orderly development of communities as it considers and decides individual proposals. LAFCo has a role in reconciling differences between agency plans so that the most efficient urban service arrangements are created for the benefit of current and future area residents and property owners.

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg (CKH) Act requires to develop and determine the SOI of each local governmental agency within the county and to review and update the SOI every five years. LAFCos are empowered to adopt, update and amend the SOI. They may do so with or without an application and any interested person may submit an application proposing an SOI amendment.

While SOIs are required to be updated every five years, as necessary, this does not necessarily define the planning horizon of the SOI. The term or horizon of the SOI is determined by each LAFCo. In the case of Plumas LAFCo, the Commission's policies state that an agency's near term SOI shall generally include land that is anticipated to be annexed within the next five years, while the agency's long-term SOI shall include land that is within the probable growth boundary of an agency and therefore anticipated to be annexed in the next 20 years.

LAFCo may recommend government reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using the SOIs as the basis for those recommendations.

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<sup>4</sup> The initial statutory mandate, in 1971, imposed no deadline for completing sphere designations. When most LAFCos failed to act, 1984 legislation required all LAFCos to establish spheres of influence by 1985.

In determining the SOI, LAFCo is required to complete an MSR and adopt the six determinations previously discussed.

In addition, in adopting or amending an SOI, LAFCo must make the following determinations:

- ❖ Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands;
- ❖ Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
- ❖ Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public service that the agency provides or is authorized to provide;
- ❖ Existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines these are relevant to the agency; and
- ❖ Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing Sphere of Influence for those agencies that provide water, wastewater and/or structural fire protection.

The CKH Act stipulates several procedural requirements in updating SOIs. It requires that special districts file written statements on the class of services provided and that LAFCo clearly establish the location, nature and extent of services provided by special districts.

By statute, LAFCo must notify affected agencies 21 days before holding the public hearing to consider the SOI and may not update the SOI until after that hearing. The LAFCo Executive Officer must issue a report including recommendations on the SOI amendments and updates under consideration at least five days before the public hearing.

### **3. MSR AREA**

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This chapter provides an overview of Plumas County and the fire municipal service providers in the central region of Plumas County. For a detailed description of each local agency, please refer to the agency-specific chapters of this report.

While not geographically specific, this review covers fire service providers generally found in the central area of Plumas County. The agencies reviewed here extend from the La Porte area in the southwest to the Indian Valley area in the center of northern Plumas County. The MSR area includes the communities of La Porte, Cromberg, Long Valley, Greenhorn, Meadow Valley, Bucks Lake, Quincy, Greenville, Taylorsville, Crescent Mills, Indian Falls, and Genesee. The MSR area also encompasses a large portion of the Plumas National Forest.

Plumas County is located near the northeast corner of California, where the Sierra and the Cascade mountains meet. The Feather River, with its several forks, flows through the County. Quincy, the unincorporated county seat, is about 80 miles northeast from Oroville, California, and about 85 miles from Lake Tahoe and Reno, Nevada. Plumas borders Lassen County in the north and east, Sierra County in the south, Butte and Tehama Counties in the west, Yuba County in the southwest, and Shasta County in the northwest. Approximately 70 percent of the County is covered with National Forests. The only incorporated city in the County is the City of Portola.

#### **GROWTH & POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

This section reviews population and economic growth, the job-housing balance, projected growth, and growth areas.

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##### **Historical Growth**

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There were 20,824 residents in Plumas County, as of the 2000 Census. The population in the unincorporated communities was 18,597, composing 89 percent of the County population.

Since 2000, the 2010 Census showed that the countywide population experienced negative growth of almost four percent, from 20,824 to 20,007 in 2010. The population in the unincorporated communities decreased from 18,597 to 17,903 over this time period. Annually, the entire County averaged 0.2 percent negative population growth.

Based on annual population estimates released by the California Department of Finance (DOF), the population growth rate in unincorporated Plumas County has been below the statewide growth rate for the last 13 years. In more recent years, since the 2010 Census was conducted, the DOF estimates that Plumas County has experience an annual decline in population averaging 0.6 percent each of the last three years (2010 to 2013). By comparison, the statewide population grew by an average of 0.6 percent during the same time period.

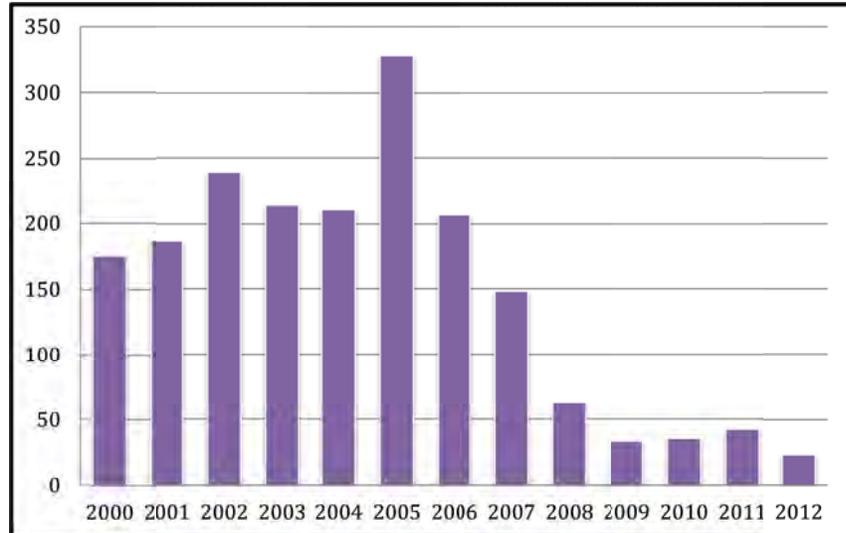
## Development

### Residential Development

The number of new residential permits issued in unincorporated Plumas County peaked in 2005 at 337 and has since declined to 35 in 2010 and rebounded to 44 in 2011 then reached a low of 23 in 2012, as shown in Figure 3-1.

All permits, except for one, in the County in the last ten years were issued for single-family buildings. One permit, issued in the City of Portola in 2002 was for a two unit building.

**Figure 3-1: New Residential Building Permits, 2000-2012**



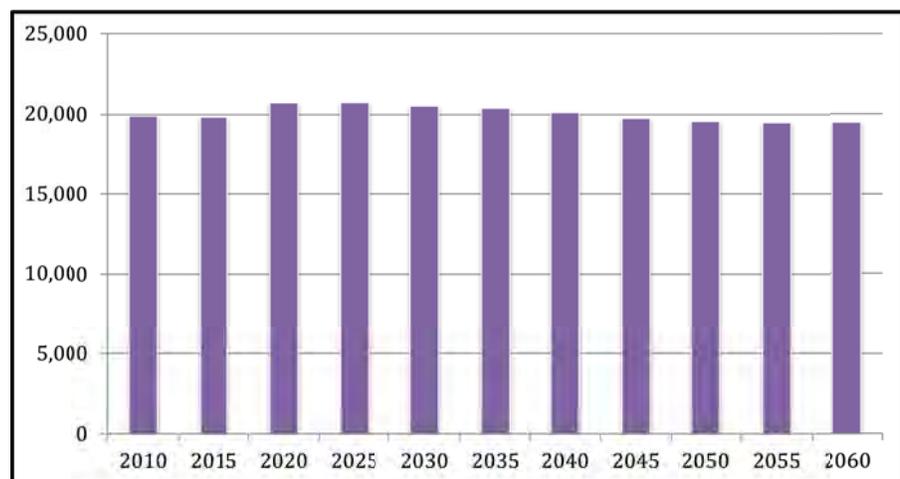
## Population Projections

### Countywide

Population projections for the County vary depending on the data source that is used. Countywide projections are made by the Department of Finance (DOF), Plumas County Planning Department, and the Plumas County Transportation Commission.

**Figure 3-2: Countywide DOF Population Projections**

In 2013, the California Department of Finance (DOF) released updated population projections for the State and each county. The DOF projections for Plumas County appear to more conservatively project limited growth in the County over the next 15 years, and a slight decline in population in later years through 2060. The population is anticipated to hover around 20,000 residents over the next 4.5 decades. The DOF projections through 2060 are shown in Figure 3-2.



The County is currently in the process of updating its General Plan. As part of the Housing Element that was updated in 2010, Plumas County included a chapter on population trends and projections. All projections were done by the Planning Department. The growth patterns of the last few years are expected to continue until new circumstances shape growth. Most population growth is anticipated to occur in the Almanor, Mohawk and Sierra Valley areas. These areas are primarily influenced by recreational development and proximity to out-of-County employment. The County projects that the unincorporated county population will grow by nine percent between 2010 and 2020, which equates to an average annual growth rate of 0.9 percent. The County does not make projections beyond 2020 in the Housing Element.

According to the Plumas County Transportation Commission, Plumas County has experienced slow growth (population increases at less than 0.1 percent per year on the long-term average) in population and employment over the past two decades and is forecast to continue this trend through 2030. The 2010 Regional Transportation Plan makes population projections based on projections previously developed by the Department of Finance. These projections conservatively anticipate an annual growth rate of 0.06 percent countywide through 2030.

A comparison of the annualized growth rates through 2030 for each of the projection methods discussed is shown in Table 3-3.

**Figure 3-3: Annualized Growth Projections by Method**

<i>Method</i>	<i>2010-2020</i>	<i>2020-2030</i>
DOF Projections	0.40%	-0.10%
County Projections	0.9%	No Projections
Plumas County Transportation Commission	0.06%	0.06%

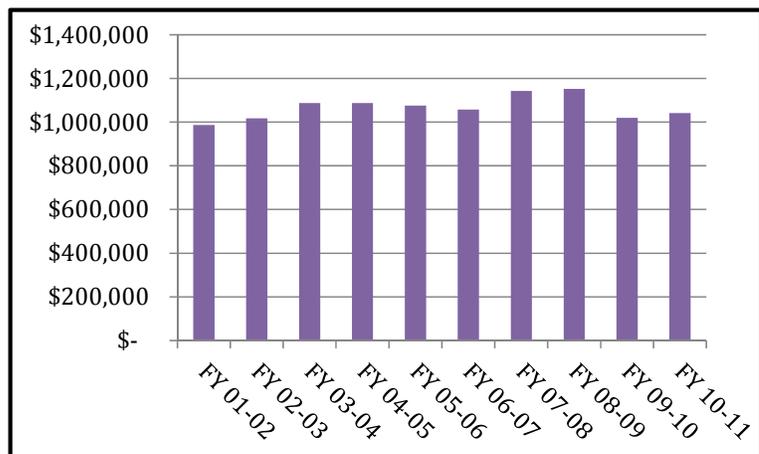
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## Tourism

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**Figure 3-4: Transient Occupancy Tax Revenue, FYs 02-11**

Plumas County has become a tourist destination for outdoor activities, sports and recreation. The peak tourist season is during summer when part-time residents and short-term tourists can more than triple the population of the area. Tourism throughout Plumas County has for the most part remained fairly constant over the last decade as indicated by the transient occupancy tax (TOT) revenue reported by the County.



In FY 09-10, there was a slight dip in TOT revenue, indicating a small decline in tourism, which was also reflected in demand for fire and ems services. However, in FY 10-11, it appears that tourism is on the rise again.

## SERVICE PROVIDERS

This report focuses on fire service providers located in the central region of Plumas County. As shown in Figure 3-6, seven special districts were reviewed as part of this Municipal Service Review. In total there are 19 local fire service providers under LAFCo's jurisdiction, of which five were reviewed in the Lake Almanor MSR and seven in the Eastern Plumas MSR. The intent of this report is to complete the reviews of the seven remaining fire providers in the County. Of the seven agencies reviewed here, three are multi-service community services districts (CSD) that provide other services in addition to fire and emergency medical services (EMS). In addition to fire protection and EMS, Greenhorn Creek CSD provides potable water and street maintenance services, Indian Valley CSD provides potable water, wastewater collection and treatment, parks and recreation, and lighting services, and Long Valley CSD provides limited recreation services. While not the focus of this report, these additional services are covered in each of the districts' respective chapters.

**Figure 3-5: Reviewed service providers in Central Plumas County**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Fire &amp; EMS</i>	<i>Water</i>	<i>Wastewater</i>	<i>Parks &amp; Rec</i>	<i>Streets</i>	<i>Lighting</i>
Crescent Mills Fire Protection District	✓					
Greenhorn Creek Community Services District	✓	✓			✓	
Indian Valley Community Services District	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
La Porte Fire Protection District	✓					
Long Valley Community Services District	✓			✓		
Meadow Valley Fire Protection District	✓					
Quincy Fire Protection District	✓					

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

This section provides an overview of fire protection services in Plumas County and offers a brief review the fire and EMS services provided by local agencies in the Central MSR area. For a detailed description of each service provider, refer to the agency's respective chapter in this document.

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### **Background**

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Plumas County is 2,613 square miles in size. About 18 percent or 287,072 acres are privately-owned lands and the remaining 82 percent are public lands. Of these public lands, the Plumas National Forest consists of 70 percent or 1,151,360 acres, and the Tahoe and Lassen National Forests, the Bureau of Land Management lands and Lassen Volcanic National Park comprise the remaining ten percent.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has a statutory responsibility for wildfire protection of private lands in California. The Lassen-Modoc-Plumas Unit of CAL FIRE is administratively responsible for fire protection of private lands in Plumas County. Through a cooperative agreement between CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), wildfire protection for vegetation fires on private lands for a majority of Plumas County has been granted to USFS based in the Plumas National Forest. Responsibility for all other fire and medical emergencies, including structural fires, vehicle accidents, emergency medical calls, lies with the local fire agency. The Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) in Plumas County are the more densely populated areas or agricultural lands with less wildfire hazard. LRA areas in Plumas are limited and include the City of Portola, portions of Quincy and East Quincy, areas in the town of Chester, and the portion of Sierra Valley south of the railroad.

As part of the operating plan that is part of the agreement between USFS and CAL FIRE, USFS conducts a majority of the prevention activities that would normally be conducted by CAL FIRE. However, USFS conducts limited activities that occur on private lands, as a State law exists, which precludes Federal officers in northern California, from going on to private lands to enforce State laws except by invitation or threat of wildfire. An exemption exists, but the County Sheriff must enact it. Current prevention activities on private land include issuing fire permits (e.g., campfires, dooryard and other burn permits) and preserving and documenting preliminary fire origin and cause area that would be conducted by CAL FIRE.

The agreement between USFS and CAL FIRE does not include fire safe planning on State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands. The Fire Protection Planning Bureau handles this responsibility through its fire protection planning and pre-development review of plans for fire safe requirements. The Plumas County Fire Safe Council furthers fire safe efforts through firewise community and evacuation planning, and hazardous fuel reduction.

Local fire protection, for other than vegetation fires, is provided to communities in Plumas County by 19 fire departments located throughout the County. While not all territory within the County has a designated local fire protection provider, all territory within the County has a determined first responder based on an informal agreement with the Sheriff's Dispatch Center. With few exceptions, these fire agencies have agreed to respond outside of their LAFCo-approved boundary to provide fire and medical emergency

response when an incident is not within the purview of USFS. Providers do not receive compensation for these responses outside of their bounds unless the agency has a fee system in place to charge the caller for the response. Of the County's total population, approximately 4.56 percent of residents live in areas without structural fire protection services—primarily in existing communities established from the late 1800's through the 1960's. These areas appear to be the result of historic settlement patterns rather than planned communities.<sup>5</sup> Larger communities not in a fire district are: Belden, Caribou, Storrie, Twain, Mohawk Vista, Keddie, Clio, Blairsden, Canyon Dam, Johnsville, Bucks Lake, Little Grass Valley, and Warner Valley.

### State Responsibility Area Fees

Assembly Bill X1 29, approved by the California Legislature in 2011, established a new annual Fire Prevention Fee to pay for fire prevention services within the State Responsibility Areas (SRA). Fees are assessed on owners of habitable structures located in the SRAs throughout California.

The fee is assessed at a rate of \$150 per habitable structure. However, owners of habitable structures that are within the boundaries of a local fire protection agency receive a discount of \$35 per habitable structure. Residents in the SRAs receive notice of the specific fee amount and exemptions (if any) on a fee billing notice.

Over time, this fee is intended to fund a variety of fire prevention services in the SRAs, which include fire break construction and other fuel reduction activities that lessen the risk of wildfire to communities and evacuation routes. Fire prevention activities consist of brush clearance around communities, and along roadways and evacuation routes, defensible space inspections, fire prevention engineering, emergency evacuation planning, fire prevention education, fire hazard severity mapping, implementation of the State Fire Plan, and fire-related law enforcement activities, such as arson investigation.

There has been significant opposition to the newly enacted fee throughout the State. The Plumas County Board of Supervisors sent a letter opposing the fee to CAL FIRE for several reasons—1) limited CAL FIRE Direct Protection Areas in the County, 2) lack of CAL FIRE facilities in the County, and 3) a history of local fire prevention efforts. Additionally, in October 2012, a class action suit was filed by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, as well as several other organizations and individuals, claiming that the fee is actually an illegal tax according to Proposition 13. There has been no decision in this case, as of the drafting of this report.

### Dispatch

Dispatch is provided by the Plumas County Sheriff's Office for a majority of the fire and EMS providers in the County. The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Plumas County Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in the northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center.

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<sup>5</sup> Plumas County Office of Emergency Services, *Communications Plan*, June 2013, p. 3.

The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first-responder map, to identify the appropriate provider to dispatch.

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## Provider Overview

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Fire and EMS services are provided in the Central MSR area by seven districts—Crescent Mills Fire Protection District, Greenhorn Creek Community Services District, Indian Valley Community Services District, La Port Fire Protection District, Long Valley Community Services District, Meadow Valley Community Services District, and Quincy Fire Protection District. The bounds and service areas of these agencies are shown in Figure 3-7. The service areas shown on the map are reflective of the areas that the agencies have informally agreed to respond to outside of their bounds, and are based on the Sheriff's first responder map for dispatch purposes.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ **Updated General Plan Policies:** The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ **Building Permit Review:** Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ **GIS Website Update:** The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ **District Sphere of Influence Updates:** The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ **Fire Protection Communication Plan:** Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ **Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status:** As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.

- ❖ **Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development:** The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

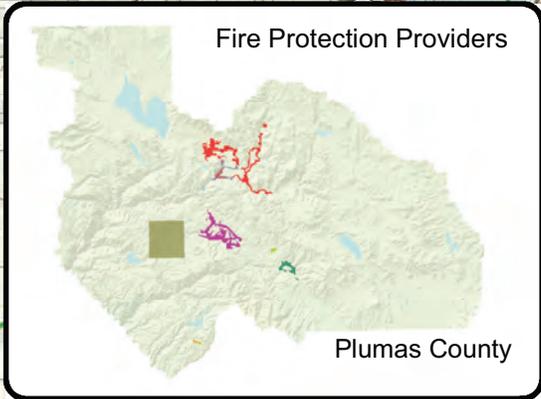
The County is responsible for ensuring that developments in the area meet all State and County fire code requirements. Proposals for new developments are required to be sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within a district's boundaries. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist whose position is dependent on grant funding; a permanent fire marshal position would allow for more efficient code enforcement and building inspections.

In a further attempt to improve fire services and extend fire protection to unserved developments, the County started encouraging annexations of additional territory into existing districts in 2002 by sharing property taxes with fire districts on a case-by-case basis. Districts that annex additional territory may be able to get five percent of the one percent property tax allocation for existing structures and land values and seven percent of the one percent property tax allocation for future structures and land values. In an effort to promote annexation by the local fire districts, the Plumas County Office of Emergency Services developed a Communication Plan (June 2013) to educate special districts and residents residing outside of a fire district.

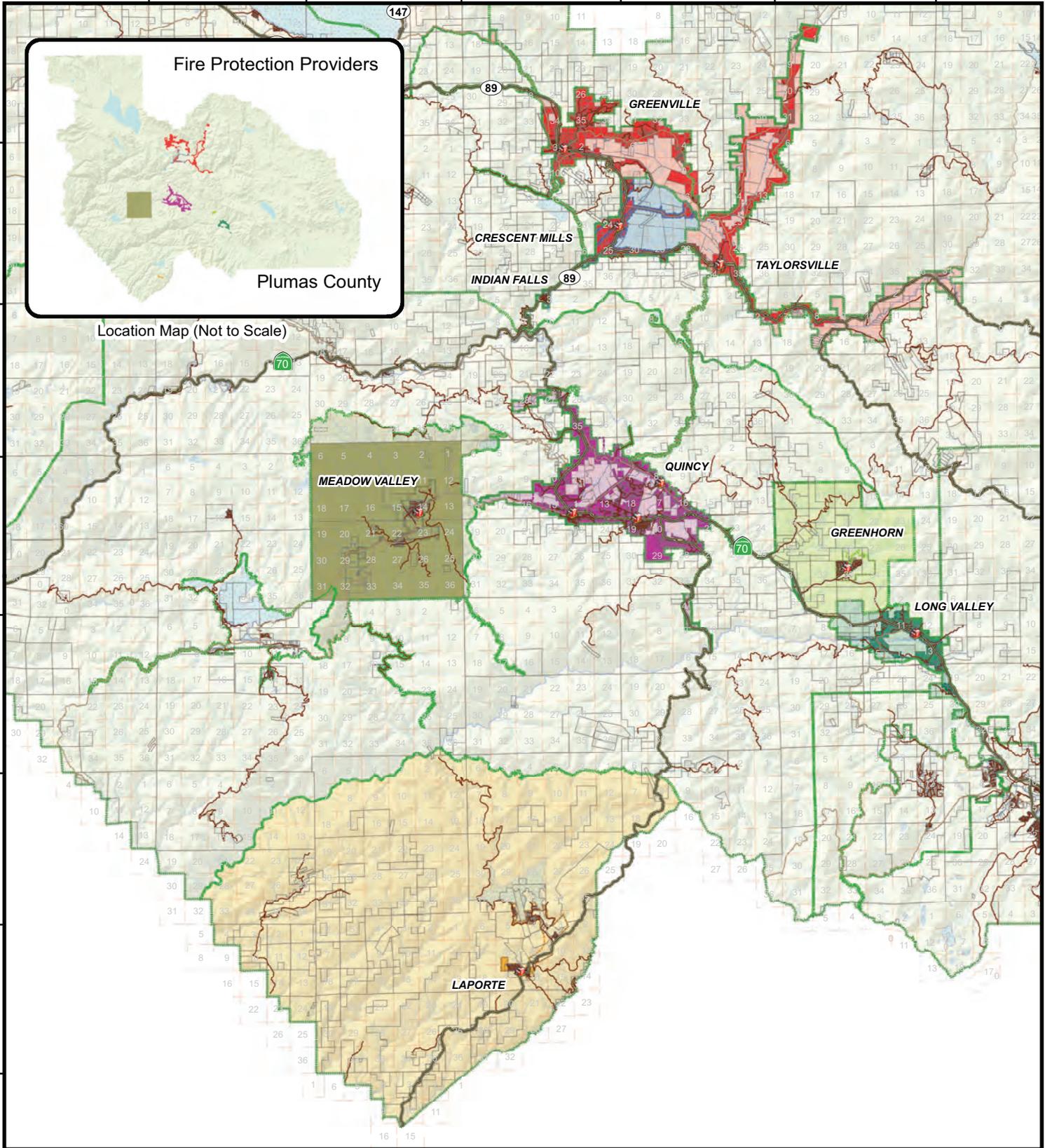
# Central Plumas Fire Protection Providers

Range 6 East    Range 7 East    Range 8 East    Range 9 East    Range 10 East    Range 11 East    Range 12 East

Township 27 North  
Township 26 North  
Township 25 North  
Township 24 North  
Township 23 North  
Township 22 North  
Township 21 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)



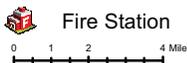
## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Waterbodies
- Fire Station

- |                     |                           |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Crescent Mills FPD  | Crescent Mills FPD (SOI)  | Crescent Mills FPD (ESN)  |
| Greenhorn Creek CSD | Greenhorn Creek CSD (SOI) | Greenhorn Creek CSD (ESN) |
| Indian Valley CSD   | Indian Valley CSD (SOI)   | Indian Valley CSD (ESN)   |
| LaPorte FPD         | LaPorte FPD (SOI)         | LaPorte FPD (ESN)         |
| Long Valley CSD     | Long Valley CSD (SOI)     | Long Valley CSD (ESN)     |
| Meadow Valley FPD   | Meadow Valley FPD (SOI)   | Meadow Valley FPD (ESN)   |
| Quincy FPD          | Quincy FPD (SOI)          | Quincy FPD (ESN)          |

Source: Plumas LAFCo  
Map Created 9/30/2013



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## Service Adequacy

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This section contains a discussion on service adequacy indicators which is intended to identify outliers—providers with relatively high service levels and those providers that could take steps to improve certain aspects of service provision. The fire and emergency medical service adequacy measures discussed here include firefighter certification rates, response times, ISO ratings, coverage adequacy, and operating expenditures.

### Firefighter Certification

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>6</sup> In addition to these certifications, firefighters may hold certification for emergency medical care, which include Emergency Medical Technician I (EMT I), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (EMT II), and Paramedic. Additionally, there is an initial EMS certification level for public safety personnel, referred to here as First Responder EMT, which requires 15 hours of first aid training and six hours of CPR training.

Among the fire providers of the Central Plumas area, Crescent Mills FPD has the highest certification rate of 91 percent for Firefighter I certification. The highest certification rate of 67 percent for EMT I certification is held by La Porte FPD. On the other side of the spectrum is Greenhorn Creek CSD, which has a certification rate of zero percent for both Firefighter I and EMT I certifications. Indian Valley CSD also has no firefighters certified at Firefighter I, and Meadow Valley FPD has no personnel certified at EMT I. It should be noted that these agencies do have personnel certified at the Volunteer Firefighter and First Responder EMT levels.

### Response Times

Response times reflect the time elapsed between the dispatch of personnel and the arrival of the first responder on scene. As such, response times do not include the time required to transport a victim to the hospital. The response times include the dispatching time of fire personnel. Response times are generally faster for more compact service areas and longer in large districts. Response times will also vary depending on the number and location of stations and firefighters available. Particularly in cases involving patients who have stopped breathing or are suffering from heart attacks, the chances of survival improve

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<sup>6</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

when the patient receives medical care quickly. Similarly, a quick fire suppression response can potentially prevent a structure fire from reaching the “flashover” point at which very rapid fire spreading occurs—generally in less than 10 minutes.<sup>7</sup>

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>8</sup>

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas.

All of the providers reviewed here, with the exception of La Porte FPD and Meadow Valley FPD track their response times for each incident. While Greenhorn Creek CSD tracks its response times, a large enough sample was not provided to calculate median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times for the agency. Based on the call samples provided by the districts that track their response times, median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times were calculated. The shortest median response time of three minutes belongs to Quincy FPD. In regard to the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile, Crescent Mills FPD has the best result of seven minutes. Long Valley CSD reports the longest response times with a median of six minutes and within 14 minutes 90 percent of the time. All the reviewed fire and EMS service providers who track their response times respond within an adequate time frame based on both, NFPA and California EMS Agency standards.

### ISO Ratings

The Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization, classifies fire service in communities from 1 to 10, indicating the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best systems for water distribution, fire department facilities, equipment and personnel and fire alarms and communications receive a rating of 1. A Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating has a direct bearing on the cost of property insurance for every home and building in a community. In the case of split classifications, the first class generally applies to properties within five miles of a station and 1,000 feet of a hydrant. The second class applies to areas within five miles of a station but beyond 1,000 feet of a hydrant.

ISO ratings differ for every fire provider. Most fire providers in the Central Plumas area have multiple ratings for different areas, depending on the location of hydrants and

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<sup>7</sup> NFPA Standard 1710, 2004.

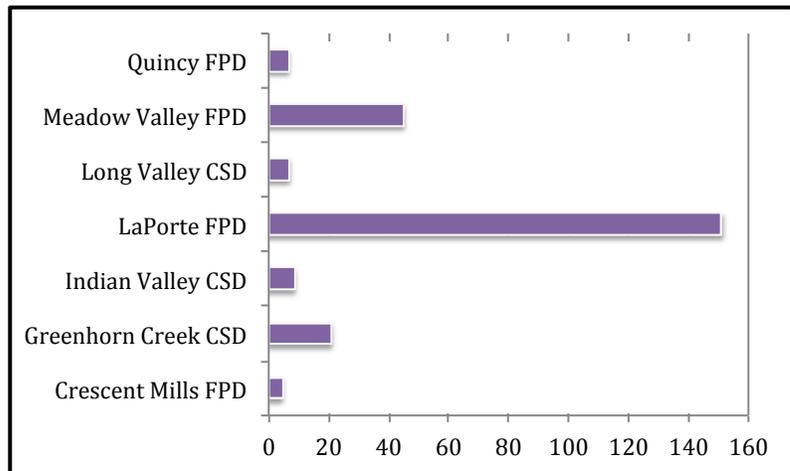
<sup>8</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

stations. Only Long Valley CSD and Meadow Valley FPD have a single ISO rating for all territory within their bounds. In Plumas County, the ISO ratings mostly depend on the availability of water in a specific area. The fire providers in the Central Plumas MSR area have ISO ratings ranging from four to nine. The best ISO rating of four in Central Plumas belongs to Quincy FPD and Indian Valley CSD. Long Valley CSD received a rating of nine. Crescent Mills FPD, Greenhorn Creek CSD and La Porte FPD also have areas within their bounds that are rated as a nine.

Coverage Adequacy

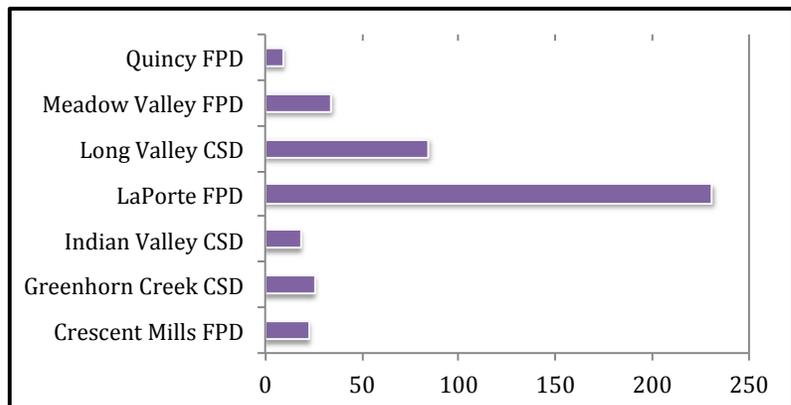
**Figure 3-7: Service Area per Fire Station**

The service area<sup>9</sup> sizes for each fire station differ for each fire provider, as shown in Figure 3-7. The median fire station in the Central Plumas area serves approximately nine square miles. La Porte FPD serves by far the most expansive area of the agencies reviewed here, as well as of all districts in Plumas County, with 151 square miles served by its single fire station. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD is six square miles per fire station. Crescent Mills FPD also serves a small area of 4.5 square miles per station, which is a result of two stations serving a relatively small service area.



**Figure 3-8: Firefighters per 1,000 residents**

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of service adequacy; however, it is approximate. The providers' call/volunteer firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if availability on the part of the firefighter is limited. Figure 3-8



illustrates the number of firefighters each provider has as a ratio per 1,000 residents served. Staffing levels in the Central Plumas area vary from nine firefighters per 1,000 residents in the Quincy FPD boundary area to 231 in La Porte FPD. It should be noted that

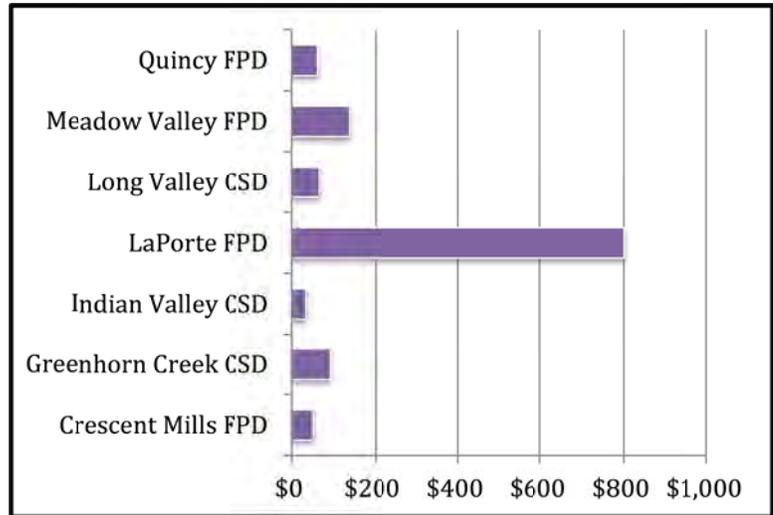
<sup>9</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on the First Responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

while Quincy FPD has the lowest firefighter ratio in the region, the District has some of the only paid staff in the area, which are often a more dependent resource than volunteers. Densely populated areas also tend to have fewer firefighters per 1,000 residents. The six firefighters of La Porte FPD on the other hand serve only 26 people within their District plus recreationalists, tourists, and seasonal residents not accounted for among the permanent population.

Operating Expenditures

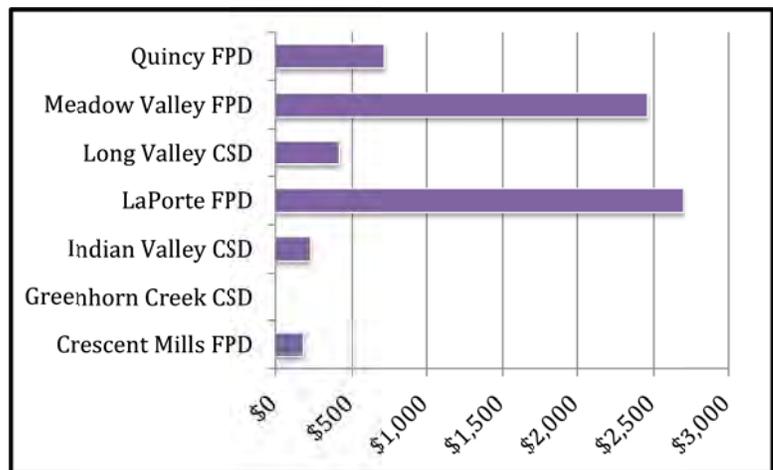
**Figure 3-9: Operating Expenditures per Capita (FY 11-12)**

Operating expenditures per capita, shown in Figure 3-9, are often reflective of the level of service offered by each fire provider. The least amount of money per capita was spent by Indian Valley CSD, which may be the case, as administrative expenses are shared with the multiple other services provided by the District. La Porte FPD expends the most per capita—most likely due to the fact that while comparable in boundary size to other service providers in the Central Plumas area, the District serves only 26 residents, which is eight times smaller than similar sized departments such as LVCSD.



**Figure 3-10: Operating Expenditures per Service Call (FY 11-12)**

A similar situation exists with operating expenditures per service call, as is clear from Figure 3-10. The low cost per service call for Indian Valley CSD is most likely explained by administrative cost sharing and purely volunteer sworn personnel (with the exception of the chief), while the high cost per service call for La Porte FPD and Meadow Valley FPD may be explained by the extremely low number of calls responded to by these fire departments resulting in a lack of economies of scale. Quincy FPD also has a comparably high cost per call, as the District makes use of paid personnel.



Accountability and Governance

Accountability of a governing body is signified by a combination of several indicators. The indicators chosen here are limited to: 1) constituent interest in the agency’s activities

as indicated by presence of interested candidates for board elections, 2) agency efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities, in addition to legally required activities such as agenda posting and public meetings, and 3) agency's financial transparency as indicated by compliance with requirements to submit annual reports to the State Controller's Office, annual budgets to the County Auditor's Office, and regularly audited financial statements to the County Auditor's Office.

For all the local agencies reviewed in this report, the established manner of board selection is elections by the voters within the respective agency. In the event of an absence of interested candidates, the County Board of Supervisors appoints board members. If there is only one interested candidate, that person runs unopposed and becomes a board member. Generally, there is a lack of contested elections for all local fire providers in Plumas County, similar to other rural counties in California. All current board members of Quincy FPD's governing body were appointed. One to two current directors in La Porte FPD and Long Valley CSD were also appointed. The entire current governing bodies of Crescent Mills FPD, Indian Valley CSD and Meadow Valley FPD were elected in uncontested elections. Although current board members of Greenhorn Creek CSD were also elected, there are presently two vacancies. It appears that there is limited interest in serving on the governing bodies of these agencies, as indicated by the number of appointed positions, lack of contested elections and the number of vacant positions.

All agencies prepare and post meeting agendas and make minutes available as required. Additional outreach efforts include websites and educational and awareness programs. All the agencies conduct community outreach activities where they participate in community events and organize educational activities. Several providers have websites to offer information by way of constituent outreach, including Greenhorn Creek CSD, Indian Valley CSD and Quincy FPD. The four other providers do not have websites. It is recommended that every public service provider maintain a website or a social media web page in order to keep constituents aware of the agency's activities.

Public agencies are required to report to several regulating agencies throughout the year. For financial transparency purposes, each agency is required to submit annual reports to the State Controller's Office, annually submit adopted budgets to the County Auditor's Office, and submit regular audits to the County Auditor's Office. Of the agencies reviewed, only Indian Valley CSD has failed to submit annual reports to the State Controller's Office for FYs 11 and 12. New management is aware of this deficiency and is in the process of bringing all financial reports up to date.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All districts reviewed here that keep their funds with the County have appropriately submitted their adopted FY 13-14 budgets to the County Auditor's Office—Crescent Mills FPD, La Porte FPD, Long Valley CSD, Meadow Valley FPD, and Quincy FPD. Greenhorn Creek CSD and Indian Valley CSD do not keep their funds with the County and as such have not been asked to submit budgets.

All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a

biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>10</sup> The Plumas County Board of Supervisors' has adopted a blanket resolution applicable to all districts in the County.<sup>11</sup> The resolution allows each district to submit biennial audits to the County, unless total annual revenue sources for the district are less than \$75,000, in which case the district may conduct and submit audits every five years. Of the districts reviewed here, Crescent Mills FPD, La Porte FPD, Long Valley CSD, and Meadow Valley FPD qualify to conduct audits every five years. The three others—Greenhorn Creek CSD, Indian Valley CSD, and Quincy FPD—must conduct audits every two years and submit them to the County Auditor's Office. Based on records from the County Auditor's Office, Greenhorn Creek CSD (submitted FY 08) and Indian Valley CSD (submitted FY 07) have not conducted and submitted audits on the required timeline.

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<sup>10</sup> Government Code §26909.

<sup>11</sup> BOS Resolution 11-7705.

## **4. CRESCENT MILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

Crescent Mills Fire Protection District (CMFPD) provides structural fire, emergency medical and emergency rescue services. The last municipal service review (MSR) for the District was completed in 2008.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

#### **Background**

CMFPD was formed in 1950 for the purpose of providing fire protection to the residents of the District.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>12</sup> The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.<sup>13</sup> Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.<sup>14</sup>

CMFPD is located in the southwestern portion of Indian Valley in Plumas County. CMFPD is entirely surrounded by the Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD), which among other services provides fire protection.

#### **Boundaries**

CMFPD is located entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 3.5 square miles and include the communities of Crescent Mills and Indian Falls.

Since the formation of the District, there have been three boundary changes. The most recent annexation occurred in 1983, when CMFPD added the territory of Indian Falls. The District's boundary changes are shown in Figure 4-1.

**Figure 4-1: Crescent Mills FPD Boundary History**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Crescent Mills Fire Protection District	Formation	1950	SBOE, LAFCo
Genesee Lumber Company, Arthur Sorsoli, E. M. Openshaw, Marian Cardoza Yanez	Annexation	1956	SBOE, LAFCo
"Second Annexation" (5 arces)	Annexation	1968	SBOE, LAFCo
Indian Falls	Annexation	1983	SBOE, LAFCo

<sup>12</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>13</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>14</sup> Government Code §56824.10.

### Sphere of Influence

The sphere of influence for the District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.<sup>15</sup> The SOI was further revised on July 12, 1982.<sup>16</sup> The latest SOI update took place in 2008.<sup>17</sup> The current SOI is coterminous with the District's bounds. Figure 4-2 depicts CMFPD's boundaries and SOI.

### Extra-territorial Services

CMFPD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through an automatic aid agreement with Indian Valley CSD and informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of CMFPD, the District's service area extends to northeast, southwest along SR 89 and northwest towards Round Valley Reservoir. The service area encompasses about nine square miles. CMFPD, similar to all fire providers in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. Fire districts have the option to charge for service outside of their district.

### Areas of Interest

Of particular interest to the District is Indian Valley CSD, which completely surrounds CMFPD. Both districts have considered consolidation for some time and have been in discussions as to how to best go about consolidation. At present, one option that is being considered is the Indian Valley CSD Fire Department becoming independent as a new fire protection district and then consolidating with CMFPD to include all territory within both agencies. Another option being considered is Indian Valley CSD divesting itself of fire services and CMFPD annexing the territory currently served by IVCS.

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<sup>15</sup> LAFCo Resolution 76-37.

<sup>16</sup> LAFCo Resolution 82-07.14.

<sup>17</sup> LAFCo Resolution 2008-010.

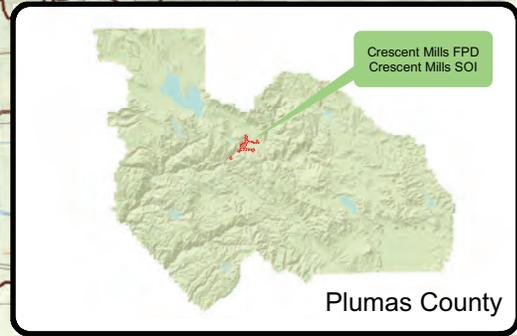
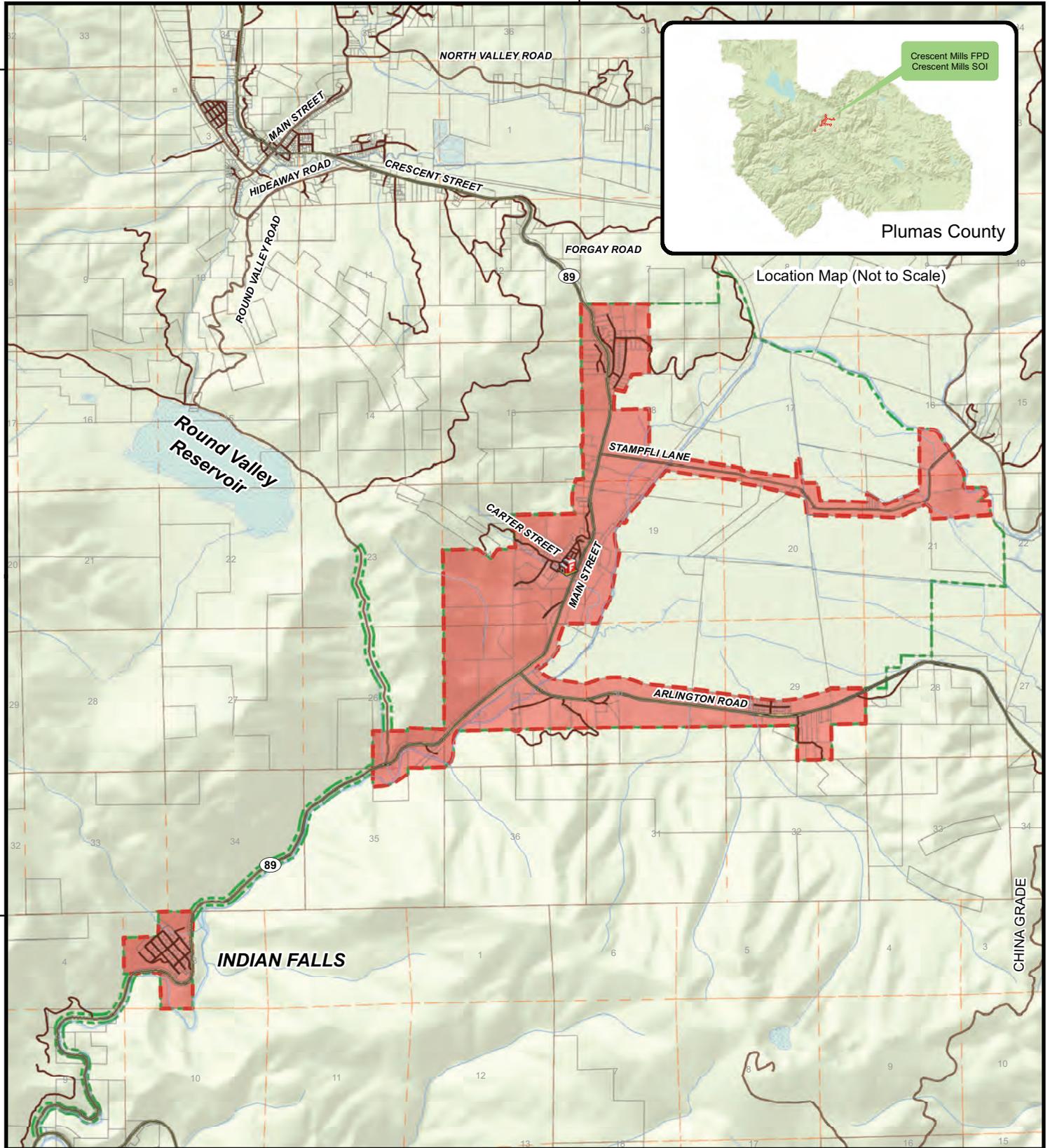
# Crescent Mills Fire Protection District

Range 9 East

Range 10 East

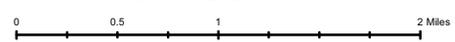
Township 26 North

Township 25 North



## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station
- Crescent Mills FPD
- Crescent Mills Sphere of Influence
- Crescent Mills Service Area



Crescent Mills FPD  
 Resolution:  
 Formed: January 31, 1950

Crescent Mills FPD (SOI)  
 Resolution:  
 Adopted: June 9, 2008

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 9/28/2013

## Accountability and Governance

The principal act orders that the board of directors of a fire protection district must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11 members. Directors may be appointed or elected.<sup>18</sup> CMFPD is governed by a five-member board of directors elected at large to staggered four-year terms. All current members were elected; there are no vacancies. The chair of the Board rotates with each meeting. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 4-3.

The Board meets a minimum of once a quarter on a Sunday at four in the afternoon at the District's Station 1. The specific date for the meeting is usually set at the preceding meeting. Board meeting agendas are posted at both fire stations and emailed to the mailing list of interested parties. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.

**Figure: 4-3: Crescent Mills FPD Governing Body**

Crescent Mills FPD				
<b>District Contact Information</b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Steve Allen, Secretary			
<b>Address:</b>	PO Box 1959, Quincy, CA 95971			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-283-1139			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:hereward@thegrid.net">hereward@thegrid.net</a>			
<b>Board of Directors</b>				
<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>	<b>Manner of Selection</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>
Jerry L. Thrall	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Dennis Fitch	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Doyle Ralston	Director	December 2017	Elected	4 years
Kerry Wright	Director	December 2017	Elected	4 years
Cody Joe Pearce	Director	December 2017	Elected	4 years
<b>Meetings</b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Quarterly on Sundays at 4pm.			
<b>Location:</b>	Station 1.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted on at both District fire stations and emailed to the list.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through participating in community events such as a Christmas event and the Veteran's Day and Fourth of July parades, taking students and scouts on station tours, and performing crash demonstrations to kids.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted to the chief, the secretary or a board member. The District does not have a formal policy regarding complaints. The person responsible for handling complaints depends on the nature of the grievance. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2012.

CMFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

<sup>18</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District has one fire chief and 10 volunteer firefighters. Daily operations are managed by the fire chief, who is paid a monthly stipend. The Board secretary handles bills and paperwork. The chief is accountable to the Board; volunteer firefighters report to the chief.

The District does not track the workload handled by the chief or the volunteers. CMFPD reported that tracked data would have no practical application, because even if additional labor force is needed there is a difficulty recruiting more volunteers. Day time calls are reportedly the most difficult to respond to, because volunteers are busy with their daily activities. The current practice is to have both districts, CMFPD and IVCS, dispatched to the same incidents, as CMFPD is occasionally unable to respond on its own.

CMFPD does not conduct employee evaluations; the chief makes occasional reports to the Board of Directors. CMFPD reported that it did not conduct evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports. The District is aware of its challenges such as lack of volunteers and limited funding, but believes matters will not improve until the Plumas economy recovers.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited when necessary. CMFPD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District conducts capital improvement planning informally as needed and forecast repair/replacement needs through equipment maintenance. CMFPD does not adopt any other planning documents.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>19</sup> The most recent audit for CMFPD was completed for FY 09. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District has complied with this requirement.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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A majority of the land uses within the District are commercial, industrial and residential. The District's bounds encompass approximately 3.5 square miles.

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<sup>19</sup> Government Code §26909.

### Population

There are approximately 487 residents within the District, based on GIS estimate. The District's population density is 139 residents per square mile.

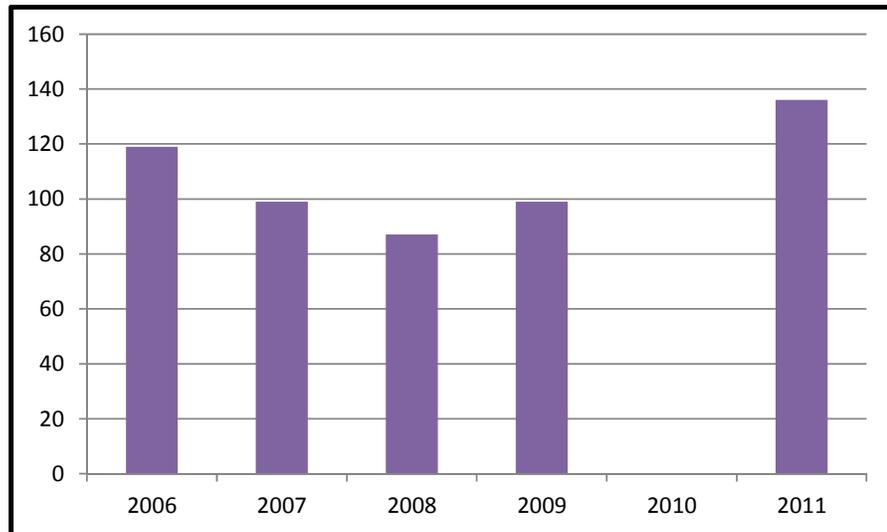
### Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District are in the mornings and in the early evenings. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

**Figure 4-4: Crescent Mills FPD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011**

The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years.

The number of calls dropped in 2008 and went back up increasing every year for the next few years, as shown in Figure 4-4.<sup>20</sup> The District reported that demand increased because the



District's firefighters are responding in conjunction with the ambulance service providers (either South Lassen Ambulance or Chester PUD).

### Projected Growth and Development

CMFPD anticipates no growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. The District reported that there were no planned developments within the District's boundaries.

The District does not create population projections, as it relies entirely on an all-volunteer staff and limited funding. CMFPD sees no need for projections, as the District is already aware of its shortcomings in the form of personnel needs. As no growth is anticipated in the near future, the personnel issue has not become an emergency. Should growth occur in the future, CMFPD does not have sufficient personnel capacity to provide services to any possible future growth areas.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 487 in 2010 to approximately 506 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

<sup>20</sup> The number of calls for 2010 was not provided, as the ISO office had not returned the District's reports.

### Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCO are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>21</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>22</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>23</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>24</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>25</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>22</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>27</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>28</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>29</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>30</sup>
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>31</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

- 12) The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space through conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.
- 13) The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.
- 14) In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.
- 15) New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.
- 16) New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 17) The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.
- 18) Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>31</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

<sup>32</sup> Plumas County General Plan, *Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures*, 2010.

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

In regards to governance structure options, it was reported that consolidation with Indian Valley CSD is a possibility. However, no formal steps towards consolidation have been taken to date.

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## Financing

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The District reports that current financing levels are marginally adequate to deliver services. CMFPD has a lot of deferred maintenance on its facilities and equipment and insufficient revenue sources to cover those needs.

To improve its financing level, the District would like to become eligible for federal grants by adopting the national incident management system. However, the challenge with grants is that the District would need to match a portion of the project cost from its own funds. CMFPD is not considering a special tax measure, as there are a substantial number of low income residents within the District.

The District's total revenue for FY 11-12 was \$24,454. Ninety eight percent of the income came from property tax revenue. Other revenue sources included interest and state and federal aid. The District's principal source of funds is derived from property taxes levied by Plumas County. CMFPD does not receive any special tax or benefit assessment revenue. The District does not charge fees for its services.

CMFPD's expenditures in FY 11-12 amounted to \$24,839. Of this amount, 54 percent was spent on salaries and benefits and the remainder on services and supplies.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. Needs are assessed through equipment and facility maintenance. Capital improvements are financed through a pay-as-you-go approach.

CMFPD does not have a formal financial reserve. There is a rollover fund, which consists of revenues that were not spent in previous years. At the end of FY 11-12, the unrestricted rollover fund contained \$15,314.

The District participates in a statewide joint powers agreement (JPA), Fire Agencies Self Insurance System, for workers compensation insurance.

## FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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CMFPD provides fire protection, emergency medical services, and vehicle rescue.

#### Collaboration

CMFPD has a formal automatic aid agreement with Indian Valley CSD and informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.

The District expressed a desire for closer collaboration with other fire providers in the area of grant searches and applications.

#### Dispatch and Communications

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The District reported that an improvement to the dispatch service could be a clearer distinction between the Indian Valley CSD and Crescent Mills FPD service areas.

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### Staffing

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CMFPD has 11 sworn personnel—one fire chief and 10 volunteer firefighters. The part-time chief is paid a monthly stipend; the remainder of the staff is not compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 33, with a range from 23 to 60.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. CMFPD tries to recruit more volunteers through direct personal contact, word of mouth, and signs posted in Indian Falls.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course,

Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>33</sup> CMFPD has 10 Firefighter I and three EMT I certified personnel.

The District's requirement for volunteer firefighters is to train to the level of Firefighter I. Volunteers are offered 16 training hours per month. A significant challenge reported by CMFPD is lack of available time for volunteers, due to other jobs and travel distances in rural and remote Indian Valley.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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CMFPD operates two fire stations. Crescent Mills Fire Station, which was reported to be in fair condition, is located at 36 Carter Street in Crescent Mills and was built in 1940. Indian Falls Fire Station, located at 238 Indian Falls Road in Indian Falls, was built in 1983. The station was also reported to be in fair condition. Neither of the District's stations are staffed.

Crescent Mills Fire Station is used as a fire station and a meeting room and houses one tanker, two type I engines, one quick response vehicle, and one command vehicle. Crescent Mills Fire Station is also used by Indian Valley CSD for occasional meetings. Indian Falls Fire Station is used as a fire station and contains two type 1 engines, one quick response vehicle, and one command vehicle.

The District's water reserves are represented by a 212,000-gallon community water system in Crescent Mills operated by Indian Valley CSD, 4,300 gallons of water on a tanker and 4,900 gallons of water on the trucks. There is also a water tank located in Indian Falls, which does not seem to be full therefore the actual quantity of available water is unknown.

Currently, the District has marginal capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. CMFPD reports that lack of personnel as a major capacity constraint.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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Although the District does not formally plan its capital improvement needs, CMFPD is aware through routine maintenance that its equipment is aging and will need to be replaced in the near future. The District is in need of a new tank for the tanker (which would cost about \$150,000 to \$300,000), breathing apparatuses, and new fire extinguishers. In addition, the septic tank at Crescent Mills Station needs to be pumped.

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## Challenges

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The District's primary challenge is a lack of volunteers. CMFPD struggles to recruit and retain firefighters, due to the recent economic recession. CMFPD also reported a lack of available water in the District as a major challenge. Except for within the Crescent Mills community, the water for fire suppression has to be hauled. Difficult terrain presents obstacles as well. There is an extremely steep road that leads to the ranch area on Old Green Mountain. Some portions of Arlington Road are also steep. These issues are

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<sup>33</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

amplified in winter months. Finally, a lack of available funding causes deferred maintenance and replacement on equipment and facilities.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. CMFPD has an ISO rating of eight in urban areas and nine in rural areas. The District was last evaluated in 2011.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>34</sup> CMFPD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. Based on CMFPD sample response times from August 2012, its median response time is four minutes, and seven minutes 90 percent of the time.

The service area size<sup>35</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles. Similarly, each fire station in CMFPD serves approximately 4.5 square miles.

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<sup>34</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>35</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources, if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD. By comparison, CMFPD has approximately 22 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

**Figure 4-5: Crescent Mills FPD Fire Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
<b>Firestation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	
Crescent Mills Fire Station	36 Carter Street, Crescent Mills, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	Tanker, 2 type 1 engines, 1 quick response vehicle, 1 command vehicle	
Indian Falls Fire Station	238 Indian Falls Road, Indian Falls, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	2 type 1 engines, 1 quick response vehicle, 1 command vehicle	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> Indian Valley CSD and U.S. Postal Service use Crescent Mills fire station for occasional meetings. CMFPD is a member of Plumas Fire Chiefs Association and Special Districts Association.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> The District did not identify any future opportunities for facility sharing.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
All fire stations have unmet maintenance needs.					
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>	
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	2	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	136
Stations Serving District	2	EMS	Direct	% EMS	88%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	4.50	Ambulance Transport	SLASA	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	1%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	11	Hazardous Materials	County	% False	4%
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	SLASA	% Misc. emergency	8%
Total Call Firefighters	11	Fire Suppression Helicopter	None	% Non-emergency	0%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	5.5	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	68%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	22	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	272
<b>Service Adequacy</b>			<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2012 (August)	Lack of personnel is a significant challenge. Lack of funding defers equipment maintenance and replacement. Terrain presents response challenges.			
Median Response Time (min)	4 minutes	<b>Training</b>			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	7 minutes	Volunteers are required to train to the firefighter I level. Firefighters train 16 hours per month.			
ISO Rating	8/9				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
The District has automatic aid agreement with Indian Valley CSD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County.					
Notes: 1) Primary service area (square miles) per station. 2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel. 3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## **CRESCENT MILLS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS**

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### **Growth and Population Projections**

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- ❖ Crescent Mills Fire Protection District (CMFPD) had a population of approximately 487 as of 2010.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years. There was an increase in calls over the last four years of approximately 56 percent, a majority of which the District attributes to an increase in medical service calls.
- ❖ CMFPD anticipates no residential growth within the District in the next few years. The District reported that there were no planned or proposed developments within the District's boundaries.

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### **The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI**

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### **Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies**

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- ❖ Currently, the District's facilities appear to have marginal capacity to provide adequate services to existing demand and future growth. Current response times meet California EMS Agency and NFPA standards for response to medical emergencies and structural fires respectively. Service capacity is constrained by outdated equipment and lack of personnel.
- ❖ CMFPD would require additional staffing and enhanced funding to address possible future growth. The District will need to look at additional funding sources to ensure sustainable financing.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include a new tank for the tanker, breathing apparatuses, and new fire extinguishers. In addition, the septic tank at Crescent Mills Station needs to be pumped.
- ❖ The District does not have a capital improvement plan. Capital improvement needs are reviewed as needed through regular equipment and facility maintenance. It is a recommended practice for all districts to adopt a capital improvement plan to allow for more effective infrastructure improvement and related financing planning.

- ❖ CMFPD services appear to be adequate. The District has adequate response times. The District's ISO rating is high compared to urban service providers, but similar to rural providers and those in the County.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that its current financing levels were marginally adequate to deliver services. CMFPD has significant deferred maintenance on its facilities and equipment and insufficient incoming funds to cover those needs.
- ❖ Grants were identified as a possible additional source of financing to fulfill necessary apparatus replacement.
- ❖ The District's general operations are funded primarily by property taxes. CMFPD does not have any long-term debt.
- ❖ The District does not maintain financial reserves and uses a pay-as-you-go approach to finance its capital improvements. The unrestricted rollover fund at the end of FY 11-12 contained \$15,314.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ The District has mutual aid agreements with all surrounding fire districts and a formal automatic aid agreement with Indian Valley CSD.
- ❖ Crescent Mills Fire Station is used by Indian Valley CSD and the U.S. Postal Service for occasional meetings.
- ❖ The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District expressed the desire for closer collaboration with other fire providers in the area of grant searches and applications.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ CMFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ CMFPD practices outreach efforts; however, the District lacks a website where district information is made available to the public. It is recommended that every public service provider have a website to keep constituents aware of the agency's activities.
- ❖ In regards to governance structure options, it was reported that consolidation with Indian Valley CSD is a possibility. However, no formal steps towards consolidation have been taken to date.

## **5. GREENHORN CREEK COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

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Greenhorn Greek Community Services District (GCCSD) provides fire, water and contract road maintenance services. This is the first municipal service review (MSR) for Greenhorn Creek CSD.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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#### **Background**

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GCCSD was formed in 1971 as a dependent special district to provide water to the western portion of the Greenhorn Creek housing development known as Greenhorn II. In 1975, GCCSD was consolidated with Estray Creek Community Services District. The consolidation empowered GCCSD to provide domestic water for fire protection purposes and to collect, treat and dispose of sewage. In 1990, Greenhorn Creek Valley Volunteer Fire Department was formed, and in 1995, the fire department became a part of GCCSD. GCCSD took over the responsibilities of the Greenhorn Ranch Company in 1995 and began providing water to the eastern side of the development known as Greenhorn I, as well as Greenhorn Guest Ranch. In 2003, the citizens of Greenhorn Creek voted to become an independent special district. On April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013 LAFCo authorized GCCSD to start performing road maintenance services contingent upon the district approving a special tax or assessment to provide this service. Should the district not approve a special tax or assessment by April 8, 2014, LAFCo's approval will expire.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.<sup>36</sup> CSDs may potentially provide a wide array of services, including water supply, wastewater, solid waste, police and fire protection, street lighting and landscaping, airport, recreation and parks, mosquito abatement, library services; street maintenance and drainage services, ambulance service, utility undergrounding, transportation, graffiti abatement, flood protection, weed abatement, hydroelectric power, among various other services. CSDs are required to gain LAFCo approval to provide those services permitted by the principal act but not performed by the end of 2005 (i.e., latent powers).<sup>37</sup>

GCCSD is located approximately 1.5 miles northeast of Spring Garden and SR 70 in Plumas County. Fire service providers within close proximity of GCCSD include Quincy FPD in the northwest and Long Valley CSD in the southeast.

#### ***Boundaries***

GCCSD is located entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 0.4 square miles and include the communities of Greenhorn Creek and Estray Creek.

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<sup>36</sup> Government Code §61000-61226.5.

<sup>37</sup> Government Code §61106.

Since its formation, the District has undergone three boundary changes. In 1975, GCCSD consolidated with Estray Creek CSD. In 1995 the District acquired the area known as Greenhorn I and the Greenhorn Guest Ranch.

The most recent annexation, which was known as the Wilburn Annexation, took place in 2007 and included five parcels on Running Springs Lane. The lots are still vacant and no construction is anticipated in the near future.

### *Sphere of Influence*

The sphere of influence (SOI) for the District was first adopted in 1983. The SOI was last amended in 2013.<sup>38</sup> The District's SOI is 1.18 square miles in size compared to 0.4 square miles of boundary area. The SOI is coterminous with the District's boundaries on the western side and extends beyond its bounds in all other directions.

### *Extra-territorial Services*

GCCSD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD and Long Valley CSD. The District is also in the process of establishing an automatic aid agreement with Long Valley CSD, based on which both districts will be dispatched simultaneously to the same incidents.

The District occasionally responds to wildland fires and gets reimbursed from the state or federal government.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of GCCSD, the District's service area is significantly larger than its boundary area and extends outside of its bounds in all directions. The service area encompasses 21 square miles. GCCSD, similar to other fire districts in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. Fire districts have the option to charge for service outside of their district.

### *Areas of Interest*

An area of interest for GCCSD is the territory served by the two road associations. Currently, the District provides road maintenance services to these road associations through a contract, with the long-term goal of a complete transfer of street maintenance services to GCCSD. To complete the process, the District must form an assessment district to finance the services. Although, in 2013, GCCSD was empowered by LAFCo to start providing street maintenance services directly, the transfer process was postponed indefinitely.

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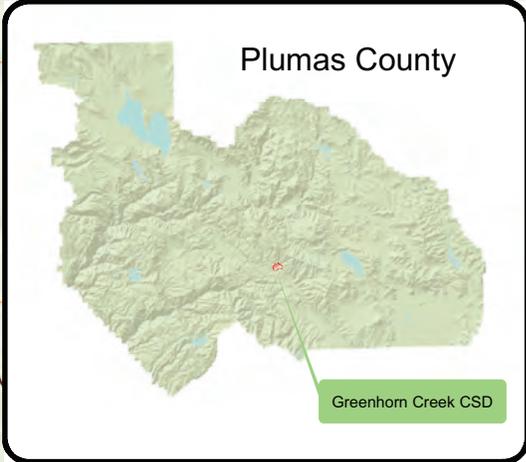
<sup>38</sup> LAFCo Resolution 2013-0001.

# Greenhorn Creek Community Services District

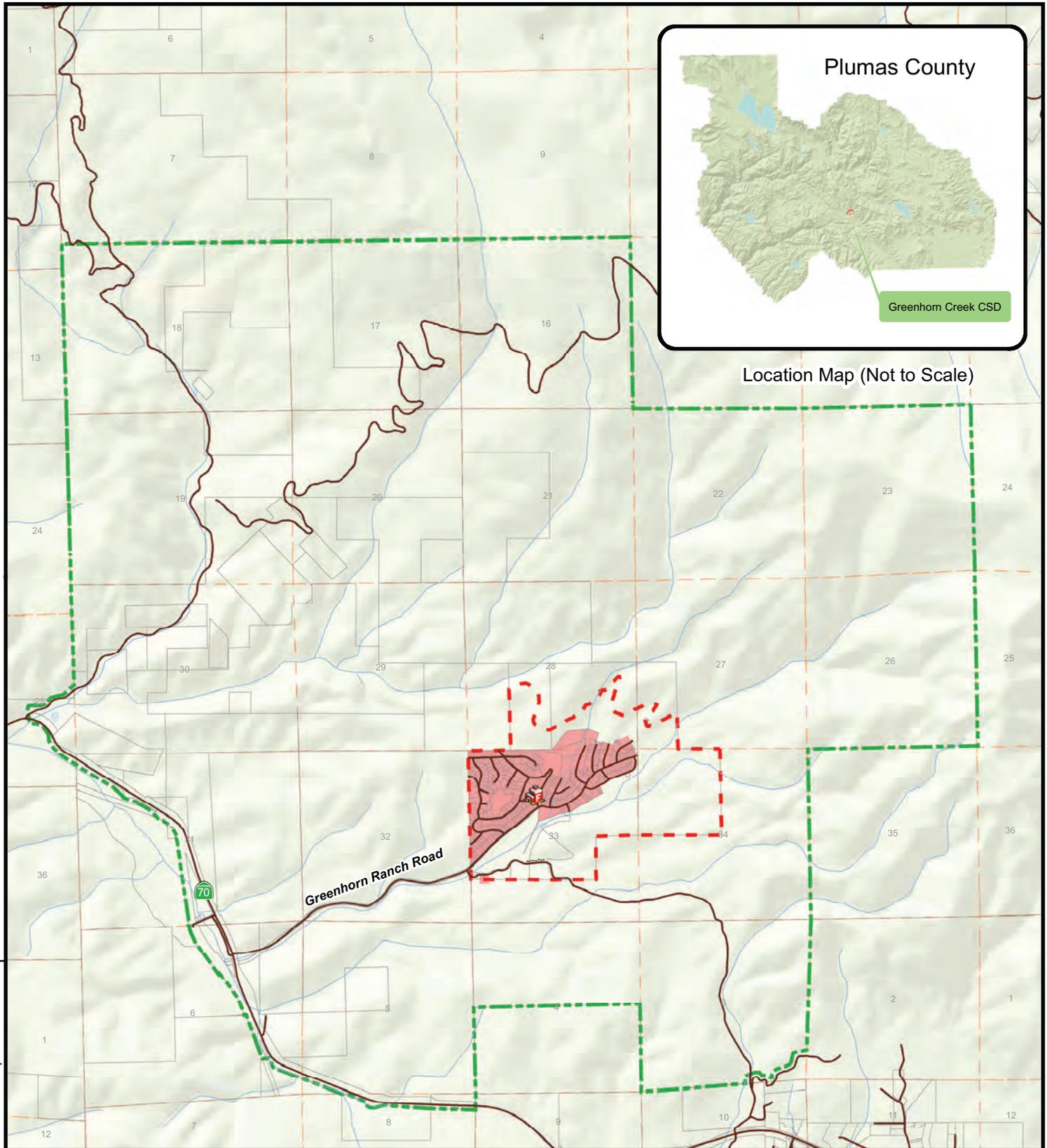
Range 11 East

Township 24 North

Township 23 North

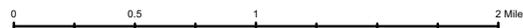


Location Map (Not to Scale)



## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station
- Greenhorn Creek CSD
- Greenhorn Creek CSD Sphere of Influence (Current)
- Greenhorn Creek CSD Service Area



Greenhorn Creek CSD  
Resolution:  
Formed: 12/29/71

Greenhorn Creek CSD (SOI)  
Resolution: 83-28  
Adopted: 3/24/83

Source: Plumas LAFCo MapModified 9/30/2013

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## Accountability and Governance

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In 2003, the citizens of Greenhorn Creek voted to become an independent special district with a directly elected five-member Board of Directors. However, no candidates filed to run in the 2005 district election, and the Board of Supervisors continued to serve as the governing board of GCCSD. In 2007, the District started holding elections and is now governed by a five-member Board of Directors elected to four-year terms. There are presently two vacancies on the District’s Board. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 5-2. The District did not provide the term expiration date for each board member nor the manner of selection of each member (i.e., elected or appointed).

The Board of Directors meets on the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 in the evening at the Greenhorn fire station located at 2049 Red Bluff Circle. Agendas are posted on the bulletin board by the subdivision mail boxes and on the GCCSD website. Minutes are provided at meetings and are posted on the website.

**Figure 5-2: Greenhorn Creek CSD Governing Body**

<b>Greenhorn Creek CSD</b>				
<b><i>District Contact Information</i></b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Roy Carter, General Manager			
<b>Address:</b>	2049 Red Bluff Circle, Quincy, CA 95971			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-283-4588			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:roycarter@greenhorncsd.org">roycarter@greenhorncsd.org</a> / <a href="http://www.greenhorncsd.org/">http://www.greenhorncsd.org/</a>			
<b><i>Board of Directors</i></b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Candy Miller	Secretary	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Zeke Awbrey	Director	December 2017	Elected	4 years
Gail Higgins	Director	December 2015	Appointed	4 years
Janice Bishop	Director	December 2017	Elected	4 years
Vacancy	Director	N/A	N/A	4 years
<b><i>Meetings</i></b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Third Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m.			
<b>Location:</b>	Station 1 - 2049 Red Bluff Circle, Quincy, CA			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted at mail boxes, posted on auxiliary website, and emailed to list.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request.			

In addition to the legally required agendas and minutes, to reach its constituents GCCSD sends out consumer confidence reports and updates in its water bills. Greenhorn fire department auxiliary hosts the website where it provides information about services provided by the District, district finances, and the Board of Directors. The website is not sponsored or controlled by GCCSD.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints may be submitted by calling the general manager or the accountant. The general manager is responsible for handling complaints; in certain cases complaints come to the attention of the Board. Most of the recent complaints received by the District are regarding water meters and rates. The

District reported that it received seven complaints in 2011—one regarding taste and odor, one regarding color, four about pressure, and one referring to a leak.

GCCSD demonstrated partial accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. Although the District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests, responses to service-specific questionnaires required multiple follow-up attempts. Ultimately, while the District provided a majority of the requested information, the District failed to provide some essential requested information, such as number of calls for service for each year between 2006 and 2011 and response times.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District employs one part-time paid general manager, who also acts as the water operator and a fire captain. GCCSD retains an additional part-time paid water operator on staff. The fire chief is a volunteer as are the five firefighters.

The District does not perform regular employee evaluations. The general manager is occasionally evaluated by the Board of Directors; the most recent evaluation took place in 2011. None of the other personnel are evaluated.

GCCSD tracks its employee workload through timesheets filled out by paid personnel. Water operators fill out detailed timesheets that include lists of jobs and tasks. The general manager's hours are also tracked, in particular time spent on grant work.

Evaluations of the District as a whole are conducted through annual reports submitted to the County Public Health Agency. GCCSD also conducts annual meetings with the road associations to perform a review of services provided. The District, however, reported that joint meetings might not continue to take place in the future.

GCCSD adopted a mission, which states that the District aims to provide safe, affordable and reliable drinking water and responsive fire service.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and annually audited financial statements. GCCSD adopted a Water System Master Plan, completed in 2005, which provided the GCCSD Board, staff and customers a comprehensive evaluation of the community water system for current and future uses. The Master Plan also includes capital improvement needs. It is recommended that the District periodically review capital improvement needs as economic and financial circumstances change. Additionally, GCCSD adopted the Greenhorn Creek Emergency Plan in 2007.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. Additionally, all special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>39</sup> The most recent audit for GCCSD was completed for FY 12-13. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit

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<sup>39</sup> Government Code §26909.

requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District has complied with this requirement.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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Land uses within the District are mainly comprised of rural residential and low density suburban. There is one 6.26-acre area currently zoned for general commercial. Greenhorn Guest Ranch includes 26 guest rooms, a lodge, a saloon, and a kitchen.

The District's bounds encompass approximately 0.4 square miles.

### Population

The total population of GCCSD is 209 residents, based on GIS analysis. The District's population density is 523 people per square mile.

### Existing Demand

The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years. Although, the most recent annexation in 2007 added five lots, the territory was and still is uninhabited.

At the time of formation, there were 438 residential lots zoned in the Greenhorn Creek CSD. However, some land owners combined adjacent lots to increase acreage for one residence. As of June 2013, there were 139 housing units constructed which consisted of and 214 unimproved lots within the District owned by private parties. In addition there were 39 unimproved lots owned by the Greenhorn Creek CSD. The District was unable to provide updated lot information for the area within its bounds.

The District reported that it did not notice a specific pattern regarding peak demand times for fire services. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region. It could not be determined if there had been any change in demand for fire services over the last five years, as the District did not provide the total number of calls for each year.

Average day water use has been stable over time while water use varies significantly between summer (64 percent greater) and winter months, due to seasonal occupancy. Since 2007, GCCSD has added three new connections.

### Projected Growth and Development

The GCCSD 2005 Water System Master Plan projected a growth rate of at least 10 percent; however, this prediction was made before the housing bubble burst of 2008. GCCSD anticipates no growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. The District reported that there were no planned developments within the District's boundaries.

The District projects its future service demand through the Water Master Plan, which was adopted in 2005 and has not been updated since. Reportedly, GCCSD has sufficient capacity to provide water and road maintenance services. The District has recently added a new water storage tank and a new well. Marginal capacity is available to provide fire services to Greenhorn Creek residents. Although there is sufficient equipment, the District is in need of more firefighters.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent from 2010 to 2020. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 209 in 2010 to approximately 217 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

### Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCO are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>40</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>41</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>42</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>43</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>44</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>45</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>46</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>47</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>48</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>49</sup>
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>50</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

- 12) The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space through conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.
- 13) The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 32.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>50</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 14) In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.
- 15) New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.
- 16) New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 17) The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.
- 18) Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>51</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ **Updated General Plan Policies:** The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ **Building Permit Review:** Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ **GIS Website Update:** The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ **District Sphere of Influence Updates:** The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ **Fire Protection Communication Plan:** Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the

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<sup>51</sup> Plumas County General Plan, *Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures*, 2010.

process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.

- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that consolidation with another fire and/or water provider would be theoretically an option; however, there are limited options for consolidation due to the geographic isolation of GCCSD from other similar providers.

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## Financing

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The District reported that its current financing levels were adequate to deliver water and road maintenance services, but not sufficient to provide fire services.

The District's total operating revenue for FY 11-12 was \$151,263, of which \$14,974 was earmarked for governmental or fire-related activities and \$125,469 considered business-type revenue from water services. Total non-operating revenue, which consisted of interest income and property taxes, was \$532.

Operating water revenues included water sales (68 percent), standby assessments (13 percent), debit service fees (12 percent), facility fees (four percent), and other sources (three percent).

Water service rates are \$50.00 per month for water operations and \$9.20 per month to help fund the cost of the new water tank that was recently installed. In FY 11-12, the District installed water meters and read them over several months to collect information based on which it will be completing a water rate study. The District's water department also receives revenue from the water standby fees paid by unimproved lot owners at a rate of \$82.50 per lot per year (\$2.50 is a collection fee charged by the County). GCCSD collects \$4,320 per new connection as a facility fee. A facility fee is the new users' share of the cost of new infrastructure. A \$400 connection fee is charged for all new connections. This fee covers the cost of labor to meet with contractors, inspect the work, and input the new account data. Water rates were last updated in 2007.

Of the \$14,974 in fire-related revenue in FY 12, 40 percent came from property taxes, 58 percent from property assessments, and two percent of other sources.

The fire department is funded through a combination of property taxes and special tax. The District charges a special tax of \$50 per year for improved lots and \$35 per year for unimproved lots. GCCSD occasionally directs funding to fire services by dedicating the water department share of property taxes to the fire department. This practice is reviewed annually and a decision is made during the budget process. In FY 11-12, a majority of property tax revenue was dedicated to the fire department, which resulted in an increase in the fund balance for the fire department. The special tax on parcels was approved in 1990

with no adjustment for inflation and no sunset. The District is researching the possibility of increasing the special tax through an election.

In addition to the property tax and assessment revenue, the fire department receives donations. Greenhorn Fire Department Auxiliary is a private, volunteer organization that was established to raise private donations to support the Greenhorn fire department and to provide other volunteer assistance in support of the fire department.

GCCSD's operating expenditures in FY 11-12 amounted to \$128,722. Of this amount, \$10,637 was spent on governmental (fire) activities and \$118,085 on business-type activities. Non-operating expenditures in the form of interest expenses amounted to \$13,202.

Of the water operating expenditures, 13 percent was spent on pumping, 26 percent on transmission and distribution, 12 percent on treatment, six percent on customer accounts, 35 percent on administration and general activities, and eight percent on depreciation.

Primary fire-related expenses included workers compensation insurance (21 percent), insurance (27 percent) and utilities (36 percent). The remainder was spent on administration, fuel, dues and subscriptions, office expenses, repairs and maintenance, small tools, travel, telephone, payroll expenses, supplies, training, and miscellaneous uses.

The District spends about \$70,000 annually on providing contractual road services to the road associations. The associations collect dues from community residents based on an annual budget adopted at each of the association's annual meetings. The adopted dues for FY 12-13 were \$150 per lot in Unit I and \$165 per lot in Unit II. In FY 11-12, Unit 1 paid the District \$32,019 and Unit 2 paid \$49,918. The District spent \$29,839 in the Unit 1 territory and \$36,682 in Unit 2. A breakdown of these expenditures by type was not provided by the District. In order for road maintenance services to be transferred from the road associations to GCCSD, the District must form an assessment district to fund the road services. The initial cost for assessment district formation was estimated to be \$30,000.

The District plans for its water system capital improvements in its water master plan. Fire department conducts capital improvements as needed.

The District has used loans in the past to fund water system improvements. These improvements were conducted in two phases. Phase I, which consisted of repair of existing infrastructure, replacement of existing controls, and installation of water meters, was mostly completed in FY 11-12. This project qualified for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding of \$374,219. This amount is considered a loan with subsidization in the form of 100 percent debt forgiveness. The final closeout of the project occurred during FY 12-13. Phase II—installation of a new water storage tank, pressure reducing valve and a well pump—was completed in FY 11-12. A loan was secured from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to fund the project in the amount of \$250,000. At the end of FY 11-12, the District had a remaining loan balance of \$235,528. The loan has an interest rate of 4.25 percent, and payments are due annually in December.

While not a formal reserve policy, the District intends to accumulate equipment reserves for the fire department. Consequently, GCCSD has adopted a budget for FY 12-13 that utilizes property taxes in the fire department with the intention of directing a portion to the equipment reserves.

CCCSD maintains a reserve in its enterprise fund. At the end of FY 12-13, the District had \$191,000 in its water reserve and \$45,000 in fire department reserve. In addition, CCCSD has to maintain \$45,218 in a short-lived asset reserve to comply with the provisions of USDA loan.

The District does not participate in any joint powers authorities (JPAs).

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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In the 1960s, the Greenhorn Creek community relied on Quincy FPD for fire services. In the early 1970s, a contractor working on road maintenance in the area gifted a 1942 Chevrolet water truck to Greenhorn Ranch. The truck was able to draft water from the pond and was used for dust control and for firefighting if needed. In the 1980s, two more fire trucks were obtained by the Ranch. In 1989, construction began on the fire station, and in 1990 Greenhorn Creek Valley Volunteer Fire Department was officially formed.

Currently, the District provides structure and wildland fire suppression, hazardous material response services, emergency medical services, and basic life support. The District may start providing advanced life support when GCCSD volunteer firefighters pass the EMT test in spring of 2014.

#### *Collaboration*

GCCSD has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD and Long Valley CSD (LVCSD) and an automatic aid agreement with LVCSD. The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association, Special District Association and the Community Services Districts Association.

#### *Dispatch and Communications*

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The Sheriff's dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo-approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

With regard to dispatch services, the District did not identify any areas in need of improvement.

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### **Staffing**

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GCCSD has six sworn personnel—one fire chief and five firefighters. None of the fire personnel are compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 30, with a range from 26 to 70.

The District reports that its staffing levels had decreased in the last few years. GCCSD attempts to recruit more volunteers through applying for recruitment grants with Quincy FPD and other Plumas County fire departments.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills

and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>52</sup> GCCSD has no Firefighter I and no EMT I certified personnel. The District has three firefighters who attended Quincy Fire Academy and two firefighters who are currently attending EMT training.

The District does not have training requirements for its firefighters. Volunteers rely on training courses offered by other agencies and generally train about four hours a month on average.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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GCCSD operates one fire station. Greenhorn Creek Station, which was reported to be in good condition, is located at 2049 Red Bluff Circle and was built in 1991. The station is not staffed.

Greenhorn Creek Station is used as a fire station and a town meeting hall for community and road association meetings and houses one Type 1 engine, one Type 3 engine and one chief's pickup truck.

The District's water reserves available for firefighting purposes consist of 90,000 gallons maintained in a newly constructed water storage tank.

Currently, the District has marginal capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. GCCSD reports lack of personnel as the primary capacity constraint.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District reported that there were no current infrastructure needs.

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## Challenges

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The primary challenge the District faces is lack of personnel and difficulties with recruitment.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

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<sup>52</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. GCCSD has an ISO rating of 7-9. The District was last evaluated in 2013.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>53</sup> GCCSD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. The District reported an average response time of 5.3 minutes in 2013 to incidents within the District's boundaries.

The service area size<sup>54</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles. By comparison, each fire station in GCCSD serves approximately 21 square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD. By comparison, GCCSD has approximately 29 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>53</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>54</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 5-4: Greenhorn Creek CSD Fire Service Profile**

<b>Fire Service</b>				
<b>Facilities</b>				
<b>Fire station</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>
GCCSD Station	2045 Red Bluff Circle, Quincy, CA	Good	Unstaffed	3 Type 1 engines, 3 Type 3 engines and chief's pickup truck
<b>Facility Sharing</b>				
<b>Current Practices:</b> GCCSD station is used as a town meeting hall.				
<b>Future opportunities:</b> The District did not report any future opportunities to share facilities with other entities.				
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>				
No infrastructure needs or deficiencies were reported.				
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	21.0	Ambulance Transport	PHD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	6	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Renown	% Misc. emergency
Total Call Firefighters	6	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	6	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	29	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people
<b>Service Adequacy</b>		<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2013	Lack of sufficient personnel is the District's main challenge.		
Median Response Time (min)	5.3 (average)	<b>Training</b>		
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	NP	Firefighters train for four hours a month on average. The District does not have its own training program and relies on other agencies for training resources.		
ISO Rating	7-9 (2013)			
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>				
GCCSD has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD and Long Valley CSD and automatic aid agreement with Long Valley CSD (LVCSD).				
Notes:				
1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.				
2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.				
3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.				

## WATER SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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GCCSD provides retail water services to the residents and commercial establishments within the boundaries of the District. There are 137 service connections, of which 135 are residential and two are commercial (Greenhorn Guest Ranch). All residences and facilities within Greenhorn Creek Subdivision using water for human consumption are required to connect to the GCCSD water system.

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### Staffing

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The GCCSD water department has one part-time employee who is a licensed water distribution operator and acts as the district manager. There are 0.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff dedicated to water operations.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The current water system includes four pumping stations (two groundwater wells with submersible pumps and two booster pump stations), two storage tanks, two pressure regulating stations, a transmission and distribution system, as well as appurtenances such as service meters and fire hydrants.

Well #1 is located at the southern end of Cold Springs Lane. It is the backup supply water source for GCCSD. The well was installed in July 1972. The well depth is 268 feet below ground surface (BGS). Well #1 is screened from 95 to 115 feet BGS and from 165 to 225 feet BGS. The depth to static water at time of well installation was 52 feet BGS. The well yield in 1972 was 200 gallons per minute (gpm) with 208 feet of drawdown after four hours. The well has an automatically operated submersible pump. The pump is primarily used to supply water to the 100,000-gallon tank. However, this well can be used to backup Well #2 when it is out of service. Well #1 produces water at approximately 125 gpm.

Well #2 is located on the west side of Greenhorn Creek Road across from the Greenhorn Guest Ranch. It is the lead supply water source for the Greenhorn Creek CSD. This well was installed in July 1972. The well depth is screened from 232 to 382 feet BGS. The depth to static water at time of well installation was 51 feet BGS. The well yield in 1972 was 150 gpm with 199 feet of drawdown after six hours.

Well #2 has an automatically operated submersible pump. Well operation is level controlled via sensors in the 8,000 gallon storage tank. Water from Well #2 enters the distribution system on Greenhorn Road and then turns north on Red Bluff Trail en route to the 8,000 gallon storage tank. There are two booster pumps in a wood framed structure below this 8,000 gallon tank which distribute the water into the rest of the distribution system and also supply water to Tank #1 (the upper 100,000 gallon storage tank).

There is also a third groundwater well, which is a standby well and is not currently operational due to vulnerability to contamination.

The main Red Bluff pumping station is located on the northern end of Red Bluff Trail. It is comprised of two booster pumps with 7.5 horsepower motors. These two pumps operate

alternatively with each other. The pumping station moves water from the 8,000 gallon tank into the distribution system and fills the 100,000-gallon tank if excess water is available.

The Fern Ridge pump station is located northwest of the end of Fern Ridge Drive. This station has two centrifugal pumps with 10 horsepower motors and a variable speed pump controller. The station is located adjacent to the 100,000-gallon storage tank.

The existing GCCSD water system utilizes three storage tanks, including one 8,000-gallon tank and two 100,000-gallon tanks. All customers receive their water from the 100,000-gallon tanks except for the residences on Red Bluff Tail. Currently, the distribution system is such that the 8,000-gallon tank supplies water to the Red Bluff pump station and the residences along Red Bluff Trail. There is a pressure-reducing valve located at the Red Bluff Pumping Station that provides water to the residents on Red Bluff Trail if the 8,000-gallon tank is empty and/or the wells are not operable.

The distribution and transmission system contains over five miles of pipe, which varies in pressure class and diameter. The distribution system pipe is comprised of two types of pipe materials, including asbestos cement (transite) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Most of the pipes in the GCCSD distribution system have been in the ground for nearly 40 years. The pipes are brittle and breakage occurs when new service connections are installed.

There are currently three operations PRV's within the District. The maximum pressure in the system is about 160 pounds per square inch (psi). The highest pressures are located at the lowest elevations on the western end of Greenhorn Road. The lowest pressures are located on Fern Ridge and Shooting Star Lane. The typical pressure desired in a domestic water system ranges from 40 to 80 psi. Currently, some of the pressures throughout the Greenhorn Creek CSD water system exceed this range. Therefore, many homes have PRVs at their service connections. The homeowner is responsible for maintenance of these individual home PRVs. The fire protection water system has to be designed so that the maximum pressure at any single hydrant would not exceed 150 psi. There is one fire hydrant within GCCSD that currently exceed this maximum pressure.

Currently, all of the District's pumps possess enough pumping capacity.

GCCSD's water system does not have adequate storage facilities to meet operational storage (15 percent of the maximum day demand), fire storage (as dictated by the fire authority) and emergency storage (one average day demand). The District was unable to provide the amount of storage that would be necessary to comply to these requirements.

The 2005 Water System Master Plan indicated that storage at the existing Fern Ridge tank site was inadequate to meet the projected build-out of the GCCSD area and that a new 100,000 gallon tank was needed. The Plumas County Public Health Agency noted in its 2012 report that the 100,000-gallon tank had been installed at Summit Trail. The storage capacity at the existing Red Bluff tank site is 8,000 gallons. This volume is sufficient to provide water to the booster pump station. If there is a fire on Red Bluff Trail, additional water capacity would need to be provided by a PRV fed from Tank #1. GCCSD reports that its water system does presently have adequate storage facilities to meet operational storage (15 percent of maximum day demand), fire storage (60,000 gallons), and emergency storage (one average day of demand). Based on these calculations, the District should maintain at least 202,539 gallons of water storage. The District presently maintains 208,000 gallons of storage.

Water is provided entirely from the Middle Fork Feather River Groundwater Basin and is considered to have high quality water that does not require treatment. The District reported that the maximum annually available water supply was 161 acre feet from Well #1 and 129 acre feet from Well #2. Water demand was reported to be 72 acre feet a year in 2009 and 59.9 acre feet in 2012. The District's peak day demand was reported to be 0.211 million gallons per day (mgd). The 0.211 figure was based on a day when Well No.1 had been shut down the day before, and the pump had to provide two days worth of water. The actual day demand is closer to 0.12 mgd. The District's water reserves for working, fire and emergency purposes are 500 gallons per minute (gpm) for two hours. A minimum maintained water pressure by GCCSD is 50 psi.

The District reportedly has some surface water rights; however, does not use surface water in its water service provision.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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GCCSD planned its infrastructure needs in two phases. The purpose of Phase I was to replace the pressure reducing valves, install air vacuum releases, replace control systems, replace well-house piping, and install water meters. The total cost of the project was estimated to be at \$400,000. In September 2009, a funding agreement between GCCSD and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was signed for a 100 percent forgivable \$374,219 loan. In October 2010, the contractor defaulted on the project. The District hired a new general contractor to complete the project. GCCSD recovered \$75,285 from the Surety Company. At the end of FY 12, project work in progress amounted to \$365,858.

For the Phase II project, in January 2009, the District entered into an agreement with USDA for a loan of \$250,000 for the installation of the new water tank. The total cost of the project was expected to be \$362,250. The new water tanker was completed in 2012 for a final cost of \$388,281.

No other infrastructure needs or plans for improvements were identified by the District.

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## Challenges

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No challenges to providing adequate water services were identified by the District.

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## Service Adequacy

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This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including the Plumas County Environmental Health Agency system evaluation, drinking water quality, and distribution system integrity.

The County Environmental Health Agency is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts, and the operational permitting and regulatory oversight of public water systems of 199 connections or less. These systems are subject to inspections by the County Environmental Health Agency. During the Agency's most recent inspection in 2012, the Agency noted that GCCSD's system appeared to be well managed; however, there were a few infrastructure needs identified, including repairs to both active wells, sealing or destroying the inactive well, repairs to the 8,000-gallon tank,

updating the biological sampling site plan, improvements to hoses used to fill the chlorine solution containers, and installing flushing valves.

Drinking water quality is also determined by a combination of historical violations reported by the EPA since 2000 and the percent of time that the District was in compliance with Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2012. Since 2000, the District has had eight health and two monitoring violations. The eight violations occurred between 2002 and 2006 and were related to coliform. The first monitoring violation was received for coliform in 2002 and the second one for lead and copper in 2003. The District was in compliance with drinking water regulations 100 percent of the time in 2012. According to the District, the water quality is of excellent quality. It is clean and safe to drink. The water is treated with a small amount of chlorine as a disinfectant. The water is disinfected as a precautionary measure. The water is tested monthly for bacteria by a laboratory, and chlorine samples are taken daily.

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and 2012 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. The District reported that 10 breaks and leaks occurred in 2011 and eight in 2012. It was reported that the distribution loss rate was unknown.

## STREET MAINTENANCE SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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As was previously mentioned, in 2013, the District was authorized to provide road services directly contingent upon the district approving a special tax or assessment to provide this service. This authorization will expire on April 8, 2014 if no such funding mechanism is in place. GCCSD currently provides road services indirectly through a contract to two road associations within the District's boundaries. Through LAFCo Resolution 2013-0002, the District gained power to acquire, construct, improve, and maintain streets, roads, right-of-ways, bridges, culverts, drains, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and any incidental works within the District conditioned upon the district approving a special tax or assessment. LAFCo approval to transfer the responsibility for road services from the road associations to GCCSD is contingent upon formation of an assessment district in the amount appropriate to fund the services currently estimated to be \$70,000 per year. The District must provide LAFCo with proof of formation of the assessment district prior to issuance of a Certificate of Completion by LAFCo. The associations will disband upon transfer of all responsibilities. The District recently reported that it would not be pursuing service transfer in the near future.

Current contract services provided by GCCSD include annual road repair including culvert maintenance, road grading and dust abatement, watering roads as needed for dust abatement, and snow removal and plowing.

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### Staffing

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The information on the number and type of staff that provides contract street maintenance services to the road associations was not provided by the District.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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There are approximately four miles of dirt roads within the District where GCCSD provides contract services. There are no signalized intersections. The condition of the roads was reported to be fair.

A challenge identified by GCCSD was that some of the roads were very steep and required special maintenance.

The road associations own a 1962 Austin Western road grader with attached snowplow, a 1975 International Dump Truck with attached snowplow and a 1975 Kenworth 3,000-gallon water truck. All equipment was reported to be in fair condition.

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### Infrastructure Needs

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The District reported that in FY 11-12, about 0.5 miles of roads were rehabilitated. There are approximately two more miles of roads that are in need of rehabilitation.

## **GREENHORN CREEK COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS**

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### **Growth and Population Projections**

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- ❖ Greenhorn Creek Community Services District (GCCSD) had a population of approximately 209 residents as of 2010.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years.
- ❖ GCCSD anticipates no growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. The District reported that there were no planned developments within its boundaries.

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### **The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI**

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### **Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies**

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- ❖ GCCSD appear to generally have sufficient capacity to provide water and road maintenance services. The District has recently added a new water storage tank and a new well.
- ❖ Marginal capacity is available to provide fire services to Greenhorn Creek residents. Although there is sufficient equipment, the District is in need of additional firefighters.
- ❖ The District planned its water infrastructure needs in its master plan, which was adopted in 2005 and has not been updated since. It is recommended that the District periodically review capital improvement needs as economic and financial circumstances change.
- ❖ GCCSD does not plan for its capital improvements related to fire protection facilities and equipment. The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan for the fire department to identify future financing needs and sources for these needs.
- ❖ No current infrastructure needs were reported for the GCCSD fire department.
- ❖ No further water infrastructure needs were identified by the District.

- ❖ There are approximately two miles of roads within the District that are in need of rehabilitation.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that its current financing levels were adequate to deliver water and road maintenance services, but not sufficient to provide fire services.
- ❖ Water services are primarily financed through water sales and standby assessments. Water rates were last updated in 2007.
- ❖ Fire services are financed through property taxes and special assessments. To improve the fire department's financing and build up a capital reserve, the District has been allocating a large portion of its property taxes to the fire department.
- ❖ The District spends about \$70,000 annually on providing contractual road services to two road associations. The associations collect dues from community residents based on an annual budget adopted at each association's annual meetings.
- ❖ GCCSD has a financial reserve in its enterprise fund. The informal goal of the District is to have about \$100,000 for contingencies.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ Greenhorn Creek Station is used as a fire station and a town meeting hall for community and road association meetings.
- ❖ GCCSD has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD and Long Valley CSD and automatic aid agreement with Long Valley CSD.
- ❖ The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association, Special District Association and the Community Services Districts Association.
- ❖ GCCSD collaborates with Quincy FPD and other fire departments in Plumas County in its attempt to obtain a grant that would finance recruitment efforts.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ GCCSD demonstrated partial accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. Although the District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests, responses to service-specific questionnaires required multiple follow-up attempts.
- ❖ GCCSD practices outreach efforts and has a website where some district information is made available to the public.
- ❖ With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that consolidation with another fire and/or water provider would be theoretically an option; however, other providers are generally not in close proximity to GCCSD, which limits opportunities for reorganization.

## **6. INDIAN VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

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Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD) provides retail water, fire protection, emergency medical, lighting, park and recreation, and wastewater treatment and collection services. Additionally, the District provides contract general manager services to the Indian Valley Ambulance Service Association through a joint powers agreement. A municipal service review (MSR) for was previously initiated for IVCSD in conjunction with Crescent Mills FPD by LAFCo in 2004, but was never completed. This is the first municipal service review for the District.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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#### **Background**

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IVCSD was formed in 1993<sup>55</sup> after a reorganization of Greenville Community Services District, Taylorsville Fire Protection District and Taylorsville County Service Area into a single district. The formation resolution does not identify which services the newly formed district is authorized to provide. The District continued providing services that were offered by its predecessor agencies.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.<sup>56</sup> CSDs may potentially provide a wide array of services, including water supply, wastewater, solid waste, police and fire protection, street lighting and landscaping, airport, recreation and parks, mosquito abatement, library services; street maintenance and drainage services, ambulance service, utility undergrounding, transportation, abate graffiti, flood protection, weed abatement, hydroelectric power, among various other services. CSDs are required to gain LAFCo approval to provide those services permitted by the principal act but not performed by the end of 2005 (i.e., latent powers).<sup>57</sup>

IVCSD is located in the middle of northern Plumas County and encompasses the communities of Greenville, Crescent Mills and Taylorsville. The nearest providers of similar services are Crescent Mills Fire Protection District and Indian Valley Parks and Recreation District, both of which IVCSD overlaps.

#### **Boundaries**

The District's bounds encompass approximately 18.6 square miles. Since its formation, there have been five annexations to the District. The most recent annexation occurred in 1999 and included the North Valley and the Diamond Mountain areas. All boundary changes made to IVCSD are shown in Figure 6-1.

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<sup>55</sup> LAFCo Resolution 93-1.

<sup>56</sup> Government Code §61000-61226.5.

<sup>57</sup> Government Code §61106.

**Figure 6-1: Indian Valley CSD Boundary History**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Pew Annexation	Annexation	1994	LAFCo, BOE
Olding/Seegmiller Annexation	Annexation	1994	LAFCo, BOE
Crescent Mills	Annexation	1995	LAFCo, BOE
Cassity/Kingdon Annex	Annexation	1995	LAFCo, BOE
North Valley/Diamond Mountain	Annexation	1999	LAFCo, BOE

*Sphere of Influence*

At present, IVCSO does not have an adopted sphere of influence. LAFCo records show that a sphere study was to be conducted following the reorganization of Greenville CSD and Taylorsville CSA in 1993; however, it appears that the study was never completed and an SOI never adopted for the newly formed district. Following the adoption of this service review, LAFCo will begin the process of adopting an SOI for the District.

*Extra-territorial Services*

Although IVCSO provides fire services to Crescent Mills FPD on occasion through an automatic aid agreement, these services are technically provided within IVCSO’s bounds as it overlaps the entirety of Crescent Mills FPD. IVCSO also maintains mutual aid agreements with all other fire service providers in Plumas County.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of IVCSO, the District’s service area includes areas within its bounds, with the exception of Crescent Mills, and extends beyond its bounds along the various roads that enter the area. The service area encompasses about 34.7 square miles. IVCSO, similar to other fire districts in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement, with the exception of motor vehicle accidents for which it has an adopted fee schedule. However, it should be noted that there are no records of the District actually billing and receiving payment for these services over the last six years since the fees were adopted.

With regard to water and wastewater services, the District is not aware of any extra-territorial service connections; however, some district-owned property and facilities are outside of the LAFCo-approved boundaries, including a portion of the Greenville system wastewater treatment ponds and the Round Valley Reservoir.

IVCSO’s park and recreation services are available to residents and non-residents of the District alike.

*Areas of Interest*

Of particular interest to the District is the Crescent Mills community. This area is already within IVCSO’s boundaries, but is also within Crescent Mills FPD’s bounds. Crescent Mills FPD provides first responder fire services to the area; while IVCSO provides fire and emergency medical services in the area through an automatic aid agreement.

# Indian Valley Fire Protection Providers

Range 9 East

Range 10 East

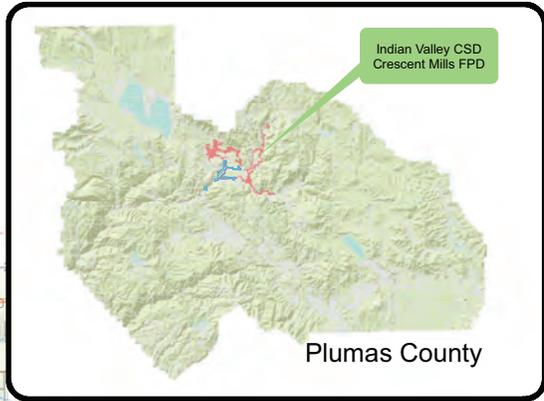
Range 11 East

Township 28 North

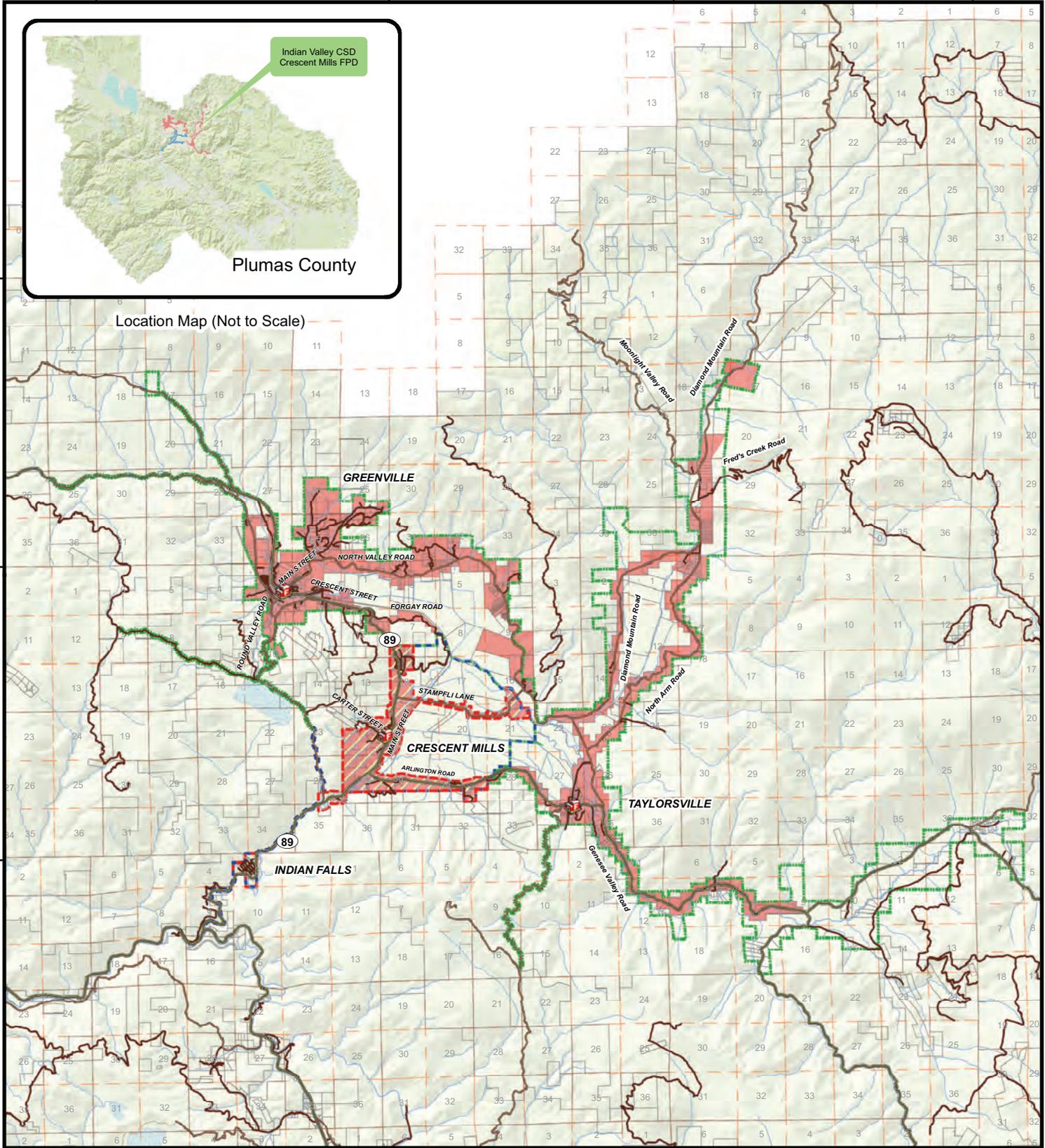
Township 27 North

Township 26 North

Township 25 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)



## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

- Indian Valley CSD
- Crescent Mills FPD
- Crescent Mills FPD (SOI)
- Crescent Mills FPD (ESN)
- Indian Valley CSD (ESN)



Indian Valley CSD  
Resolution: 93-1  
Formed: April 28, 1993

Crescent Mills FPD (SOI)  
Resolution: 08-10  
Adopted: June 9, 2008

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 9/28/2013

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## Accountability and Governance

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The District’s governing body consists of a five-member board that is elected at large to four year terms. Elections are generally uncontested. Board members and their respective term expiration dates are shown in Figure 6-3.

Board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm. Ten months of the year the meetings are held at the Greenville Townhall; during the other two months, one meeting is held in Taylorsville and one meeting in Crescent Mills. Meeting agendas are posted on the district website, at the CSD office, Greenville and Crescent Mills post offices, fire station in Taylorsville, and Evergreen grocery store. Minutes are made available on the District’s website, at the CSD office, and in the subsequent meeting agenda package.

**Figure 6-3: Indian Valley CSD Governing Body**

<b>Indian Valley Community Services District</b>					
<i>District Contact Information</i>					
<b>Contact:</b>	Jesse Lawson, General Manager				
<b>Address:</b>	P.O. Box 899, 127 Crescent Street, Greenville, CA 95947				
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-284-7224				
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.indianvalleycsd.com/home.htm">http://www.indianvalleycsd.com/home.htm</a>				
<i>Board of Directors</i>					
Member Name	Position	Began Serving	Term Expires	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Jane Braxton Little	Director	2004	2015	Elected	4 years
Blake Shelters	Director	2011	2017	Elected	4 years
Mike Yost	Director	2004	2015	Elected	4 years
Brad Smith	Chair	2009	2017	Elected	4 years
Judy Yocum	Director	2009	2017	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>					
<b>Date/Time:</b>	Second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm				
<b>Location:</b>	IVCSD Office 10 months, Taylorsville 1 month, Crescent Mills 1 month				
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Agendas are posted on the district website, the CSD office, Greenville and Crescent Mills post offices, fire station in Taylorsville, Evergreen grocery store				
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available on the District’s website, at the CSD office, and in meeting agenda packages				

Constituent outreach efforts, in addition to the legally required agendas and minutes, consist of mailing out the annual water quality report to district residents, inserts in water bills regarding any update of interest to the public, and a district website. The District makes available public documents, meeting information, contact information, and board meeting recordings on its website. The District also operates a Facebook page where additional information is made available.

Complaints are accepted via website, email, phone call, or in person. All complaints are documented in a complaint book covering the type of complaint, the employee assigned to address the complaint, and the resolution. The general manager is responsible for ensuring the complaints are handled to resolution. Occasionally, the Board’s public relation

committee will meet and address complaints or community concerns, particularly when there is a pattern or trend in complaints. In 2011, there were six complaints—the primary complaint was that office hours were not consistent. In 2012, there were nine complaints—one third of which were related to taste and color of water and most other complaints were regarding problems with water meters.

IVCSD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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IVCSD employs four full-time and two part-time staff, consisting of full-time office manager, chief water/sewer operator, water treatment and sewer operator, and fire chief positions, a part-time general manager position, and a seasonal general maintenance position. Additionally, the District's fire department relies on 24 volunteers to provide fire services. The fire chief, office manager, and chief water operator report to the general manager, who in turn reports to the Board of Directors at monthly meetings. The water operator and general maintenance staff report to the chief water operator. Ambulance, accounting, bookkeeping, audit, lab water testing, legal counsel and business services are provided by contract service providers.

Employees have not been evaluated regularly. The District plans to initiate annual staff evaluations as it moves forward with making district-wide improvements. Staff work load is documented in time sheets, which are broken down by division and geographic area. Additionally, maintenance logs are maintained at each site.

Service on a district-wide level has not been evaluated, meaning that benchmarking with other similar providers or annual reports have not been completed. IVCSD reported that it intended to begin strategizing for future work needs, such as infrastructure and employment needs. The District is evaluated on a regular basis by various regulating agencies, such as the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Public Health, and the Insurance Service Office.

The District has adopted the following mission statement: To provide and manage the necessary services, for our community health, safety, well-being, and prosperity. Other than the mission statement, the District does not presently have any documents where goals are defined and adopted, such as a strategic plan. The District does maintain a complete set of policies, which are currently under review by the Ordinance Committee. Financial management practices include an annually adopted budget and historically sporadic audits. The District has not regularly conducted financial audits; however, it is in the process of rectifying this situation. The most recent audit was completed for FY 07. At present, the audits for FYs 08, 09 and 10, as well as a forensic audit, are in draft form and nearing adoption. Upon adoption of these audits, the District will begin work on the FYs 11, 12 and 13 audits. The District plans to complete the FY 11, 12 and 13 audits in May 2014, and the FY 14 audit will be completed on time. There are no other planning documents of note, such as a capital improvement plan or master plans. Capital improvement needs are planned for on an annual basis in the budget.

IVCSD has had challenges complying with audit requirements in the past. With the new management, the District is working to bring all financial records up-to-date and ensure transparency in expenditures that was previously lacking. Similarly, IVCSD failed to submit the financial report to the State Controller’s Office in FY 10-11 and FY 11-12, which is required to be submitted annually by State law.<sup>58</sup>

## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

The lands within the District consist of several land use designations, including single family residential, rural residential, secondary suburban residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural preserve, and resort and recreation. The District’s bounds encompass approximately 18.6 square miles.

### Population

As of 2010, the District had a population of approximately 2,479 residents, based on GIS analysis.

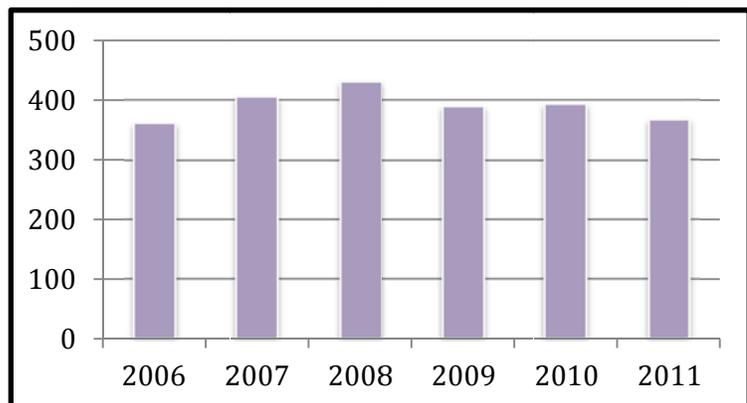
### Existing Demand

The District reported that demand for services in recent years had been relatively static. Occupancy in the area has reportedly marginally decreased, and related demand for services has remained relatively unchanged.

While demand associated with population has remained unchanged, such as the number of water or wastewater connections, other factors have had an impact on the amount of water provided and the amount of wastewater treated. For example, the District has made efforts to minimize the amount of unaccounted lost water in the distribution systems, which has reduced the volume that must be taken from the water sources. Similarly, the District has taken steps to reduce infiltration and inflow in the wastewater systems, resulting in a reduction in wastewater treated during wet weather.

**Figure 6-4: Indian Valley CSD Calls for Fire Service, 2008-2011**

Figure 6-4 shows the number of calls for emergency services in recent years. As can be seen, the number of calls peaked in 2008 and has steadily declined to the present.



The District reported that it experienced peak call volume in the early morning hours (5am). Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

<sup>58</sup> Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year.

### Projected Growth and Development

IVCSD does not make any formal population projections, but generally anticipates little change in population growth in the area over the next few years.

There is one planned subdivision in the area. Permits for the Round Valley development have been issued for 29 lots. Building of these lots has not yet begun, as the landowner has entered foreclosure. The District has filed liens on all lots in the proposed development. IVCSD planned to provide services to the new development upon completion.

The addition of the Round Valley connections would maximize the capacity of IVCSD's Greenville wastewater system. Any additional connections (inside the District's bounds in the Greenville area) will reportedly require capacity enhancements to the wastewater system. The water system and water sources reportedly have sufficient capacity to provide services to anticipated demand, as does the fire department.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 2,479 in 2010 to approximately 2,578 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

### Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

With respect to fire services, the County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCo are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>59</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>60</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>61</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>62</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>63</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>64</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>65</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>66</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>67</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>68</sup>
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>69</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

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<sup>59</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>60</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>69</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 12)The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space though conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.
- 13)The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.
- 14)In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.
- 15)New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.
- 16)New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 17)The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.
- 18)Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>70</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.

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<sup>70</sup> Plumas County General Plan, *Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures*, 2010.

- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to governance structure options, the District has considered consolidation with Crescent Mills FPD in some form; however, no serious steps towards reorganization have been taken to date. IVCS D's Fire Department has indicated interest in operating independently of the CSD, whether it is as a newly formed fire protection district or if the current territory served were annexed into Crescent Mills FPD. IVCS D's Board plans to consider these options, as well as the option of continuing to provide fire services under the umbrella of the CSD. Should the CSD choose to continue to provide fire services, it is recommended that the District come to LAFCo to differentiate between the fire and water and wastewater service areas, which would ensure ease of annexation of additional territory for the purpose of fire service provision and promote the goal of a valley-wide fire provider.

Additionally, another governance option is some form of reorganization of park services with Indian Valley Recreation and Park District, given that the two agencies provide a similar category of park and recreation services within bounds that overlap one another. IVCS D has also recently sent a letter of support to the County for a countywide lighting district, which would result in the divesting of lighting services by the District.

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## Financing

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The District reported that its existing financing levels were adequate to deliver services if used appropriately. However, the District faces a particular challenge serving an area with a high rate of low-income households, where property tax income has declined and bills are sometimes unpaid. Additionally, the District's population has been aging, as families with children have migrated out of the community.

The District is looking for potential additional funding sources, such as State grants for disadvantaged communities, asking for donations, or selling surface water. Simultaneously, the District has worked to reduce costs by using a hydroelectric generator (currently in the testing phase) to reduce electricity costs.

There are concerns of fraud and embezzlement on the part of former management. Consequently, the District is in the process of conducting a forensic audit for the time

period in question (FYs 07-12). Financial records from FY 08 to FY 12 are lacking, and the District is piecing together this information as it goes through the audit process. Starting in FY 13, when the District hired new management, district financial records became more transparent. As the District has not yet completed an audit for FY 12 (the time period covered for all other districts reviewed in this document) and clear unaudited records are not available for that fiscal year, all information reported here is based on unaudited actuals as reported by IVCSO for FY 13.

The District relies on property tax revenue and donations to finance the fire, park and recreation, and lighting services. Water and wastewater utilities are financed through rates collected for the respective utility. Each utility is tracked through a separate enterprise fund by system (i.e., Greenville, Taylorsville).

In FY 13, total revenues were \$833,621, of which 26 percent was property tax income, and the other 74 percent came from charges for water and wastewater services.

The District last updated water and wastewater rates in 2013. Effective rates for water consist of a flat monthly rate dependent upon meter size (i.e., \$32.09 per 5/8 inch meter) and usage rates of \$2.47 per 100 cubic feet of water. Additionally, water users pay a fee of \$3.00 per month, which goes toward the Plumas County loan and a fee of \$2.44, which is allocated to the USDA loan reserve. Sewer system users pay a flat rate of \$18 per month for each living unit on the property.

Additionally, the District has reportedly adopted a fee schedule for a fire service cost recovery program. The District has adopted charges for services provided to motor vehicle accidents to which it responds outside of its bounds; however, there are no records of the District billing for services and collecting the revenue. Rates are hourly for equipment and personnel as follows:

Each truck: \$85/hr

Chief : \$30/hr

Officers: \$25/hr

EMT: \$22/hr

Firefighter: \$21/hr

Base Operator: \$18/hr

In FY 13, expenses totaled \$731,939. Primary expenses included payroll (37 percent), professional services (15 percent), utilities (10 percent), and permits and inspections (eight percent).

The District does not have a formal capital improvement plan. Capital projects are planned for on an annual basis. The District uses a combination of debt financing and cash to cover capital expenses. As of the end of FY 13, the District had \$2.9 million in long term debt, of which \$2.2 million is attributable to purchase of and improvements to the Greenville water system. The remaining debt consists of \$261,992 attributable to expansion of the Greenville sewer system, \$169,757 for improvements to the Crescent Mills water system, \$132,204 for a fire rescue vehicle, and \$130,000 on a Rural Community

Assistance Corporation bridge loan. Annual payments on these loans total approximately \$192,000.

The District does not have any formal policies regarding reserves. IVCSO is required to maintain a reserve as part of its USDA loan in the amount of one year of payments for each loan, which totals \$157,088. IVCSO is not presently meeting this requirement, as the District's fund balance at the end of FY 13 was minimal.

IVCSO participates in several joint powers authorities to jointly finance or manage services or property. The District is a member to an agreement with Indian Valley Recreation and Park District regarding Triangle Park. IVCSO agreed to accept ownership of the newly constructed park and provide necessary watering for landscaping. IVRPD agreed to administer grant funds it had received for the construction of the park and to be responsible for any necessary maintenance or repairs at the park. Also, the District provides contract general manager services to the Indian Valley Ambulance Service Association through a joint powers agreement.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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IVCSD provides structural and wildland fire protection, emergency medical (consisting of basic life support), hazardous material first response, and rescue services to the residents of Indian Valley.

#### *Collaboration*

IVCSD has an automatic aid agreement with Crescent Mills FPD for the entirety of the territory within Crescent Mills FPD with the exception of Indian Falls. The District has mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, USFS and CAL FIRE. The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association.

#### *Dispatch and Communications*

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in the northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCO-approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

IVCSD reported that it was satisfied with the level of dispatch service provided by the Sheriff's Office. The District did not identify any aspects of the service there were in need of improvement.

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### **Staffing**

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IVCSD Fire Department has 24 sworn personnel, which consists entirely of volunteer officers and firefighters overseen by a paid chief. The full-time chief is the only paid sworn staff with a monthly salary of \$2,400; all other firefighters are not compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 54.6, with a range from 25 to 83.

The District reported that staffing levels have remained relatively unchanged in recent years. At present, IVCSD's roster is full; consequently, the District is not actively conducting any recruitment activities.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the firefighter to perform essential and advanced fire ground tasks, as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes

training on various fire ground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>71</sup> IVCSO has 16 Volunteer Firefighter, no Firefighter 1, four First Responder EMT, four EMT 1, and two Paramedic certified personnel.

The District offers at least 12 hours of training for sworn personnel each month, of which volunteers are required to attend at least eight hours. The District reported that one of the primary challenges to training is the limited availability of volunteers.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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IVCSO owns and operates four fire stations located throughout Indian Valley, all of which are unstaffed.

The Greenville Fire Station was previously owned by the Greenville Fire Protection District, prior to the reorganization of the districts in the area; based on information provided by the County Assessor's Office, the station appears to continue to be owned by Greenville FPD, although the agency technically no longer exists. It is recommended that IVCSO ensure that the property is in the name of the proper owner. The station is located at 121 Ann Street in Greenville. The station was built in 1932 and is considered to be in fair condition by the District, due to its age and size constraints. The station houses two pumpers, one rescue vehicle, and one water tender.

The Taylorsville Station, the North Arm Station, and the Genesee Station were previously owned by the Taylorsville Fire Protection District prior to reorganization; similar to the Greenville Station, records on ownership of these stations continue to show the former fire protection district as the owner although the agency no longer exists. The Taylorsville Station was built in 1952 and is reportedly in good condition. Similar to the Greenville Station, the Taylorsville Station houses two pumpers, one rescue vehicle, and one water tender. The North Arm Station was built in 1995 and is reportedly in good condition. The North Arm Station houses two pumpers. The Genesee Fire Station was built in 1998, and is also considered to be in good condition. The Genesee Station does not house any vehicles.

With regard to water storage that can be used for fire protection purposes, the District maintains one million gallons in storage tanks located at the two water systems (Greenville and Crescent Mills). The District also has two water tenders with a combined storage capacity of 7,700 gallons.

It appears that the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. Facilities and equipment appear to be sufficient. Volunteer time constraints are a concern should demand increase in the future.

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<sup>71</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District reported that the Greenville Fire Station is outdated and overcrowded. As the main district station, the District reported it would like to have room for two more vehicles, plus equipment. At present, the District does not have plans for improvements or expansion to the station, given financing constraints.

Although the vehicles are somewhat older, they are reportedly in good working condition, and no replacements are necessary at this time.

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## Challenges

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Areas that are considered the most difficult to serve within IVCSO are Genesee and Antelope Lake, due to the distance from the center of the District. The primary challenges to service identified by the District include limited funding and unreliable volunteer availability. Given the nature of operating an entirely volunteer fire department, availability of personnel is dependent on daily job and personal schedules of the individual firefighters. This constraint can limit the number hours volunteers are able to conduct training and the times that the firefighter can respond to calls for service.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. IVCSO has an ISO rating of four in urban areas and 8 in rural areas. These results are based on an evaluation in 2005.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>72</sup> IVCSO falls under the definition of rural and remote demand zones.

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<sup>72</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

Emergency medical response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. Based on a sample of response times provided by IVCSO for September 2013 its median response time is five minutes, and 11.6 minutes 90 percent of the time. Median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times include incidents that occurred outside of the District's boundaries, but within its service area.

The service area size<sup>73</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles. By comparison, each fire station in IVCSO serves approximately 8.7 square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD. By comparison, IVCSO has approximately 10 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>73</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 6-5: Indian Valley CSD Fire Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
Fire station	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
Greenville Fire Station	121 Ann St. Greenville, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	2 pumpers, 1 rescue vehicle, 1 water tender	
Taylorville Fire Station	4290 Nelson St. Taylorville, CA	Good	Unstaffed	2 pumpers, 1 rescue vehicle, 1 water tender	
North Arm Fire Station	6433 North Arm Rd. Taylorville, CA	Good	Unstaffed	2 pumpers	
Genesee Fire Station	5497 Fir Fork Rd. Taylorville, CA	Good	Unstaffed	None	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> IVCSO does not currently share fire service facilities with other agencies or organizations.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> IVCSO did not identify any future facility sharing opportunities.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
The Greenville Fire Station is outdated and lacks necessary space for vehicles and equipment. As the primary district station, it should have room for two more vehicles and equipment. There are presently no plans for expansion or new facilities given financing constraints.					
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2013	Configuration Base Year	2013	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	4	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	367
Stations Serving District	4	EMS	Direct	% EMS	64%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	8.7	Ambulance Transport	South Lassen EMS	% Fire/Hazardous M	14%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	24	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	Unknown
Total Volunteer Firefighters	23	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CHP	% Misc. emergency	4%
Total Call Firefighters	1	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency	17%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	6	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	NP
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	9.7	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	148
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2013	Areas that are considered the most difficult to serve are Genesee and Antelope Lake due to distance from the center of the District. Service challenges include limited funding and volunteer availability.			
Median Response Time (min)	5	Training			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	11.6	The District offers 12 hours minimum of volunteer firefighter training per month.			
ISO Rating	4/8				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
IVCSO has an automatic aid agreement with Crescent Mills FPD for the entirety of the territory within Crescent Mills FPD with the exception of Indian Falls. IVCSO also maintains mutual aid agreements with all other fire service providers in Plumas County.					
Notes:					
1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.					
2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.					
3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## WATER SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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IVCSD supplies potable water to the communities of Greenville and Crescent Mills. All other areas (i.e., Taylorsville) within the District's bounds rely on private well systems. The District serves a total of 664 water connections—582 connections in the Greenville system and 82 connections in the Crescent Mills system. All connections in both systems are metered, and monthly billings are made according to water usage.

IVCSD does not collaborate with other agencies on the provision of water services.

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### Staffing

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IVCSD maintains one chief operator/general manager, and one operator/maintenance employee who are responsible for all aspects related to the operation, maintenance and repair of both the water and sewer systems, along with any equipment maintenance and repair. Personnel are also charged with some capital improvement projects.

The chief operator maintains a certification level of T2 for treatment systems and D2 for distribution systems, which meets the system requirements for treatment and exceeds system requirements for distribution.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The water system for the town of Greenville is made up of groundwater from two wells, a water treatment plant with a 720,000-gallon storage tank, a 92,000-gallon tank, and 26 miles of pipes. Groundwater from two wells is the primary water source for the Greenville system. Wells 1 and 2 were drilled in 2009 and 2011. The two wells are able to pump up to 270 gallons per minute (gpm) combined of water from the Indian Valley groundwater basin. The District presently pumps approximately 240 gpm on average. Based on a recent groundwater report from a firm hired by IVCSD, the groundwater basin appears to have a sustainable yield of 260 gpm. The water is generally of good quality; however, in 2007, Radium 228 was found in excess of recommended health limits. Since then, Radium 228 has returned to acceptable levels.

The Greenville treatment plant was built in 2009 and is considered by the District to be in excellent condition. The plant can provide membrane treatment to up to one million gallons per day (mgd) of water. On average, the District treats 0.29 mgd, which constitutes 29 percent of the treatment plant's capacity. During peak demand periods the District treats 0.44 mgd or 44 percent of the plant's capacity.

The Greenville distribution system consists of a combination of steel boiler tube pipe dating from the 1930s (10 percent), asbestos cement (10 percent), PVC (40 percent), high density polyethylene (10 percent), and C900 (30 percent). The system is entirely gravity fed. The mains are generally in poor condition as indicated by the high rate of unaccounted for loss in the system. Approximately 50 percent of treated water was lost from the Greenville system and was not sold to customers in 2012. This loss is attributed primarily to breaks and leaks—the steel portions are most prone to these leaks. The loss has been reduced somewhat over the last seven years. In 2005, the system lost approximately 68

percent of treated water. A portion of the loss can be attributed to a replacement project in which new C900 lines were installed, but the old steel lines were not shut down upon completion of the project. These lines have been identified and turned off. Additionally, the District is working to replace deficient sections, as opposed to just making repairs. Most recently, the District completed replacement of 1,200 feet of main and 12 service connections.

Residents of Crescent Mills are served by a separate system, which is comprised of groundwater from a spring, a treatment plant, and a 231,000-gallon storage tank, as well as three miles of distribution mains. The Crescent Mills system also has one well, which is used for back up purposes. The District has rights to 47 percent of the flow from Russell Springs, which flows out of Old Green Mountain Mine Tunnel #6. Total flow from the spring averages 0.3 cubic feet per second (cfs), 47 percent of which is 0.13 cfs or 83,870 gpd. The spring water is generally of good quality; however, in 2008, arsenic in excess of the legal limit was found in the Crescent Mills water. Since then, arsenic levels have returned to acceptable levels. Additionally, the water source has three main contaminants of interest that are naturally occurring—iron, manganese, and turbidity. A majority of the turbidity is believed to be related to the iron concentration. The treatment plant provides a treatment process for both iron and manganese; however, the concentration of manganese in the treated water can occasionally exceed the maximum contaminant limit.

It is unknown when the treatment plant was constructed in Crescent Mills; however, the plant is reportedly in good condition. The plant can provide greensand filter treatment to up to 100,000 gpd of water. On average in 2012, the District treated 28,650 gpd at this plant, which constituted 29 percent of the treatment plant's capacity. During peak demand periods the District treated 58,400 gpd or 58 percent of the plant's capacity.

The Crescent Mills distribution system consists of 75 percent C900, 20 percent PVC, and five percent steel. The system is entirely gravity fed. The mains are generally in good condition. While the Crescent Mills system previously experienced high water losses similar to that of the Greenville system, improvements to the system have resulted in significant improvements to accountability. In 2005, the system experienced a loss of 76 percent of all treated water. In 2012, the total loss of water was reduced to 43 percent. Most recently, in 2013, the District is experiencing losses of only about four percent.

In addition to the water sources already discussed, IVCS D maintains two additional wells—one at Clay park that is used for irrigation and the public pool, and one inactive well at Greenville Community Park. IVCS D also reportedly maintains pre-1914 rights to surface water from North Creek (2cfs), Round Valley Reservoir (Lake Bidwell), and Buckeye Springs.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The Greenville distribution system suffers from a particularly high rate of unaccounted for loss of 50 percent. This means that somewhere between the treatment plant and the connections, almost half of the treated water is lost through breaks and leaks. This is a particularly high rate of loss that the District is working to address. The District has plans to replace all steel mains; however, there are financial constraints, which limit funding for

any significant capital improvements. The District's current priority is to build reserves; once financially viable, the District plans to complete the replacement projects.

In the long term, the District would like to address some undersized mains and areas that are distant from hydrants in the Greenville system.

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## Challenges

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The District reported that the primary challenge to providing adequate services is limited funding. Until recently, water charges had not been increased since 2006, and the District was marginally able to cover all operating expenses, with little left over for necessary capital improvements. In 2013, the District updated rates to ensure revenues will adequately cover operational, capital, and reserve needs.

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## Service Adequacy

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This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including the California Department of Public Health system evaluation, drinking water quality, and distribution system integrity.

The DPH is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts and the operational permitting and regulatory oversight of public water systems. Domestic water providers of at least 200 connections are subject to inspections by DPH. The Greenville system exceeds 200 connections and is therefore subject to DPH inspections. The most recent inspection occurred in September 2013; however, the report had not been finalized as of the drafting of this report. Prior to that, the most recent inspection occurred in 2008; consequently, that review is too dated to be informative for the purpose of this review.

The County Environmental Health Agency is responsible for the enforcement of the federal and California Safe Drinking Water Acts, and the operational permitting and regulatory oversight of public water systems of 199 connections or less. These systems are subject to inspections by the County Environmental Health Agency. IVCS's Crescent Mills system is subject to inspections by the County. The most recent inspection occurred in January 2012. The report states "overall the system appears well managed," and also notes that "the water system continues to accomplish improvements as time and resources allow." The inspection identified a need for a written treatment plant operations plan, line disinfection program, valve maintenance program, and line flushing program. The report also offered praise for the water accountability program that the District had instituted.

Drinking water quality is determined by a combination of historical violations reported by the EPA since 2000 and the percent of time that the District was in compliance with Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2011. Since 2003, the District has had four health violations, all of which were related to treatment technique, and four monitoring violations. All violations were regarding the Greenville system. This equates to approximately 6.25 violations per 1,000 connections served. In 2012, the District was within legal limits for all contaminants in the Greenville system 100 percent of the time, while the level of manganese exceeded maximum contaminant limits on two occasions in the Crescent Mills system.

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. IVCS D reported approximately 66 breaks and leaks per 100 miles of pipe lines in 2012 in the Crescent Mills system and approximately 211 breaks and leaks per 100 miles of pipe lines in the Greenville system. The District estimated that approximately 50 percent of water is lost between the water source and the connections served in the Greenville system. In 2012, the Crescent Mills system was only slightly better with approximately 40 percent of water lost; however, it appears that losses have declined to about four percent in 2013.

## WASTEWATER SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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IVCSD provides wastewater collection and treatment at its facilities in Taylorsville and Greenville. The two systems are subject to two separate permits issued by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB).<sup>74</sup> The permit for the Taylorsville system became effective in 1995 and expired in 2005. The Greenville permit became effective in 1999 and is set to expire in 2015.

Maintenance services include regular repairs, as well as inspections of the system through CCTV and smoke testing to look for breaks or leaks. The District has in the past targeted certain areas of concern for smoke inspections. The District is planning to start a regular CCTV inspection of portions of the systems each year, with the goal of inspecting both systems in their entirety.

The Taylorsville system serves 91 users. The Greenville system is made up of 351 connections. In total, the District serves 430 residential connections and 12 commercial connections. Over the last 10 years, wastewater flow has remained relatively static in both systems.

Within the District's boundaries, IVCSD estimates that there are approximately 15 parcels that are unserved as they rely on private septic systems.

IVCSD does not collaborate with other agencies on the provision of wastewater services.

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### Staffing

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IVCSD maintains one chief operator/general manager, and one operator/maintenance employee who are responsible for all aspects related to the operation, maintenance and repair of both the water and sewer systems, along with any equipment maintenance and repair. Personnel are also charged with some capital improvement projects.

The chief operator maintains a certification level of Wastewater Operator Grade 1, which meets the requirements of the system.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The Taylorsville system consists of five miles of collection mains and one lift station with two pumps. Effluent is collected into a community leachfield system. The system was constructed in the mid-1980s. Effluent is discharged into an 81,000-gallon septic tank prior to disposal to seven acres of leachfields. The collection system is comprised of 100 percent PVC pipes. The design flow capacity of the system is 40,000 gallons per day (gpd). The District treats on average 11,500 gpd in the Taylorsville system, which is 29 percent of the system's design flow.

The Greenville system is made up of 11 miles of collection mains, five pump stations, 170 manholes, and 29 acres of lagoons. The Greenville system was initially built in 1959. A

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<sup>74</sup> RWQCB Waste Discharge Requirements 99-046 (Greenville) and 95-162 (Taylorsville).

majority of the collection system is made of vitreous clay pipe, which is in need of replacement. The design flow of the system is 0.4 million gallons per day (mgd). The District treats on average 0.13 mgd in the Greenville system, which is 32 percent of the system's design flow.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The Greenville collection system is aged and in need of replacement. The mains suffer from infiltration and inflow (I/I) during wet periods. It is recommended that the District develop a regular replacement schedule to ensure that all deficient segments are replaced and the current I/I issue mitigated.

While not apparent on average days of demand, the flows during wet weather have exceeded the design capacity of the Greenville treatment plant. The Greenville system is in need of an engineer's report to determine the extent of any remaining capacity, identify necessary improvements to maximize available capacity in the system, and minimize I/I, prior to the addition of any new connections. The District has made great efforts at reducing the I/I problem by smoke testing to identify infiltration points and making appropriate repairs. In 2011, during a peak wet weather event, the plant experienced flows of 26 mg, which is 20,000 percent more flow than on an average day. During that particular event, the pond overflowed into Wolfe Creek. Subsequent to this overflow, the District conducted smoke testing and identified 138 infiltration points in the system and made repairs. Following these repairs, during a 2012 rain event of similar proportion to the 2011 event, the plant had flows of six mg, which is significantly reduced from the prior year, but still in excess of the capacity of the plant.

The District does not have plans to make replacements to the system in the near future, but instead plans to inspect the entire system with CCTV and continue to make targeted repairs.

While not strictly an infrastructure deficiency, it is recommended that the District develop a more detailed and effective Sewer System Management Plan to address deficiencies in the systems.

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## Challenges

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The District reported that the primary challenge to providing adequate services is restricted funding. Until recently, wastewater charges had not been increased since 2006. At the previous rate structure, the District was marginally able to cover all operating expenses, with little left over for necessary capital improvements. In 2013, the District reviewed rates and made appropriate changes to ensure satisfactory funding.

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## Service Adequacy

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This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including regulatory compliance, treatment effectiveness, sewer overflows and collection system integrity.

IVCSD had two violations between the period from January 1, 2010 to October 15, 2013. Both violations were for unauthorized discharges of untreated effluent into Wolf Creek—

one on August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010 and one on April 12<sup>th</sup> 2011. Both discharges resulted in notice of violations from the RWQCB, but no formal enforcement action was taken.

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. The District reported that in 2012, it was never out of compliance with effluent quality requirements.

Wastewater agencies are required to report sewer system overflows (SSOs) to SWRCB. Overflows reflect the capacity and condition of collection system piping and the effectiveness of routine maintenance. The sewer overflow rate is calculated as the number of overflows per 100 miles of collection piping. IVCSO reported two overflows in its Taylorsville system during the period from 2010 to 2012, and consequently, the overflow rate is 40. In the Greenville system, IVCSO also reported two overflows during the same period, so the overflow rate is 18.

There are several measures of integrity of the wastewater collection system, including peaking factors, efforts to address infiltration and inflow (I/I), and inspection practices. Wastewater flow includes not only discharges from residences, businesses, institutions, and industrial establishments, but also infiltration and inflow. Infiltration refers to groundwater that seeps into sewer pipes through cracks, pipe joints and other system leaks. Inflow refers to rainwater that enters the sewer system from sources such as yard and patio drains, roof gutter downspouts, uncapped cleanouts, pond or pool overflow drains, footing drains, cross-connections with storm drains, and even holes in manhole covers.<sup>75</sup> Infiltration and inflow tend to affect older sewer systems to a greater degree. Infiltration and inflow rates are highest during or right after heavy rain. They are the primary factors driving peak flows through the wastewater system and a major consideration in capacity planning and costs. The peaking factor is the ratio of peak day wet weather flows to average dry weather flows. The District reported that the peak day flows in 2013 in the Greenville and Taylorsville systems were 1.1 mgd and 18,000 gpd, respectively. While the average dry weather flows of these systems in 2013 were 67,000 gpd in the Greenville system and 11,500 gpd in the Taylorsville system. Therefore the Greenville system has a peaking factor of 16, while the Taylorsville system has a peaking factor of 1.6. The Greenville peaking factor is indicative of the extremely high I/I discussed earlier. The Taylorsville peaking factor indicates minimal I/I in the relatively new system.

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<sup>75</sup> A sewer cleanout is a pipe rising from the underground sewer line to the ground surface with a removable cap; it is used to access the sewer line to clear blockages.

## **PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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IVCSD offers park and recreation services in the form of ownership and maintenance of three parks and ownership of a community pool, all of which are made available to residents and non-residents alike. The District does not offer or plan recreation programs at these facilities through district staff, but leases the pool to Indian Valley Recreation and Park District (IVRPD) for operation and recreational activities during the summer and maintains a memorandum of understanding with the local Little League for use of the baseball fields.

The District previously managed a campground, which it leased from the U.S. Forest Service. The lease expired in 2012 and was not renewed.

As previously mentioned in the Financing section, the District owns Triangle Park through a joint powers agreement with Indian Valley Recreation and Park District (IVRPD). Operations and maintenance of the park are conducted in coordination with IVRPD.

There appears to be some overlap in the type of services offered with IVRPD, as both agencies provide services within the same general park and recreation category. However, IVCSD's services largely focus on making park facilities available for public use, while IVRPD operates a recreation center and the pool, which offer more recreational activities. There may be potential for further collaborative efforts between the two districts, or perhaps some form of functional consolidation or reorganization to eliminate this duplication of efforts by the two agencies.

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### **Staffing**

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During six months of the year when the parks are open to the public, district staff dedicate approximately 20 hours a week to park maintenance on average. In addition to regular maintenance activities, the District also conducts necessary special maintenance and improvement projects, which require supplementary staff time. During the period when the parks are open, IVCSD hires a seasonal part-time employee to conduct regular maintenance activities. The general manager and operator are also available when required.

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### **Facilities and Capacity**

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IVCSD owns three parks (two in Greenville and one in Taylorsville) and a pool. The Greenville Community Park (7.5 acres) and Chuck Clay Park (0.3 acres) are considered to be in good condition. The Triangle Park (0.02 acres) is reportedly in excellent condition. The Indian Valley Community Pool is operated by IVRPD and is considered to be generally in good condition by IVCSD.

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### **Infrastructure Needs**

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No significant needs at the parks were identified. The District does not presently have plans for significant park facility improvements or new facilities.

While the pool is considered to be in good condition, the District has plans for certain maintenance activities, due to root intrusion in the cement surrounding the pool. The District recently replaced the cement around the pool, and plans to remove the encroaching cedar tree to prevent further damage. The fencing surrounding the pool also needs to be relocated/expanded.

IVCSD is reportedly working with the County and IVRPD to ensure that an adequate level of park facilities is made available in the area. The District has not yet adopted a goal or standard for the number of acres of parkland it would ideally like to make available.

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## Challenges

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IVCSD did not report any particular challenges with regard to park and recreation services; however, similar to other districts that rely on property tax revenue to provide services, the District reported that financing constraints were the primary hurdle to providing an adequate level of services.

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## Service Adequacy

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Based on the information regarding facilities offered, financing adequacy, and acres of park facilities offered, IVCSD's level of park and recreation services appears to be moderately adequate.

IVCSD offers a limited range of recreational facilities. It is recommended that the District evaluate resident needs with regard to developed recreational facilities to determine if there are any needs that are not being met at the existing facilities.

While the District faces financing constraints, it is one of the few park and recreation providers in the County that receives regular revenues in the form of property taxes.

The national park acreage standard per the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is four acres per 1,000 residents. NRPA is currently leading a charge to move towards a goal of five acres per 1,000 residents. At present, IVCSD makes available almost six acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which exceeds the NRPA standard.

## LIGHTING SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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IVCSD is responsible for providing street lighting for both Greenville and Taylorsville. Responsibilities include paying the utility bill for electricity and forwarding any complaints to the utility company (PG&E) for repair. The District is not responsible for maintaining street lights.

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### Staffing

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The District does not maintain any staff dedicated to these services. The office manager pays the regular utility bill.

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### Facilities and Capacity

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The District estimated that there are approximately 20 street lights within its bounds for which it is responsible.

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### Infrastructure Needs

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All of the lights are operable. No infrastructure needs were identified.

The California Department of Transportation is in the process of planning a streetscaping project along SR 89. There is discussion to install energy efficient lighting in conjunction with these improvements. An independent Streetscaping Committee is responsible for choosing lighting for the project.

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### Challenges

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The District reported that there were no particular challenges to providing street lighting services, other than the cost, which is not reimbursed.

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### Service Adequacy

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There are no industry standards with regard to street lighting services, such as response times to a service request. Additionally, the District is not responsible for maintenance of the lights, making it difficult to determine service adequacy.

## INDIAN VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ Indian Valley Community Services District (IVCSD) had an estimated population of 2,479 in 2010.
- ❖ There has been no population growth within the District's bounds over the last five years. This trend is anticipated to continue over the next few years. The District anticipates little or no change in service demand in the near future.

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### The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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- ❖ The Greenville wastewater system is nearing capacity. The system is in need of an engineer's report to determine the extent of any remaining capacity, identify necessary improvements to maximize available capacity in the system, and minimize infiltration and inflow, prior to the addition of any new connections.
- ❖ At present, the District only makes use of approximately 29 percent of the Taylorsville wastewater system's capacity. The system is relatively new and in good condition with no identified infrastructure needs.
- ❖ Both water systems and water sources appear to have sufficient capacity to provide services to anticipated demand. However, the Greenville water system continues to need substantial improvements to reduce significant unaccounted for water loss.
- ❖ With regard to fire services, it appears that the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. Facilities and equipment appear to be sufficient; although, the Greenville Fire Station is outdated and overcrowded and in need of expansion to hold two additional vehicles. Volunteer time constraints are a concern should demand increase in the future.
- ❖ IVCSD is reportedly working with the County and IVRPD to ensure that an adequate level of park facilities is made available in the area. The District has not yet adopted a goal or standard for the number of acres of parkland it would ideally like to make available. At present, IVCSD makes available almost six acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which exceeds the National Recreation and Park Association standard.

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## Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that its existing financing levels were adequate to deliver services if used appropriately.
- ❖ There are concerns of fraud and embezzlement on the part of former management. Consequently, the District is in the process of conducting a forensic audit for the time period in question. Financial records from FY 08 to FY 12 are lacking, and the District is piecing together this information as it goes through the audit process.
- ❖ IVCSO is required to maintain a reserve as part of its USDA loan in the amount of one year of payments for each loan. IVCSO is not presently meeting this requirement, as the District's fund balance at the end of FY 13 was minimal.
- ❖ As of the end of FY 13, the District had \$2.9 million in long term debt. Annual payments on these loans total approximately \$192,000 or 23 percent of the District's total revenue in that year.

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## Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ The District practices facility sharing with the Indian Valley Recreation and Park District (IVRPD). IVCSO owns the community pool and IVRPD operates the pool. These districts also have a joint powers agreement whereby IVCSO owns Triangle Park, and IVRPD funded the construction of the park.
- ❖ The District does not practice facility sharing at its fire, water and wastewater facilities.
- ❖ No additional opportunities for facility sharing were identified.

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## Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ IVCSO demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCO. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ The IVCSO Board is considering whether to continue to offer fire services or to divest itself of the power to provide the service, with services continued by a newly formed fire protection district or the area annexed by Crescent Mills FPD. Should the CSD choose to continue to provide fire services, it is recommended that the District come to LAFCO to differentiate between the fire, water and wastewater service areas, which would ensure ease of annexation of additional territory for the purpose of fire service provision and promote the goal of a valley-wide fire provider.
- ❖ Another governance option is some form of reorganization of park services with Indian Valley Recreation and Park District, given that the two agencies provide a similar category of park and recreation services within bounds that overlap one another. IVCSO has also recently sent a letter of support to the County for a countywide lighting district, which would result in the divesting of lighting services by the District.

## **7. LA PORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

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La Porte Fire Protection District (LPFPD) provides structural fire, emergency medical in the form of basic life support, fire prevention, minimal rescue and hazardous material services. This review is the first municipal review (MSR) for the District.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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#### **Background**

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LPFPD was formed on June 18, 1962 as an independent special district and confirmed by the Secretary of State in January 1963. The District's purpose is to provide fire protection to the residents of the District.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>76</sup> The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.<sup>77</sup> Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.<sup>78</sup>

There have not been any changes to services provided since the District's formation; however, in 1970, LAFCo heard a request for the formation of a cemetery district and a community services district, which was to take on fire services provided by LPFPD. LAFCo approved the formation of both the cemetery and community services districts. The cemetery district was declared formed. The community services district was to be formed under certain conditions and the provision of an election; however, the election never took place. In 1977, LAFCo reheard the request for formation of a community services district and again approved the request. Again, the election never took place. LPFPD indicated that Proposition 13 adversely affected the decision to form the new district and dissolve the fire protection district. As a result, the community services district was not formed in either attempt, and LPFPD was never dissolved and continues to perform the functions it was authorized to perform when it was formed.<sup>79</sup>

LPFPD is located in the southwest portion of Plumas County. There are no other fire protection districts with boundaries that abut the District, due to the remote location of the community.

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<sup>76</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>77</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>78</sup> Government Code §56824.10.

<sup>79</sup> LAFCo resolution 83-29, Exhibit A.

### Boundaries

LPFPD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 0.4 square miles.

Since the formation of the District, there have been two boundary changes. The area of Levy 3 in Plumas County was annexed into LPFPD in 1963. The most recent annexation occurred in 1985, when LPFPD added the territory of Bradley Estates #1, La Porte Pines Country Club and Territory (APN 003-34-03).

### Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.<sup>80</sup> The SOI was further revised on March 24, 1983, in order to insure the orderly growth of the area.<sup>81</sup> The current SOI is 2.1 square miles compared to about 0.4 square miles of boundary area, and extends outside of the District's boundaries along Quincy La Porte Road to the northeast, curving around to the west. Figure 7-1 depicts LPFPD's boundaries and SOI.

### Extra-territorial Services

LPFPD provides services outside of its bounds through an automatic aid agreement with Foothill Fire Protection District (FFPD). LPFPD responds most frequently to Strawberry Valley in FFPD, because geographically LPFPD is approximately one mile closer to the area than FFPD.

LPFPD has mutual aid agreements with members of the Plumas County Chiefs Association, The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), United States Forest Service (USFS), and FFPD.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of LPFPD, the District's service area extends to Middlefork Feather River in the north, Sierra County to the east, Yuba County to the South and Butte County to the west. LPFPD's service area is 151 square miles. LPFPD, similar to other fire districts in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. Fire districts have the option to charge for service outside of their district.

### Areas of Interest

Of particular interest to the District are four subdivisions around the lake that have indicated an interest in receiving service from LPFPD. LPFPD was approached by the four subdivisions—Pancake, Burbon and Water, Answering Meadows, and Silvertip Springs—proposing to be annexed into the District. The proposed annexation includes approximately 100 structures requiring seasonal services. Previously, the District adopted a resolution to move forward with annexation of these subdivisions; however, nothing further has occurred since then.

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<sup>80</sup> LAFCo Resolution 83-29.

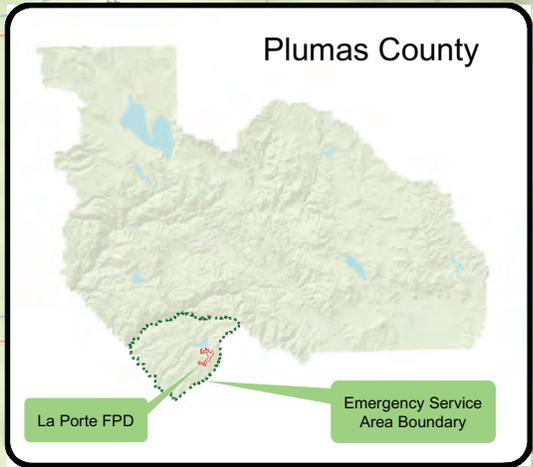
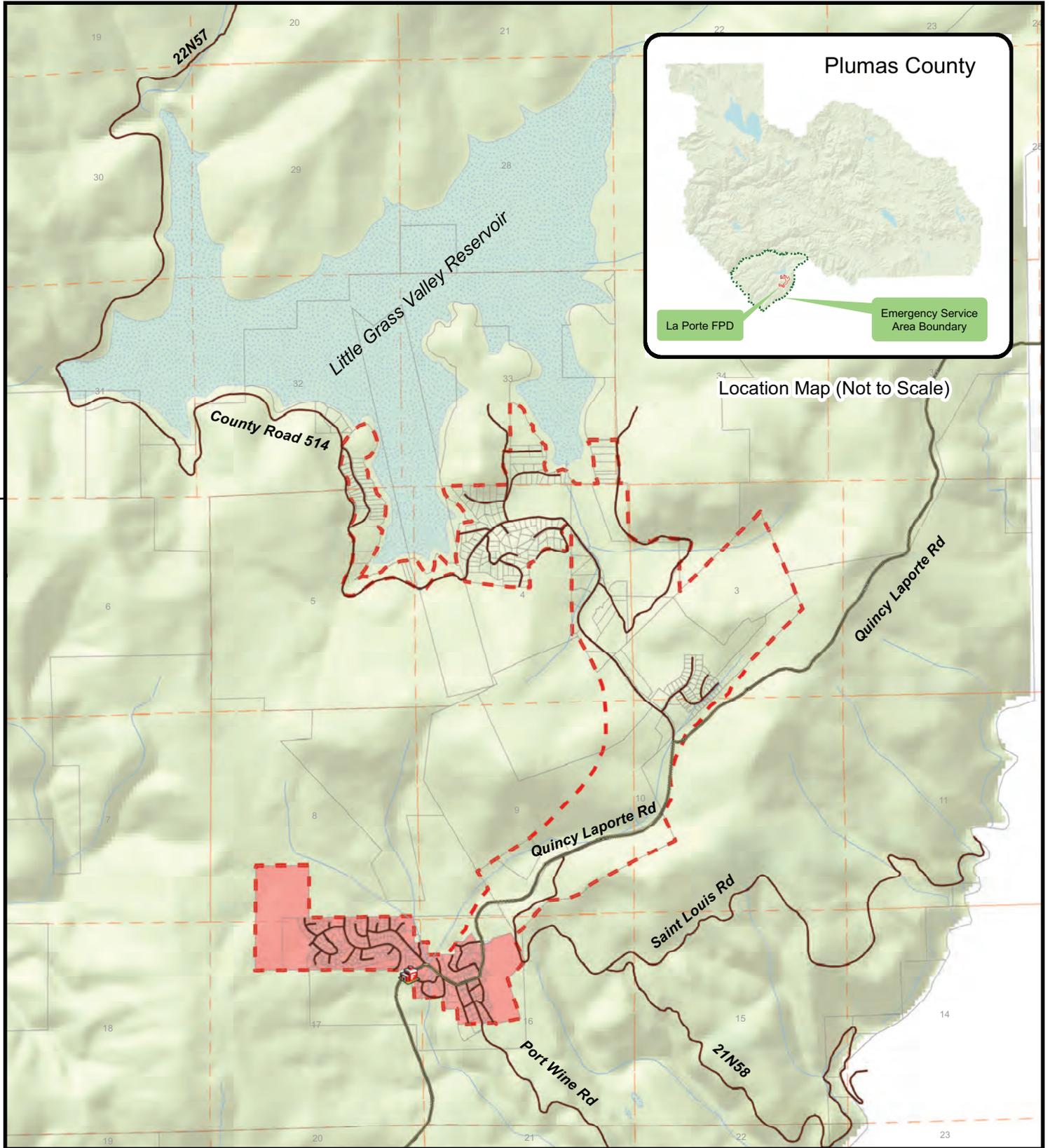
<sup>81</sup> LAFCo Resolution 83-29.

# LA Porte Fire Protection District

Range 9 East

Township 22 North

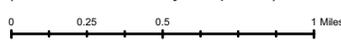
Township 21 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)

## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station
- La Porte FPD
- La Porte FPD Sphere of Influence (Current)
- Emergency Service Area (CDF Grass Valley Dispatch)



La Porte FPD  
 Resolution:  
 Formed: 6/18/1962

La Porte FPD (SOI)  
 Resolution: 83-29  
 Adopted: 3/24/1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 6/7/2013

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## Accountability and Governance

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The principal act orders that the board of directors of a fire protection district must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11 members. Directors may be appointed or elected.<sup>82</sup> LPFPD is governed by a three-member board of directors elected at large. Board members are elected to staggered four-year terms. Currently, two board members were elected and one was appointed; there are no vacancies. The District reported that there has not been a contested election in the recent memorable history of the District. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 7-2.

The Board meets the second Wednesday of every month at 5pm at the District's fire station. The District advertises meetings of the Board in the local post office and in the general store. Board meeting minutes are disseminated upon request.

**Figure 7-2: La Porte FPD Governing Body**

<b>La Porte Fire Protection District</b>				
<b><i>District Contact Information</i></b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Steve Burroughs, Chair			
<b>Address:</b>	2181 Cedar Lane, La Porte, CA 95981			
<b>Telephone:</b>	(530) 675-2557			
<b>Fax:</b>	N/A			
<b>Email/website:</b>	laportefire@yahoo.com			
<b><i>Board of Directors</i></b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Steve Burroughs	Chair	December 2015	Elected	Four years
Don Skaggs*	Director	December 2015	Elected	Four years
Lynda Griffith	Director	December 2013	Appointed	Two years
<b><i>Meetings</i></b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Second Wednesday of every month at 5pm.			
<b>Location:</b>	District's fire station.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Board meetings are advertised in the local post office and general store.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Board meeting minutes are available upon request.			
<b>Notes:</b>	*Don Skaggs is currently acting Chief and will be resigning from the Board.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District itself does not conduct further outreach; however, the La Porte Fire Department Auxiliary tries to reach residents by way of fundraisers and community events such as the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Tri Tip Dinner and the Pancake Breakfast. Additionally, the Auxiliary keeps residents apprised of local agency activities through a newsletter in late spring, as well as a safety message.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted verbally and are handled at Board meetings. Depending on the nature of the complaint, either the chief or the Board would be responsible for handing the complaint to resolution. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2012.

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<sup>82</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

LPFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo during the MSR process. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District has one acting fire Chief, one fire captain, three firefighters and one training officer. The position of assistant chief is currently vacant. The fire chief manages daily operations and an office assistant handles the bills and paperwork. The firefighters report to the chief, and the chief is accountable to the Board. All of the positions at the District are filled by volunteers who receive no financial compensation.

Staff workload is monitored via tracking of calls and tracking of the individuals who responded to those calls. Maintenance and training logs are kept as well; however, the District does not track response times.

The District does not conduct employee evaluations. The fire chief reports to the Board at monthly board meetings. As well, at the end of every calendar year, the fire chief reports to the Board the number of calls and achievements of that year. LPFPD reported that it did not conduct evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

Objectives and goals for the District are set annually at a predetermined training session.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited every five years. The most recent audit took place in 2009. LPFPD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District conducts capital improvement planning informally at Board meetings.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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Land uses within LPFPD include recreation, forest and watershed, and suburban residential uses.<sup>83</sup>

### Population

There are approximately 26 residents within the District, based on the population of the census-designated place of La Porte in the 2010 Census and GIS estimate. The District's population density is 65.

### Existing Demand

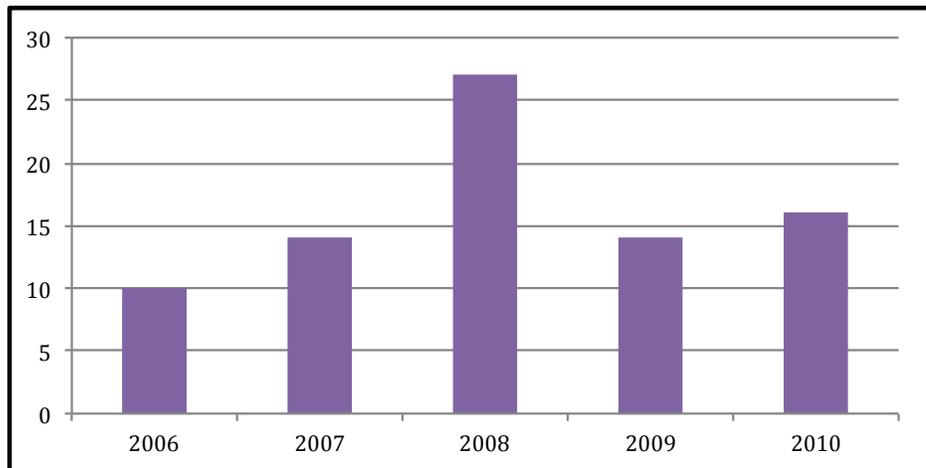
The District reported that it had observed a decrease in service demand in the last five years. The District reported that it receives 17-18 calls per year; most of the calls are for emergency medical services.

The number of calls peaked in 2008 at 27 calls and subsequently returned to previous levels in 2009 and 2010, as shown in Figure 7-3. The District reported that service demand is always higher in the summer months.

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<sup>83</sup> LAFCo resolution 83-29, Exhibit A.

**Figure 7-3: La Porte FPD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2010**



Growth in the area has been minimal. There have been approximately six new structures in the last few years in the La Porte area; however, these new buildings have all been outside of the District’s boundaries but within its sphere of influence. This minimal growth appears to not have had an impact on demand for the District’s services.

Projected Growth and Development

The District reported that within LPFPD’s boundaries, La Porte Pines Division has the greatest potential for growth. Although there are a number of lots available, only one to two houses on average are being built per year.

At one point in time, there was a development proposed outside of the District’s bounds near Little Grass Valley Reservoir; however, currently there is no active interest in pursuing the development.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District’s population would increase from 26 in 2010 to approximately 27 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

The District reported that it has the capacity to provide services in the current service area. The District reported further that it has the capacity to provide service to planned development in the future growth area provided that growth continued at the current rate. However, if a large subdivision was to be built, the District may not have adequate service capacity.

Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires

defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCO are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>84</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>85</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>86</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>87</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>88</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>89</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>90</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>91</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>85</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>93</sup>

11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>94</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

12)The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space though conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.

13)The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.

14)In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.

15)New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.

16)New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.

17)The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.

18)Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>95</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>94</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

<sup>95</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

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## Financing

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The District's primary financing sources are property taxes and fundraisers. The District noted that relying solely on tax dollars does not provide sufficient financing to provide adequate service to LPFPD residents; therefore, supplementary financing in the form of fundraisers is necessary. To date, adequate funds have been raised; however, this is not a guaranteed revenue stream in the future. The District also noted that one of the financing challenges they face is the decrease in property values in the area. Another challenge of note for LPFPD is that they provide services to La Porte Pines subdivision, which is located in the District; however, LPFPD does not receive property tax revenue from the territory, due to the lack of a tax sharing agreement with the County when the area was annexed in 1983.

The District is looking into grant funding as a way to supplement its current financing sources. The District applied for a grant from FEMA, which it did not receive because of insufficient call volume. The District reported it was looking into other types of grants.

The District's total revenue for FY 11-12 was \$21,459. Of this amount, 79 percent came from property tax revenue, 20 percent came from state and federal aid and one percent was from interest invested funds and other revenue.

The District's principal source of funds is derived from ad valorem property taxes levied by Plumas County. LPFPD does not receive any special tax or benefit assessment revenue. The District does not charge fees for its services.

LPFPD's expenditures in FY 11-12 amounted to \$20,831. Of this amount, 53 percent was spent on services and supplies, 39 percent was spent on fixed assets, including the purchase of a fire truck and other fire equipment, and the remaining amount was spent on compensation insurance.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. Needs are assessed through equipment and facility maintenance. Capital improvements are financed through a pay-as-you-go approach. Additionally, the District relies heavily on donations for equipment from the auxiliary fundraising group.

The District has a totally debt outstanding of \$26,237, which is the balance remaining on the 2006 GMC Pumper. The balance will be paid off in February 2017.

LPFPD does not have a formal financial reserve. There District reported a cash balance of approximately \$23,031 with no funds identified for reserve.

The District participates in in a joint powers agreement (JPA) with Golden State for workers compensation insurance.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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LPFPD provides structural fire, wildfires, and emergency medical in the form of basic life support, fire prevention, minimal rescue and hazardous material services.

#### *Collaboration*

In addition to the mutual and automatic aid agreements already identified, the District conducts joint training sessions with Foothill Fire Protection District in Yuba County.

The District also expressed interest in the potential opportunity to share facilities with the substation for the Sheriff Department.

#### *Dispatch and communications*

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for those in the northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC). The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. LPFPD is an exception within Plumas County in that it is the only district dispatched by Grass Valley CAL FIRE in Nevada County. CAL FIRE has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within

the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCO-approved boundaries of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

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## Staffing

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LPFPD has six personnel—one fire chief, one fire captain, three firefighters and one training officer. All of the positions at the District are filled by volunteers who receive no financial compensation. The median age of the firefighters is 59, with a range from 45 to 63.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. LPFPD reported it has initiated a support volunteer position in an effort to recruit more volunteers to the District. The goal is to recruit seasonal residents to join the District. These volunteers will be used for non-hot zone assignments.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>96</sup> LPFPD has two Firefighter I certified personnel and four Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) I certified personnel. In addition to Firefighter I and EMT certifications, LPFPD has two firefighters certified in Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), seven certified in Incident Command System (ICS) 100, 200 and 7000, two certified in low angle rope rescue operational (LARRO), two certified in hazmat first responder and three certified as Wildland Firefighters.

The District's requirement for volunteer fire fighters is to have training in First Aid and CPR. The District offers six to eight hours per month of in house First Aid and CPR training, based on the Firefighter I textbook. Volunteers are also offered the opportunity to train with FFPD in Yuba County. In addition, USFS also provides wildland training. The remote location and minimal budget of the District is a particular challenge for District, as it is difficult for volunteers to attend training sessions offered by larger agencies. The District also noted that not all volunteers are comfortable in hot zones, and therefore volunteers are trained according to individual abilities.

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<sup>96</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

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## Facilities and Capacity

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LPFPD operates one fire station. La Porte Volunteer Fire Station, which was reported to be in good condition, is located at 2181 Cedar Lane in La Porte and was built in 1996. The station is not regularly staffed.

La Porte Volunteer Fire Station is used as a fire station and space to conduct training and administrative services. The station houses two type II engines, one type II water tender and one snow cat. La Porte Volunteer Fire Station is also used by the organizations in the District to host occasional events and meetings.

The District's water reserves are represented by 200,000 gallons in storage in La Porte Water District, 80,000 gallons in storage in La Porte Pines and 3,800 gallons on wheels.

Currently, the District reported it has no need for new facilities or facility upgrades. In addition the District reported that there is a general consensus that LPFPD's equipment is sufficient in terms of capacity and providing adequate services.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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Although the District does not formally plan for future capital improvement needs, LPFPD reported that it would like to purchase a new pumper/tanker to replace its current 1976 type II engine. The District reported they have not purchased this vehicle due to financing constraints, noting that the District only receives about \$20,000 annually in revenues. As previously noted, LPFPD reported that the equipment is sufficient for service provision; however, the District will take advantage of an opportunity to purchase new equipment if an economical prospect arose.

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## Challenges

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The District reported that its primary challenge is accessibility during the winter months, when the roads are snow covered and difficult to traverse. The District acquired a snow cat and is working on a sled mounted water pump (100-gallon tank) in order to respond to structure fires more efficiently in the winter months. Another challenge the District reported was that of ensuring firefighter safety when providing services. The District is currently looking at an assessment to provide new equipment and training that will allow better service provision and increased firefighter safety.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. LPFPD has an ISO rating of seven in town and nine in rural areas. The District was last evaluated in 2010.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>97</sup> LPFPD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wilderness areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District does not track its response times for each incident.

The service area size<sup>98</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD.

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<sup>97</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>98</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 7-4: La Porte FPD Fire Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
<b>Firestation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	
LPPFD	2181 Cedar Lane, La Porte, CA, 95981	Good	Unstaffed	2 type II engines, 1 type II water tender and 1 snow cat	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> The District's fire station is available for community events and meetings.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> The District reported the potential opportunity to share facilities with the substation for the Sheriff Department.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
The District's fire station does not need any upgrades. LPPFD would like to replace the 1976 type I engines but will only do so when the economics					
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>	
Staffing Base Year	2013	Configuration Base Year	2013	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	17
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS	65%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	0.4	Ambulance Transport	Yuba/Sutter County	% Fire/Hazardous Mater	0%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	6	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	6%
Total Volunteer Firefighters	6	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe Flight Care	% Misc. emergency	29%
Total Call Firefighters	6	Fire Suppression Helicopter	N/A	% Non-emergency	0%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	6	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	35%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	231	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people	654
<b>Service Adequacy</b>			<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	N/A		LPPFD reported that there are areas in its service area which are hard to serve in the winter because of snow covered roads that are difficult to traverse.		
Median Response Time (min)	N/A		<b>Training</b>		
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	N/A		LPPFD firefighters must be trained in First Aid and CPR. The District offers 6-8 hours a month of in house training. Training is also available in Brownsville via a mutual aid agreement.		
ISO Rating	In town 7 (2010), Rural 9 (2010)				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
LPPFD has a mutual aid agreement with Plumas County Chiefs Association, CAL FIRE, United States Forest Service (USFS) and Foothill Fire Protection District. In addition, LPPFD has an automatic aid agreement with Yuba County. In addition to the mutual and automatic aid agreements already identified, the District conducts joint training sessions with Foothill Fire Protection District.					
Notes:					
1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.					
2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.					
3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## LA PORTE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ As of 2010, La Porte Fire Protection District (LPFPD) had population of 26.
- ❖ There has been minimal growth within the District's bounds over the last five years. This trend is anticipated to continue over the next few years.
- ❖ The District anticipates growth little or no change in service demand in the near future.

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### The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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- ❖ The average number of calls for service per annum, based on number from 2006 to 2010, is 16.2. Peak service demand is in the summer months.
- ❖ The District identified no pressing infrastructure or facility needs; however, when financing becomes available LPFPD plans to purchase a vehicle to replace the aged 1976 type II vehicle.
- ❖ The District reported that it currently has the capacity to provide adequate service to areas in its bounds; however, LPFPD expressed concern that if a new subdivision was to be built it may no longer have the capacity to provide adequate services.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that the current financing level is adequate to deliver services to existing customers. However, the District did express concern over the stability of funding resources, noting that fundraising financing is not always guaranteed.
- ❖ The District has no designated restricted or unrestricted reserves.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ The District does not share fire facilities with any other district or city in Plumas County.
- ❖ The District's fire station is open to the surrounding communities and organizations to periodically host events and meetings.

- ❖ The District expressed interest in the potential opportunity to share facilities with the substation for the Sheriff Department.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ LPFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ It is recommended that LPFPD develop a basic website or Facebook page in order to keep customers up to date on District happenings. This online presence may be a more efficient way of posting meeting notices, agendas and meeting minutes.
- ❖ Governance structure options, with regard to fire services in La Porte, include the finalization of the proposed annexation of the four subdivisions currently in LPFPD's SOI. As of the drafting of this report, the District had adopted a resolution to proceed with an application to LAFCo.

## **8. LONG VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

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Long Valley Community Services District (LVCSO) provides fire protection, emergency medical and limited recreation services. This is the first municipal service review (MSR) for the District.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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#### **Background**

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The District's formation was approved in 1976, but was not recorded by the Board of Equalization until 1981.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.<sup>99</sup> CSDs may potentially provide a wide array of services, including water supply, wastewater, solid waste, police and fire protection, street lighting and landscaping, airport, recreation and parks, mosquito abatement, library services; street maintenance and drainage services, ambulance service, utility undergrounding, transportation, abate graffiti, flood protection, weed abatement, hydroelectric power, among various other services. CSDs are required to gain LAFCo approval to provide those services permitted by the principal act but not performed by the end of 2005 (i.e., latent powers).<sup>100</sup>

LVCSO is located in the south central part of Plumas County and includes the communities of Cromberg and Camp Layman. The closest fire protection districts to LVCSO are Greenhorn Creek CSD, located to the northwest of the District, and Graeagle FPD to the southeast.

#### **Boundaries**

LVCSO's bounds are entirely within Plumas County. The present boundary area contains 2.7 square miles and consists of two non-contiguous parts, the smaller of which is located to the southeast of the larger portion, along SR 70. The larger of the two areas contains an island,<sup>101</sup> which lies outside of the fire protection district. The island consists of two parcels, which are zoned as agricultural preserve and timber preserve and contain no structures.

Since the formation of the District, there has been one boundary change. In 1985, the District annexed the territory of Camp Layman.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Government Code §61000-61226.5.

<sup>100</sup> Government Code §61106.

<sup>101</sup> APNs 122060047 and 122070005.

<sup>102</sup> LAFCo Resolution 8-ANNX-84.

### Sphere of Influence

The sphere of influence (SOI) for the District was established on August 26, 1976 upon approval of the District's formation. The sphere of influence was last updated on August 18, 1981. The current SOI is larger than the LVCSD boundary area and extends outside its bounds to the west of the larger portion of the District, as well as includes the island within the District.<sup>103</sup> The District's SOI is 3.8 square miles in size, compared to 2.7 square miles of territory within its bounds.

### Extra-territorial Services

LVCSD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD, Plumas Eureka CSD and Graeagle FPD. The District is also in the process of establishing an automatic aid agreement with Greenhorn Creek CSD, based on which both districts will be dispatched simultaneously to the same incidents.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of LVCSD, the District's service area extends to northwest and southeast along SR 70 and includes the island excluded from LVCSD's bounds, the territory between the two district areas, along with a small area to the northeast of the District. The service area encompasses about 6.9 square miles. LVCSD, similar to other fire departments in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. While fire districts have the option to charge for service outside of their bounds, the District does not have a fee schedule and does not charge for responding outside of its boundaries.

### Areas of Interest

The two areas of interest for LVCSD are the island located within the District and the Two Rivers Soccer Camp. As previously mentioned, the island is zoned as agricultural preserve and timber preserve and, at present, contains no structures. As the District is responsible for structural fire protection, there is currently no need for the annexation of this area to LVCSD. However, if in the future, the area is rezoned and becomes inhabited, the existence of the island should be revisited by LAFCo.

Two Rivers Soccer Camp is located outside of the District's boundary area, but within its service area. According to LVCSD, the camp is extremely difficult to access and the District struggles to provide services there. The owner of the camp reportedly refuses to attend to the condition of the roads leading to the camp or discuss the possibility of annexation into LVCSD or the neighboring Graeagle FPD.

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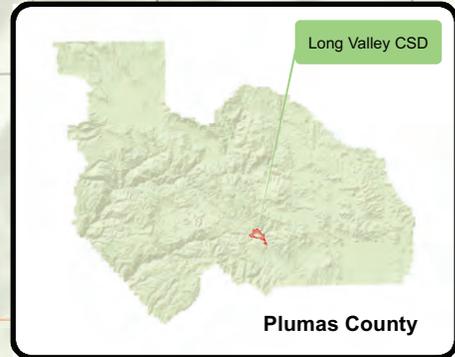
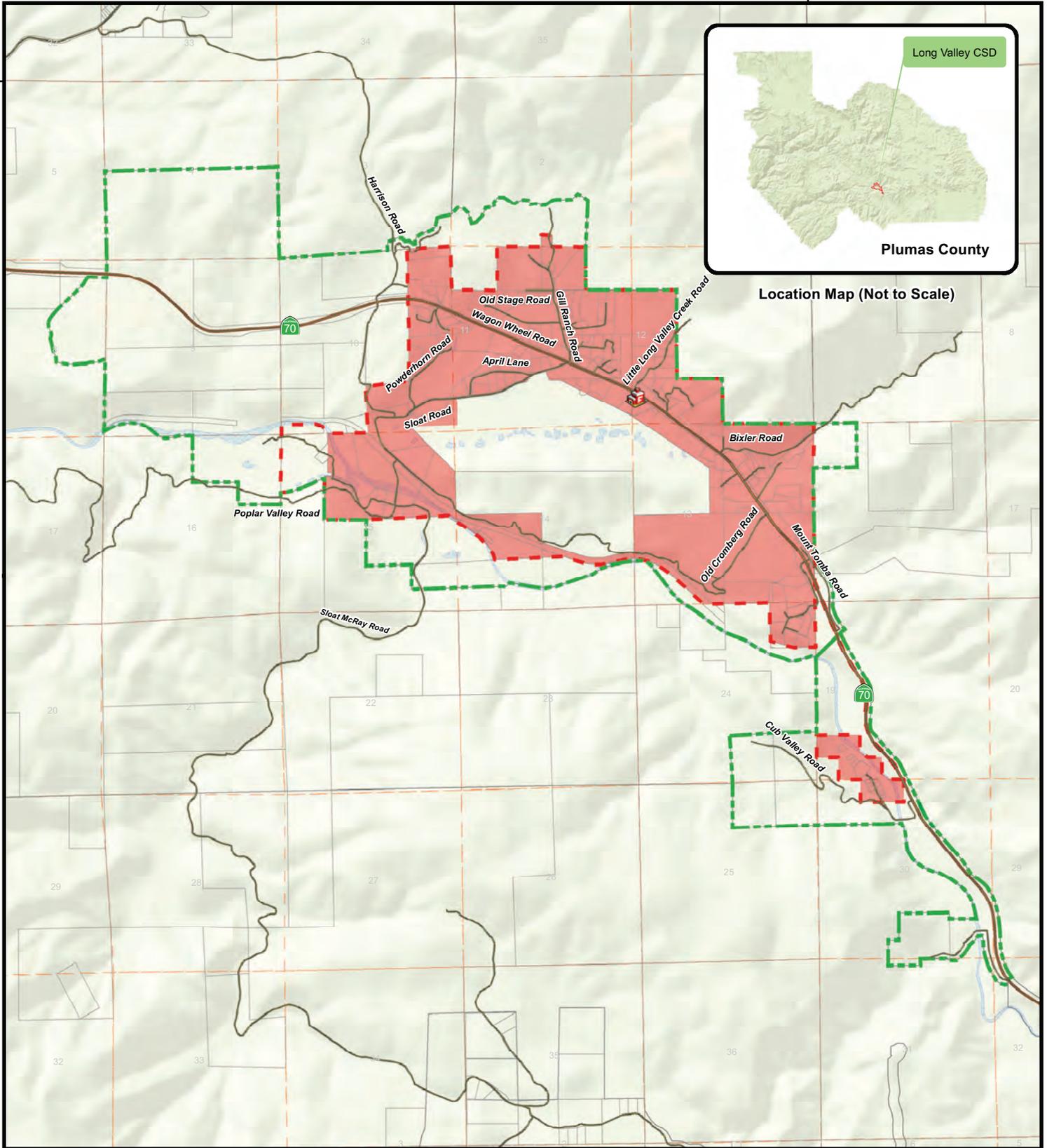
<sup>103</sup> LAFCo records are unclear as to whether the island that is excluded from LVCSD's bounds is included within the District's SOI. Two maps of the District's SOI were found with not dates to identify which is the most recent. Given that the excluded area is also within the District's service area, it was assumed by LAFCo that the area was also included in the District's adopted SOI.

# Long Valley Community Services District

Range 11 East

Range 12 East

Township 23 North



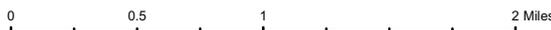
Location Map (Not to Scale)

## Legend

- Major Roads
- CA State Highway
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Stations

- Long Valley CSD Boundary
- Long Valley CSD (SOI)
- Long Valley CSD Service Area



Long Valley CSD  
 Resolution: 75-2784  
 Adopted: August 18, 1981  
 Long Valley (SOI)  
 LAFCo Resolution: 83-27 76-42  
 Adopted: August 26, 1976

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 9/30/2013

## Accountability and Governance

LVCSO is governed by a five-member board of directors elected at large to four-year terms. Three out of the five current members were appointed; there are presently no vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 8-2.

The Board meets regularly on the second Tuesday or Wednesday of every quarter. The time of regular meetings depend on board member availability. Board members meet at the town hall or the RV park. Board meeting agendas are posted at the post office, at the fire station and at the town hall. Minutes of the meetings are available upon request.

**Figure 8-2: Long Valley CSD Governing Body**

Long Valley CSD				
<b><i>District Contact Information</i></b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Dan Kenney, Board Member			
<b>Address:</b>	P.O. Box 30226, Cromberg, CA 96103			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-836-1380			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:dkenney50@hotmail.com">dkenney50@hotmail.com</a>			
<b><i>Board of Directors</i></b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Art Hinton	President	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
Robert Greene	Vice-president	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Lawrence Van Bergen	Director	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
Ken Muir	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Dan Kenney	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
<b><i>Meetings</i></b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Quarterly on second Tuesday or Wednesday.			
<b>Location:</b>	Town hall or RV park.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted post office, fire station and town hall.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through community activities such as an open house in the spring, a pancake breakfast in June, and by placing notices in the newspaper. LVCSO encourages its constituents to attend regular board meetings.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted by writing a letter to the fire department. The chief is usually the person responsible for handling complaints; more serious matters are handled by the Board. The District reported that it had not received any complaints in the last several years.

LVCSO demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCO. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

## Planning and Management Practices

The District currently has 11 sworn personnel, of whom seven are firefighters, three are captains and one is fire chief. The firefighters report to the captains who are accountable to the chief. In addition to sworn staff, there is a non-sworn Board secretary and a general manager. All personnel are volunteers.

The volunteer general manager manages bills, mail and correspondence with the insurance company. The board president and the chief are responsible for day-to-day operations of the District. LVCSO does not conduct employee evaluations or evaluations of the District as a whole, such as annual reports or benchmarking. Employee workload is tracked through the training schedule, a log for professional development, and a maintenance log.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and financial statements. The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP), nor does it plan for capital improvements in other ways. LVCSO reported that it did not have any funding for capital improvements and therefore did not see a need to plan for capital projects. All new equipment is funded through grants. The District has not adopted any additional planning documents.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>104</sup> The most recent audit for LVCSO was completed for FY 09. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the District during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District has complied with this requirement.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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Land uses within the District are designated as suburban residential, secondary suburban residential, limited access rural residential, resort and recreation, mining and some wetlands. . The District's bounds encompass approximately 2.7 square miles.

### Population

There are approximately 216 permanent residents within the District, based on GIS estimate. The District's population density is 80 residents per square mile. According to LVCSO, the District population is about 240-260 people at any given time.

### Existing Demand

The District reported that it experienced peak call volume during summer months. Vehicle accidents in winter also constitute a large percentage of calls for LVCSO. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

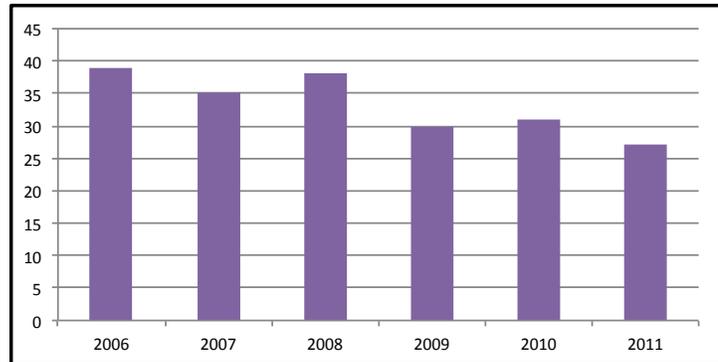
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<sup>104</sup> Government Code §26909.

The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years with an average number of annual calls fluctuating between 30 and 40. According to LVCSO, the number of residents has been fairly constant, consisting of an aging population, which can result in an increase in demand for medical emergency services.

**Figure 8-3: Long Valley CSD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011**

As shown in Figure 8-3, the number of calls slightly decreased from 2006 to 2011.



Projected Growth and Development

LVCSO anticipates no growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. However, no formal population or demand projections have been conducted by LVCSO. Reportedly, no new developments are planned within the district boundary area and SOI. The District also reported that the County had not been notifying LVCSO about any new or prospective developments.

LVCSO reported that it had sufficient capacity to serve current and future demand; however, serving possible future growth may be challenging if more volunteers are not recruited. In addition, in the absence of any grants, the District will face the problem of outdated and inoperable equipment.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent from 2010 to 2020. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District’s population would increase from 216 in 2010 to approximately 225 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCo are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>105</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>106</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>107</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>108</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>109</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>110</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>111</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>112</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>113</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>106</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>115</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

12)The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space though conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.

13)The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.

14)In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.

15)New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.

16)New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.

17)The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.

18)Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>116</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.

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<sup>114</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>115</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

<sup>116</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

- ❖ **Building Permit Review:** Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ **GIS Website Update:** The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ **District Sphere of Influence Updates:** The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ **Fire Protection Communication Plan:** Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ **Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status:** As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ **Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development:** The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it had considered annexing the Two Rivers Soccer Camp located southeast of the District along SR 70, but gave up on the idea, because with no improvements to the condition of the road to the camp, it would be impossible to bring equipment to the area. The LVCSO Board is also interested in discussing consolidation options; however, believes that given its financial constraints, that consolidation options may be limited.

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## Financing

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The District reported that current financing levels were adequate for operations but not for capital improvements. LVCSO reported that equipment would need to be replaced in the near future and would have to be solely financed through grants. A majority of the District's current equipment is new and was financed through grants.

To improve its current financing level, the District is looking into billing for out-of-district calls and non-resident calls. This new source of funding is expected to aid operational costs but not cover capital improvement needs.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 11-12 was \$19,679. Sources of revenue included special tax income (94 percent), property tax income (one percent) interest income (one percent), and other revenues and donations (four percent).

The District's principal source of funds is derived from a special tax, which consists of \$50 per year on each parcel less than 10 acres without a residential dwelling, \$60 on each parcel 10 acres or greater without a residential dwelling, \$85 per year for each parcel with

a residential dwelling and \$35 for each additional residential dwelling. The District charges \$0.06 per square foot on structures or buildings over 100 square feet used in a business or trade, and \$1.50 per trailer space for RV parks. The voters approved an increase to the special tax in 2005.

LVCSD's expenditures in FY 11-12 amounted to \$14,170, which was spent on employee benefits (21 percent) and services and supplies (79 percent).

The District does not perform any capital improvement planning, as it currently does not have enough funding for capital improvements. LVCSD has identified a need for replacement of one 1983 engine. There are currently no funds to finance the replacement; the District is looking into acquiring a grant for this capital purchase. The replacement cost could range from \$25,000 (used) to \$280,000 (new).

LVCSD has a management practice of maintaining an unrestricted fund balance for contingencies. At the end of FY 11-12, the fund balance was \$52,260.

The District does not have any long-term debt.

The District does not participate in any joint financing arrangements under joint powers agreements (JPAs).

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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LVCSD provides wildland and structural fire suppression, responds to vehicle fires and medical emergencies, provides basic life support (BLS), and offers fire prevention in the form of outreach through newsletters and informal on-site inspections.

LVCSD provides contract services to USFS for wildland fire suppression. The District is reimbursed for time over four hours of being on the scene.

The District receives contract services from other agencies. LVCSD contracts with All Star Fire, a company in East Bay, for Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) maintenance services. Checks are performed every other year for a flat fee of \$1,600 per inspection. LN Curtis Technicians are hired to perform annual inspections on the air compressor, which costs \$700 to \$800 per inspection. Bookkeeping and accounting are provided by a district volunteer.

### **Collaboration**

LVCSD is in the process of setting up an automatic aid agreement with Greenhorn Creek CSD, according to which both fire departments will be dispatched simultaneously to the same incidents. The District has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD, Plumas Eureka CSD and Graeagle FPD. In addition, the District participates in the Training Master Plan through the Plumas Fire Chiefs Association.

### **Dispatch and Communications**

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most landline emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are

answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo-approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The District reported that to comply with Federal Communications Commission requirements the radio frequency in the County was split in half, which caused problems in signal transmission and limited coverage.

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## Staffing

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LVCSD has 11 sworn personnel—three captains, seven firefighters and one fire chief. None of the staff is paid. The median age of the firefighters is 56, with a range from 28 to 73.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. LVCSD tries to recruit more volunteers through recruitment posters, notices at the post office, mailings, and word of mouth. In addition, the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association is working to assist fire departments in the County in their recruitment efforts.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>117</sup> LVCSD has five Firefighter I and two EMT I certified personnel.

The District provides training for its volunteers. Regular training sessions take place on two nights of each month for a minimum of three hours each time. New firefighters must attend a firefighter academy organized by Quincy FPD and additional joint trainings with USFS. The District reported that the primary challenge to attaining State-mandated training levels for volunteers was the distance firefighters had to travel for their training courses, which consequently resulted in higher cost.

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<sup>117</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

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## Facilities and Capacity

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LVCSD operates one fire station located at 58880 SR 70 in Cromberg. The station was constructed in the late 1970s and was reported to be in excellent condition. The station is not staffed. Housed at the LVCSD station are an old water tender (1981-1,600 gallons of water), a 1983 fire engine, a 2006 international diesel water tender (2,500 gallons), and two wildland engines. The station is used to store equipment and vehicles; it also contains a small kitchen, restrooms and a shower. LVCSD makes its station available to USFS in during emergencies.

The District's water reserves are represented by a 10,000-gallon tank kept at the fire station. LVCSD also has access to a swimming pool at the local motel and a pond.

Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its service area; however, future growth may present a problem, if LVCSD does not recruit additional personnel.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District reported that it neither needed to upgrade nor replace its existing fire station as renovations and an addition have been recently done at the facility. The 1983 fire engine is in need of replacement. There is no current need for additional facilities or vehicles.

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## Challenges

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The District's main challenge is a lack of funding for needed capital purchases. In addition, LVCSD identified multiple areas within its service area with limited access, including narrow roads and poorly maintained streets. Difficult to serve areas include the Cromberg community north of SR 70 and the Two Rivers Soccer Camp. The camp is located in the District's service area and is difficult to access. The owner of the camp has failed to maintain the roads and apply for the area to be added a fire district.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. LVCSD has an ISO rating of 9. The District was last evaluated in 2012.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful

benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>118</sup> LVCS D falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. LVCS D provided a sample of service calls and response times for calendar year 2012. Based on the provided sample, the District's median response time was six minutes and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response time was 14 minutes.

The service area size<sup>119</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles. By comparison, each fire station in LVCS D serves approximately 6.9 square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD. By comparison, LVCS D has approximately 51 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>118</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>119</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 8-4: Long Valley CSD Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
<b>Firestation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	
LVCSD Station	58880 SR70, Cromberg, CA 96103	Excellent	Unstaffed	Old water tender, 1983 fire engine, 2006 international diesel water tender, 2 wildland engines	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> LVCSD informally makes its station available to USFS in case of emergencies.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> The District did not report any future opportunities to share facilities with other entities.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
The District reported a need to replace its 1983 fire engine. No other facility or vehicle needs were identified.					
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>	
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	34
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS	59%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	6.9	Ambulance Transport	EPHD, PHD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	15%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	11	Hazardous Materials	County	% False	0%
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CareFlight	% Misc. emergency	18%
Total Call Firefighters	11	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency	9%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	11	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	0%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	51	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	157
<b>Service Adequacy</b>			<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2012	The District lacks funding for capital improvements. LVCSD also reported that there are areas in its service area which are hard to serve: Two Rivers Soccer Camp and area north of SR70			
Median Response Time (min)	6	<b>Training</b>			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	14	Training takes place on two nights of the month for at least 3 hours each time. New firefighters must attend the Quincy FPD fire academy and participate in joint trainings with USFS.			
ISO Rating	9 (2012)				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
LVCSD is in the process of setting up an automatic aid agreement with Greenhorn Creek CSD according to which both fire departments will be dispatched to same incidents. The District has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD, Plumas Eureka CSD and Graeagle FPD.					
Notes: 1) Primary service area (square miles) per station. 2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel. 3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## RECREATION SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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LVCSO provides limited recreation services in the form of an insurance policy for a town hall building. The building is owned by LVCSO and located on land that belongs to a neighboring property owner. The town hall is managed by a small committee that provides regular updates to the LVCSO Board of Directors. The committee is not a part of LVCSO and provides updates as a courtesy to the District. Building maintenance and insurance costs are financed through fundraising. LVCSO uses the town hall for its regular Board of Directors meetings; the building is also used for various meetings of community groups and organizations, which are occasionally charged for the use of the premises. The facility, which is about 10 years old and consists of meeting space, kitchen and event space was reported to be in excellent condition. Approximately three to four years ago, the County administered improvements on the building financed by a rehab grant applied for and received by the town hall managing committee.

## **LONG VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS**

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### **Growth and Population Projections**

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- ❖ As of 2010, Long Valley Community Services District (LVCSO) had a population of 216.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed little change in service demand in the last few years.
- ❖ LVCSO anticipates limited growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. No new developments are planned within the District's bounds and SOI.

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### **The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI**

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCO will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### **Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies**

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- ❖ Currently, the District's facilities appear to have sufficient capacity to provide adequate services to existing demand. Although, there is presently adequate facilities and equipment, outdated vehicles may present a problem in the future. Current response times meet California EMS Agency and NFPA standards for response to medical emergencies and structural fires, respectively.
- ❖ LVCSO reported that the District would only be able to finance future capital improvements through grants.
- ❖ Current infrastructure needs include the replacement of the 1983 fire engine. The fire station was reported to be in excellent condition.
- ❖ The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP), nor does it plan for capital improvements in other ways. All new equipment is funded through grants.
- ❖ LVCSO fire services appear to be adequate. The District has satisfactory response times based on industry standards. While the District's ISO is high compared to urban service providers, it is similar to other rural providers.

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### **Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services**

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- ❖ The District reported that current financing levels were adequate for operations but not for capital purchases. Although the District's equipment is fairly new, a majority

of it will need to be replaced in the near future. LVCSO has been successful at financing capital improvements through grants in the past.

- ❖ To improve its financing resources, the District is looking into billing for out-of-district calls and non-resident calls. This new source of funding is expected to aid operational costs but not cover capital improvement needs.
- ❖ The District does not have any long-term debt.
- ❖ LVCSO has a management practice of maintaining an unrestricted fund balance for contingencies. At the end of FY 11-12, the fund balance was \$52,260.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ LVCSO is in the process of setting up an automatic aid agreement with Greenhorn Creek CSD, according to which both fire departments will be dispatched simultaneously to the same incidents.
- ❖ The District has mutual aid agreements with Quincy FPD, Plumas Eureka CSD and Graeagle FPD.
- ❖ LVCSO participates in the Training Master Plan through the Plumas Fire Chiefs Association.
- ❖ The LVCSO Board of Directors meets at and insures the town hall, which is used by other community organizations for meetings and events.
- ❖ The District makes its fire station available to USFS during emergencies.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ LVCSO demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCO. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ LVCSO practices outreach efforts; however, the District lacks a website where district information is made available to the public. It is recommended that every public service provider have a website to keep constituents aware of the agency's activities.
- ❖ The District is interested in discussing various consolidation options, however, believes that given its financing constraints options may be limited.

## 9. MEADOW VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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Meadow Valley Fire Protection District (MVFPD) provides structural and wildland fire suppression, rescue, medical first responder, public assistance, and some fire prevention services. This is the first municipal service review (MSR) for the District.

### AGENCY OVERVIEW

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#### Background

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MVFPD was formed in 1955 for the purpose of providing fire protection to the residents of the District.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>120</sup> The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.<sup>121</sup> Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.<sup>122</sup>

MVFPD is located in the central part of Plumas County. The nearest fire protection district to MVFPD is Quincy FPD, which is located to the east of the District.

#### Boundaries

MVFPD's territory is located entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 34.8 square miles and include the community of Meadow Valley and some U.S. Forest Service lands.

Since the formation of the District, there have been no boundary changes.

#### Sphere of Influence

The sphere of influence (SOI) for the District was established on August 26, 1976. The SOI was further updated and reduced to exclude the USFS lands in 1983, indicating that LAFCo anticipated this territory would eventually be detached from the District. The current sphere of influence is smaller than MVFPD's boundaries and includes 2.5 square miles compared to 34.8 square miles of territory within the District's bounds.

#### Extra-territorial Services

MVFPD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through an automatic aid agreement with the Bucks Lake Home Owners Association (HOA) fire department. In addition, the District has an automatic aid agreement with Quincy FPD, according to which

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<sup>120</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>121</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>122</sup> Government Code §56824.10.

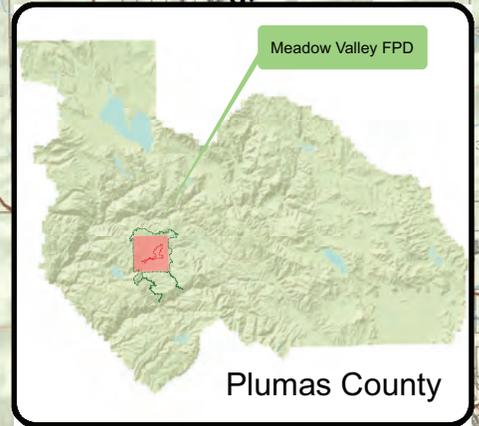
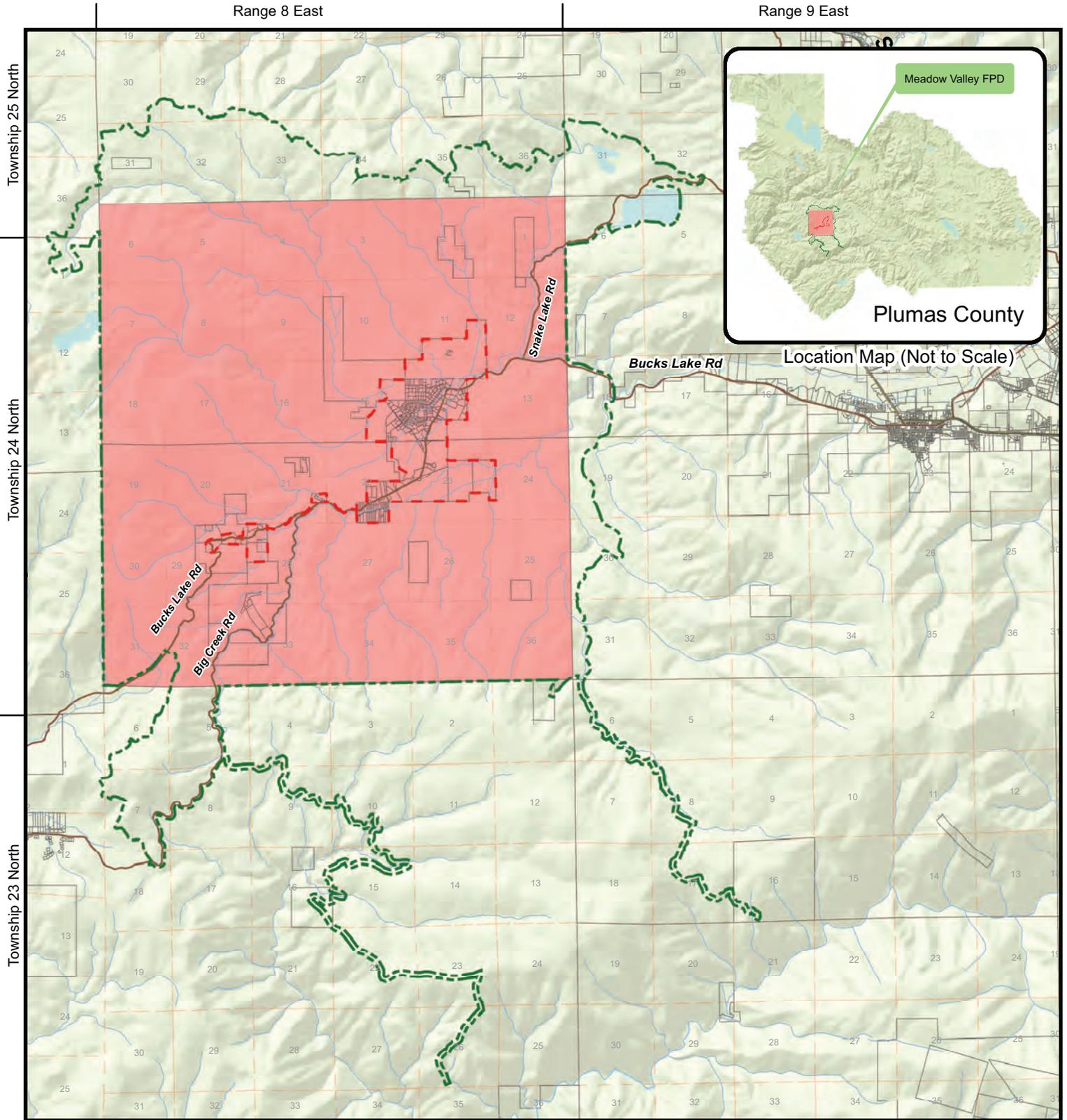
Quincy FPD responds within MVFPD's service area as needed. MVFPD also has mutual aid agreements with all other local fire providers in Plumas County.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of MVFPD, the District's service area extends to the north, east, and south in two narrow portions. The service area encompasses about 44.6 square miles. MVFPD, similar to other fire departments in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. Fire districts have the option to charge for service outside of their district.

*Areas of Interest*

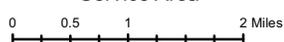
An area of interest for MVFPD is the community of Bucks Lake. Fire and EMS services in Bucks Lake are provided by a private fire department organized by the community's HOA. MVFPD occasionally (especially often in winter) provides services within the subdivision. The District would like to annex the area but reported that a major challenge to annexation is LAFCo fees.

# Meadow Valley Fire Protection District



## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station
- Meadow Valley FPD
- Meadow Valley FPD Sphere of Influence
- Meadow Valley FPD Service Area



Meadow Valley FPD  
 Resolution:  
 Formed: June 7, 1955

Meadow Valley FPD (SOI)  
 Resolution: 83-21  
 Adopted: February 16, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 9/25/2013

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## Accountability and Governance

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The principal act orders that the board of directors of a fire protection district must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11 members. Directors may be appointed or elected.<sup>123</sup> MVFPD is governed by a three-member board of directors elected at large to staggered four-year terms. All current members were elected; there are no vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 9-2.

The Board meets once in a quarter. Board meetings have no specific time or place. Board meeting agendas are posted on the fire station door. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.

**Figure: 9-2: Meadow Valley FPD Governing Body**

Meadow Valley FPD				
<b>District Contact Information</b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	John DeSelle, Director			
<b>Address:</b>	6913 Bucks Lake Road, Meadow Valley, CA			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-283-3128			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:jdscpa@sbcglobal.net">jdscpa@sbcglobal.net</a>			
<b>Board of Directors</b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Peter Beck	Chairman	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Rick Beacham	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
John DeSelle	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
<b>Meetings</b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Quarterly. There is no set date or time.			
<b>Location:</b>	There is no set location.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted on the fire station door.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District attempts to reach its constituents by participating in community events such as the Pancake Breakfast and Fourth of July parade and BBQ, which the District sponsors. MVFPD has not had contested elections for over a decade, and the District does not conduct any voter outreach.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted to a board member or anybody at the fire department. The District does not have a formal policy regarding complaints. The person responsible for handling complaints depends on the nature of the complaint. The responsibility is delegated by the chief. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2012.

MVFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

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<sup>123</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District has 18 personnel, of whom 16 are sworn staff and the other two are a communications officer and an auxiliary staff member. None of the personnel are paid, with the exception of the chief who receives \$500 a year for travel expenses. There are one fire chief, one assistant chief, two captains, two engineers, and 10 firefighters.

Daily operations are managed by the assistant fire chief. The chief is accountable to the Board of Directors and directly oversees the assistant chief. The assistant chief is in charge of the captains, the communications officer and auxiliary staff member. The captains oversee the firefighters.

MVFPD tracks its employees' workload by tracking training time and the number of personnel responding to each call. Response times for each incident are not tracked.

MVFPD does not currently evaluate its own performance in the form of an annual report or benchmarking with other providers, but is planning to do so in the future through a strategic plan.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and biennially audited financial statements. The most recent audit took place in FY 11. The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP). Currently, the District plans its capital improvements at board meetings. MVFPD is waiting to complete its strategic plan to identify the District's goals, after which the District will put together a list of infrastructure needs and funding sources. The District does not adopt any other planning documents.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>124</sup> The most recent audit for MVFPD was completed for FY 11. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District has complied with this requirement.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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Land uses within the District are timber production zone, general forest, agricultural preserve, residential, and commercial. The District's bounds encompass approximately 34.8 square miles.

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<sup>124</sup> Government Code §26909.

### Population

There are approximately 464 residents within the District, based on census place population in the 2010 Census and GIS estimates.<sup>125</sup> The District's population density is approximately 13 residents per square mile; however, a majority of the District's residents are concentrated in the Meadow Valley community.

### Existing Demand

The District reported that it did not have enough call volume to be able to identify peak demand hours. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years. MVFPD was unable to provide service call data for 2006-2010.

### Projected Growth and Development

MVFPD anticipates limited growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. A new road is being made off of Bucks Lake Road, which indicates to the District that a potential new development is being planned. Additionally, should the District annex the Bucks Lake community, there would be a larger population served and greater demand for services.

The District does not currently project service demand in its service area; however, it is trying to integrate some projections in its strategic plan, which is presently being developed.

MVFPD reported that it had sufficient capacity to serve current demand; however, serving possible future growth may be challenging if more volunteers are not recruited.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 464 in 2010 to approximately 483 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

### Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291.

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<sup>125</sup> Census Place Meadow Valley in Plumas County.

In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCo are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>126</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>127</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>128</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>129</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>130</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>131</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>132</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>133</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>127</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>135</sup>

11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>136</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

12)The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space though conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.

13)The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.

14)In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.

15)New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.

16)New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.

17)The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.

18)Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>137</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

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<sup>135</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>136</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

<sup>137</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it had not considered consolidation with other districts. There is the potential of MVFPD annexing the Bucks Lake community; however, the District reported that LAFCo fees may deter annexation.

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## Financing

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The District reported that current financing levels were adequate to cover operations but not for necessary capital improvements. MVFPD reported that it could not finance its capital improvement needs, because the District could not service the required debt with only property tax revenue. In the past, the District received a number of donations, but due to the economic downturn, donations have dramatically declined.

To improve its level of financing, the District is looking into applying for more grants.

The District's total revenue for FY 12 was \$60,073. Sources of revenue included property taxes (89 percent), interest (one percent), rental income (three percent), donations (one percent), Evening on the Green fundraiser (three percent), craft fair (one percent), calendar sales (one percent), and state homeowner's property tax (one percent).

The District's principal source of funds is derived from property taxes levied by Plumas County. MVFPD does not collect any special taxes or benefit assessments.

MVFPD's expenditures in FY 12 amounted to \$63,927. Primary expenditures were depreciation (36 percent), utilities (17 percent), worker's compensation insurance (11 percent), insurance (10 percent), professional services (eight percent), maintenance of buildings and grounds (six percent), vehicle fuel (two percent), truck maintenance (two percent), and tax administration fees (two percent). The remainder was spent on wages, clothing, communications, equipment maintenance, office expenses, training, travel, newspaper advertising, fire calls, and fire equipment.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. The District is planning to conduct capital improvement planning after the strategic plan is finished. MVFPD reported that its fire station was in need of replacement. It was estimated that a new station would cost approximately \$500,000.

MVFPD has a management practice to maintain a financial reserve. The District puts away about \$10,000 per year. At the end of FY 12, the reserve had a balance of \$195,760.

The District does not have any long-term debt.

The District does not participate in any joint financing ventures under joint powers agreements.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Service Overview**

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MVFPD provides structural and wildland fire suppression, vehicle rescue in conjunction with Plumas County Search and Rescue, emergency medical services, medical first responder services, public assists, and some fire prevention in the form of handouts and signage.

The District provides contract services to other agencies. MVFPD contracts with and gets reimbursed from the California Office of Emergency Services and California Emergency Management Agency.

#### ***Collaboration***

MVFPD has an automatic aid agreement with Quincy FPD, according to which QFPD responds in MVFPD's service area as needed Monday through Friday, from eight in the morning to five in the afternoon. The District also has an automatic aid agreement with the Bucks Lake Homeowners Association Fire Department to respond within the Bucks Lake community as needed, particularly in winter months. The District has mutual aid agreements with all other local fire providers in Plumas County.

MVFPD is a member of the Fire Safe Council and the Fire Chiefs Association.

#### ***Dispatch and Communications***

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The District reported that it was satisfied with the dispatch services as provided by the sheriff's office.

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### **Staffing**

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MVFPD has 16 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one assistant chief, two captains, two engineers, and 10 firefighters. None of the staff is paid. The median age of the firefighters is 50, with a range from 19 to 74.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. MVFPD attempts to recruit more volunteers through posters and via word of mouth. In addition, the Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association is working to assist fire departments in the County in their recruitment efforts.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>138</sup> MVFPD has one Firefighter I, seven First Responder, and no EMT I certified personnel.

The District provides training for its volunteers. Regular training sessions take place on two Tuesdays of each month for two hours each time. New district volunteers, without previous firefighter experience, must attend a firefighter academy organized by Quincy FPD. The District reported that its primary challenge is obtaining time commitments from its volunteers.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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MVFPD operates one fire station located at 6913 Bucks Lake Road. The original portion of the fire station was built in 1964. The second building was constructed in 1981, and the two joined together in 1999. The station is not staffed and was reported to be in fair condition. MVFPD currently has six operable vehicles that consist of a rescue/medical aid unit, a brush (wildland fire) rig, two type 2 engines, and two water tenders. The station grounds are occasionally used to park Plumas County road maintenance equipment. The administrative area of the fire station is used for periodic Meadow Valley Cemetery District meetings at no charge. The District also owns the property commonly called Schoolhouse, which is used as a community center and located at 7512 Bucks Lake Road.

The District's water reserves are represented by water storage tanks located behind the fire station that hold up to 6,000 gallons. MVFPD's mobile water tenders have a combined capacity of 6,800 gallons. The District has access to one hydrant on a private water system, which does not have any water storage. MVFPD can also draft water from a number of ditches, streams and ponds.

Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its service area; however, future growth may present a problem, if MVFPD does not recruit more personnel.

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<sup>138</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District reported that it either needed to upgrade or replace its existing fire station. The current station's bays are too narrow, short and low to accommodate newer vehicles. To date, MVFPD has not upgraded or replaced its station, due to lack of funding.

The District also has multiple vehicle needs. MVFPD would like to replace its type 2 engines with type 1 engines that are able to carry five to six firefighters. The District also needs vehicles with 1,000-gallon water storage; however, these vehicles would not be able to fit into the existing station.

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## Challenges

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The District's main challenge is lack of funding for needed capital improvements. In addition, MVFPD has difficulty providing fire services to the Toll Gate area, due to the steepness of the road. Other challenges include narrow access roads in select areas, difficulty in the winter due to accumulation of snow, and lack of available personnel during work hours.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. MVFPD has an ISO rating of 8B. The District was last evaluated in 2010.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>139</sup> MVFPD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the

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<sup>139</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District reportedly tracks its response times for each incident. MVFPD provided a sample of service calls and response times for August 2012; however, this sample consisted of only one call, which had a response time of 10 minutes. The provided sample was not large enough to determine the District's median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times.

The service area size<sup>140</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles. By comparison, each fire station in MVFPD serves approximately 44.6 square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD. By comparison, MVFPD has approximately 37 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

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<sup>140</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 9-3: Meadow Valley FPD Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
<b>Firestation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>	
MVFPD Station	6913 Bucks Lake Road, Meadow Valley, CA	Fair	Unstaffed	Rescue/medical aid unit, a brush (wildland fire) rig, 2 type 2 engines, and 2 water tenders.	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> The District's Schoolhouse is available for community events. The fire station grounds are occasionally used to park Plumas County road maintenance equipment. The administrative area of the fire station is used for periodic Meadow Valley Cemetery District meetings at no charge.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> The District did not report any future opportunities to share facilities with other entities.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
The District's fire station is in need of replacement or expansion. MVFPD also needs type 1 engines that would carry 5-6 firefighters. There is also a need for vehicles with 1,000-gallon water storage.					
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>	
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	26
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS	62%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	44.6	Ambulance Transport	PHD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	15%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	18	Hazardous Materials	QFPD	% False	8%
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CHP	% Misc. emergency	8%
Total Call Firefighters	16	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency	8%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	16	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	0%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	34	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	56
<b>Service Adequacy</b>			<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2012 (August)	The District lacks funding for capital improvements. MVFPD also reported that there are areas in its service area which are hard to serve because of narrow, steep roads especially in winter.			
Median Response Time (min)	N/P	<b>Training</b>			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	N/P	Training takes place two Tuesdays a month for two hours each time. New volunteers must attend QFPD firefighter academy.			
ISO Rating	8B (2010)				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>					
The District has automatic aid agreement with QFPD according to which QFPD responds in MVFPD Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm, automatic aid agreement with Bucks Lake HOA to respond in Bucks Lake, and mutual aid agreements with the rest of the local fire service providers in Plumas County.					
Notes: 1) Primary service area (square miles) per station. 2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel. 3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.					

## MEADOW VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ Meadow Valley Fire Protection District (MVFPD) had a population of approximately 464 as of 2010.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years.
- ❖ MVFPD anticipates limited growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. There is a potential development on the Bucks Lake Road. Additional growth may also result from the annexation of the Bucks Lake community.

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### The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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- ❖ Currently, the District's facilities appear to have sufficient capacity to provide adequate services to existing demand. Future growth areas, however, may present a problem if more volunteers are not recruited. It was not possible to be determined whether current response times meet California EMS Agency and NFPA standards for response to medical emergencies and structural fires respectively because the District was unable to provide sufficient call sample.
- ❖ The District needs to upgrade or replace its existing fire station and replace and purchase multiple vehicles. These capital needs have not been fulfilled for the lack of funding.
- ❖ The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP). Currently, the District plans its capital improvements at board meetings. MVFPD is waiting to complete its strategic plan to identify the District's goals, after which the District will put together a list of infrastructure needs and funding sources.
- ❖ MVFPD services appear to be adequate. Based on a single call sample, the District has adequate response times. ISO is high compared to urban service providers, but similar to rural providers and those in the County.

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## Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that current financing levels were adequate to cover operations but not for necessary capital improvements. MVFPD reported that it could not finance its capital improvement needs, because the District could not service the required debt with only property tax revenue.
- ❖ To improve its level of financing, the District is looking into applying for more grants.
- ❖ The District's principal source of funds is derived from property taxes levied by Plumas County. MVFPD does not collect any special taxes or benefit assessments.
- ❖ MVFPD has a management practice to maintain a financial reserve. The District puts away about \$10,000 per year. At the end of FY 12, the reserve had a balance of \$195,760.
- ❖ The District does not have any long-term debt.

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## Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ MVFPD has an automatic aid agreement with Quincy FPD, according to which QFPD responds in MVFPD's service area as needed Monday through Friday, from eight in the morning to five in the afternoon.
- ❖ The District has an automatic aid agreement with the Bucks Lake Homeowners Association Fire Department to respond within the Bucks Lake community as needed, particularly in winter months.
- ❖ MVFPD has mutual aid agreements with all other local fire providers in Plumas County.
- ❖ MVFPD is a member of the Fire Safe Council and the Fire Chiefs Association.

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## Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ MVFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ Although MVFPD practices some constituent outreach efforts, the District does not conduct any voter outreach and has not had contested elections for over a decade. The District lacks a website where district information is made available to the public. It is recommended that every public service provider have a website to keep constituents aware of the agency's activities.
- ❖ With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it had not considered consolidation with other districts. There is the potential of MVFPD annexing the Bucks Lake community; however, the District reported that LAFCo fees may deter annexation.

# 10. QUINCY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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Quincy Fire Protection District (QFPD) provides fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical, light and heavy rescue, and inspections. This is the first municipal service review (MSR) for the District.

## AGENCY OVERVIEW

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### Background

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On December 19, 1878, the first organized fire department for the Quincy area was established as the Quincy Hose Company No. 1. QFPD became an independent special district June 1, 1917.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>141</sup> The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.<sup>142</sup> Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.<sup>143</sup>

QFPD is located in the central part of Plumas County. Other nearby fire protection districts include Meadow Valley FPD to the west and Greenhorn CSD to the southeast.

### Boundaries

QFPD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 11.7 square miles and include the communities of Quincy and East Quincy. The town of Quincy is the Plumas County seat.

Since the formation of the District, there have been 13 annexations to QFPD. The most recent annexation occurred in 1991 and involved the territory of Little Keddie. The District's boundary changes are shown in Figure 10-1.

The annexation of the Upper Keddie Territory<sup>144</sup> only appears in LAFCo archives, and has not been recorded by the Board of Equalization (BOE). QFPD and LAFCo should work together to determine whether the annexation was satisfactorily completed, submit the annexation for recording by the State, and ensure that the District's Tax Rate Area is consistent with BOE records.

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<sup>141</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>142</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>143</sup> Government Code §56824.10.

<sup>144</sup> Resolution 84-4 (2-ANNX-84).

**Figure 10-1: Quincy FPD Boundary History**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Quincy FPD	Formation	1917	SBOE
Unknown territory	Annexation	1939	SBOE
Unknown territory	Annexation	1949	SBOE
Nine parcels of contiguous lands	Annexation	1959	SBOE
Annexation #6 (2 parcels)	Annexation	1968	SBOE, LAFCo
Annexation #7 (2 parcels)	Annexation	1968	SBOE, LAFCo
Annexation #3 (21 areas, 20 parcels)	Annexation	1976	SBOE, LAFCo
Leonhardt	Annexation	1980	SBOE, LAFCo
Clear Creek Estates	Annexation	1982	SBOE, LAFCo
Leonhardt et al	Annexation	1983	SBOE, LAFCo
Upper Keddie Territory	Annexation	1984	LAFCo
Essex Lumber Co.	Annexation	1985	SBOE, LAFCo
Bresciani Industrial Park	Annexation	1985	SBOE, LAFCo
Little Keddie Territory	Annexation	1991	SBOE, LAFCo

*Sphere of Influence*

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on in 1976.<sup>145</sup> The SOI was further revised in 1983.<sup>146</sup> The current SOI is 16.1 square miles compared to about 11.7 square miles of boundary area. Figure 10-2 depicts QFPD’s boundaries and SOI.

*Extra-territorial Services*

QFPD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD (which is effective Monday through Friday from 8am till 5pm), informal mutual aid agreements with all other fire providers and Plumas County, and formal mutual aid agreements with California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), CAL FIRE, and U.S. Forest Service.

In 2011, the District responded to four requests for mutual aid. One was a request from Cal EMA for an out of region mutual aid campaign fire. Another response was for a mutual aid call to Greenhorn FPD, which had not responded to dispatch for a call in its jurisdiction. The other two were to Meadow Valley FPD.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of QFPD, the District’s service area extends along Roundhouse Road, Oakland Camp Road, Mt. Hough Crystal Lake, SR 70, Quincy La Porte Road, and Bucks Lake Road. The service area encompasses about 20.1 square miles. QFPD, similar to other fire departments in the County, does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement. Although, the District has a fee schedule for responding outside of its boundaries, it has not been successful at collection.

<sup>145</sup> LAFCo Resolution 76-15.

<sup>146</sup> LAFCo Resolution 83-19.

Areas of Interest

Specific areas of interest for the District are areas in the QFPD's SOI, but outside of the District's boundaries. The District is interested in annexing its islands and all other SOI areas except for the northern areas, which lack a nearby fire station.

Additionally, there are four districts with which QFPD is interested in entering a JPA to share resources. These districts include Meadow Valley FPD, Bucks Lake private fire department, Greenhorn Creek CSD, and Long Valley CSD.

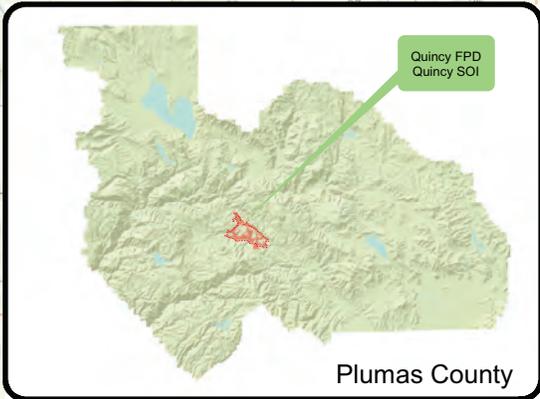
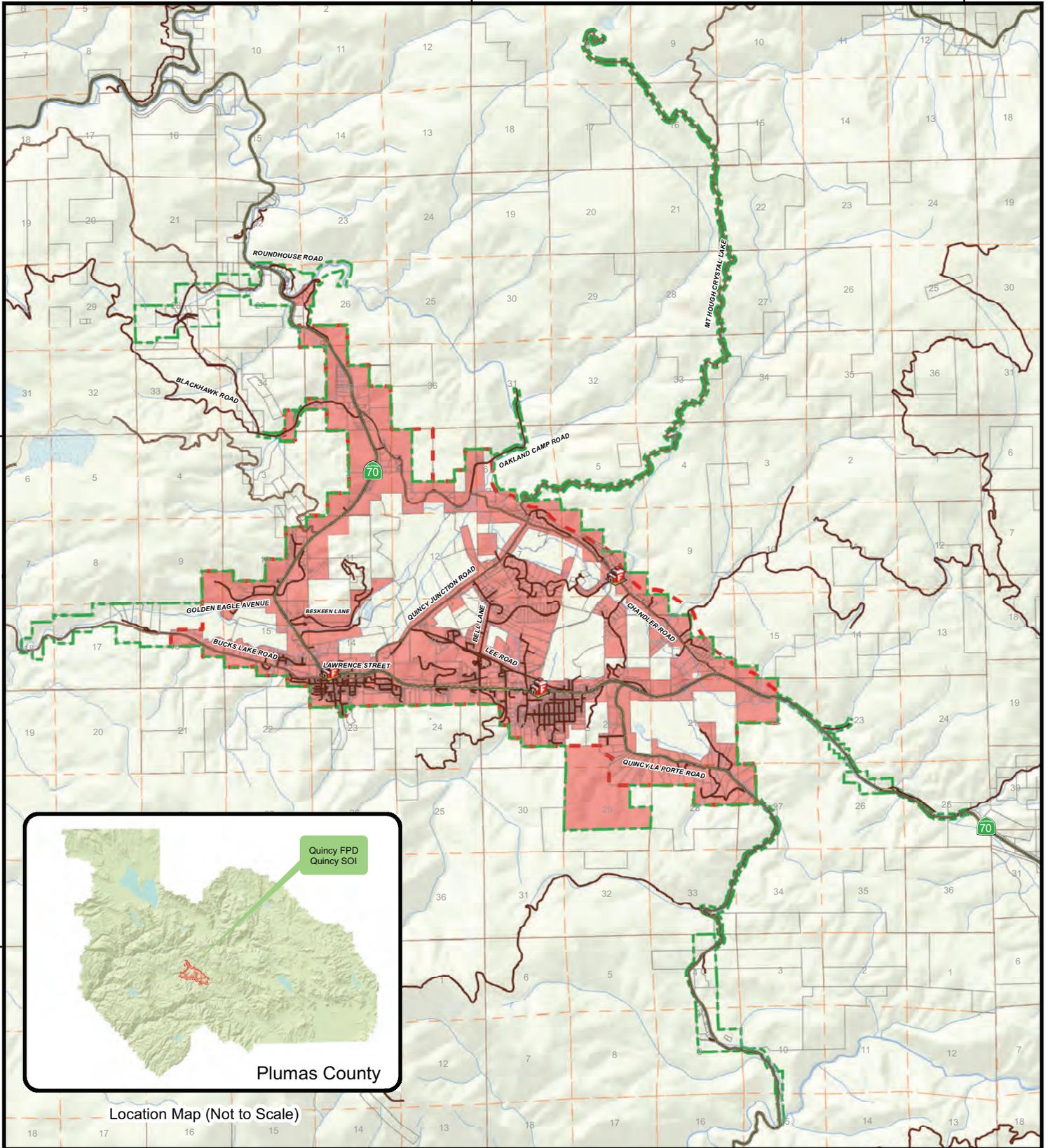
# Quincy Fire Protection District

Range 9 East

Range 10 East

Township 25 North

Township 24 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)

## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station

- Quincy FPD
- Quincy FPD Sphere of Influence
- Quincy FPD Service Area



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Quincy FPD  
Resolution:  
Formed: June 1, 1971

Quincy FPD (SOI)  
Resolution: 83-19  
Adopted: February 16, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 9/30/2013

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## Accountability and Governance

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The principal act orders that the board of directors of a fire protection district must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11 members. Directors may be appointed or elected.<sup>147</sup> QFPD is governed by a three-member board of directors elected at large to staggered four-year terms. All current members were appointed; there are no vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 10-3.

The Board meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 in the evening at 237 Lawrence Street in Quincy. Board meeting agendas are posted on the bulletin board and at the district fire stations, and emailed to the mailing list. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request and emailed to the board members before every meeting.

**Figure 10-3: Quincy FPD Governing Body**

Quincy FPD				
<b>District Contact Information</b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Robbie Cassou, Fire Chief			
<b>Address:</b>	505 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA 95971			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-283-0870			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:robbie.quincyfire@sbcglobal.net">robbie.quincyfire@sbcglobal.net</a> , <a href="http://quincyfire.com">quincyfire.com</a>			
<b>Board of Directors</b>				
<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>	<b>Manner of Selection</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>
Mike Taborski	Chairman	December 2015	Appointed	4 years
Andy Ryback	Treasurer	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
Chuck Leonhardt	Secretary	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
<b>Meetings</b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Second Thursday of every month at 7:30am.			
<b>Location:</b>	Building at 237 Lawrence St.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted on on the bulletin board and fire stations, and emailed to the list.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request and emailed to board members prior to the meetings.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents by participating in the children’s fair and handing out books that teach fire safety, taking part in college career days and holiday functions, and sending the fire safety trailer to schools for educational purposes. The District encourages voter participation by publishing notices in the local newspaper, posting them at the library and the courthouse, and placing them on bulletin boards and at the district fire stations. Additionally, the District makes information available on its website.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints may be submitted to the chief. The District does not have a formal policy regarding handling of complaints. The District reported that there was one complaint in 2012.

QFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

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<sup>147</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District has 51 personnel, of whom 40 are sworn staff and 11 are support staff. The chief, administrative secretary and the mechanic are full-time paid staff. The rest of the personnel are volunteers. Daily operations are managed by the fire chief with the support of the administrative secretary. The chief is accountable to the Board of Directors and directly oversees the administrative secretary, facilities manager/mechanic, EMS coordinator, and deputy chief. The deputy chief manages the assistant chief who supervises the captains. Firefighters report to the captains.

Paid employees are evaluated annually by the chief; the Board evaluates the chief. Volunteers are not evaluated.

QFPD tracks its employees' workload through training records, credential records, call log, and vehicle mileage log. The District believes that tracking staff workload increases their motivation to succeed. Firefighters are rewarded by being promoted and granted performance awards.

QFPD reported that it performed evaluations of the District as a whole through its strategic plan. In addition, the District reviewed the operations of other similar agencies as QFPD looked into proposing a new tax measure to its voters.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and biennially audited financial statements. The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP). QFPD conducts capital improvement planning when the District prepares to go to its voters for a new special tax. Thus, in 2012 a committee looked into five-year capital improvement needs; however, a document recording these needs have never been completed. QFPD records its capital improvement needs in its budgets. In addition, QFPD adopts the strategic plan, which was most recently updated in 2012.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>148</sup> The most recent audit for QFPD was completed for FY 10-11. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District has complied with this requirement.

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<sup>148</sup> Government Code §26909.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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The land uses within the District include residential, commercial, industrial, and some general forest and timber preserve. The District's bounds encompass approximately 11.7 square miles.

### Population

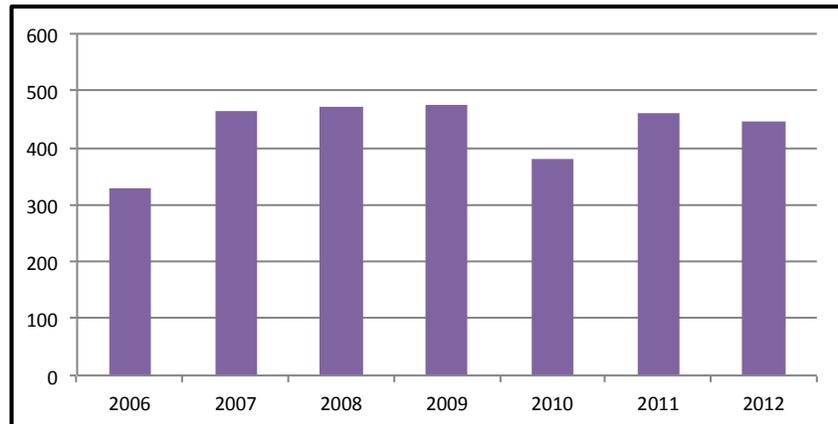
There are approximately 5,444 residents within the District, based on GIS estimate. The District's population density is 465 residents per square mile.

### Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District were reported to be in the afternoons. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

**Figure 10-4: Quincy FPD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011**

The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years, due to an increase in tourism, a revival of the timber industry, and aging population. The District did not attribute this growth in demand to a growth in its permanent population, given that QFPD is surrounded by USFS lands, which limits development.



As shown in Figure 10-4, the number of calls went up from 2006 to 2007, stayed steady for three years, then slightly dropped in 2010 and went back up in 2011 and 2012.

### Projected Growth and Development

QFPD anticipates moderate growth in service demand within the District in the next few years, particularly due to some areas being rezoned from industrial into residential, increasing the potential for residential growth. The District also reported that there was one development in northern Quincy, which currently includes about 25 units, but could potentially add 200 more. The District is anticipating providing services to this potential growth. QFPD reported that it had sufficient equipment capacity to serve its anticipated future growth, but the District lacks the necessary personnel. QFPD also cited absence of a sufficient water system as a capacity constraint for the District.

The District does not create population projections, reportedly due to financial limitations.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections,

the District's population would increase from 5,444 in 2010 to approximately 5,662 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

### Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

The County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCO are working on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impacts the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>149</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>150</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>151</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>152</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>150</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>154</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>155</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>156</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>157</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>158</sup>
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>159</sup>

The County is in the final stages of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

- 12) The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space through conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.
- 13) The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.
- 14) In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.
- 15) New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.
- 16) New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 17) The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>159</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

18) Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>160</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it had not considered consolidation with other districts. QFPD reported that it would like to annex its islands; however, these annexations would be dependent on negotiating a tax sharing agreement with the County. The District would also like to annex all areas in its

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<sup>160</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

SOI with the exception of the northern areas, as it would be challenging to serve due to the absence of a nearby fire station. The District is also in discussions with four other fire departments (Long Valley CSD, Greenhorn Creek CSD, Meadow Valley FPD, and Bucks Lake private fire department) to explore the possibility of establishing a JPA to combine and share resources.

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## Financing

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The District reported that previous financing levels were not adequate to deliver services. QFPD required additional source of funding, as it was using its reserves to continue operations. In June 2013, district voters passed Measure A, a special tax on parcels to ensure continued satisfactory operations of the fire district.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 12 was \$247,873. Sources of revenue included property tax income (88 percent), special tax (one percent), interest revenue (one percent), and other miscellaneous revenue (10 percent).

The District's principal source of funds is derived from property taxes levied by Plumas County. QFPD currently receives revenue from one special tax, which brings in a minor amount. The District's other special tax expired in 2010 and reduced the District's income by half. Consequently, QFPD once again went to the voters to approve a new special tax.

In 2007, the District started charging fees for providing services outside of its boundaries and first responder fees inside the boundaries; however, it hasn't been successful collecting the funds for a majority of the responses. Charges are based on hourly use of equipment and personnel and vary from \$50 an hour to \$200 an hour for equipment and from \$21 per hour to \$55 per hour for personnel. In addition, QFPD is compensated for workers compensation insurance, unemployment insurance and administrative costs. The District also has fee schedules as parts of agreements with Cal EMA, CAL FIRE and USFS. In FY 12, the District received no income from service fees.

QFPD's expenditures in FY 12 amounted to \$332,202. Of this amount, 55 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 39 percent on services and supplies, and six percent on fixed assets. The District's expenditures exceeded its revenues by \$84,329 in that year.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. According to the District's approved FY 13-14 budget, QFPD is planning to spend \$412,111 on capital improvements this fiscal year.

QFPD has a management practice to maintain a financial reserve. At the end of FY 12, the reserve had a balance of about \$800,000. About \$150,000 will most likely be spent on the District's operations by the end of FY 12-13. The remainder of the balance is earmarked for capital improvement needs such as structures, trucks, and safety equipment.

QFPD does not have any long-term debt.

The District does not participate in any joint financing ventures under joint powers agreements.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### Service Overview

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QFPD provides structural fire suppression, wildland fire suppression, airport rescue firefighting (ARFF), year-round fire prevention, emergency medical services (consisting of basic life support and advanced life support), hazardous material response (technical and operational level), and rescue (operational level).

The District provides contract services to other agencies. QFPD contracts with and gets reimbursed from USFS for wildland fire suppression. The District also houses the Cal EMA engine and staffs it as needed.

### Collaboration

QFPD has an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD to respond in MVFPD as needed Monday through Friday from eight in the morning till five in the afternoon. The District has mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, USFS and CAL FIRE. The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and California State Firefighters Association.

QFPD participated in the Plumas County Hazmat Plan as a part of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, the State Master Mutual Aid Plan, and the County Fire Chief's Association Plan.

### Dispatch and Communications

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the CHP Susanville Dispatch Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo approved boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The District reported that in general it was very satisfied with the dispatch services provided by the Sheriff's Office. However, the District reported that improvements could be made to infrastructure and equipment, such as repeaters, dispatch equipment and software, field radio equipment and GIS mapping. Other desirable improvements include more mountain top repeater sites, better computer aided tracking of individual resources (for example, response times), integration of pre-designated alarm assignments, including automatic and mutual aid agreements, and emergency medical dispatch pre-arrival instructions. While emergency medical dispatch would reportedly be ideal, it would require an additional dispatcher. Sometime in the future the District would also like to see integration and accessibility of National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) report information for each response agency, as well as integration of Environmental Health

Business Plan information, fire hydrant data, and fire district pre-plan information in the dispatch center system.

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## Staffing

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QFPD has 30 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one deputy chief, one assistant chief, five captains, and 22 firefighters. The full-time chief is the only paid sworn staff; the rest of the firefighters are not compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 42, with a range from 20 to 71.

Staffing levels for firefighters have run from 30 to 40 over the last 10 years. Turnover has been an average of 10 firefighters per year over the last three years.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.<sup>161</sup> QFPD has three Firefighter I and seven EMT I certified personnel. The District is currently training its firefighters to the NFPA 1001 standard through a 156-hour program, which includes lecture, hands-on training, home study, and online course work.

All new members attend QFPD 40-hour basic fire academy in April of each year. This program is in addition to a 32-hour wildland firefighter course, 16-hour HAZMAT First responder Operations Course, eight-hour Confined Space Rescue Awareness course, 16-hour Auto Extrication class, as well as ICS 100 and 700 (though taught periodically during regular meetings, ICS courses can be completed online).

Quincy Volunteer Firefighters are constantly training for emergencies. Volunteers are expected to participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the District's Tuesday night drills.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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QFPD operates three fire stations. Station 1, which was reported to be in fair condition, is located at 505 Lawrence Street in Quincy and was built in 1939 with additions made through the early 1970s. Station 1 is staffed by the fire chief, administrative secretary and mechanic/facilities manager Monday through Friday from six in the morning till five in the afternoon. Station 2, located at 49 Alta Avenue in Quincy, was built in 1948 with an addition completed in 1978. The station was reported to be in poor condition. Station 3

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<sup>161</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

was built in 1979 and is considered to be in good condition. It is located at 1649 Chandler Road in Quincy. Stations 2 and 3 are unstaffed.

Station 1 is used as a fire station, administrative offices, vehicle maintenance and testing facility, training facility, and meeting rooms. It houses 10 vehicles—two type 1 structure engines, one type 3 wildland engine, one hazmat response vehicle, one support unit, one fire safety trailer, one antique parade vehicle, and two forklifts. Station 2 is used as a fire station and physical fitness center and contains two type 1 structure engines, one type 3 wildland engine and one rescue squad vehicle. Station 3 serves exclusively as a fire station and includes one type 2 structure engine and one 3,500-gallon water tender.

The District's total water storage capacity is 9,000 gallons, which include water stored in engines, rescue squad, water tender, and ladder truck.

Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area; however, the ability to adequately address demand as a result of any future growth will greatly depend on a stable and adequate financing source. Although, there are sufficient facilities and equipment, lack of available water supply and limited staffing may present a problem in the future.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District identified multiple infrastructure needs and deficiencies. Station 1, which was built in 1939, requires electrical improvements and sheetrock on the interior walls. The building is also not protected by sprinklers or a fire alarm system. Heating appliances have recently been improved, but insulation, single pane windows and air conditioning still have to be addressed. Replacing or redesigning the roof will improve drainage and snow loading and leakage.

The District's training facility is built on land that was donated by a retired fire chief and comprises three lots north of Station 1. On the western side of the training facility there is a parcel with covered storage, which is owned by the church and shared through a reciprocal agreement according to which QFPD may use the property for training in exchange for access to the once land-locked property for parishioners of the church on Sundays. Future acquisition of this and/or other neighboring properties would greatly improve the District's training capabilities as reported by QFPD.

Station 2 has substandard wiring and interior walls are not sheet rocked. Due to its small size it is unable to house modern fire apparatuses. The District has saved nearly \$400,000 for the station's eventual replacement.

Station 3 is in adequate condition and only needs minor upgrades. However, the ownership of the station is debated, because the donation of the property was not properly recorded in 1978.

The District reported multiple constraints to completing these capital improvement needs, including failure to obtain a tax sharing agreement with the County, lack of access to funding for fire suppression in the State Responsibility Areas (SRA) due to the five party agreement (land swap agreement between CAL FIRE and USFS), lack of success with federal grant opportunities for new fire station construction, and no access to Proposition 172 funds.

In addition to facility needs, the District requires some vehicle upgrades. Currently, QFPD structure engines are on a 40-year replacement cycle. To compare, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends a 20-year replacement cycle. Constraints to vehicle replacement needs include the high cost of vehicles and inadequate storage space at Station 2 to accommodate newer equipment. Despite some replacement needs, the District reports that it has adequate equipment in serviceable condition to meet its current demand.

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## Challenges

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The District reported that within its boundaries there were no notable barriers to response that would delay responses other than individual narrow or steep driveways. QFPD, however, is concerned about some areas with limited access or egress. These areas include the Galleppi Ranch Subdivision and Main Ranch Road. The areas of Chandler Road, La Porte Road, Main Ranch Road, Carol Lane East, and Carol Lane West are also a concern, due to lack of fire hydrants or other accessible year-round water supplies.

The District reported various other challenges to providing adequate services, such as lack of a unified Plumas County presence in structural firefighting, fire prevention and code enforcement. Plumas has recently made a step forward by hiring a fire prevention officer, but there are still concerns on the part of the District regarding a lack of centralized coordination between the County's fire service providers. In addition, fire districts lack a legitimate voice in the planning process for new development. If districts choose to participate, each one is responsible for plan checking and code enforcement within their own district. Most fire districts have not adopted a fire code or local ordinances. These same districts may not have any training or experience in plan checking or code enforcement. Volunteer fire departments find it difficult to function in an enforcement role when they rely heavily on local support for fundraising and recruitment. QFPD also reported that continuously increasing regulation and medical requirements on volunteer firefighters have made the recruitment, training and retention of firefighters difficult. Equipment costs and staying in compliance with NFPA, OSHA and other regulations and standards present a challenge as well.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. QFPD has an ISO rating of four in urban areas and 8B in rural areas. These results are based on the 1993 evaluation. The District was re-surveyed in August of 2012 and the report reveals ISO rating of 4/8B.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other

guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>162</sup> QFPD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. Based on QFPD a response times sample from August 2012, its median response time is three minutes, and 12.4 minutes 90 percent of the time. Median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times include incidents that occurred outside of the District's boundaries, but within its service area.

The service area size<sup>163</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD.

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<sup>162</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>163</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 10-5: Quincy FPD Fire Service Profile**

Fire Service				
<b>Facilities</b>				
<b>Firestation</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Vehicles</b>
Station 1	505 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA	Fair	Monday-Friday 6am-5pm	2 type 1 structure engines, 1 type 3 wildland engine, 1 hazmat response vehicle, 1 support unit, 1 class B foam unit, and 1 fire safety trailer
Station 2	49 Alta Avenue, Quincy, CA	Poor	Unstaffed	2 type 1 structure engines, 1 type 3 wildland engine, and 1 rescue squad
Station 3	1646 Chandler Road, Quincy, CA	Good	Unstaffed	1 type 2 structure engine and 1 3,500-gallon water tender
<b>Facility Sharing</b>				
<b>Current Practices:</b> The District makes use for training purposes of a parcel which is owned by the church and shared through a reciprocal agreement.				
<b>Future opportunities:</b> QFPD is discussing a possibility of a JPA according to which it will share resources with four other districts.				
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>				
Station 1 requires multiple upgrades. Station 2 needs to be replaced. Station 3 only needs minor repairs and upgrades. Multiple vehicles need to be replaced.				
<b>District Resource Statistics</b>		<b>Service Configuration</b>		<b>Service Demand</b>
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year
Fire Stations in District	3	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls
Stations Serving District	3	EMS	Direct	% EMS
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	6.7	Ambulance Transport	PHD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	30	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False
Total Full-time Firefighters	1	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CHP	% Misc. emergency
Total Call Firefighters	29	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	10	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	6	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people
<b>Service Adequacy</b>		<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2012 (August)	The District suffers from the lack of funding sources and high cost of equipment. QFPD also identified multiple difficult-to-serve areas in its service area.		
Median Response Time (min)	3 minutes	<b>Training</b>		
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	12.4 minutes	All new members attend QFPD 40-hour basic fire academy in April of each year. Quincy Volunteer Firefighters are constantly training for emergencies.		
ISO Rating	4/8B (2012)	Volunteers are expected to participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the		
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>				
The District has automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm and mutual aid agreements with the rest of the fire service providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, CalFire and USFS.				
Notes: 1) Primary service area (square miles) per station. 2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel. 3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.				

## QUINCY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ Quincy Fire Protection District (QFPD) had population of 5,444 as of 2010.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years due to an increase in tourism, a revival of the timber industry, and the aging of the local population.
- ❖ QFPD anticipates moderate growth in service demand within the District in the next few years, particularly due to some areas being rezoned from industrial to residential. There is also one development in northern Quincy, which currently includes about 25 units, but could potentially add an additional 200.

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### The Location and Characteristics of Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Agency's SOI

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- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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### Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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- ❖ Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area; however, the ability to adequately address demand as a result of any future growth will greatly depend on a stable and adequate financing source.
- ❖ Current response times meet California EMS Agency and NFPA standards for response to medical emergencies and structural fires, respectively.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include upgrades to Station 1, replacement of Station 2 and minor repairs at Station 3. The District also needs to replace multiple vehicles.
- ❖ The District does not have a formal capital improvement plan. It is a recommended practice for all districts to adopt a capital improvement plan to allow for more effective infrastructure improvement and related financing planning.
- ❖ QFPD services appear to be adequate. The District has adequate response times. The District's ISO rating is high compared to urban service providers, but similar to rural providers and those in the County.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that previous financing levels were not adequate to deliver services. QFPD required additional source of funding, as it was using its reserves to

continue operations. In June 2013, district voters passed Measure A, a special tax on parcels to ensure continued satisfactory operations of the fire district.

- ❖ The District's general operations are funded primarily through property taxes. QFPD charges fees for providing services outside of its boundaries and first responder fees inside the boundaries; however, it has not been successful collecting a majority of the fees.
- ❖ QFPD maintains a financial reserve, which at the end of FY 12, had a balance of about \$800,000. About \$150,000 will most likely be spent on District's operations by the end of FY 12-13. The remainder of the balance is earmarked for capital improvement needs.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ The District has mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, CAL FIRE and USFS, and an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD.
- ❖ The District uses a parcel owned by the neighboring church for training purposes through a reciprocal agreement.
- ❖ The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and California State Firefighters Association.
- ❖ QFPD participated in the Plumas County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, State Master Mutual Aid Plan, and County Fire Chief's Association Plan.
- ❖ The District sees an opportunity to share resources with four other districts through a joint powers agreement.

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### Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

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- ❖ QFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ QFPD practices outreach efforts and has a website where district information is made available to the public.
- ❖ In regards to governance structure options, it was reported that the District would like to annex its islands and various other areas in its SOI with the exception of the northern areas. These annexations would be contingent upon a tax sharing agreement with the County.