



LAKE ALMANOR AREA MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FINAL

Adopted October 15, 2012

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS.....	6
PREFACE.....	9
CONTEXT.....	9
CREDITS.....	9
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	10
SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	10
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	11
GROWTH.....	11
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT	11
ACCOUNTABILITY.....	12
FIRE & EMS	13
WATER & WASTEWATER.....	14
OTHER KEY FINDINGS	15
GOVERNANCE OPTIONS	16
2. LAFCO AND MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEWS.....	17
LAFCO OVERVIEW	17
MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW LEGISLATION.....	21
MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW PROCESS.....	21
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES	22
3. MSR AREA	25
GROWTH & POPULATION PROJECTIONS.....	25
SERVICE PROVIDERS.....	28
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	29
WATER SERVICE.....	37
WASTEWATER SERVICES	42
4. ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT.....	46
AGENCY OVERVIEW	46
PARK SERVICES	53
ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS.....	56
5. CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT	58
AGENCY OVERVIEW	58
CEMETERY SERVICES	65
CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	67
6. CHESTER PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT.....	69
AGENCY OVERVIEW	69
WATER SERVICES	83
WASTEWATER SERVICES	90
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	97
LIGHTING SERVICES	103
SOLID WASTE SERVICES.....	104
CHESTER PUD DETERMINATIONS	105
7. HAMILTON BRANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT	108
AGENCY OVERVIEW	108
WATER SERVICES	116

HAMILTON BRANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS.....	123
8. HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT	125
AGENCY OVERVIEW	125
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	137
HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	142
9. PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT	144
AGENCY OVERVIEW	144
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	157
PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	162
10. PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT	164
AGENCY OVERVIEW	164
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	175
PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	180
11. SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT	182
AGENCY OVERVIEW	182
HEALTHCARE SERVICES	191
SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	197
12. WALKER RANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT.....	199
AGENCY OVERVIEW	199
WATER SERVICES	207
WASTEWATER SERVICES	213
WALKER RANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS	220
13. WEST ALMANOR COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT.....	223
AGENCY OVERVIEW	223
FIRE AND EMS SERVICES	236
WASTEWATER SERVICES	242
WEST ALMANOR CSD DETERMINATIONS	245

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1-1: SERVICE PROVIDERS IN LAKE ALMANOR REGION OF PLUMAS COUNTY	10
FIGURE 1-2: EXISTING SPHERE OF INFLUENCES.....	11
FIGURE 2-1: COMMISSION MEMBERS, 2012	18
FIGURE 3-1: POPULATION GROWTH RATES IN PLUMAS COUNTY AND CALIFORNIA	26
FIGURE 3-2: NEW RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS	26
FIGURE 3-3: COUNTYWIDE DOF POPULATION PROJECTIONS	27
FIGURE 3-4: ANNUALIZED GROWTH PROJECTIONS BY METHOD	27
FIGURE 3-5: TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX REVENUE, FYS 01-11	28
FIGURE 3-6: REVIEWED SERVICE PROVIDERS IN LAKE ALMANOR REGION OF PLUMAS COUNTY	28
FIGURE 3-7: FIRE AND EMS PROVIDERS IN LAKE ALMANOR AREA	31
FIGURE 3-8: FIRE AND EMS PROVIDERS IN LAKE ALMANOR AREA	32
FIGURE 3-9: SERVICE AREA PER FIRE STATION.....	35
FIGURE 3-10: FIREFIGHTERS PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	35
FIGURE 3-11: OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER CAPITA (FY 10-11).....	36
FIGURE 3-12: OPERATING EXPENDITURES PER SERVICE CALL (FY 09-10)	36
FIGURE 3-13: LAKE ALMANOR AREA WATER PROVIDERS	37
FIGURE 3-14: WATER AND WASTEWATER PROVIDERS IN THE LAKE ALMANOR REGION	38
FIGURE 3-15: WATER RELATED VIOLATIONS PER 1,000 CONNECTIONS (2000-2010).....	40
FIGURE 3-16: BREAKS OR LEAKS PER 100 MILES OF PIPELINES (2011).....	40
FIGURE 3-17: WATER LOSS RATE BY SYSTEM	41
FIGURE 3-18: WATER RESIDENTIAL RATES (2012)	41
FIGURE 3-19: LAKE ALMANOR BASIN WASTEWATER PROVIDERS	42
FIGURE 3-20: WASTEWATER MONTHLY RESIDENTIAL RATES (2011)	45
FIGURE 4-1: ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI	48
FIGURE 4-2: ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT GOVERNING BODY	49
FIGURE 4-3: ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT SERVICE ADEQUACY	55
FIGURE 5-1: CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI.....	60
FIGURE 5-2: CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT GOVERNING BODY.....	61
FIGURE 5-3: CCD BURIALS (2007-2011)	63
FIGURE 6-1: CHESTER PUD BOUNDARY HISTORY	72
FIGURE 6-2: CHESTER PUD BOUNDARIES AND SOI.....	73
FIGURE 6-3: CHESTER PUD GOVERNING BODY	74
FIGURE 6-4: CHESTER PUD WATER SERVICE ADEQUACY INDICATORS	86
FIGURE 6-5: CHESTER PUD WATER SERVICE TABLES	87
FIGURE 6-6: CHESTER PUD WASTEWATER SERVICE ADEQUACY INDICATORS	93
FIGURE 6-7: CHESTER PUD WASTEWATER PROFILE.....	94
FIGURE 6-8: CHESTER PUD FIRE SERVICE PROFILE	102
FIGURE 7-1: HAMILTON BRANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI	110
FIGURE 7-2: HAMILTON BRANCH CSD GOVERNING BODY	111
FIGURE 7-3: WRCSO WATER SERVICE ADEQUACY INDICATORS	119
FIGURE 7-4: HAMILTON BRANCH CSD WATER TABLES	120
FIGURE 8-1: HBFPD LIST OF LAFCo APPROVED BORDER CHANGES.....	126
FIGURE 8-2: HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI.....	128
FIGURE: 8-3: HBFPD GOVERNING BODY.....	129
FIGURE 8-4: HBFPD NUMBER OF CALLS BY YEAR, 2008-2011	131
FIGURE 8-5: HAMILTON BRANCH FPD SERVICE PROFILE.....	141
FIGURE 9-1: PFD LIST OF LAFCo APPROVED BORDER CHANGES	145
FIGURE 9-2: PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI.....	147
FIGURE: 9-3: PFD GOVERNING BODY	148
FIGURE 9-4: PFD NUMBER OF CALLS BY YEAR, 2006-2010.....	151
FIGURE 9-5: PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT SERVICE PROFILE	161
FIGURE 10-1: PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FPD BOUNDARIES AND SOI.....	167
FIGURE 10-2: PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FPD GOVERNING BODY	168

FIGURE 10-3: PAFPD NUMBER OF CALLS BY YEAR, 2006-2011.....	170
FIGURE 10-4: PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE SERVICE PROFILE	179
FIGURE 11-1: SHD LIST OF LAFCo APPROVED BORDER CHANGES	183
FIGURE 11-2: SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI	184
FIGURE 11-3: SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT GOVERNING BODY.....	185
FIGURE 11-4: TOTAL PATIENT DAYS, IN THOUSANDS (FY 2008 – FY 2011).....	187
FIGURE 11-5: SHD LOANS AND LEASES.....	190
FIGURE 11-6: SENECA HEALTHCARE PROTECTION DISTRICT PROFILE	196
FIGURE 12-1: WALKER RANCH CSD BOUNDARIES	201
FIGURE 13-2: WALKER RANCH CSD GOVERNING BODY	202
FIGURE 12-3: NUMBER OF NEW CONNECTIONS (2005-2011)	204
FIGURE 13-4: WRCSO WATER SERVICE ADEQUACY INDICATORS	209
FIGURE 13-5: WRCSO WATER SERVICE TABLES.....	210
FIGURE 13-6: WRCSO WASTEWATER SERVICE ADEQUACY INDICATORS	215
FIGURE 13-7: WRCSO WASTEWATER PROFILE	217
FIGURE 13-1: WEST ALMANOR COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT BOUNDARIES AND SOI	226
FIGURE 13-2: WEST ALMANOR CSD GOVERNING BODY	227
FIGURE 13-3: WACSD NUMBER OF CALLS BY YEAR, 2006-2011.....	229
FIGURE 13-4: WEST ALMANOR CSD FIRE SERVICE PROFILE	241

ACRONYMS

ACHD:	Association of California Healthcare Districts
ADWF:	Average dry weather flow
af:	Acre-feet
afa:	Acre-feet per annum
ALS:	Advanced Life Support
ARPD:	Almanor Recreation and Park District
BLS:	Basic Life Support
BOD:	Biological oxygen demands
BOE	California Board of Equalization
CCD:	Chester Cemetery District
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
CMS:	Center for Medical and Medicaid Studies
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
FRC:	Feather River College
FTE:	Full-Time Equivalent
FY:	Fiscal year
GIS:	Geographic Information Systems
GM:	General Manger

gpd:	Gallons per day
gpm:	Gallons per minute
GP:	General Plan
HBCSD:	Hamilton Branch Community Services District
HBFPD:	Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District
I/I:	Infiltration and inflow
ISO:	Insurance Services Organization
IRWMP:	Integrated Regional Water Management Plan
JHA:	Jurisdiction having authority
JPA:	Joint Powers Authority
LAFCo:	Local Agency Formation Commission
MCL:	Maximum Contaminant Level
mg:	Millions of gallons
mgd:	Millions of gallons per day
MSR:	Municipal services review
MS4:	Municipal separate storm sewer systems
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
PAFPD:	Pratville-Almanor Fire Protection District
PFD:	Peninsula Fire District
PSAP:	Public Safety Answering Point
PUD:	Public Utility District
PWWF:	Peak wet weather flow
RID:	Resort Improvement District
RWQCB:	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCADA:	Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition
SDMRA:	Special District Risk Management Authority
SDWA:	Safe Drinking Water Act
SHD:	Seneca Healthcare District
SOI:	Sphere of influence
SSMP:	Sewer System Management Plan
SSO:	Sewer System Overflow
SWP:	State Water Project
SR:	State Route
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

WRCSD: Walker Ranch Community Services District
WWTP Wastewater treatment plant
WTP: Water treatment plant

PREFACE

Prepared for the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo), this report is a regional municipal services review—a state-required comprehensive study of services within a designated geographic area. This MSR focuses on local agencies and other municipal service providers in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County that provide municipal services, including water, wastewater, fire and EMS, park and recreation, healthcare, cemetery, street lighting, and solid waste services.

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 municipal services in the Lake Almanor 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 services provided in the Lake Almanor region of 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, Northwestern Plumas County or Lake Almanor area. The MSR requirement is codified in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code Section 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 service providers located in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County. As shown in Figure 1-1, 10 special districts were reviewed as part of this Municipal Service Review. There are three water, three wastewater, five fire and EMS, one park and recreation, one cemetery, one healthcare, one street lighting and one solid waste providers in the region. Some of the agencies reviewed provide multiple services.

Figure 1-1: Service Providers in Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Water</i>	<i>Wastewater</i>	<i>Fire & EMS</i>	<i>Parks & Rec</i>	<i>Cemetery</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Lighting</i>	<i>Solid Waste</i>
Almanor Recreation and Park District				✓				
Chester Cemetery District					✓			
Chester PUD	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Hamilton Branch CSD	✓							
Hamilton Branch FPD			✓					
Peninsula Fire District			✓					
Prattville-Almanor FPD			✓					
Seneca Healthcare District						✓		
Walker Ranch CSD	✓	✓						
West Almanor CSD		✓	✓					

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.

Figure 1-2: Existing Sphere of Influences

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Boundary Area (square miles)</i>	<i>SOI Area (square miles)</i>	<i>SOI Description</i>
Almanor Recreation and Park District	283	N/A	No SOI Adopted
Chester Cemetery District	283	283	Coterminous SOI
Chester PUD	1.7	N/A	No SOI Adopted
Hamilton Branch CSD	0.8	2.7	Annexable SOI
Hamilton Branch Fire District	4.3	3	Annexable/Detachable SOI
Penninsula Fire District	6.5	6.7	Annexable SOI
Prattville-Almanor Fire District	0.5	0.5	Coterminous SOI
Seneca Healthcare District	283	354	Annexable SOI
Walker Ranch CSD	4.3	N/A	No SOI Adopted
West Almanor CSD	0.96	0.96	Coterminous SOI

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.

The Lake Almanor region has experienced an even larger decline in population than the County overall. The total permanent population in the area has decreased by about 15 percent. Permanent residents moved out of the area, due to decrease in timber production and loss of other jobs within the region; many part-time residents lost their properties to bank foreclosures. The tourist population, on the other hand, has not been significantly impacted by the recession and many tourist attractions continue to be built around the Lake.

Projections for future growth made by three separate agencies (California Department of Finance, Plumas County and the Plumas County Transportation Commission) anticipate minimal positive population growth over the next two decades of between 0.02 and 0.6 percent of 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 lack of regional planning regarding wastewater services.

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, many agencies demonstrated a heavy reliance on volunteers, which allows them to provide services at a minimal cost. For example, Almanor Recreation and Park

District is run and managed by the volunteer Board of Directors. The fire departments are comprised largely of volunteer firefighters, some 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. With regard to fire services, only Peninsula FD and Chester PUD track actual response times to service calls. All other fire departments do not track 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. CalFire which is the dispatcher for the fire providers in the Lake Almanor region, tracks the number and response times for each incident responded to by the five Lake Almanor fire providers. However, the number of calls provided by the majority of the districts, such as Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District (HBFPD), West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD), Prattville Almanor Fire Protection District (PAFPD), and Chester Public Utility District (PUD), differed from the number recorded by CalFire. Fire providers should coordinate with CalFire to better log and track each individual incident and response times so data is consistent and accurate.

Pre-planning for future capital improvement needs is considered a best management practice, which is recommended for all public agencies regardless of size. With the exception of Seneca Healthcare District, none of the agencies reviewed had something resembling a capital improvement plan (CIP). 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 10 agencies reviewed, three maintain websites where documents and information are made available to the public—Peninsula FD, Seneca HD, and West Almanor CSD. 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 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, mostly due to the low year-round population in the area. For example, there are 33 permanent residents within Prattville-Almanor FPD's bounds, creating a limited pool of potential board members from which the Districts may draw.

Overall, all districts reviewed demonstrated accountability by performing outreach activities beyond what's required, and having a system in place to address customers' complaints. In addition, all ten districts cooperated with Plums LAFCo's municipal service review process and requests for information. While Chester PUD, Almanor Recreation and Park District and Chester Cemetery District 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 based on an informal agreement with the Sheriff's Dispatch Center. 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. WACSD and PAFPD do not recognize that they entered into such an agreement and reported that they would only respond to any areas outside of their bounds if resources were available to ensure services could still be provided simultaneously within their bounds.

Every fire service provider in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County has a service area larger than its boundaries. None of the providers in Lake Almanor region charge per incident for providing services outside of their bounds, except for when responding to fires in State Responsibility Areas. In the Lake Almanor MSR area, there are approximately 247 square miles where Chester PUD (14 square miles), Hamilton Branch FPD (33 square miles), Peninsula FD (three square miles), Prattville-Almanor FPD (197 square miles) and West Almanor CSD (197 square miles, overlapping with PAFPD) are providing services outside of their bounds without compensation. This equates to 95 percent of the combined service area of all fire providers of the Lake Almanor area, except for those areas served by the U.S. Forest Service. It is recommended that these respective districts start charging fees for providing services within their service areas, but 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.

The County is responsible for ensuring that new developments meet all State and County fire code requirements. It outlines policies in its General Plan for new developments to follow to ensure adequate levels of fire service. The General Plan update has several new requirements that are meant to enhance fire safety. Proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider if a development is within the district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps had not been digitized, it had been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district if a proposed development is within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County Board of Supervisors has recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist whose funding is dependent on grant funding availability, but a permanent fire marshal would allow for more efficient code enforcement and building inspections. The Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group, formed by the Board of Supervisors, is attempting to ensure uniform and comprehensive emergency services provision to all of Plumas County.

A majority of the fire districts in the Lake Almanor area reported that financing was a significant challenge to providing 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 attempt to remedy the existing situation, some districts, such as WACSD and PAFPD recently raised their assessments. Sharing administrative expenses, equipment and facilities among fire providers also saves money and promotes efficiency.

A potential governance alternative that could reduce costs through resource sharing, and potentially enhance financing levels, is the consolidation of fire providers. There are multiple consolidation options that are currently being discussed by the fire providers in the Lake Almanor region, but no concrete steps had been taken as of the drafting of this report. WACSD is considering consolidation with PAFPD. An absence of efficiency was identified with respect to Prattville-Almanor FPD, as it serves a very small permanent population of about 33. Consolidation with another fire provider would remove the need for a separate board of directors, management and resources for PAFPD. Additionally, PFD is exploring the possibility of uniting with HBFPD. There are continuous discussions that take place among fire providers regarding the issue and most likely future consolidation is inevitable, but in the meantime, the agencies collaborate through contracts, and automatic and mutual aid agreements.

WATER & WASTEWATER

The Almanor area has only three wastewater providers—Chester PUD, Walker Ranch CSD (WRCSD) and West Almanor CSD (WACSD). All other areas are served by individual private septic systems. Historically, there have been limited requirements on these septic systems and leach field systems with regard to set back distance from the Lake. Additionally, in the past, wastewater planning for the region has been piecemeal for each subdivision as they are proposed and developed, and as a result there has been a general lack of preplanning with regard to wastewater collection and treatment. As the septic

systems in the area age and begin to fail, other central sewage management and disposal options should be explored to prevent contaminants from entering the Lake. Some time ago, there were concerns about ensuring proper wastewater collection through central systems and county service areas, including County Service Areas 2 (later made into WACSD) and 3, were formed to take on these services should the need arise. At one point, there was also discussion about Chester PUD becoming the regional wastewater provider throughout the basin, as it is the only agency in the area that provides effluent collection, treatment and disposal; however, no efforts have been made to date to bring this concept to fruition. It is recommended that the County and the wastewater providers work together in devising a regional plan to ensure proper wastewater management to developed and potentially developable areas around the lake.

County Service Area (CSA) 3 was formed in 1972 to provide wastewater services in the Hamilton Branch area. The CSA is inactive and has provided no services to date. While there is certainly a need for wastewater providers in the region, it is likely more efficient for a district that is already established to take on additional services should the need arise, as opposed to activating this CSA. For example, HBCSD overlaps a portion of the territory of CSA 3 and surrounds the other portion of the CSA. CSDs are permitted to provide wastewater services with approval from LAFCo; consequently, HBCSD may be better poised to take on these services if there were ever a need. It is recommended that LAFCo consider dissolving CSA 3 based on its inactive status and availability of other potential providers should there be a future need for these services.

Water and wastewater rates throughout the region are generally low compared to other providers throughout the State. It is recommended that all providers thoroughly assess their future capital needs and ensure that rates are established at levels that will cover current operation and maintenance costs, as well as future capital replacement costs. Additionally, water rates should be set to promote conservation by establishing a tier structure with a threshold just below average household water use.

OTHER KEY FINDINGS

Besides water, wastewater and fire services, agencies within the Lake Almanor MSR area provide recreation and park, healthcare, cemetery, street lighting, and solid waste services. Overall, the services offered by these districts, including Seneca Healthcare District (SHD), Almanor Recreation and Park District (ARPD) and Chester Cemetery District (CCD), appear to be adequate for the population served. However certain improvements to services could be made.

The adequacy of hospital facilities and services in meeting the needs of Chester and Lake Almanor residents can be gauged by the extent to which residents travel outside their region to receive hospital services. In the case of SHD, a majority of residents within the District's bounds in need of healthcare services appear to travel outside of the District for care. One reason for this low patronage of the District's services may be a need for more extensive services than those offered at SHD's facilities.

ARPD is entirely run by volunteers who can only offer limited hours to the operations of the District. Consequently, the District faced certain challenges with timely responses during the course of this MSR. While it is lauded that the District is making efforts to offer services within an extremely limited budget, it is recommended that ARPD consider hiring a part-time employee in the long term to aid in administration and management and enhance professionalism.

CCD could improve upon service adequacy by operating within legal requirements for cemetery districts. By allowing anybody to purchase a plot in one of its cemeteries, the District is non-compliant with legal constraints on the burial of non-residents. Additionally, CCD should institute non-resident fees for burial in accordance with State law.

Similar to fire, and water and wastewater providers, other districts in the Lake Almanor region have been severely affected by the economic conditions. Their revenues have declined, making it harder to provide adequate services to their residents. Seneca Healthcare District (SHD) faces declining Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements for services rendered, while Chester Cemetery District (CCD) has seen a trend away from full-body interments toward less costly cremations. A further challenge for Almanor Recreation and Park District (ARPD) has been the absence of any tax or special assessment revenue. The districts are in search of additional financing sources and ways to live within their means. For example, SHD and ARPD attempt to offer new services and finance these services through charges.

GOVERNANCE OPTIONS

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

- ❖ Consolidation of Peninsula FD and Hamilton Branch FPD.
- ❖ Consolidation of West Almanor CSD and Prattville-Almanor FPD.
- ❖ There is a possibility of regional fire provider consolidation.
- ❖ Transitioning Walker Ranch CSD to an independent special district.
- ❖ Detachment of the northern part of Almanor Recreation and Park District SOI, which mainly includes forest land uses.
- ❖ Consolidation of HBCSD with the Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company.
- ❖ Seneca Healthcare District is open to consolidating with other healthcare district in the County.
- ❖ Consolidation of Walker Ranch CSD with Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company.
- ❖ Annexation of Big Meadows into WACSD or PAFPD.
- ❖ Dissolution of CSA 3.

2. LAFCO AND MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEWS

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, 2012

<i>Appointing Agency</i>	<i>Members</i>	<i>Alternate Members</i>
Two members from the Board of Supervisors appointed by the Board of Supervisors.	Robert Meacher 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 William Weaver	Phil Oels
One member from the general public appointed by the other four commissioners.	Kevin Goss	John Hafen

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.

Little Hoover Commission

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.”¹

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.

Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century

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 2000.² 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

¹ Little Hoover Commission, 2000, page 24.

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

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. 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,”³ 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.

³ Commission on Local Governance for the 21st Century, 2000, page 70.

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:

- ❖ 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 1st, 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 10 special districts. 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.⁴

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.

⁴ 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.

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.

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

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

The Lake Almanor MSR area is located in northwestern Plumas County and surrounds Lake Almanor. It includes the communities of Chester, Almanor, West Almanor, Prattville, Lake Almanor Country Club, Hamilton Branch, East Shore, and Canyon Dam. The MSR area also encompasses the Plumas National Forest, particularly in the northern part of the MSR area.

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 jobs-housing balance, projected growth and growth areas.

Historical Growth

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 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.

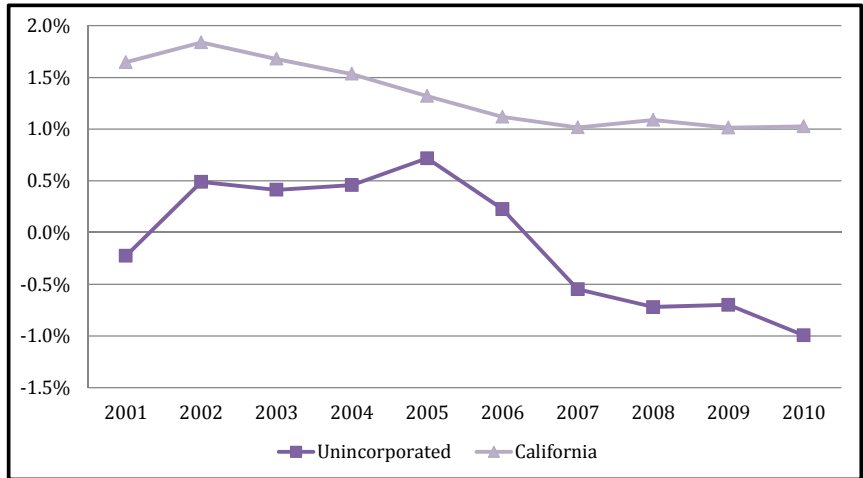
The population growth rate in unincorporated Plumas County has been below the statewide growth rate for the last ten years, as shown in Figure 3-1. Population growth in the unincorporated areas peaked in 2005 at 0.7 percent, but declined to negative 0.7 in 2008 and 2009 and went up slightly to negative 0.1 in 2010.

Figure 3-1: Population Growth Rates in Plumas County and California

The Lake Almanor region has experienced an even larger drop in population than the County overall. The number of permanent residents in the area decreased by about 15 percent from 2000 to 2010.

Plumas County's population density is eight residents per square mile, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

There are approximately two persons per household countywide.



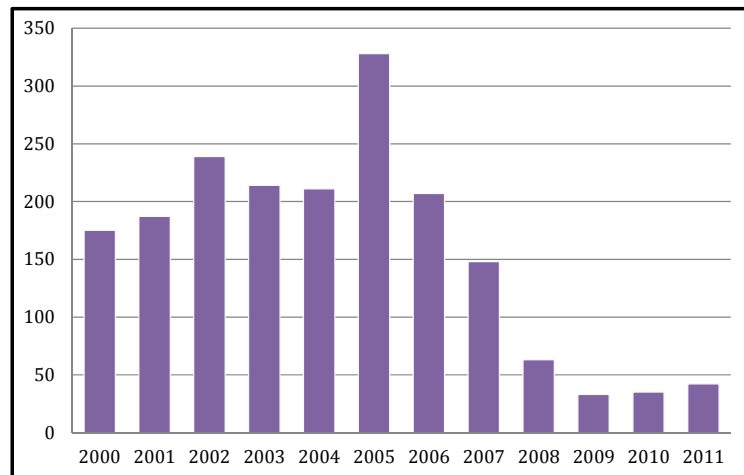
Development

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 slightly went up to 44 in 2011, as shown in Figure 3-2.

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 3-2: New Residential Building Permits



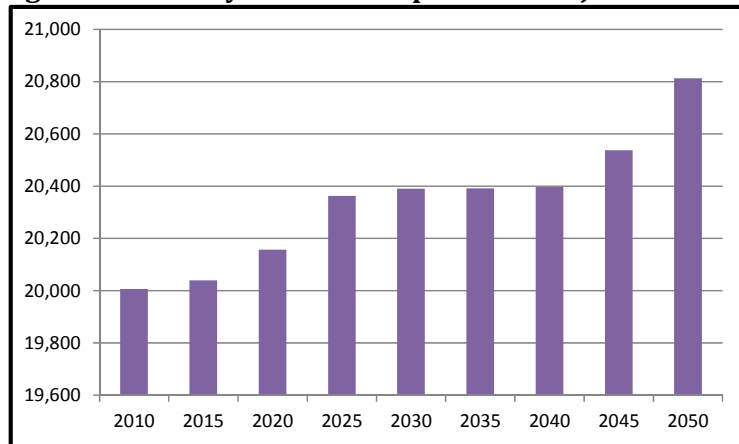
Population Projections

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.

Figure3-3: Countywide DOF Population Projections

The California Department of Finance (DOF) projects a countywide population of 20,157 by 2020, 20,390 by 2030, 26,279 by 2040, and 20,813 by 2050. This means that population in Plumas County is anticipated to increase by 0.7 percent from 2010 to 2020, by 1.2 percent from 2020 to 2030, and a total of four percent from 2010 to 2050. The DOF projections through 2050 are shown in Figure 3-3.



The County is currently in the process of updating its General Plan. As part of the Housing Element that was updated in 2007, 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 Regional Transportation Plan projects 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 3-4.

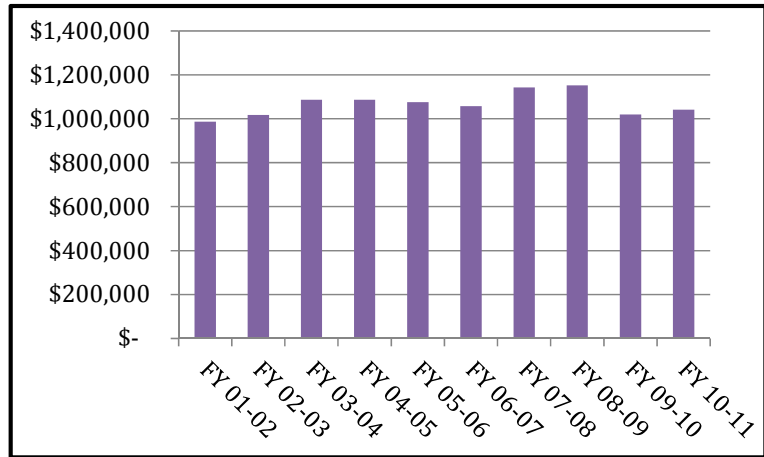
Figure 3-4: Annualized Growth Projections by Method

<i>Method</i>	<i>2010-2020</i>	<i>2020-2030</i>
DOF Projections	0.08%	0.12%
County Projections	0.9%	No Projections
Plumas County Transportation Commission	0.06%	0.06%

Tourism

Figure 3-5: Transient Occupancy Tax Revenue, FYs 01-11

Plumas County has become a tourist destination for outdoor activities, sports and recreation. The Lake Almanor area is a particular tourist destination. 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 service providers located in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County region. As shown in Figure 3-5, 10 special districts were reviewed as part of this Municipal Service Review. There are three water, three wastewater, five fire and EMS, one park and recreation, one cemetery, one healthcare, one street lighting and one solid waste providers in the region.

Figure 3-6: Reviewed service providers in Lake Almanor region of Plumas County

Agency	Water	Wastewater	Fire & EMS	Parks & Rec	Cemetery	Healthcare	Lighting	Solid Waste
Almanor RPD				✓				
Chester Cemetery District					✓			
Chester PUD	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Hamilton Branch CSD	✓							
Hamilton Branch FPD			✓					
Peninsula Fire District			✓					
Prattville-Almanor FPD			✓					
Seneca Healthcare District						✓		
Walker Ranch CSD	✓	✓						
West Almanor CSD		✓	✓					

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 Lake Almanor MSR area. For a detailed description of each service provider, refer to the agency's respective chapter in this document.

Background

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 (CalFire) has a statutory responsibility for wildfire protection of private lands in California. The Lassen-Modoc-Plumas Unit of CalFire is administratively responsible for fire protection of private lands in Plumas County. Through a cooperative agreement between CalFire 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 with less wildfire hazard. LRA areas include the City of Portola, portions of Quincy and East Quincy 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 CalFire, USFS conducts a majority of the prevention activities that would normally be conducted by CalFire. However, 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 the issuance of burning permits, residential inspections for those whom request it and wildland fire investigations.

The agreement between USFS and CalFire 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. (PACSD and WACSD do not recognize this agreement, and

will only respond outside of their bounds if they have sufficient resources to respond simultaneously within their bounds.) 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.

Dispatch is provided by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC) to the fire providers in the Almanor Basin. As of 1984, SIFC started providing emergency dispatching services for the Lassen National Forest, Norcal Bureau of Land Management (BLM), CalFire Lassen-Modoc Unit, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Fire Net Lassen, 17 local fire departments, and Sierra Medical Services Alliance (SEMSA). The center coordinates 9-1-1 dispatching for fire and medical emergency services. This merging of Federal, State, and local cooperation began in 1982, when the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (now CalFire) joined the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. SIFC grew again in 1984, with the formation of Fire Net Lassen and the beginning of 24-hour dispatching services by the interagency group.

SIFC continues to use the “closest available resources” concept. When an emergency occurs anywhere in the 6.5 million acre SIFC protection area, the closest fire engines, aircraft or crews respond, regardless of jurisdiction. During fire season, SIFC dispatchers can call on 30 fire engines, three helicopters, an air tanker and 18 ground crews. During major incidents, they can summon resources from anywhere in the state or nation. Center managers from the CalFire, BLM, and Lassen National Forest equally share management responsibilities.

The following Fire Protection Districts, Community Service Districts, Federal and State Fire Protection agencies are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Big Valley FPD | 11. Susan River FPD |
| 2. California Correctional Center | 12. Chester FPD |
| 3. CalFire | 13. Peninsula FPD |
| 4. BLM | 14. West Almanor CSD |
| 5. National Park Services | 15. Clear Creek CSD |
| 6. U.S. Forest Service | 16. Doyle FPD |
| 7. Spalding CSD | 17. Janesville FPD |
| 8. Stones-Bengard CSD | 18. Madeline FPD |
| 9. Lake Forest FPD | 19. Little Valley FPD |
| 10. Milford FPD | 20. Sierra Army Depot FD |

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 21. Standish-Litchfield FPD | 25. Hallelujah Junction FPD |
| 22. Westwood CSD | 26. Hamilton Branch FPD |
| 23. West Patton Village CSD | 27. Prattville FPD |
| 24. Northwest Lassen FPD | 28. Seneca Ambulance |

Provider Overview

Fire and EMS services are provided in the Lake Almanor MSR area by five districts that are outlined in Figure 3-6. 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.

Figure 3-7: Fire and EMS providers in Lake Almanor area

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, but a permanent fire marshal position would allow for more efficient code enforcement and building inspections.

<i>Fire and EMS</i>
Chester Public Utility District
Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District
Peninsula Fire District
Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District
West Almanor Community Services District

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to "evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County." The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. Most recently, it focused on mitigating efforts through improvements to building and development standards and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs.

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.

Northern Plumas Fire Service Providers

Range 5 East

Range 6 East

Range 7 East

Range 8 East

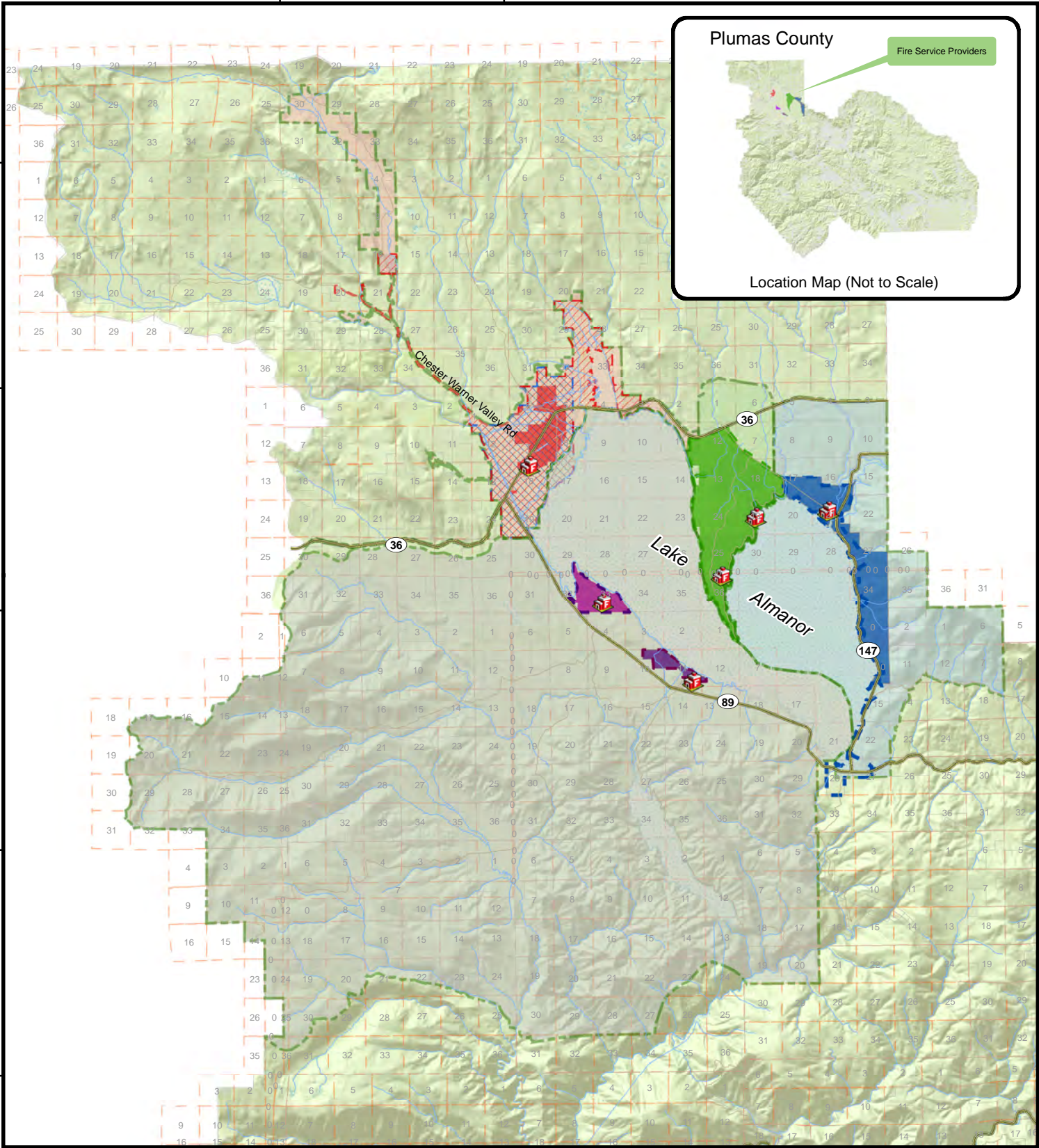
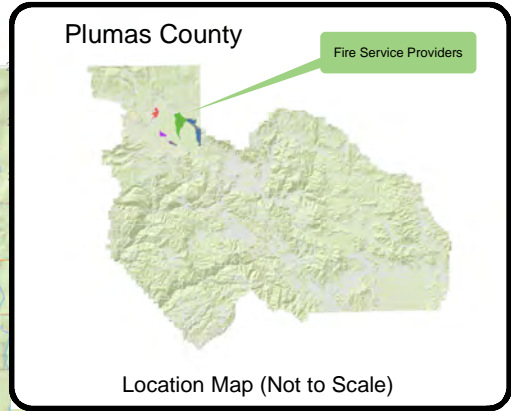
Township 30 North

Township 29 North

Township 28 North

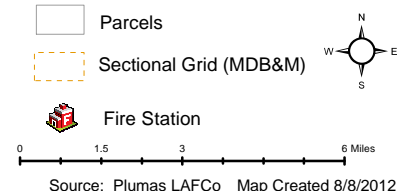
Township 27 North

Township 26 North



Legend

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Chester PUD | Chester FPD (SOI) | Chester PUD Service Area |
| Hamilton Branch FPD | Hamilton Branch FPD (SOI) | Hamilton Branch Fire Department Service Area |
| Peninsula FPD | Peninsula FPD (SOI) | Peninsula Fire Department Service Area |
| Prattville Almanor FPD | Prattville Almanor FPD (SOI) | Prattville Almanor Fire Department Service Area |
| West Almanor CSD | West Almanor CSD (SOI) | West Almanor CSD Service Area |
| | Parcels | |
| | Sectional Grid (MDB&M) | |
| | Fire Station | |



Service Adequacy

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

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 the 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.⁵

Among fire providers of the Lake Almanor area, PAFPD and WACSD have the highest certification rate of 100 percent for Firefighter I certification. The highest certification rate of 46 percent for EMS I certification is held by PFD, which also has a high certification rate for Firefighter I of 97 percent. On the other side of the spectrum is HBFPD, which has a certification rate of 20 percent for both Firefighter I and EMS I certifications. The lowest EMS I certification rate of 15 percent is held by WACSD.

Response Times

Response times reflect the time elapsed between the dispatch of personnel and the arrival of the first responder on the 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 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.⁶

⁵ State Fire Marshall, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44.

⁶ NFPA Standard 1710, 2004.

With the exception of Peninsula FD and Chester PUD, none of the fire providers track their response times for each incident. However, all of the providers reported their average estimated response times. CalFire tracks each incident's response time for all fire providers in the Lake Almanor region. It also calculates average response times and percentage of response times under five minutes. The shortest average response time within its boundaries of two minutes belongs to West Almanor CSD. Chester PUD, Hamilton Branch FPD and Prattville-Almanor FPD have average response times of about three minutes. Peninsula FD reported that it responds in its boundary area within about four minutes on average. In regards to the percentage of response times under five minutes within district boundaries, WACSD is reported to have the best result of 100 percent, followed by Chester PUD with 94 percent. About 80 percent of PFD and HBFDP responses are under five minutes. PAFPD falls slightly behind the rest of the Lake Almanor fire providers with 67 percent of its responses under five minutes. It is recommended that all fire providers track their response times for each incident and collaborate with CalFire on information and data exchange.

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.

The ISO ratings differ for every fire provider. Some fire providers have multiple ratings for different areas. In Plumas County, the ISO ratings mostly depend on the availability of water in a specific area. The fire providers in the MSR area have ISO ratings ranging from three to eight. Some providers, such as Hamilton Branch FPD, have multiple ratings depending on the location of hydrants and stations in the area. PAFPD does not have an ISO rating. The best ISO rating of three, which is also the best in Plumas County, was received by West Almanor CSD. HBFDP has an area within its bounds that is rated as an eight.

Coverage Adequacy

Figure 3-9: Service Area per Fire Station

The service area⁷ sizes for each fire station differ for each fire provider, as shown in Figure 3-9. The median fire station in Lake Almanor area serves approximately 37 square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area with 99 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula Fire District is five square miles per fire station.

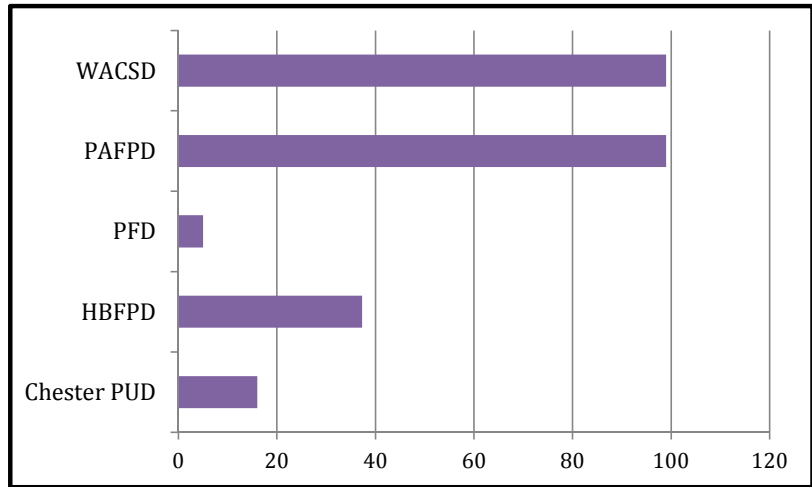
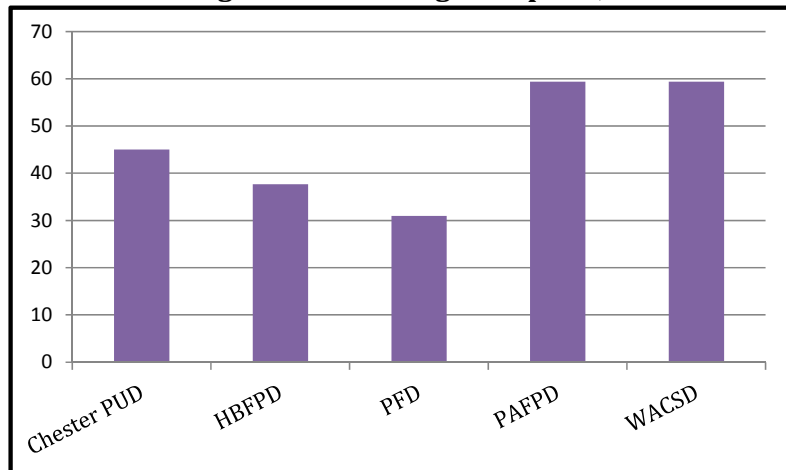


Figure 3-10: Firefighters per 1,000 residents

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of service adequacy; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Figure 3-10 illustrates the number of firefighters each provider has as a ratio per 1,000 residents served. Staffing levels in Lake Almanor area vary from 31 firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in PAFPD and WACSD. It should be noted that while PFD has the lowest firefighter ratio in the region, the District has some of the only paid firefighters in the region, which are a more dependent resource than volunteer firefighters.

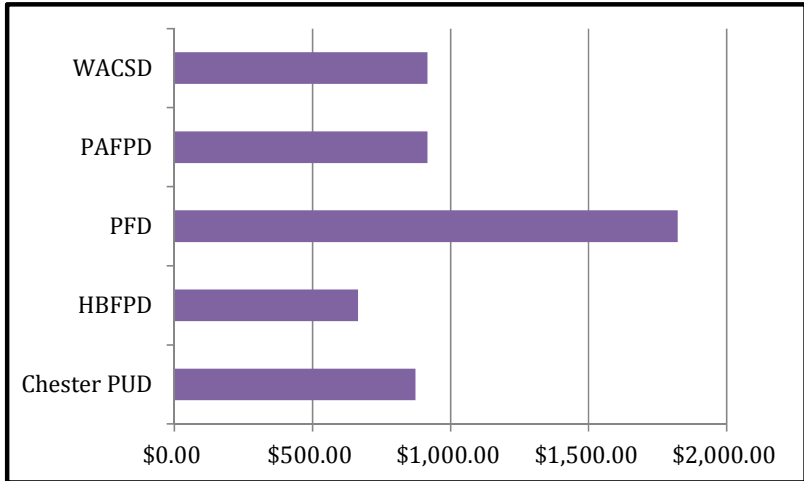


⁷ Service Area refers to the area that the agency will respond to based on the First Responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

Operating Expenditures

Operating expenditures per capita, shown in Figure 3-11, reflect the level of service for fire providers. The least amount of money per capita was spent by Hamilton Branch FPD. This fact may be explained by the absence of paid employees in the District. Although, PAFPD also does not have any paid staff, its resources are shared with WACSD and used to respond

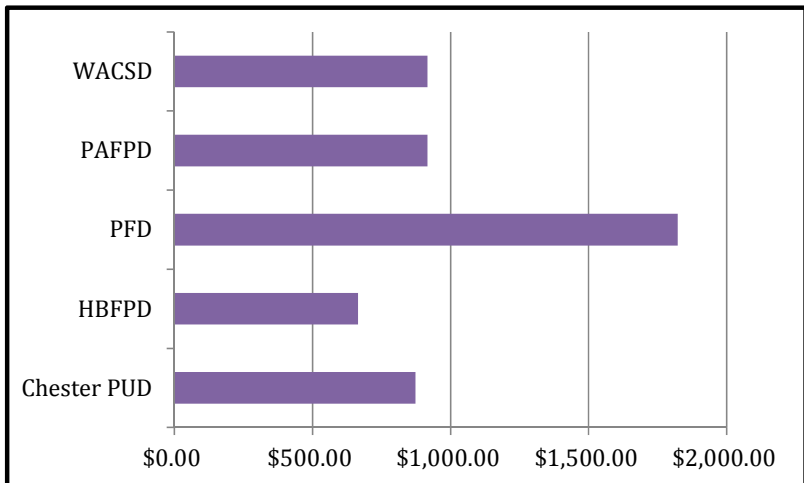
Figure 3-11: Operating Expenditures per Capita (FY 10-11)



to the same service area and the same service calls. Therefore, for the purpose of this comparison the expenditures and populations of WACSD and PAFPD are combined. Peninsula FD expends the most per capita. The reason for the higher rate of expenditures may be that a majority of PFD’s firefighters are paid. In addition, Peninsula FD operates an ambulance, which adds to the overall costs. Chester PUD also operates an ambulance, but has lower rate of expenditures as it shares administrative expenses with water and wastewater operations and heavily relies on volunteer firefighters.

Figure 3-12: Operating Expenditures per Service Call (FY 09-10)

A similar situation exists with operating expenditures per service call, as is clear from Figure 3-12. The low cost per service call for HBFDP is most likely explained by the purely volunteer personnel of the District, while the high cost per service call for PFD may be explained by its paid staff. Again, for the purpose of this comparison, because WACSD and PAFPD respond to the same service calls, their expenditures were combined.



WATER SERVICE

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

Overview

There are three domestic water providers in the MSR Area. Of these agencies, none provide recycled water for irrigation purposes. There are also two water providers that are not under LAFCO jurisdiction within the study area—Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company and Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company. The water agencies under LAFCO jurisdiction and the services they provide are shown in Figure 3-13. The location and boundaries of each of these providers are shown in Figure 3-14.

Figure 3-13: Lake Almanor Area Water Providers

Agency	# of Connections	Retail			Services			
		Potable	Irrigation	Recycled	Treatment	Distribution	Wholesale	Maintenance
Chester Public Utility District	1,197	✓			✓	✓		✓
Hamilton Branch Community Services District	499	✓			✓	✓		✓
Walker Ranch Community Services District	152	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓

All of the potable water providers presently rely on groundwater from wells and springs. The groundwater is generally of good quality and is treated on an as-needed basis.

Recycled water use is presently limited in Plumas County, but is expected to increase in the future. Recycled water is wastewater effluent treated to high standards and regulated by the State Department of Health through the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) – Redding Office. None of the water providers in the Almanor Basin make use of recycled water. At present, there are no plans for recycled water in the near future in the area.

Northern Plumas Water & Wastewater Providers

Range 6 East

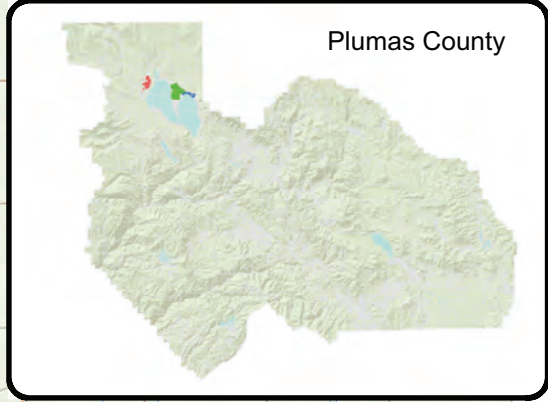
Range 7 East

Range 8 East

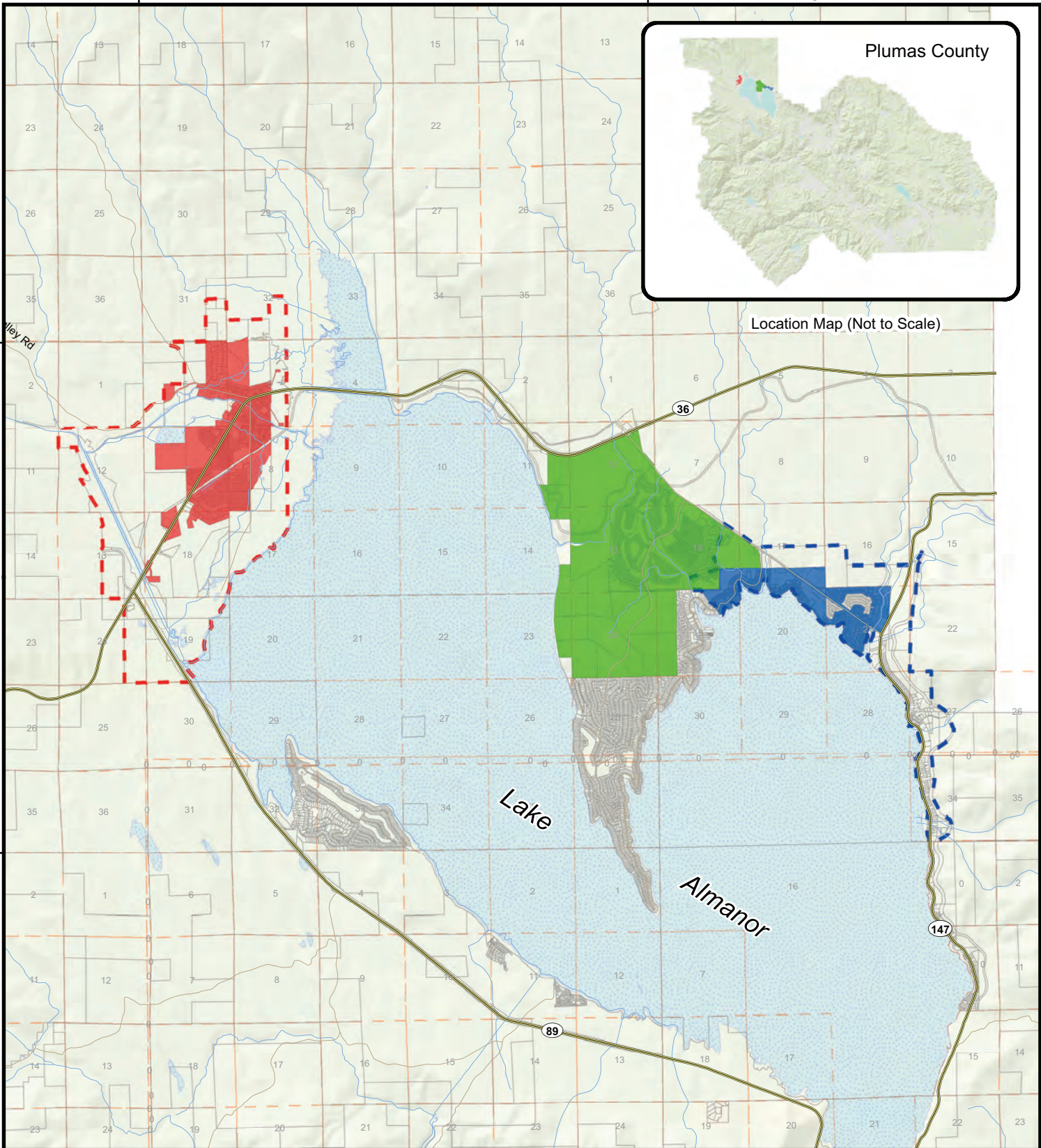
Township 29 North

Township 28 North

Township 27 North

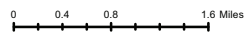


Location Map (Not to Scale)



Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Chester PUD
- Hamilton Branch CSD
- Walker Ranch CSD
- Chester PUD (Previous SOI)
- Hamilton Branch CSD (SOI)



Regulation of Water Providers

The California Department of Public Health (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. The Plumas County Environmental Health Agency (PCEHA) is responsible for regulatory oversight of small water systems. The domestic water providers are subject to inspections by these agencies. Each of the domestic water providers is inspected by the respective regulatory agency periodically. Inspection standards and reporting differ, with the DPH reports more comprehensive and more regular than PCEHA inspection reports.

Through an annual primacy delegation agreement on file with the DPH, responsibility was passed to PCEHA for the oversight and regulation of public water systems servings less than 200 connections on July 1, 2005. The system users are protected through shared oversight between DPH and PCEHA

Of the three water agencies reviewed, only Walker Ranch Community Services District (WRCSD) has less than 200 connections and is regulated by the PCEHA. Chester Public Utility District (PUD) and Hamilton Branch Community Services District (HBCSD), with more than 200 connections, are regulated by the California Department of Public Health.

Service Adequacy

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 water service adequacy measures discussed here include drinking water quality, as indicated by health and monitoring violations and compliance with drinking water standards, and distribution system integrity, as defined by the number of break and leaks and unaccounted for distribution losses.

Drinking Water Quality

Drinking water quality is determined by a combination of historical violations reported by the EPA since 2000 and the percent of time that the agencies were in compliance with Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2011.

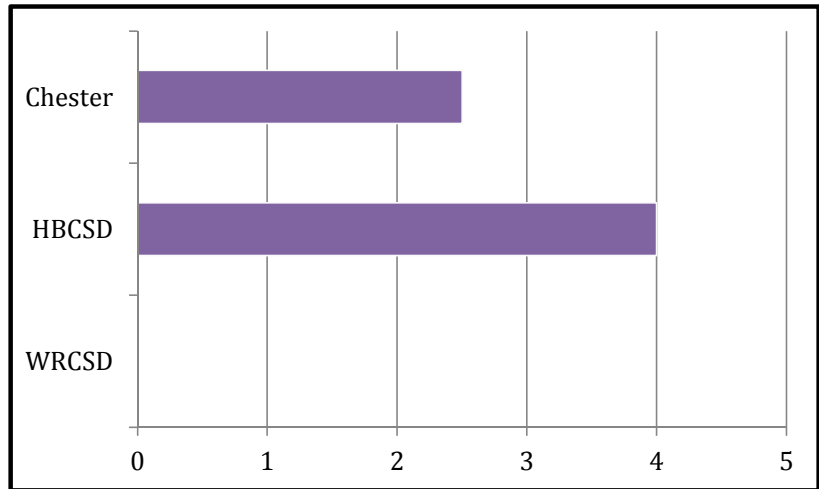
The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) is the main federal law that ensures the quality of Americans' drinking water. The law requires many actions to protect drinking water and its sources—rivers, lakes, reservoirs, springs and groundwater wells—and applies to public water systems serving 25 or more people. National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs or primary standards) are legally enforceable standards that limit the levels of contaminants in drinking water supplied by public water systems. To meet water quality standards and comply with regulations, a water system with a contaminant exceeding a maximum contaminant limit (MCL) must notify the public and remove the source from service or initiate a process and schedule to install treatment for removing the

contaminant. Health violations occur when the contaminant amount exceeds the safety standard (MCL) or when water is not treated properly. Monitoring violations involve failure to conduct or to report in a timely fashion the results of required monitoring.

For the purposes of this report, violations are shown as a rate per 1,000 connections in order to compare between providers of varying sizes.

Figure 3-15: Water Related Violations per 1,000 Connections (2000-2010)

The number of violations per 1,000 connections, for each of the providers in the region, is shown in Figure 3-15. Violation rates ranged from no violations for Walker Ranch CSD to four for Hamilton Branch CSD. By comparison, water providers in the eastern region of the County had a median of 21 violations per 1,000 connections, implying that the three water providers in the Almanor Basin have a good record of complying with federal requirements regarding drinking water.



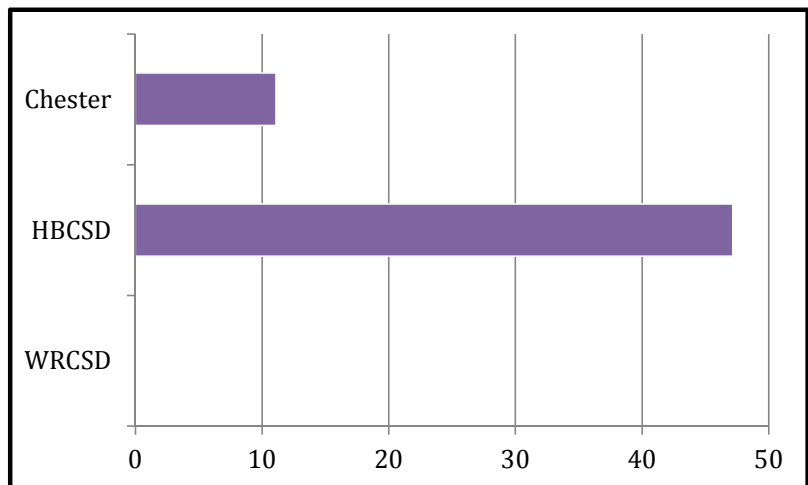
All three water service providers in the region were in compliance with drinking water regulations 100 percent of the time in 2011. Water quality standards do not appear to be a challenge for any of the districts.

Distribution System Integrity

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss.

Figure 3-16: Breaks or Leaks per 100 Miles of Pipelines (2011)

Each provider reported the number of breaks and leaks for agency-owned and maintained mains in 2011. The number of breaks and leaks are shown in Figure 3-16 as a rate per 100 miles of pipelines maintained in order to compare between providers of varying sizes. Providers in the region had a median rate of 11 breaks per 100 pipe miles. By comparison, Eastern Plumas

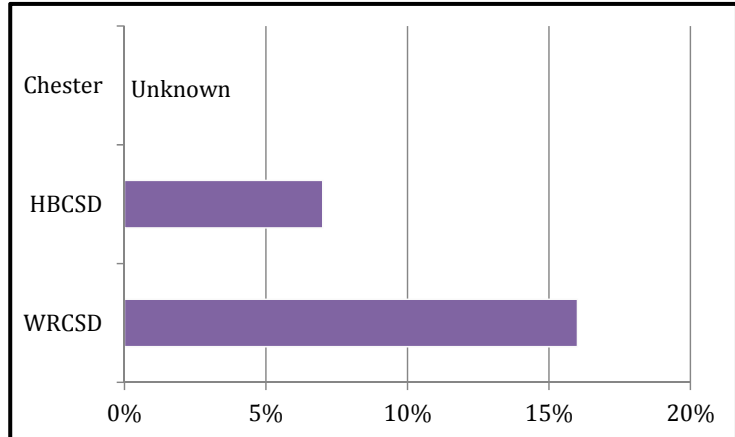


providers had a median rate of 12 breaks per 100 pipe miles. WRCS D had no breaks during that time period, while HBCSD and Chester PUD had five and two breaks, respectively.

Inevitably, a portion of water produced does not get delivered to customers as a result of fire flows, lack of integrity in the distribution system and conveyance losses. The median Almanor water system loses seven percent of water. By comparison, the industry average is 10 percent.

Figure 3-17: Water Loss Rate by System

WRCS D reported the greatest rate of loss in its water system at 16 percent. HBCSD reported seven percent water loss, and Chester PUD was unable to provide an estimate of the amount of water lost between the water source and delivery to the customer.

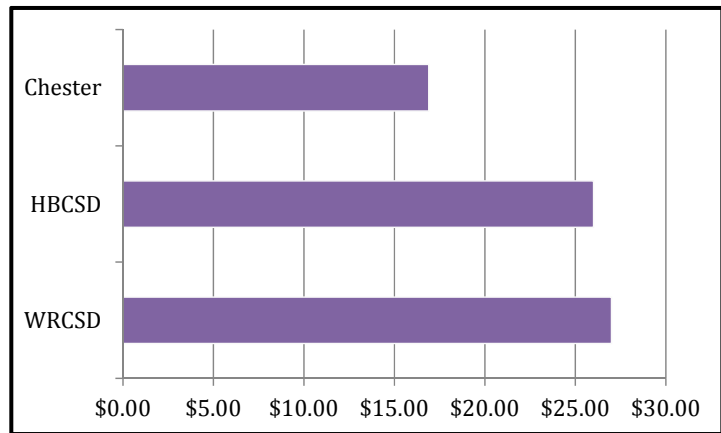


Rates

Compared with other municipal services, there are relatively few financing constraints for water enterprises. Generally, agencies may establish service charges on a cost-of-service basis. In the past, water providers have not been required to obtain voter approval for rate increases or restructuring, however, based on recent court findings, water purveyors have been required to complete a Proposition 218 voter protest process when updating rates. The boards of each of the public sector water providers are responsible for establishing service charges. Service charges are restricted to the amount needed to recover the costs of providing water service. The water rates and rate structures are not subject to regulation by other agencies. Service providers can and often do increase rates annually.

Figure 3-18: Water Residential Rates (2012)

Of the three providers, HBCSD is the only one that has recently updated its water rates. HBCSD last changed its rates in 2011, while Chester PUD and WRCS D last updated rates in 2007 and 1997, respectively. Chester PUD charges the lowest rates in the region on average of just over \$17 per month per connection. Generally, the providers reviewed have low rates (median \$26) compared to others in the County; providers in Eastern Plumas charge a median rate of \$35.25 per connection. All three districts charge according to water consumption once users have met a monthly threshold.



WASTEWATER SERVICES

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

Overview

There are two wastewater providers in the MSR Area. The wastewater agencies and the services they provide are shown in Figure 3-19. The location and boundaries of each of these providers are shown in Figure 3-14.

Figure 3-19: Lake Almanor Basin Wastewater Providers

Agency	Connections	Collection	Treatment	Disposal	Maintenance
Chester Public Utility District	1,197	✓	✓	✓	✓
Walker Ranch Community Services District	149	✓		✓	✓
West Almanor Community Services District	9	✓		✓	✓

Regulation of Wastewater Providers

Wastewater providers are regulated by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). Wastewater providers operate under permits issued by the RWQCB that outline effluent discharge requirements. Those agencies discharging to land operate under Waste Discharge Requirements, while agencies that discharge to surface water are regulated by National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

Legislation (A.B. 885) passed in 2000 requires SWRCB to adopt regulations for the permitting and operation of septic systems. Each regional water quality control board must incorporate SWRCB regulations or standards into its regional water quality control plans. SWRCB released draft septic regulations in March 2007. The implementation of these regulations in 2008 would require all septic systems statewide to meet permitting and operation standards. The regulations include required system inspections, restrictions on septic systems near impaired water bodies, performance standards and enforcement actions. There has been much debate on these regulations, and they have not been implemented to date.

The State Water Resources Control Board adopted new policies in 2004 requiring wastewater collection providers to report sanitary sewer overflows and to prepare and implement Sewer System Management Plans (SSMPs). SSMP requirements are modeled on proposed federal capacity, management, operations, and maintenance plans.

Dischargers must provide adequate sewer collection system capacity, prevent overflows, prioritize system deficiencies, and develop a plan for disposal of grease, among other requirements. SSMP implementation deadlines depend on service area size. All wastewater providers in California must have implemented an SSMP by August 2010. Also, providers must now report sanitary sewer overflows greater than 100 gallons to the RWQCB, keep internal records of smaller overflows, and produce an annual report on overflows.

Service Adequacy

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 wastewater service adequacy measures discussed here include regulatory compliance, treatment effectiveness, sewer overflows and collection system integrity.

Of the three providers, only Chester PUD has been issued a formal enforcement action as a result of violations of permit conditions between 2007 and 2012. Chester PUD has faced challenges with compliance with discharge requirements in the past. The District has consistently operated under Cease and Desist Orders since 1987. Most recently, in 2004, a Cease and Desist order was adopted, due to I/I problems in the collection system, violations of effluent percentage removal limitations for BOD and total suspended solids, and effluent coliform violations. The order required the District to repair the collection system. Due to partial compliance with the order's requirements, the order was rescinded in 2009 and a new order was adopted requiring continued improvements to the system. Additionally, in 2008, the District was issued an Administrative Civil Liability Order as chlorine levels exceeded maximum concentration limits. The District was fined \$3,000.

Violations of State requirements for wastewater providers and treatment facilities are recorded by SWRCB. Violations are categorized according to severity and type. The three wastewater providers were reviewed based on the rate of violations per 1,000 population served for the period from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011. Of the three agencies, only WRCS D received a violation during that time frame. Walker Ranch CSD had a single non-priority violation during that same time period for failing to adopt a Sewer System Management Plan as required by State law. As a result of this violation, the District was issued a notice of violation in 2010.⁸ The District has taken steps to comply with the SSMP requirement.

⁸ WRCS D reported that there was an administrative error by the State in the issuance of the Notice of Violation in 2010, pertaining to reporting requirements, resulting in lack of notification to the CSD's general manager until 2012. Subsequently, an agreement was reached between the State and WRCS D to rectify the violation by the end of 2012, without further action by the State. Accordingly, in August 2012, the District's general manager retained Vestra Resources, Inc. to provide the necessary engineering support services to rectify the situation by the end of 2012.

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. All wastewater providers in the Lake Almanor region were in compliance with requirements on all days in 2011.

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. Of the agencies reviewed, only Chester PUD reported a sewer system overflow during the period from 2009 thru 2011, which equates to 9 overflows per 100 miles of collection mains.

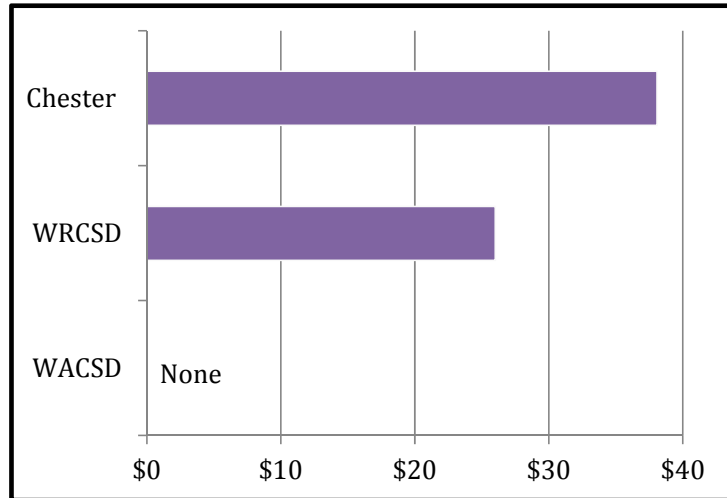
There are several measures of integrity of the wastewater collection system, including peaking factors, efforts to address infiltration and inflow (I/I), and inspection practices. The peaking factor is the ratio of peak day wet weather flows to average dry weather flows. The peaking factor is an indicator of the degree to which the system suffers from I/I, where rainwater enters the sewer system through cracks, manholes or other means. Chester PUD has a peaking factor of 2.3, which by industry standards is moderate; however, the District's high tourist population during the summer makes it challenging to calculate a peaking factor that is indicative of the true amount of I/I that is entering the system. Based on the Chester PUD's struggle with compliance and consistent operation under cease and desist orders, it is apparent that the District faces a high volume of I/I. Chester PUD's solution, only partly implemented to date, is to replace the entire sewage collection system. There are no plans at this time for when this is likely to occur. To date, about 15 percent of the collection system has been replaced. In the case of WACSD, the amount of I/I is unknown, as the system is self-contained and flow into the leach field is not tracked during dry and wet periods. Due to the young age of the system, it is assumed that there is relatively low I/I. Similar to Chester PUD, WRCSD experiences high demand during the summer, which makes it challenging to assess the true amount of I/I; however, WRCSD reported that the part of the system that is underground is pressurized, and consequently, is not susceptible to I/I, but the sand filter, which is not covered, is susceptible to infiltration due to a limited degree of atmospheric precipitation.

Rates

Compared with other municipal services, there are relatively few financing constraints for wastewater enterprises. Generally, agencies may establish service charges on a cost-of-service basis. In the past, wastewater providers have not been required to obtain voter approval for rate increases or restructuring however, based on recent court findings, wastewater providers have been required to complete a Proposition 218 voter protest process when updating rates. The boards of each of the public sector wastewater providers are responsible for establishing service charges. Service charges are restricted to the amount needed to recover the costs of providing wastewater service. The wastewater rates and rate structures are not subject to regulation by other agencies. Service providers can and often do increase rates annually.

Figure 3-20: Wastewater Monthly Residential Rates (2011)

The monthly wastewater rates charged to each residential connection are shown in Figure 3-20. WACSD does not charge fees for the wastewater services rendered as expenses related to the leach field system are minimal. Chester PUD charges \$38.05 per month, while WRCSD charges \$26 per month. By comparison, providers in Eastern Plumas charge a median of \$68.53 per month per connection. Both Chester PUD and WRCSD have not raised rates in recent years. Chester PUD last updated its rates in 2007, and WRCSD has not changed its rates since they were established in 1997.



4. ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT

Almanor Recreation and Park District (ARPD) provides recreational opportunities for residents of Almanor Basin. This is the first Municipal Service Review (MSR) for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

An attempt to form Almanor Park and Recreation District was first made in 1988.⁹ The application for the new district was approved by LAFCo, but failed in a general election. In 1999, the second attempt was approved by both, the Commission and later by the voters.¹⁰ The District was formed to provide recreational opportunities and programs to residents of Almanor basin.

The principal act that governs the District is the Recreation and Park District Law.¹¹ The principal act empowers Recreation and Park Districts to 1) organize, promote, conduct, and advertise programs of community recreation, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, parking, transportation, and other related services that improve the community's quality of life, 2) establish systems of recreation and recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, and 3) acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, both inside and beyond the district's boundaries.¹² Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise latent powers, that is, those services authorized by the principal act but not provided by the district by the end of 2000.¹³

ARPD is located in the Lake Almanor area of Plumas County. The District is not adjacent to any other recreation and park districts. The closest park and recreation provider is Indian Valley Park and Recreation District located to the southeast of ARPD.

⁹ 1-F-88.

¹⁰ 1-F-99.

¹¹ California Public Resources Code §5780-5791

¹² California Public Resources Code §5786.

¹³ Government Code §56824.10.

Boundaries

The District's boundary is entirely within Plumas County and is the same as the boundary of Seneca Healthcare District. The boundary area includes the communities of Chester, Lake Almanor Country Club, Hamilton Branch, Lake Almanor West, Prattville, and East Shore. The District starts at the Shasta and Lassen County borders in the north, borders Tehama and Lassen counties in the west and east respectively, and extends to the southern shore of Lake Almanor. The District's boundaries encompass approximately 283 square miles.¹⁴

There have been no annexations to or detachments from the District since its formation.

Sphere of Influence

A Sphere of Influence (SOI) has not been adopted for ARPD. An SOI will be adopted during this round of SOI updates following the adoption of this MSR.

Extra-territorial Services

The District does not provide any extra-territorial services, but non-residents may use district-financed facilities and programs. Non-residents and residents are charged the same fees, as the District is not supported by property taxes.

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest.

¹⁴ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2011. The data is not considered survey quality.

Almanor Recreation and Park District

Range 5 East

Range 6 East

Range 7 East

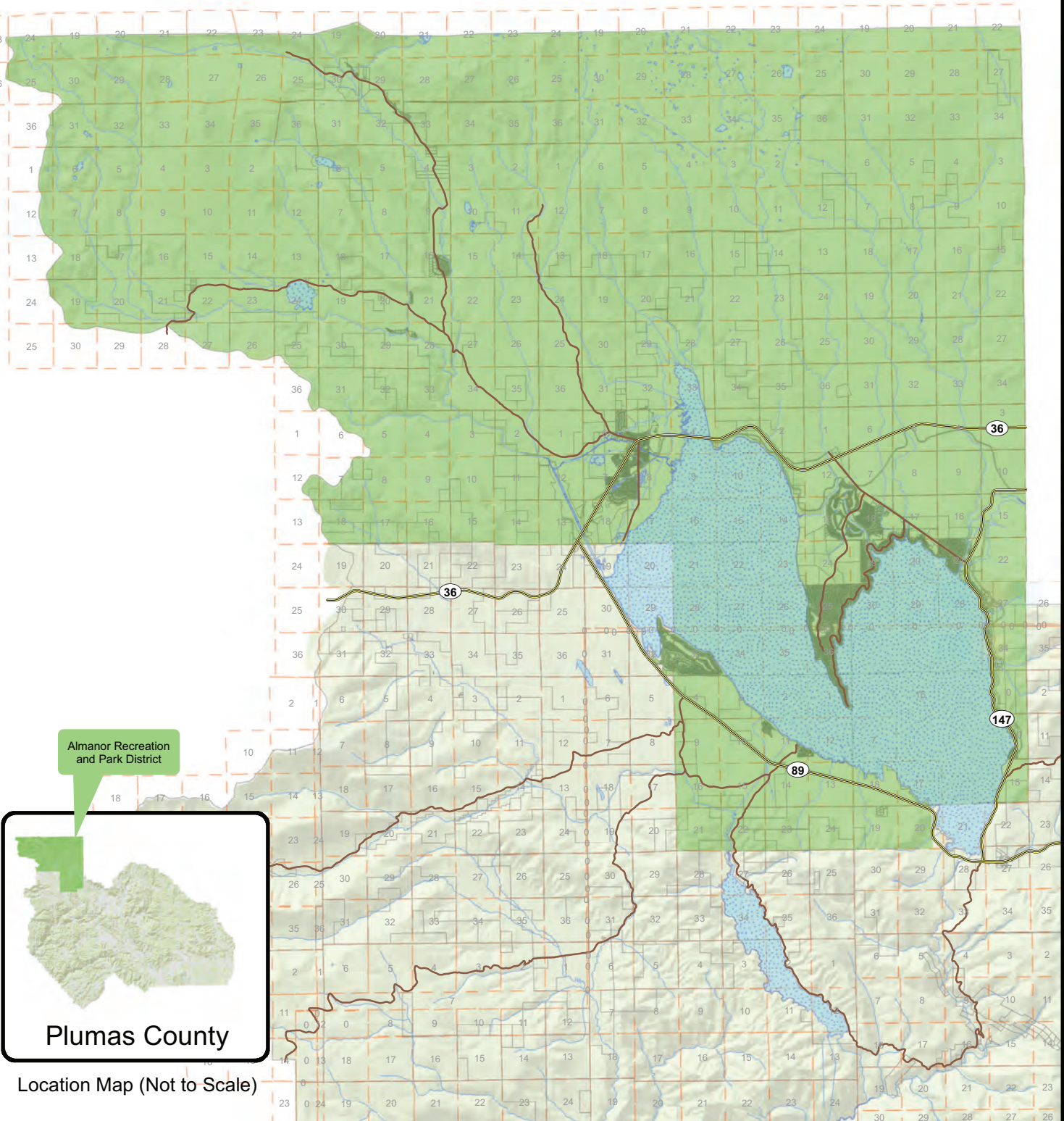
Range 8 East

Township 30 North

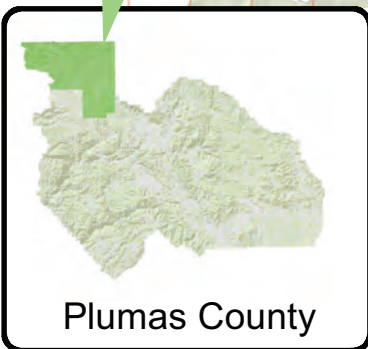
Township 29 North

Township 28 North

Township 27 North



Almanor Recreation and Park District



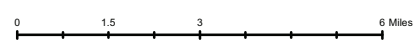
Plumas County

Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Almanor Recreation and Park District



Almanor Recreation and Park District
 Resolution: 99-9
 Adopted: November 18, 1999

Almanor Recreation and Park District (SOI)
 Resolution: None
 Adopted:

Source: Plumas LAFCo
 Map Created 7/26/2012

Accountability and Governance

ARPD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are to be elected at-large to staggered four-year terms. The initial Board was appointed by the Board of Supervisors. There are currently four members, all of whom were appointed as the positions were uncontested. There has never been a contested election in the history of the District. The Board presently has one vacancy. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 4-2.

The Board meets on the fourth Monday of every month at 5:30 in the evening at the Almanor Basin Services Center at 372 Main Street in Chester. Board meeting agendas are posted at the post office in Chester and in the Chester Progressive newspaper. Minutes are emailed to interested parties, distributed at the following meetings and are available upon request.

Figure 4-2: Almanor Recreation and Park District Governing Body

Almanor Recreation and Park District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Wes Maston, Board President			
Address:	P.O. Box 325, Chester, CA 96020			
Telephone:	(530)258-2562			
Email/website:	arpdoffice@yahoo.com			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Wes Maston	President	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
Julie Rhors	Vice President	December 2015	Appointed	4 years
Shane Bergmann	Secretary	December 2016	Appointed	4 years
Kari Delacour	Treasurer	December 2016	Appointed	4 years
Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Fourth Monday of every month at 5:30pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at Almanor Basin Service Center at 372 Main Stree, Chester, CA.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the post office in Chester and in Chester Progressive newspaper.			
Minutes Distribution:	Emaied to an email list, distributed at following meetings, and available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District occasionally publishes articles in a newspaper to inform its residents about specific programs or events. ARPD also has fundraisers, such as Fun Run and Memorial Day food booth at a crafts fair with posters of recent district activities.

If a customer is dissatisfied with District's services, complaints may be submitted to the Board of Directors at board meetings. The person responsible for handling complaints is the President of the Board. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2011. Complaints received in prior years were regarding the proposed per parcel tax.

ARPD demonstrated partial accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District was unable to respond to questionnaires and interview requests in a timely fashion; however, all information was eventually provided.

Planning and Management Practices

The District has no employees and is managed by the volunteer Board of Directors, as such, the District does not conduct employee evaluations or track of employee productivity. One district volunteer acts as the contract soccer manager but does not receive compensation, but instead passes on payments from ARPD to the soccer coaches and referees.

The District reported that it does not conduct formal evaluations of district performance as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports. But it performs reviews of its specific activities, such as fun run and soccer program.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The financial statements are audited every five years. ARPD is looking into having a financial review done instead of an audit because of a small budget. Financial statements were most recently audited in FY 08-09. The District does not adopt other planning documents, such as a capital improvement plan or master plan. Capital improvement projects are planned for in the budget.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Designated land uses within the District consist primarily of general forest, general agriculture and timberland production in the northern part of ARPD, and recreational, residential and commercial around Lake Almanor.¹⁵ The total boundary area of ARPD is approximately 283 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 3,957 residents within the District, based on census tract population in the 2010 Census.¹⁶

It is estimated by the District that the population of the Lake Almanor Basin grows to over 20,000 during the summer season from a winter population of 5,000.¹⁷

¹⁵ Plumas County Parcel Application.

¹⁶ Census Tracts 5.01 and 5.02 in Plumas County.

¹⁷ www.senecahospital.org

Existing Demand

The District reported that it had observed no change in service demand in the last few years. Demand usually increased in the summer months, due to the influx of tourists into the area.

Projected Growth and Development

Although no formal population projections have been made by the District, ARPD believes there will be limited or no growth in the next few years. ARPD does not track the number of program registrants, but plans its activities based on the amount of money coming in. The District reports that it does not find it necessary to project demand because population is currently staying fairly steady.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 3,957 in 2010 to approximately 4,155 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

There are two potential developments within the District, both of which are currently on hold. The Walker Ranch development contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course. Another planned project is the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort, which is stalled due to litigation. If built, there is the potential for an increase in both, off-season residents and seasonal population.

At present, ARPD has the capacity to serve the anticipated minimal growth in demand at existing service levels. Should significant development come to fruition, ARPD would like need to enhance services offered as residents begin to expect more urban service levels.

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 District does not take part in reviewing plans for proposed developments.

ARPD reported that it would like its SOI to include primarily the developed territory around the Lake, and exclude the northern portion of its bounds that consists primarily of forest. ARPD would also like to include the community of Westwood (in Lassen County) within its SOI. Although the local utility district offers park facilities in Westwood, the area lacks a soccer program. No other governance alternatives were identified.

Financing

The District reported that the current financing level was adequate to deliver services. No constraints or challenges to financing were identified.

The District's total revenues for FY 10-11 were \$17,164. Revenue sources included income from charges for services (96.5 percent), donations (three percent) and use of money and property (0.5 percent).

ARPD has been surviving on user fees and money from fundraisers. It was reported that revenues have been staying constant for the last few years. The largest revenue source is soccer fees.

The District is not supported by property taxes or a special assessment. ARPD charges district residents and non-residents equal fees. Truman Collins Multi-Use Park user fees are \$20 per day, \$100 per week, and \$200 per month. Soccer fees are \$30 per individual player or a maximum of \$70 per family. The District charges \$25 per runner for early registration and \$30 for later registration for Fun Run.

The District's expenditures in FY 10-11 were \$17,623. Expenditures were composed of services and supplies (97 percent) and salaries and benefits (three percent). ARPD has minimal expenses since it is operated by volunteers.

ARPD reported that its expenditures were usually nearly equal to revenues.

Capital improvements are identified in the annual budget; ARPD tries to plan for capital improvements a few years ahead on an as-needed basis. The District does not adopt any other capital planning documents, such as a strategic plan. Capital improvements are financed entirely out of regular revenue sources and donations.

ARPD does not have any long-term debt.

The District has a financial reserve that was originally earmarked for a pool, which was ultimately not constructed because the District was unable to pass a tax measure to finance its maintenance. ARPD has \$43,905 in its reserve, \$4,095 out of which is restricted and will be returned to the funding sources since the pool was never built.

The District is a member of a joint power authority (JPA), called California Association for Park and Recreation Indemnity (CAPRI) for insurance purposes.

PARK SERVICES

Service Overview

The District provides recreational opportunities for the residents of the Almanor Basin. Non-residents also may use ARPD facilities and participate in the activities provided by the District. ARPD provides a soccer program in the spring and fall, organizes a Fourth of July Fun Run, operates a field used by the District, makes available space to Little League baseball, runs a bridge club held at a senior center, and is starting an adult softball program.

ARPD contracts with Chester PUD for fire, EMS, water, and wastewater services. Chester PUD provides services to ARPD through an out-of-area service agreement (OASA).¹⁸ An agreement was entered into by Chester PUD, Collins Pine Company and the Almanor Recreation and Park District in 2010 for a 20-year lease of property known as the Truman Collins Sports Complex on a 2.3-acre area needing water, wastewater and fire and EMS services provided by Chester PUD. ARPD, through the Collins Pine Company, filed a Plumas LAFCo OASA application for approval and Chester PUD has agreed to serve and provide the 2.3-acre sports complex area with domestic water and fire and EMS services and in the future with wastewater services.

Staffing

The District has volunteer staff and is run by a volunteer Board of Directors. ARPD employed an office manager in the past, but decided to transition that money to recreational programs instead. The District has a soccer manager who operates as a contractor-volunteer. The soccer manager employs soccer coaches and referees.

Facilities and Capacity

ARPD operates the Truman Collins Sports Complex—a soccer and baseball field, which is used for activities organized by the District and by other organizations, such as Little League and Chester Junior-High School. The complex is operated by ARPD and leased from the Collins Pine Company.

The field was reported to be fairly new and in good condition; however, location and planning was slightly lacking at the time it was built. The complex is open daily during daylight hours as there are no lights on the field per the use agreement with Collins Pine Company.

¹⁸ 2010-OASA-001.

The District augments the facilities that are available for its use through shared use agreements with the local schools. At present, the high school team softball team makes use of the District's field, and ARPD makes use of the high school football field. ARPD also collaborates with the school district on joint financing of necessary improvements. For example, ARPD is financing the materials necessary for the high school to construct a soccer storage shed.

Infrastructure Needs

The District reported that it had performed a major water project last winter and was also completing some sprinkler work. Additionally, the District identified a need for soccer storage, which was constructed in the summer of 2012.

Challenges

The primary challenge for the District is lack of financing, due to the absence of any tax or special assessment revenue.

Service Adequacy

Based on the information regarding facilities offered, financing adequacy, management practices, and accountability discussed in the previous sections, ARPD's level of service appears to be moderately adequate.

ARPD offers a limited range of recreational facilities and programs for district residents. However, the activities provided seem to be appropriate to the needs of community residents, and the District is working on adding more recreational programs, such as adult softball.

Although ARPD reported that its financing was adequate, there is not sufficient funding to hire a qualified recreation professional. As indicated by the District in its proposal for formation and funding, a stable district cannot depend on volunteers to dependably perform functions such as developing and scheduling programs, recruiting and training volunteers, writing and administering grants, and managing the "business" of the recreation district. Despite financing difficulties, the District, which does not have tax or special assessment funding, is attempting to operate efficiently with the current level of funding. ARPD shares its facility with other agencies, and makes use of other entities' facilities for district programs. Another example of efficiency is the sharing of certain expenses with other institutions, such as the soccer storage shed at the high school.

The District appears to be well managed by the Board of Directors which keeps its affairs organized, prepares a budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, conducts periodic financial audits, maintains current financial records, and plans for capital needs and growth.

ARPD demonstrates accountability and transparency to its customers by making its agendas and minutes available to the public, making efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities beyond the required activities, and cooperating with the MSR process and information disclosure. It is recommended that all districts maintain a website where public documents are made available to the public to enhance transparency and accountability. The District’s accountability appears to be constrained, as indicated by a lack of interest in serving on the Board and the District’s lack of a timely response to the requests for the MSR. ARPD has one board vacancy, and has not had contested elections in the history of the District.

Figure 4-3: Almanor Recreation and Park District Service Adequacy

Park and Recreational Services			
<i>Facility</i>	<i>Owner</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Maintenance</i>
Truman Collins Sports Complex	Collins Pine	Good	ARPD
<i>Service Challenges</i>			
The biggest challenge is a lack of funding, due to the absence of tax or special assessment revenue.			
<i>Facility Needs/Deficiencies</i>			
There is a need for a soccer storage shed. The project is planned to be completed this year.			
<i>Facility Sharing</i>			
Current Practices:			
The District shares it's soccer and baseball field with Little League and with the Chester High School. ARPD uses the school's football field, and the community senior center for its bridge club. The District also organizes games with Central Plumas Park and Recreation District in Quincy.			
Future Opportunities:			
The District constantly explores additional opportunities for facility and resource sharing.			
<i>Recreation Cost per Resident</i>	\$4.5	<i>Residents per Facility</i>	3,957.00

ALMANOR RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ The estimated population served by ARPD is about 3,957 residents. The summer population goes up to about four times the number of permanent residents.
- ❖ Over the past few years the District has experienced little or no growth in population. The demand for services has stayed fairly consistent.
- ❖ Little or no growth in population and in service demand is expected within the District in the next few years.
- ❖ There are two potential developments within the District, both of which are currently on hold.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's current facilities have the capacity to adequately serve existing demand. Should any significant growth occur, the District will likely need to begin offering a higher level of service to address the residents' needs. Necessary enhancements may include hiring a qualified recreation professional to manage the District, fundraising and expanding recreational programs and facilities.
- ❖ The District identified a soccer storage shed, which was constructed this year.
- ❖ ARPD plans for its capital improvements annually in the budget on an as-needed basis.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ ARPD does not receive property tax or parcel assessment income; it is almost entirely supported by user fees revenue and some minor donations.
- ❖ ARPD reports that its financing is adequate; however, the District has been forced to minimize expenditures (by relying entirely on volunteers) and capitalize on facility sharing and joint financing arrangements in order to stay within budget each year.
- ❖ ARPD does not have any long-term debt.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ The District shares its facility with the Little League and Chester Junior High School. ARPD also makes use of the facilities of other entities, such as the Chester High School football field and the community senior center for its programs. The District also collaborates with Central Plumas Park and Recreation District.
- ❖ The District continuously explores additional opportunities for facility and resource sharing to minimize expenses.

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

- ❖ ARPD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests. Due to the volunteer nature of ARPD, the District faced challenges in providing a timely response to requests; however, ultimately all information was provided.
- ❖ It is recommended that all agencies maintain websites where public documents are made available.
- ❖ An SOI reduction to detach the northern forest area from the District was identified as an option.
- ❖ The District indicated that it would be interested in offering soccer in the community of Westwood in Lassen County.

5. CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT

Chester Cemetery District (CCD) provides cemetery related services, including interment of caskets and cremated remains, provision of cremation niches, and maintenance of grounds, to the residents around Lake Almanor.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

The District was formed as an independent special district on January 7, 1957.

The principal act that governs the District is the Public Cemetery District Law.¹⁹ The principal act authorizes the district to own, operate, improve, and maintain cemeteries, provide interment services within its boundaries, and to sell interment accessories and replacement objects (e.g., burial vaults, liners, and flower vases). Although the district may require and regulate monuments or markers, it is precluded from selling them. The principal act requires the district to maintain cemeteries owned by the district.²⁰ The law allows the district to inter non-residents under certain circumstances.²¹ Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise latent powers or, in other words, those services authorized by the principal act but not provided by the district at the end of 2000.²²

CCD is located in the northwestern corner of the County, and encompasses the communities surrounding Lake Almanor.

Boundaries

CCD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County and is the same as the boundary of Seneca Healthcare District. The boundary area includes the communities of Chester, Lake Almanor Country Club, Hamilton Branch, Lake Almanor West, Prattville, and East Shore. The District starts at the Shasta and Lassen County borders in the north, borders Tehama

¹⁹ California Health and Safety Code §9000-9093.

²⁰ California Health and Safety Code §9040.

²¹ Non-residents eligible for interment are described in California Health and Safety Code §9061, and include former residents, current and former taxpayers, family members of residents and former residents, family members of those already buried in the cemetery, those without other cemetery alternatives within 15 miles of their residence, and those who died while serving in the military.

²² Government Code §56824.10.

and Lassen counties in the west and east respectively, and extends to the southern shore of Lake Almanor. The District's boundaries encompass approximately 283 square miles.²³

Since formation there has been one annexation to CCD; a portion of Lake Almanor West subdivision (215 acres) was annexed to the District in 1974.

Sphere of Influence

CCD's Sphere of Influence (SOI) was first established on November 10, 1976.²⁴ At that time, the SOI was made coterminous with the District's boundaries. There have been no changes to the SOI since it was established.

Extra-territorial Services

While the District does not provide cemetery services outside of its bounds, the District will service any non-resident of the District for the same fees as residents.

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest.

²³ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2012. The data is not considered survey quality.

²⁴ LAFCo Resolution No. 76-55.

Chester Cemetery District

Range 5 East

Range 6 East

Range 7 East

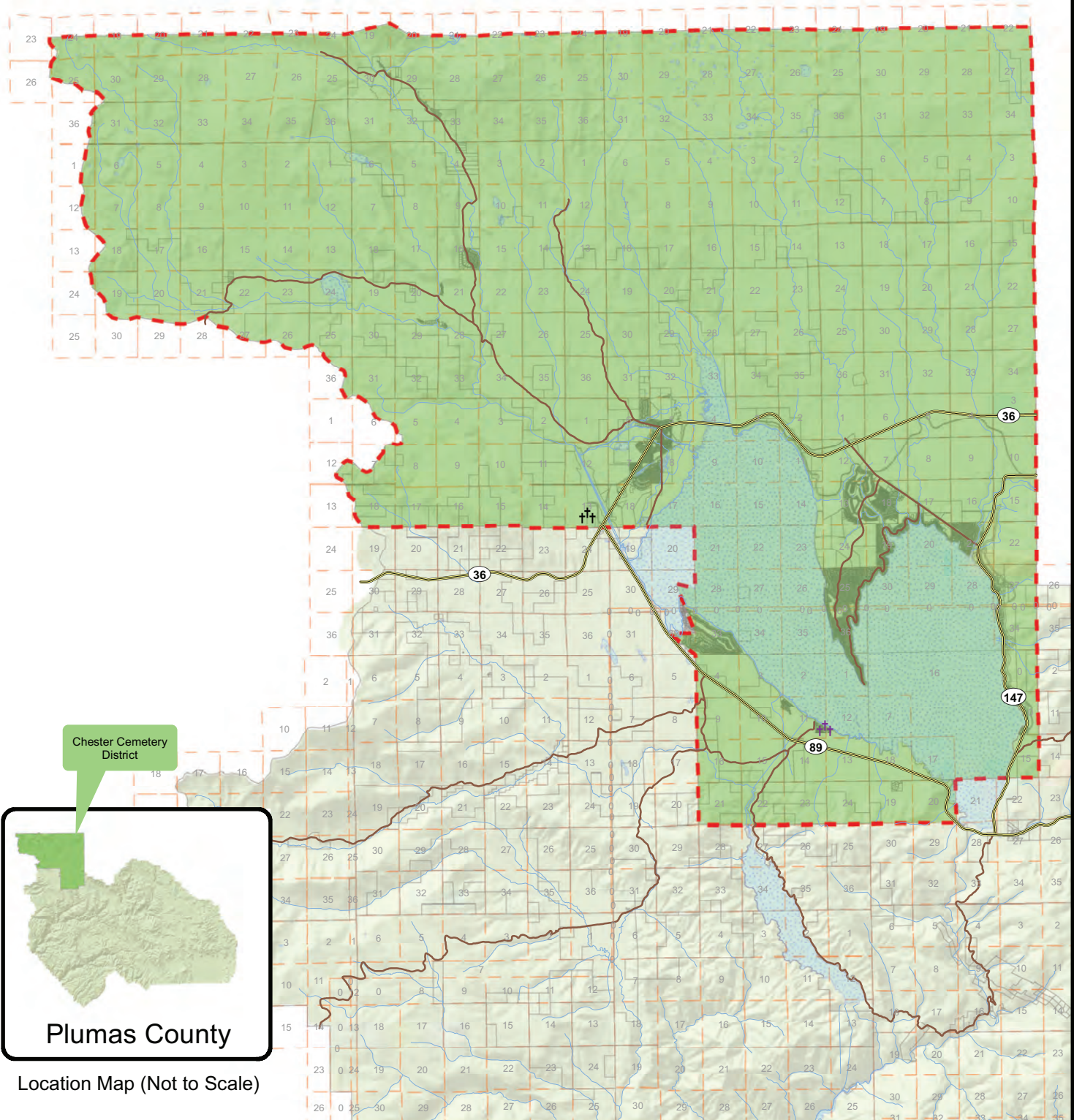
Range 8 East

Township 30 North

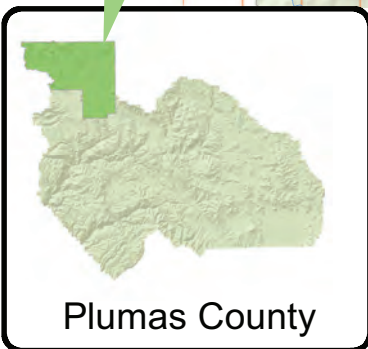
Township 29 North

Township 28 North

Township 27 North



Chester Cemetery District



Plumas County

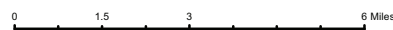
Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Chester Cemetery
- Prattville Pioneer Cemetery

- Chester Cemetery District
- Chester Cemetery District (SOI)



Chester Cemetery District
Resolution: 57-3
Adopted: January 7, 1947

Chester Cemetery District (SOI)
Resolution: 76-55
Adopted: November 10, 1976

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 4/11/2012

Accountability and Governance

Chester Cemetery District is governed by a three-member board of directors who are appointed by the County Board of Supervisors to four-year terms. The president and vice president are elected by the Board. There are presently no vacancies on the Board. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 5-2.

Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month when necessary. The meetings are held at the District's office. Board meeting agendas are posted on the District's front door, the local post office, the court house, and the library. Minutes are available in the District's office and by request.

Figure 5-2: Chester Cemetery District Governing Body

Chester Cemetery District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Fred Biscotti, General Manager			
Address:	P.O. Box 539, Chester, CA 96020			
Telephone:	530-258-3878			
Email/website:	ChesterCemeteryDistrict@frontiernet.net			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Ron Longachre	President	November 2013	Appointed	4 years
Wayne Litchti	Vice President	November 2017	Appointed	4 years
Kathy Hassel	Board	November 2015	Appointed	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Second Monday of each month as needed.			
Location:	District office.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted on the District's front door, the local post office, the court house, and the library.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

Besides the required agendas and minutes, the District does not conduct any other public outreach activities. CCD does not maintain a website where information is made available to the public.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, the complaints may be submitted to the Board of Directors in writing. If the complaint is not handled to the satisfaction of the constituent, then the complainant may bring it to the Board of Supervisors. In 2011, the District reported that it had one complaint regarding trees on the cemetery property that abutted another landowner's property.

Chester Cemetery District demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. While the District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests, the District faced some challenges responding in a timely manner.

Planning and Management Practices

The District employs one full-time general manager. Part-time help is hired to help as needed on digging and mowing.

The general manager reports to the Board of Directors at the regular meetings. CCD does not conduct regular staff evaluations, given the small size of the organization and the long-term experience of staff. Individual staff workload is not tracked; however, overall district workload, such as number of burials, as well as equipment and facility needs, are reported to the Board at the regular meetings.

CCD does not evaluate district performance as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports. However, informally, the general manager reports needs and updates the Board at the regular meetings.

The District's finances, including its endowment care fund, are managed and tracked through the County. The District conducts biennial audits, but is hoping to audit less often given the high expense of each audit. The District adopts budgets annually. Capital improvements are planned for annually in CCD's budget. CCD has not compiled any other planning documents such as a master plan.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

A majority of the District is USFS land and the majority of the private land is commercial forest or agriculture, which will discourage development. Residential development is focused around Lake Almanor. Chester has residential, commercial and industrial zones, with some surrounding rural environment zones. The developing areas around Lake Almanor are basically residential with some rural environment parcels and few interspersed commercial zones.

Population

There are approximately 3,957 residents within the District, based on census tract population in the 2010 census.²⁵

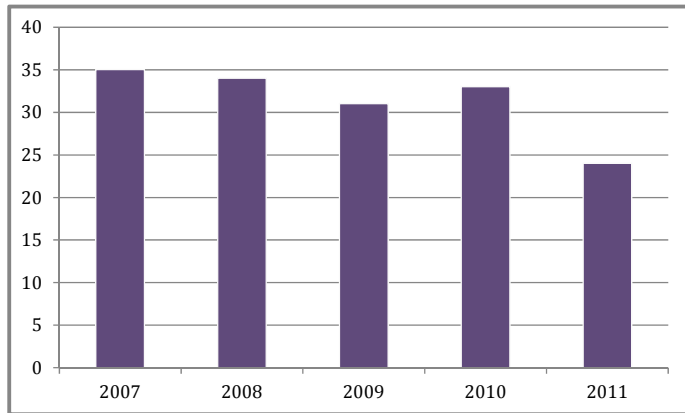
It is estimated that the population of the Lake Almanor Basin grows to over 20,000 during the summer season from a winter population of 5,000.

²⁵ Census Tracts 5.01 and 5.02 in Plumas County.

Existing Demand

The District reported that demand for services is rarely static, and is always in flux; however there is a current trend away from full-body burials to cremations. The District handled 38 and 25 burials in 2010 and 2011, respectively.

Figure 5-3: CCD Burials (2007-2011)



Projected Growth and Development

While CCD does not conduct formal demand forecasting, trends and anticipations are discussed during the District's regular meetings. At present, the District anticipates no significant change in demand in the short term.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 3,957 in 2010 to approximately 4,155 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

There are two potential developments throughout the District, both of which are currently on hold. The Walker Ranch development contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course. Another planned project is the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort, which is stalled due to litigation. If built, it has the potential to increase the off-season population in the area.

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.

Financing

CCD reported that its financing level was generally adequate to provide necessary services without going over budget; however, the District did note that there were budget limitations and that it hoped to cut audit expenditures by going to less frequent audits.

In FY 10-11, the District had total revenues of \$83,119. Revenues include charges for services (30 percent), property and other taxes (69 percent); interest and other miscellaneous revenue sources made up less than one percent of all income.

The District's fees were last updated in July 2011. In addition to the regular fees, the District currently charges endowment fees. The District recently updated its fee schedule and now meets the legally required minimum endowment fee of \$4.50 per plot square foot for all plot types.²⁶ The principal act requires the District to charge non-resident fees that are at least 15 percent higher than fees charged to residents and property owners.²⁷ The District's fee schedule does not include such fees for non-residents. The District should implement non-resident fees as soon as practical to comply with the law.

In FY 10-11, the District had a total of \$81,623 in expenditures, which included salaries and benefits (69 percent), services and supplies (30 percent) and capital expenditures (one percent).

The District uses a pay-as-you-go approach from regular revenue sources for any necessary capital improvements. The District may also make use of interest from the endowment fund for capital improvements related to regular maintenance.

CCD does not have any long-term debt.

The District does not have a formal policy of maintaining a reserve fund balance for contingencies. At the end of FY 10-11, CCD maintained a cash balance of \$55,614.

The District has an endowment care fund and provides endowment care to its cemeteries, as required by law. The endowment fund balance at the end of FY 10-11 was \$86,147. Cemetery districts are required to establish an endowment care fund and may only use the interest of the fund to finance the care of the facilities.²⁸ In FY 10-11, the District made contributions of \$5,575 to the endowment fund and had interest income of \$495 on its endowment care fund, which could use for maintenance of the facilities.

CCD participates in joint financing with regard to insurance through the Golden State Risk Management Authority.

²⁶ Health and Safety Code §8738.

²⁷ Health and Safety Code §9068.

²⁸ Health and Safety Code §9065.

CEMETERY SERVICES

Service Overview

CCD provides cemetery related services, including interment of caskets and cremated remains, provision of cremation niches, and maintenance of grounds.

Staffing

Regular maintenance and administration activities are completed by a single full-time general manager. Should the need arise for additional maintenance activities, then part-time assistants are hired.

Facilities and Capacity

The District offers services at two cemetery facilities within its bounds.

Chester Cemetery has five acres of developed cemetery space and five acres of undeveloped space. The cemetery is reportedly in excellent condition, consisting of all green landscaping and no above ground monuments. The District may need to consider expanding the developed area to the rear, but at present, there is sufficient space for another eight or nine years before this will be necessary.

Prattville Pioneer Cemetery is two acres of rustic non-landscaped space. The cemetery is generally in good condition with no significant infrastructure needs. This cemetery is not in high demand. The remaining space at this cemetery is unknown as the cemetery lies on a lava bed, which makes it challenging to dig graves.

Infrastructure Needs

At present, the District reported that there are no significant infrastructure needs or deficiencies with regard to the two cemeteries.

Challenges

No particular challenges to providing adequate service levels were identified by the District.

Service Adequacy

The following are indicators of service adequacy for cemetery districts, as defined by law or best practices. In some areas Chester Cemetery District meets or exceeds service

standards for adequate services, while other aspects could be improved upon as shown below.

- ❖ Districts that provide maintenance services on a year-round basis tend to be those with larger populations and property tax bases. Those that provide minimal maintenance tend to be those with smaller populations and less property tax. Chester Cemetery District provides maintenance services on a year-round basis.
- ❖ Health and Safety Code §9068 requires cemetery districts to have non-resident fees. Chester Cemetery District does not charge non-resident fees for each plot type in its price schedule.
- ❖ Health and Safety Code §9065 requires cemetery districts to have an endowment fee. Chester Cemetery District charges all residents and non-residents an endowment fee that varies by plot type.
- ❖ According to Health and Safety Code §8738, a minimum endowment care fee must be \$4.50 per plot square foot. Chester Cemetery District meets this requirement.
- ❖ Cemetery districts can legally provide services to non-residents if the deceased satisfies the eligibility requirements of a non-district resident per Health and Safety Code §9061, and the non-resident fee is paid. The principal act limits interments at cemetery districts to residents, former residents who purchased plots when they were residents, property taxpayers in district bounds, former property taxpayers who purchased plots, eligible non-residents, and the family members of any of the above. By allowing anybody to purchase a plot in one of its cemeteries, CCD is non-compliant with legal constraints on the burial of non-residents.
- ❖ In order to adequately plan for existing and future demand and capacity needs, cemeteries track the number of interments annually. CCD regularly tracks the number of annual burials, and appropriately assesses remaining capacity at its facilities.

CHESTER CEMETERY DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 3,957 residents within Chester Cemetery District (CCD).
- ❖ Over the past decade the District has not experienced a significant increase in population.
- ❖ No or slow growth is expected within the District until the economy improves and proposed developments are constructed.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ Chester cemetery has the capacity to handle burials for approximately eight or nine years before expansion is necessary. The amount of space available at Pratville Pioneer Cemetery is difficult to judge, as some areas have a hard rocky soil composition.
- ❖ There is a current trend away from full-body burials to cremations.
- ❖ At present, the District reported that there are no significant infrastructure needs or deficiencies with regard to the two cemeteries.
- ❖ The District could improve upon service adequacy by operating within legal requirements for cemetery districts. By allowing anybody to purchase a plot in one of its cemeteries, the District is non-compliant with legal constraints on the burial of non-residents. Additionally, the District should institute non-resident fees for burial in accordance with State law.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services however, the District did note that there were budget limitations and that it hoped to cut audit expenditures by going to less frequent audits.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ The District does not share facilities and does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other service providers in the future.

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

- ❖ The District demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo.
- ❖ The District does not conduct outreach efforts except for the required activities. It is recommended that all agencies maintain websites where public documents are made available in order to ensure transparency.
- ❖ No governmental structure options were identified with regard to CCD.

6. CHESTER PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT

Chester Public Utility District (Chester PUD) provides domestic water distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, fire protection and ambulance services. In addition, Chester PUD is partially reimbursed from the County for providing street lighting services and also awards and administers a solid waste collection franchise for the area.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

Chester PUD was formed in 1947 as an independent special district.²⁹ It was organized to provide water and wastewater services to the residents of Chester. In 2009, Chester PUD consolidated with Chester Fire Protection District (FPD), and consequently, took on fire protection and ambulance services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Public Utility District Act.³⁰ The principal act empowers the District to acquire, construct, own, operate, control, or use works for supplying light, water, power, heat, transportation, telephone service, or other means of communication, or means for the disposal of garbage, sewage, or refuse matter.³¹ In addition, the District may acquire, construct, own, complete, use, and operate a fire department, street lighting system, public parks and other recreation facilities, and provide for the drainage of roads, streets, and public places.³² 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 2000.³³

Chester PUD is located on the northwestern shore of Lake Almanor in Plumas County. The District does not border any other water, wastewater or fire providers. West Almanor CSD is located to the south of Chester PUD, and Walker Ranch is to the east.

²⁹ State Board of Equalization.

³⁰ Public Utilities Code §15501-17501.

³¹ Public Utilities Code §16461.

³² Public Utilities Code §16463.

³³ Government Code §56824.10.

Boundaries

The Chester PUD boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The District's boundaries encompass approximately 1.75 square miles.³⁴

Plumas LAFCo and State Board of Equalization records indicate that before the consolidation of Chester PUD and Chester FPD, the two districts underwent multiple annexations. All recorded boundary changes for Chester PUD and Chester FPD are shown in Figure 6-1. The most recent annexation before consolidation for both districts took place in 2006. Since consolidation, there have been no boundary changes for the District.

There is a subarea within the District, which was established as Zone A to define those areas receiving sewer services.

Sphere of Influence

The SOIs for both, Chester PUD and FPD were first adopted in 1976.³⁵ Both were further revised in 1983.³⁶ The latest revision took place in 2006 after completion of MSRs for both districts.³⁷ For reference, the SOIs that were adopted in 2006 (indicating the anticipated growth area from 2006 to 2011) for each agency are shown in Figure 6-2; however, for the consolidated Chester PUD, as it presently exists, no sphere of influence has been adopted. During this round of SOI updates the Commission will need to adopt an SOI for the consolidated entity.

Extra-territorial Services

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, Chester PUD provides services outside of its bounds. Chester PUD maintains 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 Chester PUD, the District's service area extends beyond the District's bounds along SR 36, Chester Warner Valley Road and Old Red Bluff Road. Chester PUD 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.

³⁴ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2011. The data is not considered survey quality.

³⁵ LAFCo Resolution Numbers 76-04 and 76-03.

³⁶ LAFCo Resolution Numbers 83-08 and 83-09.

³⁷ LAFCo Resolution Number 2006-003 and 2006-004.

Chester PUD provides extra-territorial services under an out-of-area service agreement (OASA).³⁸ An agreement was entered into by Chester PUD, Collins Pine Company and the Almanor Park and Recreation District in 2010 for a 20-year lease of property known as the Truman Collins Sports Complex on a 2.3-acre area needing water, wastewater and fire and EMS services provided by Chester PUD. The Almanor Park and Recreation District, through the Collins Pine Company, filed a Plumas LAFCo application for an OASA and Chester PUD agreed to serve and provide the sports complex area with domestic water and fire and EMS services, and in the future with wastewater.

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest.

³⁸ LAFCo File Number 2010-OASA-001.

Figure 6-1: Chester PUD Boundary History

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
<i>Chester PUD</i>			
Chester PUD	Formation	1947	SBOE
Highway 36 Right-of-way (Annexation #1)	Annexation	1974	LAFCo/SBOE
Vision Lake Subdivision #2	Annexation	1975	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Adoption	SOI Adoption	1976	LAFCo
Lake Almanor Forest Annex. #2	Annexation	1979	LAFCo/SBOE
Martin Ranch	Annexation	1980	SBOE
Plumas Unified School District	Annexation	1981	LAFCo/SBOE
Chester Airport	Annexation	1981	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Update	SOI Update	1983	LAFCo
Caulk	Annexation	1983	LAFCo/SBOE
Reorganization with Chester PUD	Reorganization	1984	LAFCo
Formation of Zone A	Formation	1984	SBOE
Higgins Territory	Annexation	1988	LAFCo/SBOE
Almanor Senior Residential Facility	Annexation	1989	LAFCo/SBOE
Higgins Territory	Annexation	1989	LAFCo/SBOE
Higgins/Lazzarini	Annexation	1989	LAFCo/SBOE
Collins Pine Territory	Annexation	1990	LAFCo/SBOE
USFS	Annexation	1999	LAFCo/SBOE
Caltrans Maintenance Facility	Annexation	2003	LAFCo/SBOE
Rouland Parcel	Annexation	2003	LAFCo/SBOE
USFS	Annexation	2003	LAFCo/SBOE
Wildwood Senior Center Parcel	Annexation	2005	LAFCo/SBOE
St. Clair Parcels	Annexation	2005	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Update	SOI Update	2006	LAFCo
Feather River Partners	Annexation	2006	LAFCo/SBOE
<i>Chester FPD</i>			
Chester FPD	Formation	1941	SBOE
Unknown	Annexation	1949	SBOE
Unknown	Annexation	1961	SBOE
Vision Lake Subdivision	Annexation	1976	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Adoption	SOI Adoption	1976	LAFCo
Lake Almanor Forest Annex. #1	Annexation	1979	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Update	SOI Update	1983	LAFCo
Martin Ranch	Annexation	1983	LAFCo/SBOE
Caulk	Annexation	1984	LAFCo/SBOE
Higgins Territory	Annexation	1988	LAFCo/SBOE
Almanor Senior Residential Facility	Annexation	1989	LAFCo/SBOE
PUSD/FRC	Annexation	1993	LAFCo/SBOE
Rouland Parcel	Annexation	2003	LAFCo/SBOE
Wildwood Senior Center Parcel	Annexation	2005	LAFCo/SBOE
St. Clair Parcels	Annexation	2005	LAFCo/SBOE
SOI Update	SOI Update	2006	LAFCo
Feather River Partners	Annexation	2006	LAFCo/SBOE
<i>Consolidated District</i>			
Chester PUD and Chester FPD	Consolidation	2009	LAFCo

Chester Public Utility District

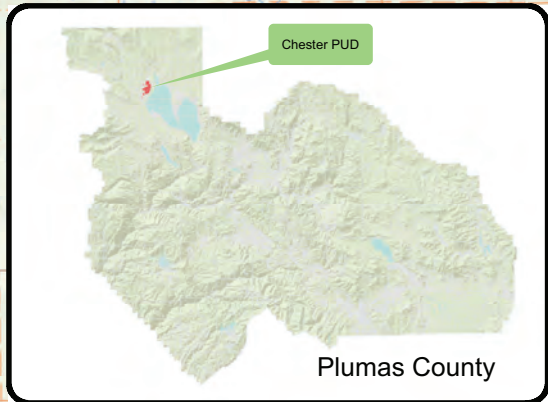
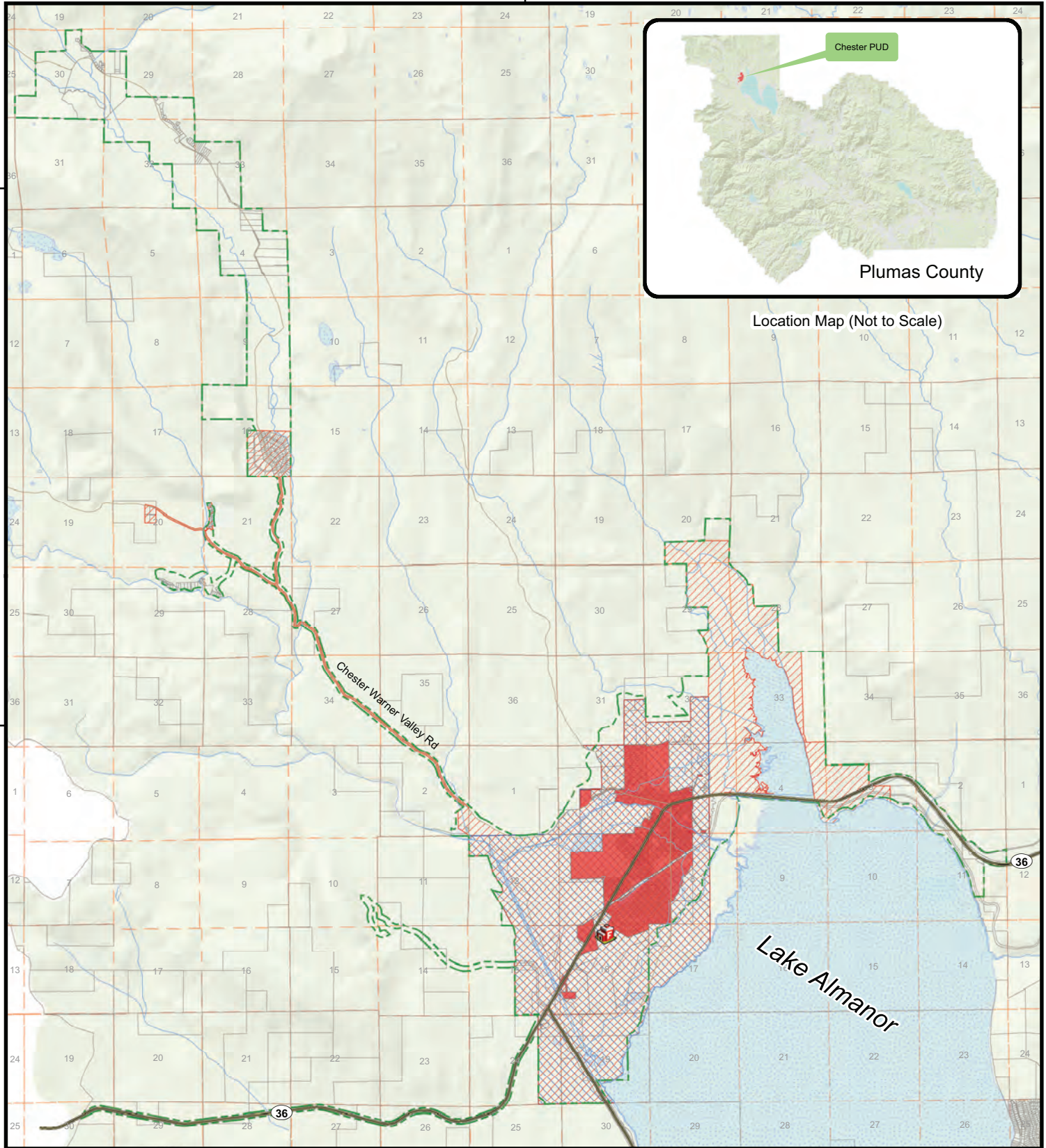
Range 6 East

Range 7 East

Township 30 North












Township 29 North

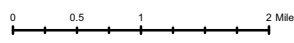
Township 28 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

-  Highways
-  Major Roads
-  Stream / River
-  Waterbodies
-  Parcels
-  Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
-  Chester PUD
-  Fire Station
-  Previous PUD (SOI)
-  Previous FPD (SOI)
-  Fire Department Service Area



Chester PUD
Resolution:
Formed: July 7, 1947

Chester PUD (SOI)
Resolution: 2006-003
Adopted: March 13, 2006

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 7/26/2012

Accountability and Governance

Chester PUD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are elected at-large to staggered four-year terms. Following the consolidation, the Board was increased to seven members; however, the Board later went to five members upon expiration of two of the member's terms. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 6-3. All members of the Board are up for recall at the November 2012 election.

Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at four in the afternoon at the district office. Agendas are posted at the PUD office, courthouse, and in the newspaper. Minutes are available upon request. The District does not have a website, so its documents are not available online.

Figure 6-3: Chester PUD Governing Body

Chester Public Utility District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Ben Thompson, Interim General Manager			
Address:	251 Chester Airport Road, Chester, CA 96020			
Telephone:	530-258-2171			
Email/website:	None			
<i>Governing Body</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Tonu Plakk	Chair	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Dick Withrow	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Ben Thompson	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
John Knopp	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Gregg Scott	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Second Tuesday of the month at 4 pm.			
Location:	PUD Office			
Agenda Distribution:	PUD Office, courthouse, and in the newspaper.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the legally required agendas and minutes, to reach its constituents Chester PUD sends out annual water reports and makes announcements in the newspaper when necessary.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted in person or in writing. The general manager is responsible for handling complaints. Most complaints received by the District are regarding wastewater odor and water pressure. The District reported that it received two complaints in 2010, both of which were concerning wastewater. To address these complaints, Chester PUD has installed an odor reducing device.

Chester PUD demonstrated marginal accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. While the District had challenges with staffing that resulted in lack of a timely response, the District ultimately responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document and interview requests.

Planning and Management Practices

Chester PUD has 12 full-time employees that include one part-time general manager/fire chief, one water/sewer foreman, two operators, 1.5 secretaries, one EMS captain, one fire captain, two to three firefighter medics, and two firefighter EMTs. The assistant chief is a per-diem employee who works part time. Until recently, the general manager/fire chief position was a full-time paid position. When the manager retired in August 2012, the Board chose to fill the position part time with a Board Member, until an adequate replacement can be found.

The general manager oversees both the fire and utility functions of the District. The water and sewer operators report to the foreman who reports to the general manager. The firefighters report to the two captains who also report to the general manager.

The general manager/fire chief evaluates employees annually. The general manager is evaluated by the Board of Directors.

To track staff workload, district employees fill out and submit timesheets. Service calls and personnel responding are tracked in a log book. There are also log books for vehicle maintenance and for water and wastewater facilities maintenance.

Chester PUD does not perform formal evaluations of overall district performance, such as benchmarking or annual reports. The District attempted to institute an annual report regarding fire services; however, there was a general lack of interest and the report was discontinued.

In order to increase efficiency and reduce costs, the District recently consolidated with the Chester Fire Protection District, enabling it to eliminate duplication of administration functions. The District has downsized staff and the fire department has been reduced to one ALS ambulance crew.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and annually audited financial statements. It was discovered that the District has not made significant changes to its budget over the last several years; as a result, increases in costs over time and the effects of merging the two districts into one have not been reflected in recent budgets.³⁹ It is recommended that Chester PUD update its budgeting process to reflect the current conditions of the District. Chester PUD does not adopt any other

³⁹ Chester PUD, *Audit Report*, 2011, p. 14.

planning documents, such as a master plan or strategic plan. The District plans for capital improvement projects annually in the budget.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Designated land uses within the District are primarily residential, suburban, recreational, commercial, timber production, and general agriculture.⁴⁰ The District's boundary area is approximately 1.75 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 2,144 residents within the District, based on census place population in the 2010 Census.⁴¹

Existing Demand

The District reported that it had observed little change in the level of service demand in the last few years. One water and one wastewater connection have been added between 2010 and 2011; however, overall demand for water and wastewater services have generally declined, due to an increase in vacancies and water conservation. Total fire service call volume appears to be slightly up in 2011, compared to the previous year.

Peak demand for water and wastewater is usually in July and August. Similarly, the peak demand time for fire services is also in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

Projected Growth and Development

The agency anticipates little or no growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years; however, no formal population projections have been made by the District.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 2,144 in 2010 to approximately 2,251 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

Chester PUD reports that there is little potential for development within its boundaries or in the areas adjacent to the District. There is one planned development just north of

⁴⁰ Plumas County Parcel Application.

⁴¹ Census Place Chester in Plumas County.

Chester within an area that was annexed into the District in 2007. Forty two units were planned, but due to the recession, construction has stalled. Prior to the recession, another development was proposed with a mixture of residential and commercial land uses; however, the area was never annexed into the District.

The District reported that it had capacity to provide adequate services to its current service area and anticipated future growth within its bounds. In order to adequately serve areas outside of its bounds, specifically for fire service, the District needs sufficient funding (i.e., property tax or special assessment) for services which are presently not being reimbursed. While growth in the community of Chester is foreseeable and manageable, there is a need to address growth needs outside of Chester to determine the potential of Chester PUD becoming a regional sanitation treatment agency. The previous MSR noted that Chester PUD is equipped to become the regional sanitation agency in the Almanor basin, but it has not addressed, developed or adopted a plan to get there.

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 a within district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, is 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 together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

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

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.⁴²
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.⁴³
- 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.⁴⁴
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.⁴⁵
- 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.⁴⁶
- 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.⁴⁷
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.⁴⁸
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.⁴⁹
- 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.⁵⁰
- 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.⁵¹

⁴² Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

⁴³ Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.⁵²

The County is in the process 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.⁵³

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. The County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through

⁵¹ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

⁵² Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

⁵³ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on addressing properties that are located outside of a fire district boundaries and are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

During the previous MSR, the District's general manager referred to Chester PUD as being a regional sanitation treatment plant. The MSR noted that there may be a way of regionalizing by reaching out to fledgling sanitation and domestic water agencies in the Almanor basin to provide collaboration, advice and contract services where it has not been done in the past. Further, the District might also adopt a proactive approach with the County to offer itself as the regional agency to go to for actual administrative, treatment, operations and maintenance services to all communities around the Almanor basin. Chester PUD could also work aggressively with the Plumas County Planning Department to make it known that it will extend itself into other territory outside of Chester to raise the level of treatment plant planning, operations and maintenance in the region. If Chester PUD expands its mission beyond Chester toward a regional planning mode, opportunities may evolve into shared contract services among numerous basin communities. The previous MSR noted that the benefits of regionalizing wastewater administration and operations may be a more experienced and trained staff that can efficiently and cost effectively deliver services to the entire Almanor basin.

Financing

The District reported that the current financing level is not adequate for fire services and adequate to deliver water and sewer services. Overall, the District has faced declining water and wastewater revenues, as well as property tax revenues, as a result of the recent recession. Additionally, the District experienced a decline in ambulance revenues over the last few years, most likely attributable to a reduction in service calls in the area. Due to these declining revenues, District expenditures exceeded total income by \$349,399 in FY 10-11. This trend continued in FY 11-12 when the District's expenditures exceed revenues by approximately \$350,000. As a result, the District is making efforts to reduce personnel by not replacing positions as they open up due to attrition or retirement and reduce costs associated with salary and benefits. Additionally, the District has attempted to improve revenues by adjusting ambulance billing.

Chester PUD operates out of the following three enterprise funds: the Water Fund, Sanitation Fund and Fire Fund. The Water Fund accounts for water and street lighting income, expenses, and net assets. The Sanitation Fund accounts for sewer and solid waste related income and expenses. The Fire Fund tracks fire and ambulance related revenues and expenses.

The District's total revenues for FY 10-11 were \$2.7 million. Primary revenue sources included utility sales (33.3 percent), charges for services (48.3 percent), and income from property taxes (17.3 percent). While income from interest, miscellaneous sources, and grants constituted just over one percent of the District's revenues.

The funding for maintenance and operation of the sanitation sewer system and water distribution system is intended to be fully funded by utility charges. The District Board of Directors approves charges for water and wastewater service based upon staff generated budget analysis. The analysis is prepared by the District's general manager. These rates were last updated in 2007. Water service charges depend on the size of the meter at the connection. A single-family residence would pay a monthly rate of \$15.09 and \$0.90 for every 1,000 gallons in excess of 6,000. For wastewater services, every connection is charged a flat rate of \$38.05 regardless of type or size of connection. In FY 10-11, water charges totaled \$351,417 in revenues for the District, and sewer charges totaled \$531,923 in the same year.

District fire and ambulance services are funded primarily by ambulance service charges (\$1.3 million) and augmented by property taxes (\$293,506) and grants (\$13,000).

With regard to street lighting, Plumas County reimburses the District for 25 percent of costs historically. During FY 10-11 the costs incurred for street lighting amounted to \$29,872. Accordingly, the County contributed \$7,468 and Chester PUD incurred the remaining \$22,404 in costs associated with street lighting from its general fund. Street lighting presents an ongoing funding problem for the District. District staff believes that the time may come when streetlights may have to be turned off if a benefit assessment, through voter approval, is not put in place to fund this expense.

Solid waste collection is provided by contract. Chester PUD awards and administers a franchise for refuse collection and solid waste disposal within its territorial boundaries. Under the current contract the franchisee is required to pay Chester PUD an annual franchise fee of \$2,100 in two semi-annual installments of \$1,050. A four-percent surcharge is placed on the monthly solid waste bill; however, this is used to fund Plumas County solid waste administration expenses and is simply a pass-through for Feather River Disposal.

The District's expenditures in FY 10-11 were approximately \$3 million. Expenditures were primarily composed of salaries and benefits (74 percent), depreciation (12 percent), utilities (four percent), and professional services (three percent). Insurance, vehicles and equipment, repairs and maintenance, office supplies, and other expenses made up less than eight percent of expenses.

During the course of Chester PUD's most recent audit, the auditor identified two significant deficiencies to internal fiscal control, both of which were considered material weaknesses.⁵⁴ The auditor found that due to the number of personnel assigned to duties that involve access to the general ledger and other accounting records and who also have

⁵⁴ Chester PUD, *Audit Report*, 2011, p. 26.

custody of and responsibility for handling cash and other assets, and inadequate segregation of duties exists. The District responded that due to the small nature of the agency, it is not possible to cost effectively mitigate this finding. Additionally, the auditor found that similar to many other California special districts, Chester PUD does not have policies and procedures in place to ensure complete and accurate financial statements, footnote disclosures, and management's discussion and analysis are prepared in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles prior to the audit. The District determined that the cost of correcting this weakness is greater than the benefits that would be received.

At the end of FY 10-11, Chester PUD had \$242,748 in debt, consisting of a capital lease payable to Wells Fargo Institutional Securities and a note payable from the Fire Fund to the Sanitation Fund. Originally, the Wells Fargo lease was issued for \$267,000 with 4.25 percent interest and funded the solar bees for the wastewater facility. This loan has since been paid off. The loan to the Sanitation Fund from the Fire Fund was for partial funding of the new building. Both loans were used for wastewater services.

The District has fund balances for fire, water and wastewater services that may be used for contingencies. The Water Fund has unrestricted net assets of \$2.45 million, and the Sanitation Fund has a balance of \$1.3 million, while the fire reserve is minimal with unrestricted net assets of \$74,990 at the end of FY 10-11.

The District participates in the Fire Agency Self Insurance System (FASIS)—a joint power authority (JPA) for insurance.

WATER SERVICES

Service Overview

Chester PUD provides domestic drinking water services to the residents and commercial establishments within the boundaries of the District. There are approximately 1,197 service connections, all of which are metered.

Additionally, the District provides retail water services under an out-of-area service agreement (OASA) with Almanor Park and Recreation District to Truman Collins Sports Complex.

Staffing

Chester PUD dedicates 1.5 full-time equivalents to water services.

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

Facilities and Capacity

The District's water system includes three wells, emergency well-head treatment, and 18 miles of distribution mains.

The District relies entirely on groundwater from the Lake Almanor groundwater basin for its water supply from four wells. The water is considered to be generally of excellent quality, but is most vulnerable to turbidity, lead, copper, total coliforms, fecal coliforms, and terrorist attacks. Lake Almanor Valley basin has locally high levels of copper, lead, iron, manganese, calcium, and boron.⁵⁵ The District does not continuously treat the water, but maintains a portable sodium hypochlorite pump system, which can be used at any well site in the event of an emergency.

The water system, which was originally installed in 1967, has undergone numerous improvements and expansions since that time. One of the most recent and notable of the water system improvements was the completion of the new production source Well 4. This well was located outside the present District boundaries. The well was subsequently abandoned due to numerous problems the District experienced with it, and the District is now in the process of drilling Well 5.

The District's three previously existing wells were being utilized to near maximum capacity during the high demand summer period. When growth dictates additional water

⁵⁵ State Water Resources Control Board, *Lake Almanor Valley Groundwater Basin – California's Groundwater Bulletin 118*, 2003, p. 2.

supply is needed, it is worth noting that in 2000 the District had an exploratory well drilled on lands of Sierra Pacific that proved to have a substantial sustained yield. The District purchased a small piece of property where the test well was drilled, and the District will develop a production well on the site as the need demands. Growth will be the determining factor of when to expand district water capacity. The source and funds for expanding well capacity will be derived through exactions and impact fees from the developers seeking services to their new projects.

Waterworks standards require a water system's sources to have the capacity to meet the system's maximum day demand (mdd). The District meets this requirement with 1.98 million gallons per day (mgd) source capacity compared to their highest mdd of 1.772 mg. Waterworks standards require that community systems using only groundwater shall be capable of meeting maximum day demand with the highest capacity source off-line. With Well 02 offline, the system would have 1.936 mgd source and storage capacity, which would be adequate to meet a 1.772 MG demand. When Well 5 is brought online it will provide additional capacity. Presently, it is unknown what the pumping capacity of Well 5 will be.

The District maintains two welded steel storage tanks with a total of 1.0 mg of storage capacity. The tanks were identified as being in good condition. For systems with 1,000 or more service connections, the system shall be able to meet four hours of peak hourly demand with source capacity, storage capacity, and/or emergency source connections. The highest four hour peak demand during the last 10 years (2000-2010) is 443,000 gallons. Four hours of the water system's total source capacity from the wells is 330,000 gallons. Therefore, the additional 113,000 gallons must be available from storage; the District's 1.0 mg of storage more than meets this requirement.

The District's distribution system consists of 18 miles of asbestos cement (85 percent), PVC (14 percent) and steel (one percent) pipelines. The mains are reportedly in good condition. The system is entirely gravity fed.

Based on the OASA that was approved in 2010, Chester PUD appears to have the capacity in its overall system to provide retail water services to the areas outside its jurisdiction, such as the sports complex, without negatively impacting the ability of the District to provide such services to the present constituent users within its own jurisdiction.

Infrastructure Needs

The District did not identify any particular infrastructure needs with regards to the water system.

Challenges

While Chester PUD did not identify any challenges to providing adequate water services, the District has recently faced turmoil, due to notification of a recall election of the

entire board that is to be held in November 2012, and the simultaneous retirement of the general manager.

Service Adequacy

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. During the Department of Public Health's most recent annual inspection in 2011, DPH reported that Chester PUD's system "appears to be well operated and maintained and is in significant compliance with drinking water regulations. Source water monitoring is up-to-date and water quality continues to be excellent with no primary or secondary MCL violations. As noted in the inspection report, the water system has source and storage capacity to meet customer demands."⁵⁶ It was noted that the District was overdue for asbestos, lead and copper sampling. Chester PUD reported that it had since brought all sampling up to date.

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 2000, the District has had three health violations, all of which were related to coliform, and no monitoring violations. This equates to approximately 2.5 violations per 1,000 connections served. By comparison, the other water providers in the Lake Almanor region of the County had an average of 2.16 violations per 1,000 connections served during that same time frame. The median water service provider in the region was in compliance 100 percent of the time in 2011. The District was in compliance with drinking water regulations 100 percent of the time, which was equal the regional average.

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. Chester PUD reported approximately 11 breaks and leaks per 100 miles of pipe lines in 2011, while other providers in the region had a median rate of 11 breaks per 100 pipe miles. The District was unable to provide an estimate of what portion of water is lost between the water source and the connections served. By comparison, other providers in the area averaged 12 percent distribution losses.

⁵⁶ Department of Public Health, Annual Inspection Report, 2012, p. 11.

Figure 6-4: Chester PUD Water Service Adequacy Indicators

Water Service Adequacy and Efficiency Indicators			
Service Adequacy Indicators			
Connections/FTE	798	O&M Cost Ratio ¹	\$794,149
MGD Delivered/FTE	0.39	Distribution Loss Rate	Unknown
Distribution Breaks & Leaks (2011)	2	Distribution Break Rate ²	11
Water Pressure	70 - 80 psi	Total Employees (FTEs)	1.5
Customer Complaints CY 2011: Odor/taste (0), leaks (0), pressure (0), other (0)			
Drinking Water Quality Regulatory Information ³			
	#	Description	
Health Violations	3	Exceedance of coliform MCL 10/2002, 11/2002, 11/2006	
Monitoring Violations	0		
DW Compliance Rate ⁴	100%		
Notes:			
(1) Operations and maintenance costs (exc. purchased water, debt, depreciation) per volume (mgd) delivered.			
(2) Distribution break rate is the number of leaks and pipeline breaks per 100 miles of distribution piping.			
(3) Violations since 2000, as reported by the U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Information System.			
(4) Drinking water compliance is percent of time in compliance with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2011.			

Figure 6-5: Chester PUD Water Service Tables

Water Service Configuration & Infrastructure				
<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	
Retail Water	Chester PUD	Groundwater Recharge	None	
Wholesale Water	None	Groundwater Extraction	Chester PUD	
Water Treatment	None	Recycled Water	None	
Service Area Description				
Retail Water	Developed parcels within Chester PUD's bounds.			
Wholesale Water	NA			
Recycled Water	NA			
Water Sources		Supply (Acre-Feet/Year)		
Source	Type	Average	Maximum ²	Safe/Firm
Lake Almanor Valley Groundwater Basin	Groundwater	649.4	2,190	Unknown
System Overview				
Average Daily Demand	0.59	mg	Peak Day Demand	1.772 mg
Major Facilities				
Facility Name	Type	Capacity	Condition	Yr Built
Well 3	Well	250 gpm	Good	1981
Well 1B	Well	400 gpm	Good	1990
Well 2	Well	725 gpm	Good	1967
Well 4	Well	Abandoned	NA	2006
Well 5	Well	Unknown	Excellent	2012
Tank 1	Storage	0.5 mg	Good	1967
Tank 2	Storage	0.5 mg	Good	1995
Other Infrastructure				
Reservoirs	-	Storage Capacity (mg)	1.0 mg	
Pump Stations	0	Pressure Zones	1	
Production Wells	4	Pipe Miles	18	
Other:				
Facility-Sharing and Regional Collaboration				
Current Practices: The District does not practice facility or equipment sharing with regard to water services.				
Opportunities: No further opportunities for facility sharing were identified.				
Notes:				
(1) NA means Not Applicable, NP means Not Provided, mg means millions of gallons, af means acre-feet.				
(2) Total combined pumping capacity of the District's wells.				

Water Demand and Supply							
Service Connections	Total		Inside Bounds		Outside Bounds		
Total	1,197		1,196		0		
Irrigation/Landscape	0		0		0		
Domestic	1,117		1,117		0		
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional	80		79		1		
Recycled	0		0		0		
Other	0		0		0		
Average Annual Demand Information (Acre-Feet per Year)							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Residential	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Commercial/Industrial	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Irrigation/Landscape	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Other	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP
Supply Information (Acre-feet per Year)							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	NA	698	658	674	691	709	727
Imported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Groundwater	NA	698	658	674	691	709	727
Surface	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Drought Supply and Plans							
Drought Supply (af)	Year 1: Unknown		Year 2: Unknown		Year 3: Unknown		
Storage Practices	Storage is for treatment and short-term emergency supply only.						
Drought Plan	The district does not have a drought contingency plan.						
Water Conservation Practices							
CUWCC Signatory	No						
Metering	Yes						
Conservation Pricing	Yes						
Other Practices	None						

Water Rates and Financing			
<i>Residential Water Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 10-11¹</i>			
	Rate Description	Avg. Monthly Charges	Consumption²
Residential	Flat monthly rate of \$15.09 per residential connection plus \$0.90 per 1,000 gallons in excess of 6,000 gallons per month.	\$17	7,600 gal/month
<i>Rate-Setting Procedures</i>			
Most Recent Rate Change	4/1/2007	Frequency of Rate Changes	As needed
<i>Water Development Fees and Requirements</i>			
Fee Approach	Cost of time and materials plus 10 percent		
Connection Fee Amount	\$110		
Development Impact Fee	None		
Notes:			
<p>(1) Rates include water-related service charges and usage charges.</p> <p>(2) Water use assumptions were used to calculate average monthly bills. Assumed use levels are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.</p>			

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Service Overview

Chester PUD provides sanitation sewer collection, treatment and disposal for most of the homes and businesses in Chester; the Forest Subdivision is the only area within the Chester PUD boundaries permitted for on-site individual waste disposal systems i.e., septic tanks and leach fields.

Staffing

Chester PUD dedicates 1.5 full-time equivalents to wastewater services.

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

Facilities and Capacity

Chester PUD's wastewater system consists of a treatment plant, wetlands, and 12 miles of collection mains.

The District owns and operates a municipal wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facility. The District's original treatment plant was constructed in the early 1950s and underwent a substantial upgrade in 1980. The District reported that the treatment plant is considered to be in good condition. The treatment system consists of a bar screen for large solids removal, an influent parshall flume for influent wastewater flow measurement, six facultative wastewater treatment ponds, effluent chlorination with a serpentine chlorination chamber and effluent parshall flume, and dechlorination when effluent is discharged to Lake Almanor (currently allowed from October 1 to May 31).

During the recreation season discharge prohibition period, June 1 to September 30, wastewater is not dechlorinated and is discharged to a series of three constructed wetlands of six acres near the wastewater ponds. Discharge from the wetlands ponds to the Lake is prohibited. Wastewater discharge to Lake Almanor does not take place every year and wastewater is seldom discharged before December of any given year. Since April 2004, the District has discharged to the Lake during four months in 2005 and six months in 2006, but not in 2007, 2008, or 2009.

The District is regulated by Waste Discharge Requirements (WDR) Order Number R5-2009-0078 and NPDES Permit Number CA0077747. The treatment facility has a permitted capacity of 0.5 million gallons per day (mgd) average dry weather flow (ADWF) and a design capacity of 0.75 ADWF. In 2011, ADWF was 0.64 mgd, which equates to 128 percent of the facility's permitted capacity and 85 percent of the facilities design capacity.

Chester PUD has had challenges in meeting effluent disinfection requirements, but generally only during times discharge to the Lake is not occurring. To help address the issue, the District added aerators to each of the ponds in November of 2008, as their engineer believes the added aeration and mixing will improve disinfection performance during the cold winter months. The cost of the aerator addition was approximately \$200,000 after energy efficiency credits were rebated. According to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), since the aerator addition, disinfection has markedly improved.

Chester PUD's collection system consists of 12 miles of entirely clay mains. The collection system, also constructed in the 1950s, has considerable shortcomings. There is a significant quantity of extraneous water entering the pipes, a condition known as infiltration and inflow (I/I).

The District has embarked on an ambitious program to replace this deteriorated collection system over the course of twenty years. In order to accomplish this, a rate increase was implemented in 2002, which would provide the income necessary to replace one mile of line every other year. Due to a handful of protests during the rate review process the Board determined to phase the increase over a five-year period to lessen the rate shock. This of course will have the consequence of lengthening the number of years in which to bring the project to completion. The first phase of the replacement project was funded and completed during FY 04-05. The District incurred expenses in excess of \$630,000 to replace approximately 3,700 lineal feet of sewer main as well as laterals and manholes. Another mile was replaced in 2011. The District Board intends to continue the replacement project as funds become available.

Infrastructure Needs

As previously discussed, the District faces significant I/I in its collection system. The District has an ADWF of approximately 0.64 mgd (during high tourist seasons), yet inflows to the plant have been known to exceed 1.5 mgd under wet weather conditions. The I/I is thought to result from periodic high groundwater and collection system defects, such as broken and settling pipes, leaking joints, and unsealed connections. The District has been subject to several cease and desist orders regarding illegal discharges that have resulted from the significant I/I. Chester PUD's solution, only partly implemented to date, is to replace the entire sewage collection system. There are no plans at this time for when this is likely to occur. To date, about 15 percent of the collection system has been replaced.

The RWQCB reported that Chester PUD has taken meaningful steps to reduce I/I. These included replacing about 10 percent of the 11-mile collection system in 2001, augmenting land disposal capacity by constructing three wetland ponds, and increasing user fees to fund future collection line replacements. These measures appear to have been beneficial, as only one illegal discharge has occurred since the wetlands ponds were completed in 1999—in the 2005/2006 rainy season, during which heavy rainfall was exacerbated by a rapid snowmelt). Until the defective portions of the collection system have been replaced as planned, the potential remains, during very wet years, for surface water discharge during the recreation season.

Challenges

The primary challenge to providing adequate services that was identified by the District is the high I/I in the collection system, which has already been discussed.

Additionally, the District has recently faced turmoil, due to notification of a recall election of the entire board that is to be held in November 2012, and the simultaneous retirement of the general manager.

Service Adequacy

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

The District had no violations between the period from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011. By comparison, other wastewater providers in the Lake Almanor region of the County averaged one violation per 1,000 population served. However, it should be noted that Chester PUD has faced challenges with compliance with discharge requirements in the past. The District has consistently operated under Cease and Desist Orders since 1987. Most recently, in 2004, a Cease and Desist order was adopted, due to I/I problems in the collection system, violations of effluent percentage removal limitations for BOD and total suspended solids, and effluent coliform violations. The order required the District to repair the collection system. Due to partial compliance with the order's requirements, the order was rescinded in 2009 and a new order was adopted requiring continued improvements to the system. Additionally, in 2008, the District was issued an Administrative Civil Liability Order as chlorine levels exceeded maximum concentration limits. The District was fined \$3,000.

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. The District reported that in 2011, it was never out of compliance with effluent quality requirements. Other wastewater providers in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County were not out of compliance in 2011.

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. Chester PUD reported one overflow during the period from 2009 thru 2011, and consequently the overflow rate is nine. Other providers in the region averaged an SSO rate of three per 100 miles of collection piping.

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. The District's high tourist population during the summer makes it hard to calculate a peaking factor that is indicative of the true amount of I/I that is entering the system. Based on average dry weather flow and the known highest flow into the system during wet

weather, the peaking factor is 2.3, which is moderate; however, it is clear that the system suffers from high I/I as previously discussed.

Figure 6-6: Chester PUD Wastewater Service Adequacy Indicators

Wastewater Service Adequacy and Efficiency			
Regulatory Compliance Record, 2009-11			
Formal Enforcement Actions	1	Informal Enforcement Actions	0
Enforcement Action Type		Description of Violations	
Cease and Desist Order (R5-2009-0080)		Severe I/I	
Total Violations, 2009-11			
Total Violations	0	Priority Violations	0
Service Adequacy Indicators			
Treatment Effectiveness Rate ²	100%	Sewer Overflows 2009 - 2011 ³	1
Total Employees (FTEs)	1.5	Sewer Overflow Rate ⁴	9
MGD Treated per FTE	0.427	Customer Complaints CY 11: Odor (2), spills (0), other (0)	
Source Control and Pollution Prevention Practices			
Chester PUD does not practice any source control of pollution prevention.			
Collection System Inspection Practices			
The District annually CCTVs approximately 0.5 miles of the collection system.			
Notes:			
(1) Order or Code Violations include sanitary sewer overflow violations.			
(2) Total number of compliance days in 2011 per 365 days.			
(3) Total number of overflows experienced (excluding those caused by customers) from 2009 to 2011 as reported by the agency.			
(4) Sewer overflows from 2009 to 2011 (excluding those caused by customers) per 100 miles of collection piping.			

Figure 6-7: Chester PUD Wastewater Profile

Wastewater Service Configuration and Demand					
Service Configuration					
Service Type	Service Provider(s)				
Wastewater Collection	Chester PUD				
Wastewater Treatment	Chester PUD				
Wastewater Disposal	Chester PUD				
Recycled Water	None				
Service Area					
Collection:	Town of Chester with the exception of the Forest Subdivision which is on septic				
Treatment:	Town of Chester with the exception of the Forest Subdivision which is on septic				
Recycled Water:	None				
Service Demand					
Type	Connections (2011) Total	Inside Bounds	Outside Bounds	Flow (mgd) Average	
Total	1,197	1,197	0	1.00	
Residential	1,117	1,117	0	NP	
Commercial/Industrial	80	79	1	NP	
Historical and Projected Demand (ADWF in millions of gallons per day) ²					
2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	
NP	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.0	
Note:					
(1) NA: Not Applicable; NP: Not Provided.					
(2) Projections are as reported by the District.					

Wastewater Infrastructure			
Wastewater Collection, Treatment & Disposal Infrastructure			
<i>System Overview</i>			
Treatment level: Secondary			
Disposal method: Lake Almanor from October 1 to May 30, man-made wetlands at other times.			
<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Year Built</i>
Treatment Plant	0.5 mgd ADWF	Good	1950
<i>Collection & Distribution Infrastructure</i>			
Sewer Pipe Miles	12	Sewage Lift Stations	4
<i>Treatment Plant Daily Flow (mgd)</i>			
<i>ADWF (mgd)</i>	<i>% of ADWF Capacity in Use</i>	<i>Peak Wet (mgd)</i>	<i>Peaking Factor</i>
0.64	128%	1.5	2.34
<i>Infiltration and Inflow</i>			
The system suffers from significant I/I, which the District is in the midst of trying to minimize by completing replacing the entire collection system. Each year the District replaces sections of the system as it can find funding.			
<i>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</i>			
The most significant infrastructure need is the replacement of the collection system to minimize significant I/I and bring the system into compliance with RWQCB requirements.			
Wastewater Facility Sharing			
<i>Facility Sharing Practices</i>			
The District does not practice facility sharing with regard to wastewater services.			
<i>Facility Sharing Opportunities</i>			
During the previous MSR, the potential of Chester PUD becoming a regional wastewater provider was identified. The previous MSR noted that the benefits of regionalizing wastewater administration and operations may be a more experienced and trained staff that can efficiently and cost effectively deliver services to the entire Almanor basin. To date, the District has made no efforts toward regionalization.			

Wastewater Rates and Financing			
<i>Wastewater Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 11-12¹</i>			
Connection Type	Rate Description	Charges	Demand ²
Residential	Flat monthly fee of \$38.05 per connection	\$38.05	250 gpd
<i>Rate-Setting Procedures</i>			
Last Rate Change	4/1/2007	Frequency of Rate Changes	As needed
<i>Wastewater Development Fees and Requirements</i>			
Fee Approach	Cost of time and materials plus 10 percent		
Connection Fee Amount	NP		
Development Impact Fee	None		
Notes:			
(1) Rates include wastewater-related service charges and strength and flow charges.			
(2) Wastewater use assumptions by customer type were used to calculate average monthly charges. Assumed use levels are 250 gallons per home per day, and are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.			

FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

Service Overview

Chester PUD provides structural and wildland fire suppression, emergency medical, emergency rescue, hazardous material response, fire inspection, airport crash and rescue, issuance of burn permits, and ambulance services (added in 2005). Prior to consolidation with Chester PUD, Chester FPD was an independent special district that had operated since 1941.

Chester FPD has been providing ambulance services since 2005. The District's primary operation area is the same as the response area previously served by the Seneca HD ambulance service. In 2005, Chester FPD and Seneca HD agreed to transfer provision of ambulance services from Seneca HD to Chester FPD. The ownership of all the inventory and equipment related to ambulance services was also transferred to Chester FPD at that time. Chester FPD, as a new ambulance service provider, was assigned to the Seneca District Hospital as its base hospital. With consolidation, ambulance services were transferred to Chester PUD. The primary response area for ambulance services provided by Chester PUD stretches eastward to the Lassen County line on SR 36, westward to Morgan Summit on SR 36 and SR 172, northward to Lassen National Park including SR 89 to the general area of Summit Lake and area accessible on the "10 Road" including Swain Mountain to the Plumas County line, and southward to the intersection of SR 147 on SR 89, CR A-13, SR 147 from the Lassen County line to the intersection of SR 89, and SR 32 to the Tehama/Butte County line.

The District provides fire and EMS services under an out-of-area service agreement with Almanor Park and Recreation District to Truman Collins Sports Complex.⁵⁷

Chester PUD has a contract with Lassen National Forest to provide personnel for an Incident Management Team (IMT). The District loans out its part-time firefighters and receives reimbursement for their participation.

Chester PUD contracts with a billing company for its ambulance services.

Collaboration

The District has an automatic aid agreement with West Almanor CSD. The two Districts respond within each other's boundary areas when needed.

Chester PUD provides ambulance services within automatic response areas which includes Canyon Dam, Lake Almanor Peninsula,⁵⁸ Westwood, and Mineral. Chester PUD

⁵⁷ 2010-OASA-001.

responds with its first-out unit into this area when requested by fire or law enforcement dispatch.

The District maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County, and with CalFire and USFS. Chester PUD is a member of the Almanor Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District 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 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 (including Chester PUD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC). SIFC is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. SIFC 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.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. The District reported that having dispatch through SIFC is costly. Chester PUD indicated that it is interested in getting dispatched through the Sheriff's Office.

Staffing

Chester PUD has 21 sworn personnel—one part-time fire chief who is also a Chester PUD board member, two captains, two firefighter medics, two firefighter EMTs, three part-time per-diem firefighters and 11 volunteers. Captains, firefighter medics and firefighter EMTs are full-time employees. Volunteers do not get compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 35, with a range from 23 to 63.

Chester PUD tries to recruit more paid firefighters and volunteers through word of mouth. The District is currently revamping its recruitment strategy, due to a change in leadership.

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,

⁵⁸ The Peninsula Fire District provides primary fire and ambulance service to Lake Almanor Peninsula; however, the area lies within Seneca HD's tax district. Chester PUD is obligated to respond when requested by fire, law enforcement, or private individuals. PFD will also be dispatched to all calls from private individuals.

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.⁵⁹ Chester PUD has nine firefighter I, six firefighter II, seven EMT I, five firefighter medic, and certified personnel.

All of the District's paid personnel must undergo two hours of training daily. For volunteers, the mandatory minimum is two drills and one Saturday per month. Chester PUD requires its paid personnel to complete 220 hours of training per year; volunteers are required to complete 156 hours with opportunities to participate in training with paid firefighters. It was reported by the District that it is a challenge to demand 220 hours from volunteers, as required by State Firefighter Training (SFT) standards.

Facilities and Capacity

Chester PUD operates one fire station. The Chester PUD station, acquired in 2009 and reported to be in good condition, is located at 251 Chester Airport Road. The station is staffed from eight in the morning till eight in the evening by two captains, two EMT I personnel and two firefighter medics.

Station 1 is used as a fire station and the Chester PUD administrative office. It houses two Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting vehicles (ARFFs), three command vehicles, one snowmobile, four engines, and three ambulance vehicles.

The District's water reserves are represented by a one-million gallon water tank and three wells.

Currently, it appears that the District's facilities, equipment and staff afford the capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area.

Infrastructure Needs

In FY 10-11, Chester PUD acquired a new ambulance vehicle. There is the possibility of staffing the new ambulance on a full-time basis and placing it on the west shore of Lake Almanor for other fire departments.

The District reports that it does not need any new facilities, facility upgrades or vehicles at this time.

⁵⁹ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Challenges

One of the challenges reported by Chester PUD is medical dispatch. The District expressed a need to find a hospital that is capable of handling medical emergency calls from dispatch by SIFC until the ambulance has arrived at the scene. Medical dispatch personnel aid the caller in assisting the affected person until trained personnel arrive. A similar problem exists for Peninsula FD, which also provides ambulance services.

Another challenge is that Chester PUD has been losing some revenue on its ambulance services. The District believes this is due to a reported decrease in tourism in Chester area. The District also reported that some portions of the ambulance service area were inaccessible during the winter.

Opportunities for improvement to fire services identified by Chester PUD include enhancing collaboration efforts with other fire providers through automatic aid and joint training.

Service Adequacy

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. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. Chester PUD has an ISO rating of four. The District was last evaluated in 1995.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.⁶⁰

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 the rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks the response time for each incident. According to Chester PUD, it takes the District an average of three minutes to respond within its boundaries and 5.4 minutes outside of the boundaries. CalFire tracks

⁶⁰ Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

response times for each incident Chester PUD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported that the District's average response time in 2011 was 3.5 minutes. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 94. An area that Chester PUD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would enhance efficiency and consistency.

The service area size⁶¹ for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five square miles. By comparison, the fire station in Chester PUD serves approximately 16 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 Lake Almanor area vary from 31 call firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD. By comparison, Chester PUD maintains approximately 45 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

⁶¹ 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 6-8: Chester PUD Fire Service Profile

Fire Service					
Facilities					
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
Chester Station	251 Chester Airport Road, Chester, CA	Good	2 captains, 2 EMTs, 2 FF Medics. Staffed 8 AM till 8 PM.	2 ARFF, 3 command, 1 snowmobile, 4 engines, 3 ambulances.	
Facility Sharing					
Current Practices: Chester PUD fire department shares offices with other Chester PUD service administrations.					
Future opportunities: There is a possibility to staff second ambulance on a full time basis and put it on the west shore for other departments. There is also a possibility of a long-term contract with USFS.					
Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies					
No infrastructure needs were identified.					
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	489
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS	83%
Sq. Miles Served per Station ¹	16.0	Ambulance Transport	Direct	% Fire/Hazardous Material	9%
Total Staff ²	21	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	2%
Total Full-time Firefighters	6	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency	1%
Total Call Firefighters	11	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency	3%
Total Sworn Staff per Station ³	21	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	2%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	45	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people	379
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2011	Medical dispatch and funding were challenged identified by Chester PUD.			
Average Response Time (min) ⁴	3.5	Training			
Percentage of response times under 5 min	94%	Paid firefighters train 2 hours a day. Volunteers do 2 mandatory drills and 1 Saturday a month. All paid firefighters are required to train for 220 hours per year; volunteers are required 156 hours per year.			
ISO Rating	4 (1995)				
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements					
The District has automatic aid agreement with WACSD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the County, including 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.					
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.					

LIGHTING SERVICES

Service Overview

Chester PUD has authority, as one of several powers granted a PUD through the State's Public Utility Code, to provide street lighting in the community. The role Chester PUD plays in this is determination of placement of the lights and payment of the monthly energy costs associated with the operation of each light. Chester PUD provides lighting services within the District's boundaries. The District determines placement of the lights and payment of the monthly energy costs associated with the operation of each light.

The Plumas County Road Department has for a number of years (contingent on funding availability) agreed that it would pay 25 percent of the street lighting cost to any Plumas County street lighting district making that request. The amount has been paid entirely through a portion of the ad valorem taxes that the district receives. The latest tax shift, in addition to the ERAF shift that has been in place since 1990, is making it increasingly difficult for the District to fund this service. The District staff believes that the time may come when streetlights may have to be turned off if a benefit assessment, through voter approval, is not put in place to fund this expense.

SOLID WASTE SERVICES

Service Overview

Chester PUD awards and administers a franchise for refuse collection and solid waste disposal within its territorial boundaries. The current franchisee under contract with the District is Feather River Disposal, a subsidiary of Waste Management. This franchise gives the franchisee the exclusive right to collect refuse within these boundaries. After collection, the franchisee deposits the waste at the Plumas County owned transfer station, which in turn is transported and ultimately disposed of at the Lockwood, Nevada landfill.

The Chester PUD Board determines and sets the rates that the franchisee is allowed to charge residents within the Chester PUD boundaries. The franchisee may petition the District for rate adjustments at reasonable times on the basis of unusual changes in costs of doing business arising from revised laws or regulations of governmental agencies or increases in disposal site fees over which the franchisee has no control. The Board enacted a four percent surcharge to be placed on the monthly solid waste bill; however, this will be used to fund Plumas County solid waste administration expenses and will simply be a pass-through for Feather River Disposal.

Under the current contract; the franchisee is required to pay Chester PUD an annual \$2,100 franchise fee in two semi-annual installments of \$1,050 each. The District does not know when the franchise agreement expires. The district manager attends meetings and sits on committees associated with solid waste and all costs incurred related to those obligations are funded via the franchise fee.

CHESTER PUD DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ The estimated permanent population of Chester Public Utility District (PUD) is 2,144 based on Census 2010 data.
- ❖ Based on Department of Finance population projections for the County, the District's population would increase to approximately 2,251 in 2020.
- ❖ Peak demand for district services occurs in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents.
- ❖ There has been no growth and little change in the level of service demand in the last few years. Similarly, minimal change in service demand is anticipated in the next few years until the economy recovers.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ Based on response times, staffing levels, and cost of services, Chester PUD appears to have adequate capacity to provide adequate fire and EMS services. An area that Chester PUD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would enhance efficiency and consistency.
- ❖ The District reports that it does not need any new fire facilities, facility upgrades or vehicles at this time.
- ❖ Chester PUD's water system appears to have sufficient capacity to meet waterworks standards and adequately serve the needs of the community.
- ❖ The District did not identify any particular infrastructure needs with regard to the water system.

- ❖ During peak demand periods in the summer, flows exceed the wastewater system's permitted capacity but are within the design capacity of the treatment facility. It is recommended that Chester PUD ensure that it is operating within the adopted permit requirements.
- ❖ The District faces significant infiltration and inflow (I/I) in its collection system. The District has been subject to several cease and desist orders regarding illegal discharges that have resulted from the significant I/I. Chester PUD's solution, only partly implemented to date, is to replace the entire sewage collection system. There are no plans at this time for when this is likely to occur. To date, about 15 percent of the collection system has been replaced.
- ❖ Similar to most other districts in the region, Chester PUD does not have a capital improvement plan to preplan for future capital needs and the necessary funding for those improvements. It is recommended that the District develop a long-term plan for all services provided, in order to financially prepare for equipment replacement and other infrastructure needs.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reported that the current financing level is not adequate for fire services and adequate to deliver water and sewer services. Overall, the District has faced declining water and wastewater revenues, property tax revenues, and ambulance revenues as a result of the recent recession.
- ❖ Over the last two fiscal years (FYs 11 and 12), expenditures have exceeded revenues by approximately \$350,000 per year. As a result, the District is making efforts to reduce personnel and salary and benefits and enhance revenues by adjusting ambulance billing.
- ❖ During the course of Chester PUD's most recent audit, the auditor identified two significant deficiencies to internal fiscal control. The auditor found that due to the number of personnel assigned to duties that involve access to the general ledger and who also have a responsibility for handling cash and other assets, an inadequate segregation of duties exists. Additionally, the auditor found that similar to many other California special districts, Chester PUD does not have policies and procedures in place to ensure complete and accurate financial statements, footnote disclosures, and management's discussion and analysis are prepared.
- ❖ It was discovered that the District has not made significant changes to its budget over the last several years; as a result, increases in costs over time and the effects of merging the two districts into one have not been reflected in recent budgets. It is recommended that Chester PUD update its budgeting process to reflect the current conditions of the District.

- ❖ The District has not updated water and wastewater rates since 2007. It is recommended that Chester PUD review its rates to ensure that they adequately cover existing operation and maintenance costs as well as any future capital needs.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ Chester PUD allows the use of its offices for public information meetings.
- ❖ There may be an opportunity for the District to share specialized equipment and services with nearby water and wastewater providers.
- ❖ A potential for collaboration and facility sharing may be Chester PUD becoming a regional treatment facility and service provider by reaching out to fledgling sanitation and domestic water agencies in the Almanor basin to provide advice and contract services where it has not been done in the past. Further, the District might also adopt a proactive approach with the County to offer itself as the regional agency to go to for actual administrative, treatment, operations and maintenance services to all communities around the Almanor basin.

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

- ❖ Chester PUD demonstrated marginal accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCO. While the District had challenges with staffing that resulted in lack of a timely response, the District ultimately responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document and interview requests.
- ❖ While Chester PUD conducts outreach in addition to legally required agendas and minutes, it is a recommended practice that a District the size of Chester PUD enhance accountability by maintaining a website where all district information is readily available to constituents.

7. HAMILTON BRANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Hamilton Branch Community Services District (HBCSD) provides domestic water service to the community of Hamilton Branch.

The most recent municipal service review (MSR) for HBCSD was completed in 2008.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

Hamilton Branch CSD was formed by citizens living near or on the shore of Lake Almanor from the mouth of the Hamilton Branch, north of the boundary of the Lake Almanor Peninsula District. The previous owner of the water system was Lake Almanor Water Supply Company, under which an inferiorly constructed water system deteriorated even more. When it became a danger to residents' health, they appealed to LAFCo and in 1982 HBCSD was formed.⁶²

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.⁶³ 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).⁶⁴

HBCSD is located on the northern shore of Lake Almanor, just east of Almanor Peninsula. The District encompasses the community of Hamilton Branch and borders Walker Ranch CSD to the west.

Boundaries

HBCSD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 0.8 square miles. There have been no annexations to or detachments from the District since its formation.

⁶² State Board of Equalization.

⁶³ Government Code §61000-61226.5.

⁶⁴ Government Code §61106.

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) for the District was first adopted in 1983 as coterminous with HBCSD's boundaries. The SOI was further revised in 2008 after a municipal service review had been completed for the District. At that time, the SOI was expanded outside the District's boundaries. The extension included territories where it was expected that private development might occur in the future. It was anticipated that any new development may have included the installation of new and separate and/or independent domestic water and sanitary sewer systems and/or packaged systems. The SOI was expanded for the purpose of giving the landowners of the territory within the added SOI territory the opportunity to annex into an existing district to receive existing administrative and technical service if not actual hookups to existing service lines.⁶⁵

The current SOI overlaps with territory presently within Walker Ranch CSD. The SOI is 2.7 square miles compared to about 0.8 square miles of boundary area. Figure 7-1 depicts HBCSD's boundaries and SOI.

Extra-territorial Services

HBCSD has a mutual aid agreement with Lake Almanor Mutual Water Company to provide water service in its territory in case of an emergency. To date, there has not been a need to use it.

Areas of Interest

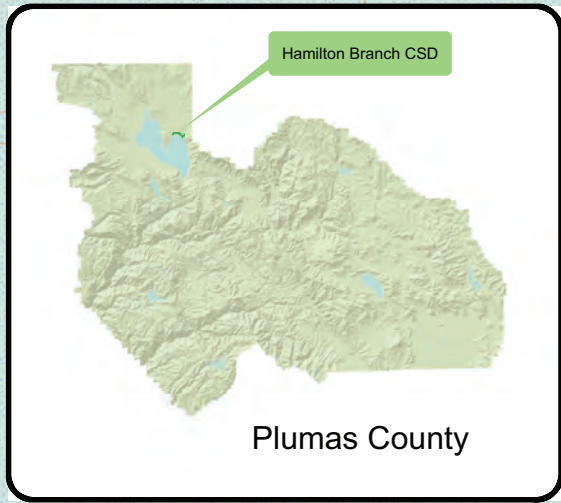
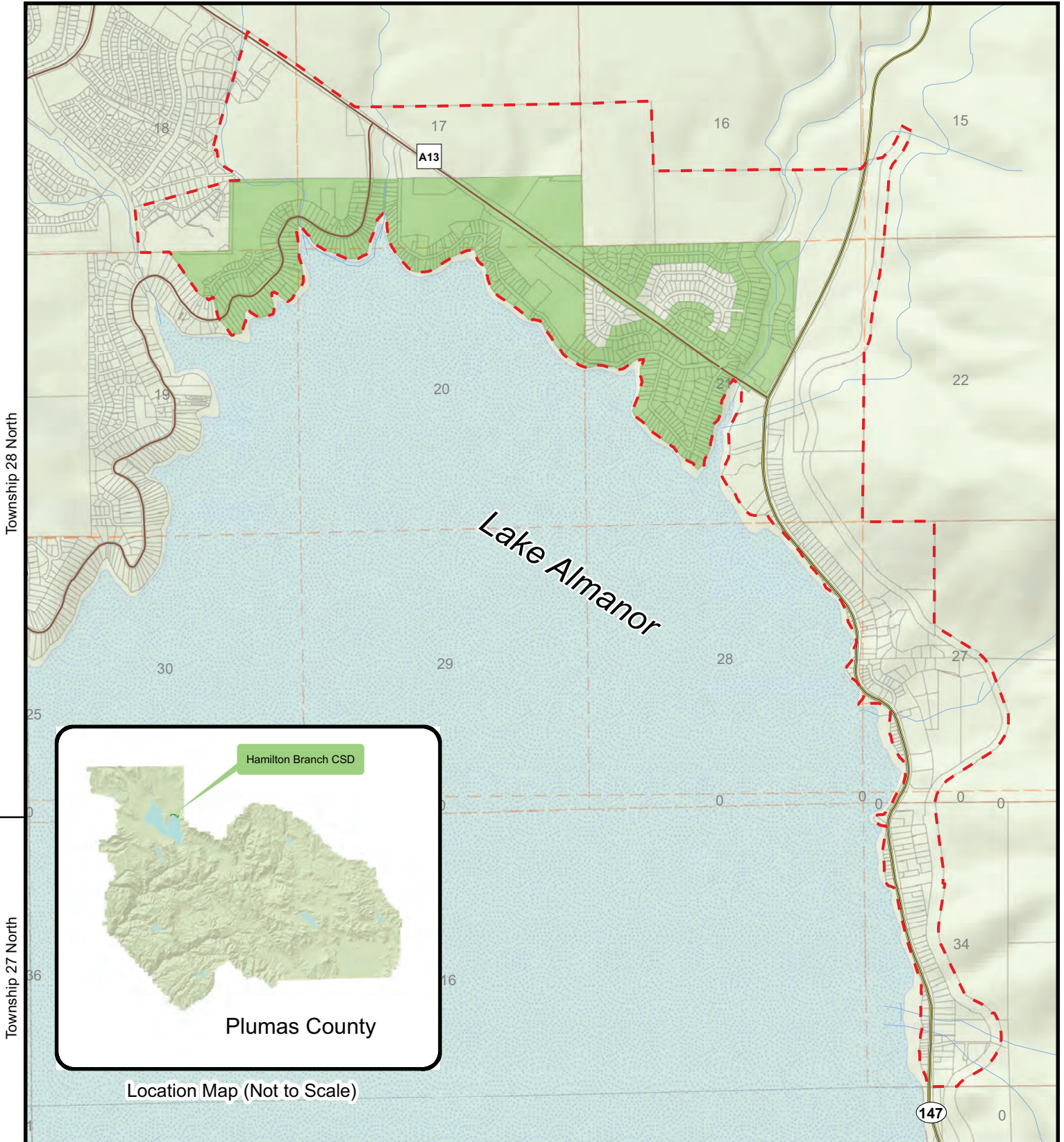
An area of interest for HBCSD is the territory of Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company, which is completely surrounded by HBCSD. This mutual water company (MWC), which continues to exist independently, evolved before the formation of the HBCSD because numerous residents were dissatisfied with services provided by Lake Almanor Water Supply Company. The water in HBMWC's service area comes from two deep wells and the water supply is maintained via a large storage tank. At the present, the District's and the MWC water systems remain completely separate, although they do have a common water line between them to allow the MWC service should the need arise.

The two agencies informally considered consolidation in 2008; however, HBMWC wanted compensation that HBCSD was not willing to pay. Consolidation would also require negotiation of composition of the consolidated board in order to adequately represent both communities.

⁶⁵ John M. Gullixson, Hamilton Branch CSD Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Amendment, 2008.

Hamilton Branch Community Services District

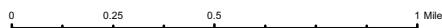
Range 8 East



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Hamilton Branch CSD
- Hamilton Branch CSD (SOI)



Hamilton Branch CSD
Resolution: 80-08
Formed: September 10, 1980

Hamilton Branch CSD (SOI)
Resolution: 2008-001
Adopted: February 11, 2008

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 5/02/2012

Accountability and Governance

HBCSD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are to be elected by the residents of the District to staggered four-year terms. There are currently five board members, all of whom were elected. There has not been a contested election in the last decade. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 7-2.

The Board meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 in the afternoon at the district office. Board meeting agendas are posted at the office building, a local market, the fire department, and in a newspaper. Minutes are available upon request at the office.

Figure 7-2: Hamilton Branch CSD Governing Body

Hamilton Branch CSD				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Mike Roarty, General Manager			
Address:	3767 SR A13, Lake Almanor, CA 96137			
Telephone:	(530)596-3002			
Email/website:	hbcسد@digitalpath.net			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Glen C. Donley	President	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Christen Delucchi	Vice President	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Jay M. Williams	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Robert C. Warner	Secretary	December 2013	Elected	4 year
Jan Hammill	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Third Wednesday of every month at 6:00 pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at the district office.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the office building, a local market, the fire department, and in a newspaper.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District communicates with its constituents through announcements included in water bills sent out to customers. In addition, HBCSD uses mailers as necessary. The District tries to encourage public attendance of board meetings; however, only one member of the community has attended in the last eight years. The District does not maintain a website where documents or information is made available to the public.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted verbally or in writing to the general manager who then passes them on to the Board. HBCSD received one complaint in 2009 about a high bill, which was due to a leak. There have been no complaints since 2009. Sometimes informal complaints are received about chlorine quantities, which in fact are in compliance with state requirements.

HBCSD 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

Daily operations of the District are managed by the general manager. There are three part-time staff that total 1.5 FTEs during peak demand in the summer. The chief operator dedicates about 20 hours a week to water operations. The office manager spends about 20 hour a week on billing. The general manager also assists in the field if necessary.

The general manager reports to the Board of Directors and is supported by the office manager and chief operator.

The employees of the District are evaluated during the annual budget process. To track staff workload, district employees fill out and submit timecards on a biweekly basis. The day-to-day work schedule is usually determined by field evaluations and a list of needs kept on a chalkboard.

The District does not conduct district-wide evaluations such as annual reports; however, the State Department of Public Health (DPH) conducts regular site visits and inspections of the District's system. Additionally, the District has conducted minimal benchmarking by reviewing rates charged by other similar providers for comparison purposes.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and annually audited financial statements. The financial statements were last audited for FY 10-11. The District plans for capital improvement projects informally on an as-needed basis. HBCSD does not adopt any other planning documents, such as a master plan or strategic plan.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

A majority of the land uses within the District are residential, commercial, and recreational. The District's bounds encompass approximately 0.8 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 537 residents within the District, based on census place population in the 2010 Census.⁶⁶

The resident population consists mainly of retired individuals and blue-collared workers.

⁶⁶ Census Place Hamilton Branch in Plumas County.

Existing Demand

The District reported that it had observed limited growth in demand in the last few years. Between 2007 and 2012, HBCSD has added a total of four new connections, going from 495 to 499 connections during that time frame. Over the last three years (2010 – 2012), the District has had no new connections.

Projected Growth and Development

HBCSD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years. The building industry has crashed and the decline in the economy caused a lot of foreclosures and outflow of people from the area.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 537 in 2010 to approximately 564 in 2020.

Slow or no growth is anticipated by HBCSD within the district boundary area in the next several years; however, no formal projections were made. No proposed or planned developments were identified within or near the District.

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 regard to possible governance structure alternatives, HBCSD reported that it may be interested in consolidating with HBMWC, which the District surrounds. Additionally, the District reported that should the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort come to fruition, that it would be interested in providing water to the development. However, the resort has faced litigation and financing challenges and is not expected to be realized in the short term.

Financing

The District reported that the current financing level was between minimally adequate to adequate to deliver services to existing customers. Some of the challenges the District identified are the rising costs of gas and insurance, occasional unanticipated incidents requiring capital expenditures, and a decline in revenues as a result of unpaid bills, vacant houses and turned off accounts.

The District's total revenues for FY 10-11 were \$241,886. Operating revenues were \$214,559 which included water sales (94 percent), reconnection fees (0.7 percent), finance and delinquency charges (three percent), reimbursed legal fees (two percent), and transfer changes (0.3 percent). Non-operating revenues amounted to \$31,664 and consisted mainly of special assessment income (92 percent). Other non-operating income revenue sources

included assessment late charges, assessment administration, interest earned, and interest earned from the local area investment fund (LAIF).

As its primary source of income, HBCSD charges various fees for its services. The service installation fee is \$450 plus any additional costs of bringing a distribution line to the customer's property and an additional 10 percent for administrative expenses. Upon connecting to the system, new customers must also pay a construction reserve fee of \$850. The service installation fee and construction reserve fee amount to \$1,300. The disconnection/reconnection fees vary by permanency between \$0 and \$100. The service call fee is \$55 plus \$55 more for each additional hour. Water service charges depend on the type of service—\$26 per month for residential connections with 5/8"-3/4" meters, which includes 2,000 cubic feet of water per month and \$38 per month for business connections with 1" meters for 2,000 cubic feet of water per month. In addition, there is a stand-by charge, excess usage charge, transfer of ownership fee, change of billing agent fee, delinquent fee, returned check fee, meter testing fee, and subdivision will-serve letter fee.

HBCSD bills its customers every two months. In the winter months, when the District is unable to read meters due to heavy snow, it charges a flat rate for which it has a tiered system. In April, when the meters are able to be read, connections are then charged for any excess water use during the winter months.

In addition to these service fees, HBCSD assessed each parcel \$137 to pay a loan that was taken out in 1986 in order to make improvements to the water system. In FY 11-12, the District was able to pay this loan in full and provide a refund to the property owners of \$64.72 per parcel.

The District's expenditures in FY 10-11 were \$213,406. Operating expenditures amounted to \$87,524 and consisted mainly of the manager's salary (33 percent), maintenance salaries (22 percent), field maintenance (22 percent), payroll taxes (five percent), auto expenses (five percent), fees (five percent), and supplies for operations (four percent). Other minor operating expenses included radios, engineering, safety equipment, small tools, and other expenses. The District's non-operating expenditures were \$125,882 and included mostly office salaries (16 percent), depreciation (26 percent), interest on mortgage (13 percent), professional services (nine percent), and municipal financing (nine percent). The remainder was spent on payroll taxes, employee benefits, bank service charges, compensation insurance, amortization, various types of insurance, legal expenses, office maintenance, office supplies, office expenses, postage, printing and publishing, telephone, uniforms, utilities, and other.

HBCSD has a management practice to keep a financial reserve. The District tries to make contributions of \$6,000 to the reserve every billing cycle (two months). At the end of FY 10-11, the District's unrestricted cash fund balance was \$31,664. Additionally, the District also maintained a construction reserve of \$17,500 and restricted funds of \$145,954.

The District's long-term liabilities include a loan from the State Department of Water Resources and a mortgage for the District's building. At the end of FY 10-11, municipal

financing debt amounted to \$184,778 and mortgage debt to \$233,110. As mentioned previously, the District was able to pay the State loan in full in FY 11-12.

After the formation of the District, residents voted to begin collection of a special assessment per parcel property tax to pay for infrastructure improvement and the acquisition of the water system. HBCSD obtained a loan from the Department of Water Resources. Terms of the loan required the District to begin depositing \$70,000 per year into a designated "Building Fund Account". Funds left over from the Special Tax, which were first used to acquire the water rights, did not cover this expense and a \$4 per month surcharge was placed on each service account. Currently, each parcel pays \$137 per year to pay off the loan. In FY 11-12, the District paid off the loan and refunded some of the money back to property owners having collected an excess of about \$12,000 per year.

The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPAs) or joint financing mechanisms.

WATER SERVICES

Service Overview

The District provides retail water services, including water extraction, chlorination, and distribution to individual users. Maintenance and operation of the water system are provided directly through district staff.

Staffing

The chief operator spends about 20 hours a week dedicated to water services. The operator maintains a certification level of T2 for treatment systems and D2 for distribution systems, which meets the system requirements.

Facilities and Capacity

The District provides water services through a natural spring, a chlorination system, two storage tanks, and 10.6 miles of distribution main.

The District's only water source is groundwater from Schumaker Springs. The water is generally of good quality. The springs can provide a maximum flow of between 200 and 400 gallons per minute or up to 576,000 gallons per day. At present, the District delivers 260,000 gallons per day on average and 430,000 gallons per day on the maximum demand day in 2011.

The distribution system is comprised of 10.6 miles of mains composed of uncoated and coated steel and PVC. The uncoated steel lines are considered to be in fair condition. The coated steel lines are in good condition, and the PVC mains are in excellent condition. The entire system is gravity fed. Many of the existing mains were originally bought in 1917 by the Red River Lumber Company and were used to pipe steam and hot water under sidewalks to keep them snow free in winter months. As a result, the pipes were already forty years old when they were installed as water mains. From the time the entire system was completed until it was acquired by HBCSD, there were no additions or improvements made to the system and maintenance costs were kept to a bare minimum. Consequently, the system infrastructure deteriorated to the point where many people were left with insufficient water pressure.

Upon acquiring the system the District made significant improvements by installing a new water tank and renovating the spring house and spring location. Other major infrastructure improvements were completed after 1986. More recently, the District made substantial improvements to the housing surrounding the spring by completely replacing the old building and fully enclosing the main spring with a metal structure. The disinfection system has been completely replaced with a new metering pump and solar power supply. A new chlorine injection vault and production meter has also been constructed. In total, these improvements cost \$115,000.

The distribution system still suffers from deterioration. Occasionally, small holes develop in the lines that suck up debris from outside the system. The District has had to put mesh filters on each of the connections to block this debris.

The District makes use of two storage tanks—one bolted steel tank with a storage capacity of 194,000 gallons and one welded steel tank with a capacity of 200,000 gallons. The tanks have a combined capacity of 394,000 gallons. The tanks were recoated in 2005 and are visually inspected annually. DPH considers the tanks to be in excellent condition. During DPH's most recent inspection, the agency noted that systems with less than 1,000 connections must have storage equal to or greater than maximum day demand. The highest maximum day demand over the last 10 years has been 586,000 gallons. Therefore, according to DPH, the District needs an additional 192,000 gallons of storage or needs an additional source of supply, which can provide the additional necessary flow should the need arise. However, the District reported that during regular usage of the system, the tanks are rarely needed to cover daily demand, and are sufficient capacity for the needs of the system. Additionally, for emergency outages at the springs, the District has interties with the Lake Almanor Country Club and the Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company. Also, should there be a significant need for fire flow, the fire providers can draft directly from Lake Almanor.

Infrastructure Needs

During the Department of Public Health's most recent inspection in 2010, three infrastructure needs were identified primarily related to eliminating standing water around the spring house. These needs included:

1. The new Schumaker Spring House should be protected against local spring runoff.
2. The East and West Spring manholes should be sealed.
3. The East and West Spring overflow needs to be located and covered with a mesh screen.

These deficiencies were corrected in September 2011 at a cost of \$20,000.

The District needs an additional storage tank or an additional source of water to cover maximum day demand should the spring become non-operational. At present, there are no plans to install a new well or storage tank.

During the winter of 2011-2012, the solar panels that operate the chlorination system did not collect enough energy to continue operating, so the system lost power. The District had to plow the snow in order to access the area and get power to the system. The District has purchased an all-terrain vehicle to access the springs, should this occur again.

Challenges

The primary challenge to providing adequate services is limited access to the spring during the winter months. Long periods of snow cover the road up to the spring, so any repairs during those months require the District to plow the road up to the spring. As previously mentioned, the District has purchased an all-terrain vehicle to improve access to the springs during the winter months.

Service Adequacy

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. During the Department of Public Health's most recent annual inspection in 2010, DPH reported that the District's system "appears to be well operated and maintained."⁶⁷ While the inspection noted a few infrastructure needs, these have been addressed since the report was issued. The DPH report also indicated that the District was past due on lead and copper sampling. According to the District, sampling was brought up to date in July 2011.

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 2000, the District has had one health violation and one monitoring violation, both of which were in 2002 and related to coliform. This equates to almost four violations per 1,000 connections served. There have been no other violations since that time. By comparison, the other water providers in the Lake Almanor region of the County had an average of 2.16 violations per 1,000 connections served during that same time frame. The median water service provider in the region was in compliance 100 percent of the time in 2011. The District was in compliance with drinking water regulations 100 percent of the time, in 2011 which was equal the regional average.

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. The District reported approximately 47 breaks and leaks per 100 miles of pipe lines in 2011, while other providers in the region had a median rate of 11 breaks per 100 pipe miles. The District estimated that it loses approximately seven percent of water between the water source and the connections served. By comparison, other providers in the area averaged 12 percent distribution losses.

⁶⁷ Department of Public Health, Annual Inspection Report, 2011, p. 10.

Figure 7-3: WRCSD Water Service Adequacy Indicators

Water Service Adequacy and Efficiency Indicators			
Service Adequacy Indicators			
Connections/FTE	998	O&M Cost Ratio ¹	\$336,276
MGD Delivered/FTE	0.52	Distribution Loss Rate	7%
Distribution Breaks & Leaks (2011)	5	Distribution Break Rate ²	47
Water Pressure	50 to 120 psi	Total Employees (FTEs)	0.5
Customer Complaints CY 2011: Odor/taste (0), leaks (0), pressure (0), other (0)			
Drinking Water Quality Regulatory Information ³			
	#	Description	
Health Violations	1	Total Coliform exceeded MCL in 2002	
Monitoring Violations	1	Failed to sample for Coliform in 2002	
DW Compliance Rate ⁴	100%		
Notes:			
(1) Operations and maintenance costs (exc. purchased water, debt, depreciation) per volume (mgd) delivered.			
(2) Distribution break rate is the number of leaks and pipeline breaks per 100 miles of distribution piping.			
(3) Violations since 2000, as reported by the U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Information System.			
(4) Drinking water compliance is percent of time in compliance with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2011.			

Figure 7-4: Hamilton Branch CSD Water Tables

Water Service Configuration & Infrastructure				
<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	
Retail Water	HBCSD	Groundwater Recharge	None	
Wholesale Water	None	Groundwater Extraction	HBCSD	
Water Treatment	HBCSD	Recycled Water	None	
<i>Service Area Description</i>				
Retail Water	Developed parcels withing HBCSD's bounds			
Wholesale Water	NA			
Recycled Water	NA			
<i>Water Sources</i>		<i>Supply (Acre-Foot/Year)</i>		
Source	Type	Average	Maximum ²	Safe/Firm
Lake Almanor Valley Groundwater Basin	Groundwater	288	637	Unknown
<i>System Overview</i>				
Average Daily Demand	0.26	mgd	Peak Day Demand	0.43 mgd
<i>Major Facilities</i>				
Facility Name	Type	Capacity	Condition	Yr Built
Spring Head	Well	400 gpm	Excellent	2010
Storage Tank 1	Storage	194,000 gallons	Good	1983
Storage Tank 2	Storage	200,000 gallons	Good	1992
<i>Other Infrastructure</i>				
Reservoirs	0	Storage Capacity (mg)	0.394 mg	
Pump Stations	0	Pressure Zones	1	
Production Wells	0	Pipe Miles	10.6	
Other:				
<i>Facility-Sharing and Regional Collaboration</i>				
Current Practices: The District shares an intertie with Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company for emergency purposes and maintains a mutual aid agreement with the company.				
Opportunities: There may be the potential of consolidation with Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company (MWC). No steps have been taken by either entity towards consolidation at this time; however, the proximity of the two water systems presents the opportunity for collaboration in emergency situations.				
Notes:				
(1) NA means Not Applicable, NP means Not Provided, mg means millions of gallons, af means acre-feet.				
(2) Based on the well pumping capacity of 400 gpm.				
(3) The capacity of the springs was recently reduced from 250 gpm to 150 gpm.				
(4) The well is presently offline due to high arsenic levels.				

Water Demand and Supply							
<i>Service Connections</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Inside Bounds</i>		<i>Outside Bounds</i>		
Total	499		499		0		
Irrigation/Landscape	0		0		0		
Domestic	487		487		0		
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional	12		12		0		
Recycled	0		0		0		
Other	0		0		0		
<i>Average Annual Demand Information (Acre-Feet per Year) ¹</i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	174	179	129	132	135	139	142
Residential	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Commercial/Industrial	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Irrigation/Landscape	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Supply Information (Acre-feet per Year) ³</i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	NA	174	288	295	303	310	318
Imported	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Groundwater	NA	174	288	295	303	310	318
Surface	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycled	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Drought Supply and Plans</i>							
Drought Supply (af) ⁴	Year 1: Unknown		Year 2: Unknown		Year 3: Unknown		
Storage Practices	Storage is for treatment and short-term emergency supply only.						
Drought Plan	The District adopted a contingency plan for a water shortage in 1991. The plan outlines measures to encourage conservation, and should it be necessary, mandatory reductions to 1,000 cubic feet of water per connection.						
<i>Water Conservation Practices</i>							
CUWCC Signatory	No						
Metering	Yes						
Conservation Pricing	Yes						
Other Practices	None						
Notes:							
(1) Annual demand estimated based on TK percent distribution loss in 2011 reported by the District.							
(2) Projected water demand and supply based on DOF population projection of 0.5 percent annually throughout the County.							
(3) In 2010, the District changed the flow meter at the springs. Prior to that, the flow meter appears to have been greatly inaccurate, and consequently the recorded flow in 2005 appears to be low. The flow at the springs flows into the storage tanks and overflows out of the tanks onto the ground when they are full, consequently the supply shown is significantly greater than the amount delivered to the connections.							
(4) The District has not estimated available supply during a three year drought. During past droughts, the District reported that it has experienced little difference in spring levels.							

Water Rates and Financing			
Residential Water Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 11-12¹			
	Rate Description	Avg. Monthly Charges	Consumption ²
Residential	\$26 per month for the first 2,000 cubic feet of water used per month, with use of additional water billed at \$2.50 per 100 cubic feet (1-2,000 cubic feet), \$3.00 per 100 cubic feet (2,001-4,000 cubic feet), \$3.75 per 100 cubic feet (4,001-6,000 cubic feet), \$4.75 per 100 cubic feet (6,001+cubic feet)	\$26	7,600 gal/month (1,016 cubic feet)
Rate-Setting Procedures			
Most Recent Rate Change	7/1/2011	Frequency of Rate Changes	Annually
Water Development Fees and Requirements			
Fee Approach	Includes installation and construction reserve costs.		
Connection Fee Amount	\$1,300 per connection		
Development Impact Fee	None		
Notes:			
(1) Rates include water-related service charges and usage charges.			
(2) Water use assumptions were used to calculate average monthly bills. Assumed use levels are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.			

HAMILTON BRANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 537 residents within Hamilton Branch Community Services District (HBCSD).
- ❖ Over the past few years, the District has experienced little or no growth in population. Over the last three years (2010 – 2012), the District has had no new water connections.
- ❖ Minimal growth is expected within HBCSD over the next 10 years, no proposed or planned developments were identified within or near the District.
- ❖ Should the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort ever come to fruition, which is not likely in the short term, the District indicated it would be interested in serving the area, which presently lies outside of its bounds and SOI.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ At present, HBCSD makes use of 45 percent of its maximum source supply on average. During peak day usage, the District uses 75 percent of its supply. The District appears to have sufficient supply to meet existing and anticipated future water needs.
- ❖ According to DPH, the District needs an additional storage tank or an additional source of water to cover maximum day demand should the spring become non-operational; however, the District maintains two interties to weather emergency outages.
- ❖ There is a need for a backup power supply should the solar panels become nonoperational again.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reported that the current financing level was between minimally adequate to adequate to deliver services to existing customers. Some of the challenges the District identified are the rising costs of gas and insurance, occasional unanticipated incidents requiring capital expenditures, and a decline in revenues as a result of unpaid bills, vacant houses and turned off accounts.
- ❖ The District has been able to pay off a loan, issue a refund to residents for over payment, and maintain a healthy balance for contingencies.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ HBCSD shares an intertie with Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company and Lake Almanor Country Club for emergency purposes and maintains a mutual aid agreement with the companies.
- ❖ There may be the potential of consolidation with Hamilton Branch Mutual Water Company. No steps have been taken by either entity towards consolidation at this time; however, the proximity of the two water systems presents the opportunity for collaboration in emergency situations.

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

- ❖ HBCSD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document and interview requests.
- ❖ While HBCSD conducts outreach in addition to legally required agendas and minutes, it is a recommended practice that a District the size of HBCSD enhance accountability by maintaining a website where all district information is readily available to constituents.
- ❖ With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, HBCSD reported that it may be interested in consolidating with HBMWC, which the District surrounds.
- ❖ The District reported that should the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort ever come to fruition, that it would be interested in providing water to the development.

8. HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District (HBFPD) provides fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical services, hazardous material emergency response, water rescue, and fire investigation services.

This is the first municipal service review for HBFPD. The process to begin an MSR was previously initiated in 2008, but never completed.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

HBFPD was formed in 1965 as an independent special district.⁶⁸ The District was formed to provide structural fire and emergency medical services to the residents on the east shore of Lake Almanor. Since its formation, the District has added water rescue, hazardous material emergency response and fire investigation services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.⁶⁹ 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.⁷⁰ 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.

HBFPD is located in the northwestern corner of Plumas County, near the County's border with Lassen County. The District is situated on the eastern shore of Lake Almanor and encompasses the communities of Hamilton Branch and East Shore, and borders Peninsula FD in the west.

Boundaries

HBFPD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 4.3 square miles.

⁶⁸ SBOE records.

⁶⁹ Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

⁷⁰ Health and Safety Code §13862.

Following formation, the District undertook two annexations. The latest boundary change occurred in 1998 and was classified as a boundary revision by the Board of Equalization. LAFCo and the District do not have records as to what this boundary revision entailed.

Figure 8-1: HBFPD List of LAFCo Approved Border Changes

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Hamilton Branch FPD	Formation	1965	SBOE
Portion of Peninsula FD	Annexation	1972	SBOE
Walker Ranch	Annexation	1997	SBOE, LAFCo
Unknown	Boundary Revision	1998	SBOE

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on May 21, 1976.⁷¹ The SOI was further revised on February 16, 1983.⁷² The 2.5-mile line along the northern boundary of the District was reduced to conform to the southern boundary of the timber production zone (TPZ) lands. The eastern boundary was determined to be the Western Pacific Railroad tracks due to a lack of access and, therefore, very little development potential. The 2.5-mile limit on the south was extended to include the lands between the railroad and the lake and the private, non-timber lands of Canyon Dam and PG&E land to the west of Canyon Dam.

The current SOI is 3.1 square miles compared to about 4.3 square miles of boundary area. Figure 8-2 depicts HBFPD’s boundaries and SOI.

Extra-territorial Services

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, HBFPD provides services outside of its bounds. HBFPD has a formal automatic aid agreement with Peninsula FD. HBFPD also maintains 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 HBFPD, the District’s service area extends to SR-36 in the north, the Plumas-Lassen county line in the east, and SR-89 in the south. The service area also includes the eastern portion of Lake Almanor and encompasses about 37.3 square miles. HBFPD 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.

⁷¹ LAFCo resolution 76-19.

⁷² LAFCo resolution 83-11.

Areas of Interest

The Canyon Dam area is an area of interest for HBFPD. The area is included in the District's SOI, and HBFPD provides services there when needed as it lies within the District's first-responder service area.

In 1983, the community of Canyon Dam expressed interest in being annexed into HBFPD. The District agreed to consider annexing the community if it fulfills certain requirements, such as 1) installing a water supply system, with three or more hydrants, 2) acquiring a quick-attack fire pumper capable of all-weather travel in the Canyon Dam area, and 3) constructing a building capable of housing the truck and the firefighting equipment.

In 1984, Canyon Dam filed an application with LAFCo requesting formation of a community services district (CSD) to encompass the entire community of Canyon Dam, as well as nearby PG&E properties, and Federal lands in the Plumas National Forest, located adjoining SR 89 at the south end of Lake Almanor. The purpose of the CSD formation was to provide future structural fire protection services for the Canyon Dam community. The petition was denied by LAFCo. The Commission decided that although an actual need for organized structural fire protection services for the Canyon Dam community did exist, the formation of a CSD would necessitate the creation of another new local governing body without an assured means of fiscal stability.

The territory of Canyon Dam is not currently in a fire district. Hamilton Branch FPD reported it is not interested in annexing Canyon Dam at this time.

Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District

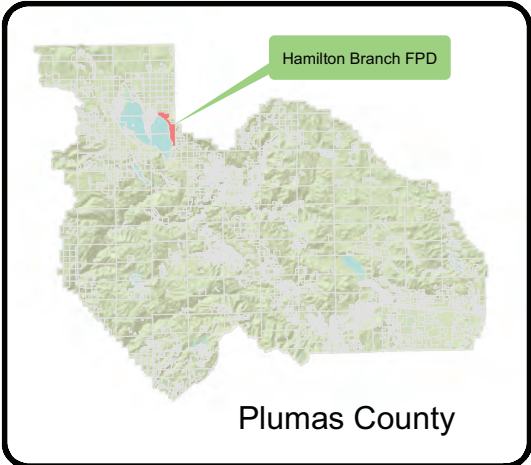
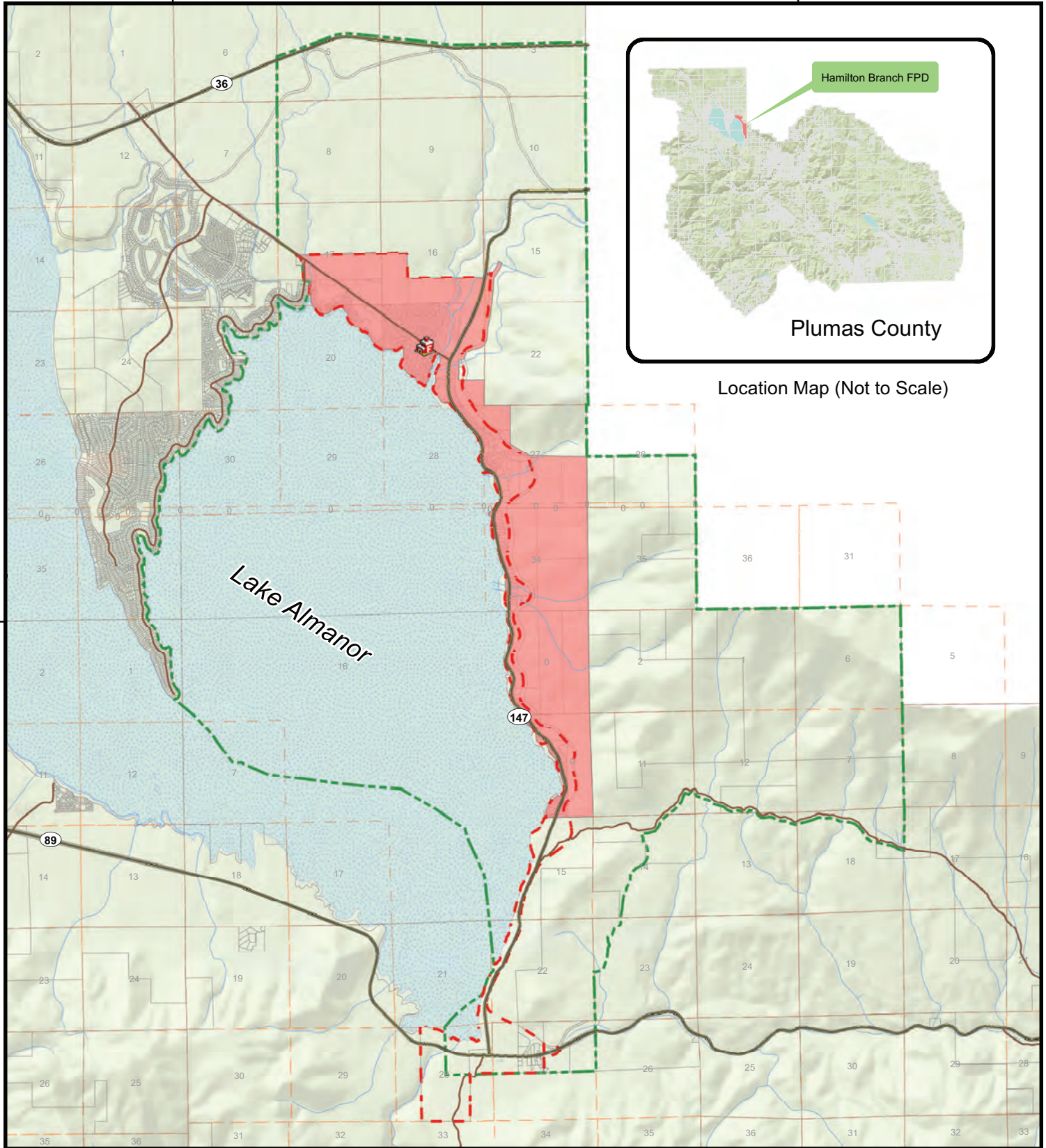
Range 7 East

Range 8 East

Range 9 East

Township 28 North

Township 27 North



Plumas County

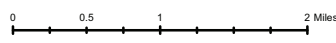
Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

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

- Hamilton Branch FPD
- Hamilton Branch FPD (SOI)
- Fire Department Service Area



Hamilton Branch FPD
 Resolution: 64-1483
 Formed: December 28, 1971

Hamilton Branch FPD (SOI)
 Resolution: 83-20
 Adopted: February 16, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 4/24/2012

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.⁷³ HBFPD is governed by a five-member board of directors elected by registered voters of the community to staggered four-year terms. All current members were elected; there is one vacancy. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 8-3.

The Board meets on the second Wednesday of every month at four in the afternoon at the District's fire station. Board meeting agendas are posted at the fire station, Hamilton Branch FPD office, and in the Chester Progressive newspaper. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.

Figure: 8-3: HBFPD Governing Body

Hamilton Branch FPD				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Fire Chief, Gary Pini			
Address:	3791 Big Springs Road, Lake Almanor, CA			
Telephone:	(530)259-2306			
Fax	(530)259-3707			
Email/website:	penfire@frontiernet.net			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Norm Solid	President	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Norm Faulkner	Vice President	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Dennis Clark	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 year
Kathleen Boisen	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 years
Vacant	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Second Wednesday of every month at 4pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at the fire station.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the fire station, Hamilton Branch CSD office and in Chester Progressive.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents with flyers, during the regular pancake breakfast and through posting information on the bulletin board. Election notices are posted at the fire station and in the newspaper to encourage voter participation.

⁷³ Health and Safety Code §13842.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be discussed with the chief or the Board of Directors. The chief is responsible for handling the complaints. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2011.

HBFPD 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

Daily operations are managed by the fire chief, who is paid through a contract with Peninsula FD. There is one paid part-time secretary and 13 volunteers—one assistant chief, two captains and ten firefighters. Peninsula FD also provides for one paid employee—a firefighter EMT I—to be at the HBFPD fire station every day, so the station is staffed 24/7.

The two captains, firefighter EMT I from Peninsula FD and the secretary are accountable to the chief. Firefighters report to the captains who evaluate them. The captains and the secretary are evaluated by the chief. The chief is accountable to the Peninsula FD Board of Directors.

The District does not track the workload handled by its volunteers; HBFPD uses a drill roster for its volunteer firefighters and records when they go on calls. Workload handled by paid Peninsula FD staff is tracked through log books. Workload monitoring helps PFD provide contract services more efficiently by identifying whether there is any downtime and changing the schedule accordingly to eliminate wasted manpower.

HBFPD reported that it does not conduct evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited every two years. HBFPD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District provided adopted budgets for FYs 10-11 and 11-12, audited financial statements for FY 09-10, and an unaudited balance sheet for FY 10-11. The District conducts capital improvement planning informally as needed and annually at board meetings. HBFPD is currently in the process of making improvements to its fire station.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

A majority of the land uses within the District are residential, commercial, rural, and timber production. The District's bounds encompass approximately 4.3 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 398 residents within the District, based on census block population in the 2010 Census.⁷⁴

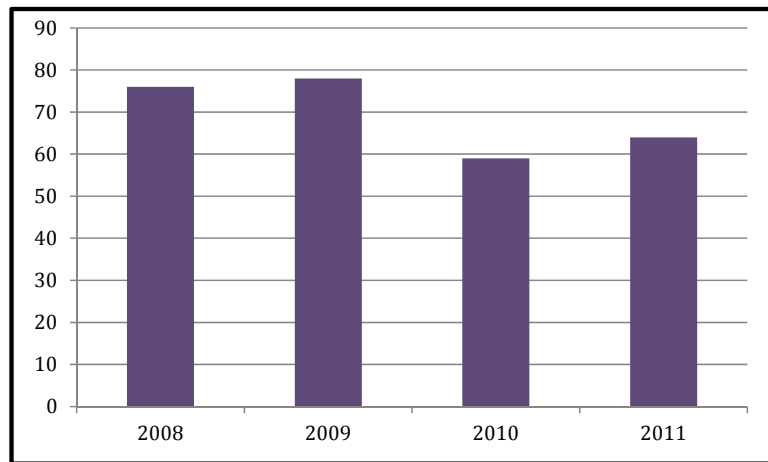
Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District are in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

Figure 8-4: HBFPD Number of Calls by Year, 2008-2011

The District reported that it had observed a slight decrease in service demand in the last few years.

The number of calls dropped in 2010 and slightly increased again in 2011, as shown in Figure 8-4. The District reported that demand dropped due to the recent economic recession which prompted residents to migrate out of the area.



Projected Growth and Development

HBFPD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years. However, no formal population projections have been made by the District. There are no planned developments within the District. There are currently about 40 acres of vacant lots within HBFPD's boundaries, with large portions located in the central part of the District, but there are no plans to develop these lots at this time. HBFPD does not forecast its service needs. It plans to hire a consultant and/or increase its staffing when the economy recovers and construction and growth resumes.

The District reported that it had sufficient capacity to serve the anticipated future growth. HBFPD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections,

⁷⁴ Census Blocks 3151, 3189, 3192, 3201, 3202, 3193, 3204, 2012, 2010, 2288, 2031, 2025, 2028, 2030 within Tract 5.02 in Plumas County.

the District's population would increase from 398 in 2010 to approximately 418 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 together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

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

19) Turnouts are now required in every new development.⁷⁵

20) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.⁷⁶

21) 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.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

⁷⁶ Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

- 22) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.⁷⁸
- 23) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.⁷⁹
- 24) 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.⁸⁰
- 25) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.⁸¹
- 26) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.⁸²
- 27) 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.⁸³
- 28) 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.⁸⁴
- 29) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.⁸⁵

The County is in the process 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:

- 30) 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.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 32.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 16.

⁸⁰ Ibid.,

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

⁸⁵ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 31)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.
- 32)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.
- 33)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.
- 34)New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 35)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.
- 36)Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.⁸⁶

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. The County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on addressing properties that are located outside of a fire district boundaries and are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it may be interested in consolidation with PFD. However, presently the Boards of Directors of both districts are content with the current contract; and consolidation is not being formally

⁸⁶ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

discussed. The HBFPD chief also expressed interest in the possibility of regional fire provider consolidation.

Financing

The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. However, the recent recession has a negative impact on the District's revenue streams, due to foreclosures, reappraisals, low growth in assessed values for property taxes, and nonpayment of property taxes. In addition, the uncertainty of federal and State funding can have a profound impact on the financial health of the District.

An additional source of income that is being considered by the District is an increase in its special tax assessment.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 10-11 was \$336,058. Revenue sources included property tax revenue (67 percent), special assessment (30 percent), use of money and properties (0.3 percent), state and federal aid (one percent), and other revenue (two percent). The majority of the District's income comes from one special tax assessment that was approved by the voters in 2008. Property owners pay \$106 per parcel with no expiration on the assessment. Revenue from the assessment is used for day to day operations. The District does not charge any fees.

HBFPD's expenditures were \$264,575 in FY 10-11. Of this amount, 14 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 83 percent on services and supplies, and three percent on fixed assets and capital improvements.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed, usually informally during Board meetings. Since the assessment was approved in 2008, HBFPD has been able to replace three vehicles. The District also just completed a \$60,000 upgrade to the outside of the fire station; the renovations inside are scheduled to begin in 2014. Another short-term improvement is the repaving of the parking lot. It was reported that after these scheduled upgrades are completed, the facilities and equipment would be in good shape.

The District's long term debt is represented by the Oshkosh Capital Lease dated February 2, 2008. The loan is payable in annual installments of \$43,599.77 including interest until 2023.⁸⁷ The purpose of this lease was to purchase two new fire engines.

The District has an adopted reserve policy for one reserve fund—the Vehicle Replacement Fund. The Vehicle Replacement Fund currently contains \$60,000, which is available for vehicle replacement. HBFPD does not maintain an emergency reserve fund.

⁸⁷ HBFPD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 09-10, p. 21.

The District participates in two joint ventures under joint powers agreements (JPAs) with the Fire District Association of California - Fire Agency Self-Insurance System (FDAC-FASIS) and the Special District Risk Management Association (SDRMA).⁸⁸

⁸⁸ HBFPD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 09-10, p. 19.

FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

Service Overview

HBFPD provides fire suppression, basic life support, emergency medical services, water rescue, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention on parcels and for businesses, and initial fire investigation services. The fire prevention efforts of the District include fire education of the population through brochures, displays and other promotional materials. HBFPD occasionally responds to wildfires. Whether the District is reimbursed by the federal government depends on the location of the fire.

Collaboration

HBFPD receives contract services from other agencies. The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with Peninsula FD, according to which PFD provides the time and expertise of its fire chief to manage the day-to-day operations of HBFPD and services of a firefighter EMT I, who is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The contract took full force in 2006, and is automatically renewed annually. In addition, PFD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid agreement according to which they share resources and conduct joint trainings. Peninsula FD provides automatic aid of one advance life support ambulance to all emergency medical aid responses throughout HPFPD's service area.

HBFPD maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. HBFPD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District 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 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 (including HBFPD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC). SIFC is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. SIFC 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.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. The District did not identify any areas where dispatch and response coordination could be improved.

Staffing

HBFPD has 15 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one assistant chief, one firefighter EMT I from PFD, two captains, and ten volunteer firefighters. The fire chief and firefighter EMT I are employed through a contract with Peninsula FD, and are the only paid sworn staff. The 13 other firefighters are not compensated.

The median age of the firefighters is 46, with a range from 31 to 66. Hamilton Branch FPD tries to recruit more volunteers through advertising.

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.⁸⁹ HBFPD has three firefighter I and three EMT I certified personnel.

The District conducts trainings twice a month. All volunteer firefighters are required to train for a total of four hours per month.

Facilities and Capacity

Hamilton Branch FPD owns and operates one fire station known as Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Station. The fire station, which was reported to be in poor condition, is located at 3791 Big Springs Road and was built in 1975. The station is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week with one firefighter EMT I employed through a contract with PFD.

Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Station is used as a fire station and to house two type I fire engines, one water tender, one rescue mini pumper, and one utility vehicle.

The District's water reserves are represented by fire hydrants in part of the District and Lake Almanor, from which they can draft water when necessary.

Currently, the District has the capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area and to planned developments. However, once construction resumes, HBFPD may have to assess its capacity to serve newly constructed homes.

⁸⁹ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Infrastructure Needs

The District requires facility upgrades on its fire station. The needs which are scheduled to be completed in the next two years include interior work and repaving of the parking lot. HBFPD has recently completed upgrades to the exterior of the station and replaced three vehicles.

Challenges

The only challenge reported by the District is the present economic condition that has affected assessed property values and residents' personal incomes, and consequently, the District's income from property taxes.

Service Adequacy

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. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. HBFPD has an ISO rating of 5 in parts of the District that have hydrants, and a rating of 8 in the areas without hydrants. The year when the District was last evaluated is unknown.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.⁹⁰

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 includes the rural and wilderness classifications. CalFire tracks response times for each incident HBFPD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported that the District's average response time in 2011 was 3.4 minutes. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 84. An area that HBFPD could improve upon is tracking and logging its

⁹⁰ Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would allow for more structured response and enhanced efficiency and consistency.

The service area size⁹¹ for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five square miles. By comparison, the one fire station in HBFDP serves approximately 37.3 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 Lake Almanor area vary from 31 call firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD. By comparison, HBFDP has approximately 37.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents.

⁹¹ 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 8-5: Hamilton Branch FPD Service Profile

Fire Service				
Facilities				
Fire station	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles
HBFPD Station	3791 Big Springs Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Poor	Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by one PFD firefighter	2 type I fire engines, 1 water tender, 1 rescue mini pumper, 1 utility vehicle
Facility Sharing				
Current Practices: The District has an automatic aid agreement with PFD. The two agencies share resources and conduct joint trainings.				
Future opportunities: The District does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other agencies.				
Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies				
The fire station is in poor condition and requires upgrades.				
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls ⁵
Stations Serving District	1	EMS	Direct	% EMS
Sq. Miles Served per Station ¹	37.3	Ambulance Transport	PFD	% Fire/Hazardous Material
Total Staff ²	16	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency
Total Call Firefighters	13	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency
Total Sworn Staff per Station ³	7.5	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	37.5	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges	
Response Time Base Year	2011	Tough economic conditions is the only challenge reported by the District.		
Average Response Time (min) ⁴	3.4	Training		
Percentage of response times under 5 min	84%	Volunteers train twice a month for a total of four hours per month.		
ISO Rating	5 and 8 (date unknown)			
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements				
The District has automatic aid agreement with PFD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the 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.				
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.				
5) HBFPD had 64 calls, as reported by the District. According to CalFire, HBFPD responded to 36 service calls.				

HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 398 residents within Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District (HBFPD).
- ❖ Over the past few years, the District has experienced a slight decline in demand for services.
- ❖ HBFPD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years.
- ❖ There are currently about 40 acres of vacant lots within HBFPD's boundaries, with large portions located in the central part of the District, but there are no plans to develop these lots at this time.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and anticipated future growth.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include upgrades to the District's fire station.
- ❖ The needs which are scheduled to be completed in the next two years include interior work and repaving of the parking lot.
- ❖ It is recommended that the County Sheriff's Office work with the fire districts to update the ESN map that is used for dispatching, in order to adequately address any communication concerns and recent boundary changes.
- ❖ The District conducts capital improvement planning informally as needed and annually at board meetings. HBFPD should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify long-term financing needs and sources for these needs.

- ❖ An area that WACSD could improve upon is tracking response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on information exchange.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services and accommodate anticipated growth.
- ❖ The recent recession had a negative impact on the District's revenue streams, due to foreclosures, reappraisals, low growth in assessed values for property taxes, nonpayment of property taxes, as well as uncertainty of state and federal funding.
- ❖ An additional source of income that is being considered by the District is an increase in its special tax assessment.
- ❖ The District has an adopted reserve policy for one reserve fund—the Vehicle Replacement Fund.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ HBFPD collaborates with other fire providers in Plumas County through informal mutual aid agreements and common trainings, and with PFD through an automatic aid agreement. HBFPD maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County.
- ❖ HBFPD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District did not identify any additional opportunities to share its facilities with other agencies in the future.

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

- ❖ HBFPD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ A governmental structure option is consolidation with Peninsula FD. Consolidation with other fire districts offers opportunities for shared resources and finances.

9. PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT

Peninsula Fire District (PFD) provides fire suppression, Advanced Life Support, ambulance services, dive and ice rescue, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention, and fire investigation services.

This is the first municipal service review for PFD. An MSR process was previously initiated in 2008, but never completed.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

PFD was formed in 1964 as an independent special district.⁹² The District was formed to provide structural fire and emergency medical services to the residents on the peninsula on the north shore of Lake Almanor. Since its formation, the District has added ambulance, dive and ice rescue, and fire investigation services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.⁹³ 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.⁹⁴ 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.

PFD is located in the northwestern corner of Plumas County, near the County's border with Lassen County. The District encompasses Lake Almanor Country Club and Walker Ranch Community Services District, and borders Hamilton Branch FPD in the northeast.

Boundaries

PFD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 6.5 square miles.⁹⁵

Following formation, the District undertook one detachment in 1971, when territory was transferred to Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District. The only annexation

⁹² SBOE and LAFCo records.

⁹³ Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

⁹⁴ Health and Safety Code §13862.

⁹⁵ <http://peninsulafire.net/>

undertaken by the District took place in 1996 and involved 1,230 acres of an area known as Walker Ranch.⁹⁶

Figure 9-1: PFD List of LAFCo Approved Border Changes

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Peninsula Fire District	Formation	1964	SBOE, LAFCo
Portion to Hamilton Branch FPD	Detachment	1971	SBOE, LAFCo
Walker Ranch	Annexation	1996	SBOE, LAFCo

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.⁹⁷ The SOI was further revised on January 21, 1983,⁹⁸ when it was expanded to include the northern peninsula area to County Road A-13 and SR 36. The western SOI border was reduced at County Road A-13 where the sphere and district lines adjoin Hamilton Branch FPD.⁹⁹ The current SOI is 6.7 square miles compared to about 6.5 square miles of boundary area.

Extra-territorial Services

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, PFD provides services outside of its bounds. PFD has a formal automatic aid agreement with HBFPD. PFD also maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA and responds to wildfire outside of the County with a CalEMA Fire Engine and a strike team, for which it gets compensated by the state and federal government depending on the location of the fire.

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 PFD, the District's service area extends north of SR 36 and encompasses about 10 square miles. PFD 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.

The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with Hamilton Fire Protection District (HBFPD) according to which PFD provides the time and expertise of its fire chief to manage the day-to-day operations of HBFPD and services of a firefighter EMT-1 who is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The contract took full force in 2006, and is automatically renewed annually. In addition, PFD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid

⁹⁶ 1-ANNX-95.

⁹⁷ LAFCo resolution 76-36.

⁹⁸ LAFCo resolution 83-11.

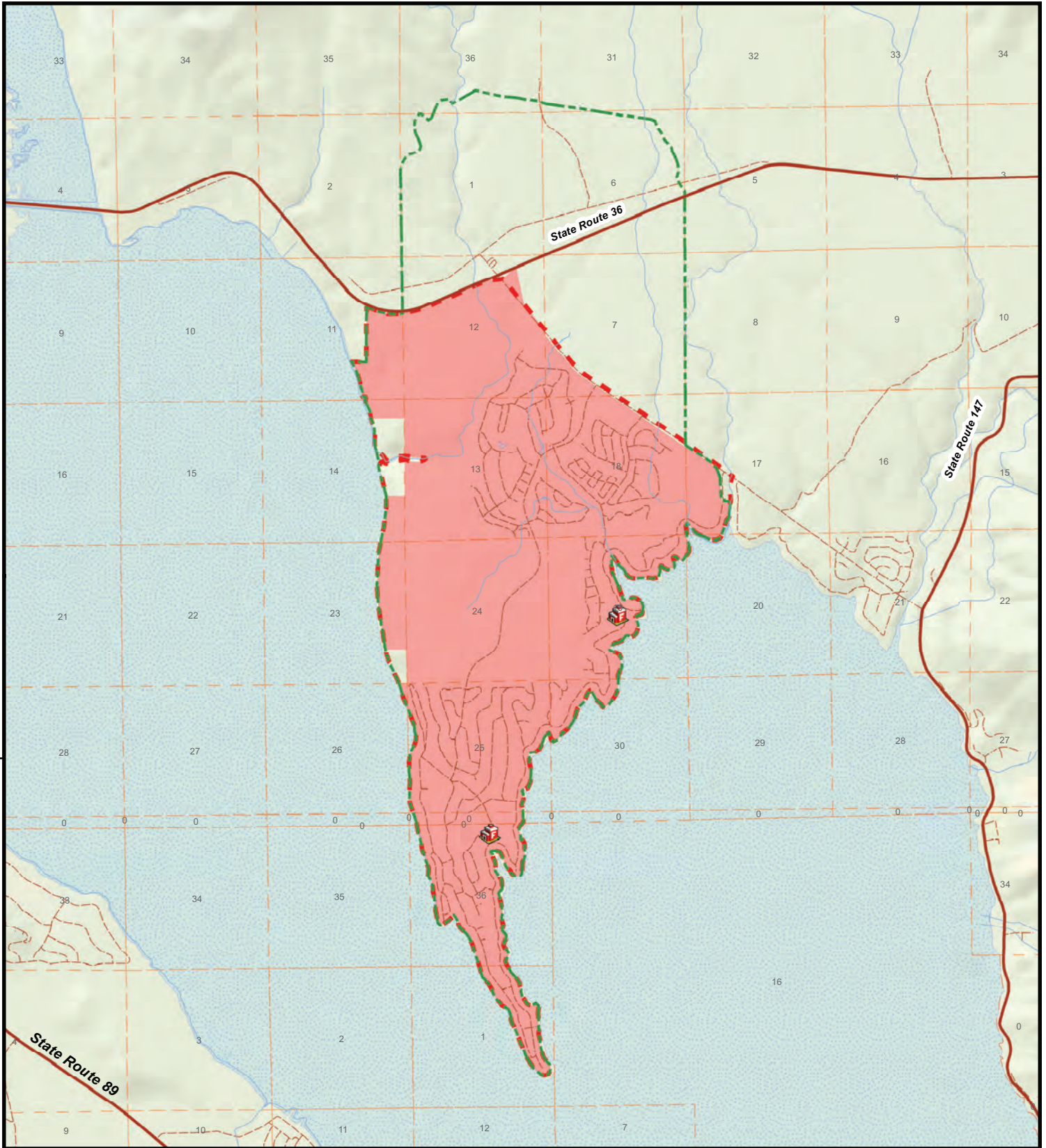
⁹⁹ Letter from Plumas County Planning Department to LAFCo, *Sphere of Influence Recommendation Basis, Peninsula Fire Protection District*, January 3, 1983.

agreement according to which they share resources and conduct joint trainings. Peninsula FD provides automatic aid of one advance life support ambulance to all emergency medical aid responses throughout HBFPD. Susanville Interagency Fire Center calls for automatic aid after debriefing by the reporting party.

Areas of Interest

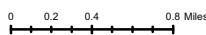
The District did not identify any particular areas of interest.

Peninsula Fire Protection District



Legend

- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Fire Department Service Area
- State Responsibility Area (Federal Responsibility lies outside hatched area.)
- Fire Stations
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Peninsula FPD
- Peninsula FPD (SOI)



Peninsula FPD
Resolution: 64-1459
Adopted: May 4, 1964

Peninsula FPD (SOI)
Resolution: 83-11
Adopted: January 21, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 1/12/2012

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.¹⁰⁰ PFD is governed by a five-member board of directors elected by registered voters of the community 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 9-3.

Board members receive no compensation; however, they may participate in the health benefits plan provided by the District on a self-pay basis.

The Board meets on the third Wednesday of every month at five in the afternoon at Fire Station 2. The date, time and place of regular board meetings are reconsidered yearly at the annual organizational meeting of the Board. Board meeting agendas are posted at least 72 hours prior to meetings at Stations 1 and 2, the Lake Almanor Country Club office, in the Chester Progressive newspaper, and on the District's website. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.

Figure: 9-3: PFD Governing Body

Peninsula Fire District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Fire Chief, Gary Pini			
Address:	801 Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA			
Telephone:	(530)259-2306			
Fax:	(530)259-3707			
Email/website:	penfire@frontiernet.net , http://peninsulafire.net/			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Robert Phillips	Chair	December 2011	Elected	4 years
Russel Greenlaw	Vice Chair	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Susan Muller	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 year
Edwin Butler	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 years
Dennis Mason	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Third Wednesday of every month at 5pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at Station #2.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the Stations 1 and 2, on the website, at the country club and in newspaper.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through its website. PFD also holds a fundraising pancake breakfast,

¹⁰⁰ Health and Safety Code §13842.

distributes brochures, performs safety demonstrations for children, and posts various informational materials throughout both fire stations. The District encourages voter participation by notifying the public of upcoming elections through its website and in newspapers.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be first discussed with an on-duty supervisor with the objective of resolving the matter informally. If an individual filing a complaint is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is forwarded to the chief. In this case, the chief is obligated to record the issue and outcome in writing and provide a copy to the individual who filed the complaint. If the individual is further not satisfied, the complaint may be brought to the attention of the Board by filing it in writing within ten days of receiving chief's decision. The Board's final decision must be in writing. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2010.

PFD 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's mission statement declares: This Fire District is organized to provide for life and property safety from the threat of forest and structure fires, natural or man-made disasters, and medical emergencies. This will be accomplished through preplanning, prevention, education, training, incident mitigation and appropriate application of ever changing technology. To maximize the ability to cope with major conflagrations the District will receive and/or provide mutual-aid assistance to other fire/ambulance agencies.¹⁰¹

Daily operations are managed by the fire chief. There are 22 paid employees—one chief, three captains, one secretary and 17 firefighters. Eleven employees, including the secretary, are full-time personnel; the rest are part-time staff. In addition, there are three volunteer firefighters.

The three captains and the secretary are accountable to the chief. Firefighters report to the captains; and the chief reports to the Board. The captains evaluate the firefighters. The captains and the secretary are evaluated by the chief, who is evaluated by the Board of Directors. New employees are evaluated after three, six and 12 months, and annually thereafter.

The District tracks the workload handled by its staff through log books for both payroll and operations. Workload monitoring helps the District improve its efficiency by identifying whether there is any downtime and changing the schedule accordingly to eliminate wasted manpower.

¹⁰¹ <http://peninsulafire.net/>

PFD reported that it does not perform evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited every two years. PFD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District provided an adopted budget for FY 11-12, audited financial statements for FY 08-09, and unaudited financial statements for FY 09-10 and FY10-11. The District conducts capital improvement planning through setting short- and long-term goals that are updated annually. Short-term goals include new furniture and appliances for both fire stations. In the long run, the District plans to secure funding for an additional fire station and related equipment, a full-time paid assistant fire chief, and four full-time personnel on each shift.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

A majority of the land within the District is used for residential, commercial, recreational, and open space purposes. The District's bounds encompass approximately 6.5 square miles.

Population

The District reported that its current estimated population was 1,500. Due to the influx of tourists during the summer months, it may go up to 5,000 people.

According to Census 2000, the District's population was 1,183.¹⁰² Based on census designated place population in the 2010 census, there are approximately 775 permanent residents within the District.¹⁰³ The District's residential population has declined by about 34 percent over the last ten years.

Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District are in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

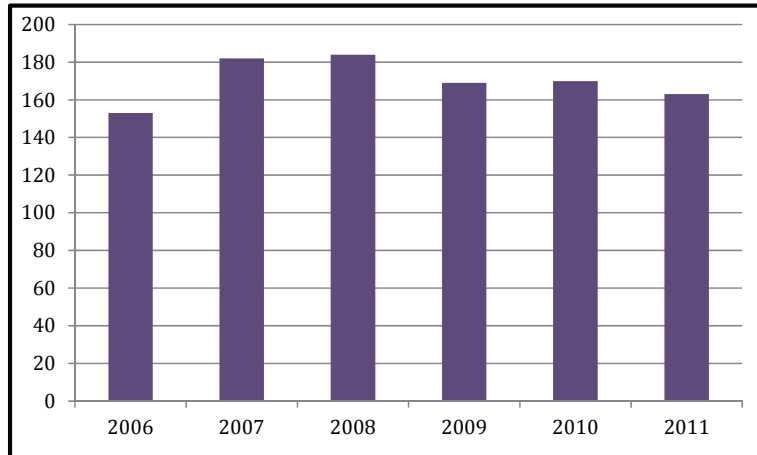
¹⁰² Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

¹⁰³ Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

Figure 9-4: PFD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2010

The District reported that it had observed little change in the level of service demand in the last few years.

The number of calls slightly increased from 2006 to 2007 and 2008 and dropped back down in 2009, 2010 and 2011, as shown in Figure 9-4.



Projected Growth and Development

PFD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years. However, no formal population projections have been made by the District. No new development has occurred in the last eight years within the District's bounds, and the District reported that it has not had a need for a growth plan. PFD plans to hire a consultant to calculate service needs when the economy recovers and construction and growth resumes.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 775 in 2010 to approximately 1,163 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 identified one undeveloped subdivision within its boundaries. Walker Ranch, which was annexed into the District in 1996, contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course. If the economy recovers and the subdivision is built-out, demand for services will likely increase. The District reported that it has the capacity to serve anticipated future growth. PFD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.

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 a 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 together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

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

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.¹⁰⁴
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.¹⁰⁵
- 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.¹⁰⁶
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.¹⁰⁷
- 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.¹⁰⁸
- 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.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

¹⁰⁵ Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.¹¹⁰
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.¹¹¹
- 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.¹¹²
- 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.¹¹³
- 11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.¹¹⁴

The County is in the process 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.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.,

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

¹¹⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 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.¹¹⁵

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. The County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on addressing properties that are located outside of a fire district boundaries and are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it may be interested in consolidation with HBFDPD. However, presently the Boards of Directors of both districts are content with the current contract; and consolidation is not being formally discussed. The PFD chief also expressed interest in the possibility of regional fire provider consolidation.

Financing

The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. However, it was also reported that the recent recession had a negative impact on the District’s revenue streams, due to foreclosures, reappraisals, low growth in assessed values for property taxes, and nonpayment of property taxes.

¹¹⁵ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 09-10 was \$1,357,498; the revenue for FY 10-11 was \$1,289,349. Revenue sources included property tax revenue (35 percent), special assessment (41 percent), charges for services (seven percent), use of money and properties (one percent), state and federal aid (0.3 percent), and other revenue (11 percent). Currently, the District has one special tax assessment; property owners pay \$197 per improved parcel and \$182 per unimproved parcel. The assessment does not adjust for inflation. These funds are used for day-to-day operations. This assessment, that voters approved effective July 1, 2011, expires on June 30, 2014. Prior to the current assessment, the District had a special tax assessment for the same amount that was also approved for a three-year period. An additional source of income that is being considered by the District is an increase in its special tax assessment.

Other revenue is primarily contract fees from Hamilton Branch FPD, but also includes donations, contributions, and proceeds from fundraisers. In 2011 through 2014, the charges for fire chief/administrative services rendered to Hamilton Branch FPD were set to be \$2,700 per month and \$285 per day for firefighter-EMT 1.

The District charges fees for ambulance services. Fees vary based on mileage, and equipment and personnel used. PFD does not charge for providing other services either within its boundaries or outside. The District also responds with a strike team to wildfires outside of the county and gets compensated by the State or Federal government depending on the location of the fire. The District is reimbursed for the time the engine and the crews are gone.

Every property that is annexed into the District has to pay a fee of \$465.16 for each parcel to be annexed, at the time of annexation. Developments also have to pay a mitigation fee of approximately \$1,061.84 per structure at the time of the issuance of the building permit based on construction type and presence of fire sprinklers.¹¹⁶ When Walker Ranch was annexed into the District in 1996, it paid \$34,669.64 in capital facilities mitigation fees based on 14 assessed structures on 66,671 square feet, and \$123,141.53 in annexation fees. Mitigation fees can only be used for growth-related capital expenditures.

The District receives comparatively insignificant amounts from its investments. The District maintains all of its cash in the County Treasury, where funds are pooled with those of other agencies and invested.¹¹⁷

The District receives State and Federal Aid in the form of state homeowners' property tax money.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ District resolution 93-12B.

¹¹⁷ PFD, *Audited Financial Statements*, FY 08-09, pp. 17, 21.

PFD's expenditures were \$1,361,134 in FY 09-10 and \$1,412,758 in FY 10-11. Of this amount, 80 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 15 percent on services and supplies, and five percent on fixed assets and capital improvements.

The District performs capital improvement planning as part of the annual budget process. PFD has short-term and long-term planned projects (projected for a five-year planning horizon) that are updated annually. In FY 10-11, the District spent \$67,420 on fixed assets and capital improvements; in FY 11-12, it plans to spend \$93,000. The cost of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets' lives are not capitalized. A capitalization threshold of \$5,000 is used.¹¹⁹

The District's long-term debt is represented by the Oshkosh Capital Lease dated December 26, 2007. The loan has an interest of 4.24 percent and is payable in annual installments of \$45,940 until 2022.¹²⁰ The purpose of this 15-year lease was to purchase two new fire engines in 2008.

The District has an adopted reserve policy for two reserve funds—the Annexation and Mitigation Fund and Vehicle Replacement Fund. The Annexation and Mitigation Fund contains money collected from annexation fees and from builders per square foot of constructed property, as previously described. These funds are set aside for capital improvements for the areas from where they were collected. The Vehicle Replacement Fund currently contains \$37,949, which is available for vehicle replacement. PFD does not have an emergency reserve fund.

The District participates in a joint venture under a joint powers agreement (JPA) with the Special District Risk Management Authority for workers' compensation insurance coverage.

¹¹⁸ Every year the Auditor's office files a claim to the State which calculates the amount of tax loss resulting from Homeowners Property Tax Exemptions. The State then reimburses the County in four increments throughout the year. The Auditor's office apportions taxes 3 times a year (December, April, and June). Each time it apportions, it distributes the amount received from the State to all the districts. It distributes the amount using the current AB8 factors.

¹¹⁹ PFD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 18.

¹²⁰ PFD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 24.

FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

Service Overview

PFD provides fire suppression, Advanced Life Support, ambulance, dive and ice rescue from a 16-foot hovercraft, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention, and fire investigation services. The fire prevention efforts of the District include fire education through the website, brochures, displays and other promotional materials.

Collaboration

The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with HBFPD according to which PFD provides the services of its fire chief to manage HBFPD's operations and a firefighter EMT-1. In addition, PFD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid agreement according to which PFD provides ambulance services to emergency medical aid responses within the HBFPD service area. The two districts also share resources and conduct joint trainings.

The District maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA with a CalEMA Fire Engine. PFD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District 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 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 (including PFD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC). SIFC is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. SIFC 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.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. The District did not identify any areas where dispatch and response coordination could be improved.

Staffing

PFD has 24 sworn personnel—one fire chief, three captains, 17 paid firefighters, and three volunteer firefighters. Each paid firefighter is compensated based on his or her

position, either on a per-diem or per hour basis. The median age of the firefighters is 35, with a range from 23 to 52.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. Peninsula FD tries to recruit more paid firefighters and volunteers through advertising.

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.¹²¹ PFD has 22 firefighter I, 11 EMT and 11 paramedic certified personnel.

The District conducts daily trainings. All paid firefighters train two hours a day. The District's requirement for the paid sworn employees is to train to the level of Firefighter I. Volunteers train twice a month for a total of four hours per month. Volunteer firefighters provide a support role for the District, which relies primarily on the paid firefighters.

Facilities and Capacity

Peninsula FD operates two fire stations. Station 1, which was reported to be in poor condition, is located at the entrance to the Lake Almanor Country Club and was built in 1971. Station 2, inside the country club, was also built in 1971; it was reported to be in fair condition. The District owns both stations. Both stations are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week with two firefighters staffing each station per shift.

Station 1 is used as a fire station and houses one Type 1 fire engine and one ambulance. Station 2 is also used as a fire station and contains two Type 1 engines, one rescue mini pumper, one utility vehicle, and one hovercraft. PFD is also home to OES 265—the engine owned by the State of California Office of Emergency Services and on loan to the District. Peninsula FD staffs this engine to respond to disasters throughout California.

Besides two fire stations, the District owns and operates two other facilities—an administration building and the Peninsula Fire Sirens Thrift shop. Both were reported to be in good condition.

The District's water reserves are represented by fire hydrants throughout the District, several ponds and Lake Almanor from which it can draft when necessary.

¹²¹ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Currently, the District has the capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. However, once construction resumes in Walker Ranch, PFD will have to assess its capacity to serve newly constructed homes.

Infrastructure Needs

The District requires facility upgrades on both of its fire stations. The needs include new roofs, new siding, new windows, and new carpet. There are currently no specific plans to address these needs since no money is available, due to a shortfall in the budget last fiscal year. It is currently unknown when the needed improvements can be completed; however, the District reports that it is able to keep its buildings up to code.

The District does not have any vehicle needs.

PFD planned the following capital improvements and transfers for future capital purchases for FY 11-12:

- ❖ Office equipment: \$1,000
- ❖ Communications equipment purchases: \$2,000
- ❖ Transfer into Vehicle Replacement Fund: \$77,000
- ❖ Building improvements: \$10,000¹²²
- ❖ Paving and curbing: \$3,000

Challenges

The only challenge reported by the District is the present economic condition that has affected assessed property values and residents' personal incomes, and consequently, the District's income from property taxes.

Service Adequacy

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. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire

¹²² Due to last year's budget shortfall, building improvements have been put on hold. Only emergency repairs are being completed.

alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. PFD has an ISO rating of 4. The District was last evaluated in 2002.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.¹²³

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 includes the rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks the response time for each incident. CalFire tracks response times for each incident PFD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported that the District's average response time in 2011 was 4.5 minutes. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 80. An area that FPD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would enhance efficiency and consistency.

The service area size¹²⁴ for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five 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 Lake Almanor area vary from 31 firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD.

¹²³ Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

¹²⁴ 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 9-5: Peninsula Fire District Service Profile

Fire Service				
Facilities				
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles
Station 1	497 Firehouse Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Poor	2 paid firefighters. Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1 Type 1 engine, 1 Ambulance
Station 2	801 A Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Fair	2 paid firefighters. Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	2 Type 1 engines, 1 Rescue mini pumper, 1 utility vehicle, 1 hovercraft.
Administration Building	801 C Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Good	N/A	N/A
Peninsula Fire Sirens Thrift Shop	801 B Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Good	N/A	N/A
Facility Sharing				
Current Practices: Firehall at Station 2 is available for public use on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Occasionally other fire agencies use PFD facilities for training. The District has an automatic aid agreement with HBFPD. The two agencies share resources and conduct joint trainings. Peninsula FD is also home to OES 265, which is owned by the State of California Office of Emergency Services and on loan to PFD.				
Future opportunities: The District does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other agencies.				
Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies				
Both stations require upgrades: new roofs, new siding, new windows, new carpet.				
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year
Fire Stations in District	2	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls
Stations Serving District	2	EMS	Direct	% EMS
Sq. Miles Served per Station ¹	5.0	Ambulance Transport	Direct	% Fire/Hazardous Material
Total Staff ²	25	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False
Total Full-time Firefighters	10	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency
Total Call Firefighters	3	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency
Total Sworn Staff per Station ³	12	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	31.2	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people
Service Adequacy		Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2010	Tough economic conditions is the only challenge reported by the District.		
Average Response Time (min) ⁴	4.5	Training		
Percentage of response times under 5 min	80%	Paid firefighters train 2 hours a day. All paid firefighters are required to train to the level of Firefighter 1. Volunteers train twice a month for a total of four hours per month.		
ISO Rating	4			
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements				
The District has automatic aid agreement with HBFPD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA with a CalEMA Fire Engine.				
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.				
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.				

PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ The estimated population of Peninsula Fire District (PFD) is 750.
- ❖ Over the last few years the District has experienced little or no growth in population and consequently in service demand.
- ❖ No or slow residential growth is expected within the District, until the construction in the Walker Ranch community resumes. Walker Ranch contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and short-term growth. However, when construction resumes in Walker Ranch, PFD will need to re-evaluate its capacity.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include new roofs, new siding, new windows, and new carpet for both fire stations. One of the stations was reported to be in poor condition; however, the District is able to keep it up to code.
- ❖ The District identified a long-term need for a new fire station to address future growth.
- ❖ It is recommended that the County Sheriff's Office work with the fire districts to update the ESN map that is used for dispatching, in order to adequately address any communication concerns and recent boundary changes.
- ❖ Currently, capital improvement projects are identified in the annual budget. The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify long-term financing needs and sources for these needs.

- ❖ An area that PFD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on service call data exchange.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services and accommodate anticipated growth.
- ❖ The current economic conditions were identified as the primary financing constraint for the District.
- ❖ PFD hopes to increase its funding through an increase of its special assessment.
- ❖ The District does capital improvement planning through setting short- and long-term goals that are updated annually.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ PFD collaborates with other fire providers in Plumas County through informal mutual aid agreements and common trainings, and with Hamilton Branch FPD through an automatic aid agreement. PFD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District makes Station 2 available for public use on Tuesdays and Thursdays. PFD lets other fire providers use its facilities for training purposes.
- ❖ The District did not identify any additional opportunities to share its facilities with other agencies in the future.

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

- ❖ PFD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ A governmental structure option is consolidation with Hamilton Branch FPD. Consolidation with other fire districts offers opportunities for shared resources and finances.

10. PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District (PAFPD) provides structural fire protection, basic life support, limited rescue services, and some fire prevention services.

This is the first municipal service review for PAFPD.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

PAFPD was originally formed as West Shore Fire District in 1963¹²⁵ for the purpose of providing basic community services to residents and landowners within the boundaries of the District in the greater Prattville Area. In 1978, West Shore Fire District was renamed into Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District.¹²⁶

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.¹²⁷ 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.¹²⁸ 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.

PAFPD encompasses the community of Prattville, which is situated along the western shore of Lake Almanor in northern Plumas County. It lies immediately east of SR 89. The District does not border any other fire districts in the County, because it is surrounded by forest zone and borders the lake to the east. Prattville-Almanor FPD is located southeast of West Almanor CSD (WACSD).

Boundaries

PAFPD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County and extends from the Almanor Homesites to the last house on the south end of Almanor Drive West. The District's bounds encompass approximately 0.5 square miles.

¹²⁵ LAFCo resolution 1328.

¹²⁶ LAFCo resolution 78-3171.

¹²⁷ Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

¹²⁸ Health and Safety Code §13862.

Following its formation, West Shore Fire District did not undertake any annexations or detachments. In 1978, West Almanor Shore Fire District was renamed into Prattville-Almanor FPD. Since then there have been no annexations to or detachments from PAFPD.

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence (SOI) for West Shore Fire District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.¹²⁹ The original SOI was incorporated with CSA #2 (Lake Almanor West). The SOI was further revised on January 21, 1983.¹³⁰ The SOI was made coterminous with the District's boundaries, because there was no room for expansion of the District due to its boundaries being immediately adjacent to USFS and P.G.&E. lands.¹³¹ No other changes to the District's SOI have been made since the 1983 update.

Extra-territorial Services

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, PAFPD provides services outside of its bounds. PAFPD has a formal automatic aid agreement with West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD). PAFPD also maintains 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 PAFPD, the District is aware of its service area as per the Emergency Response Area map, but does not recognize that the District entered into the agreement. PAFPD reported that it would only provide services outside of its boundaries if resources were available to ensure that services could still be provided within its bounds. The service area for PAFPD is the same as WACSD's service area and includes the western portion of Lake Almanor and extends south and southwest to include large territory that spreads all the way to Butte County. The service area encompasses about 198 square miles compared to 0.96 square miles of boundary area. PAFPD does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect would provide free services, if it responded to these areas without reimbursement.

PAFPD has a functional consolidation contract with WACSD, according to which identities and budgets for the two districts remain separate. West Almanor CSD provides PAFPD operations, training and automatic aid services. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses within either district. West Almanor CSD is responsible for training all PAFPD firefighters. In addition, the two districts respond to each other's emergency calls and incidents as part of automatic aid.

¹²⁹ LAFCo resolution 76-35.

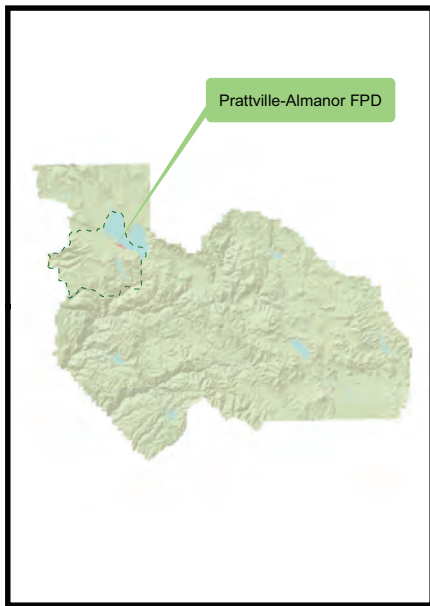
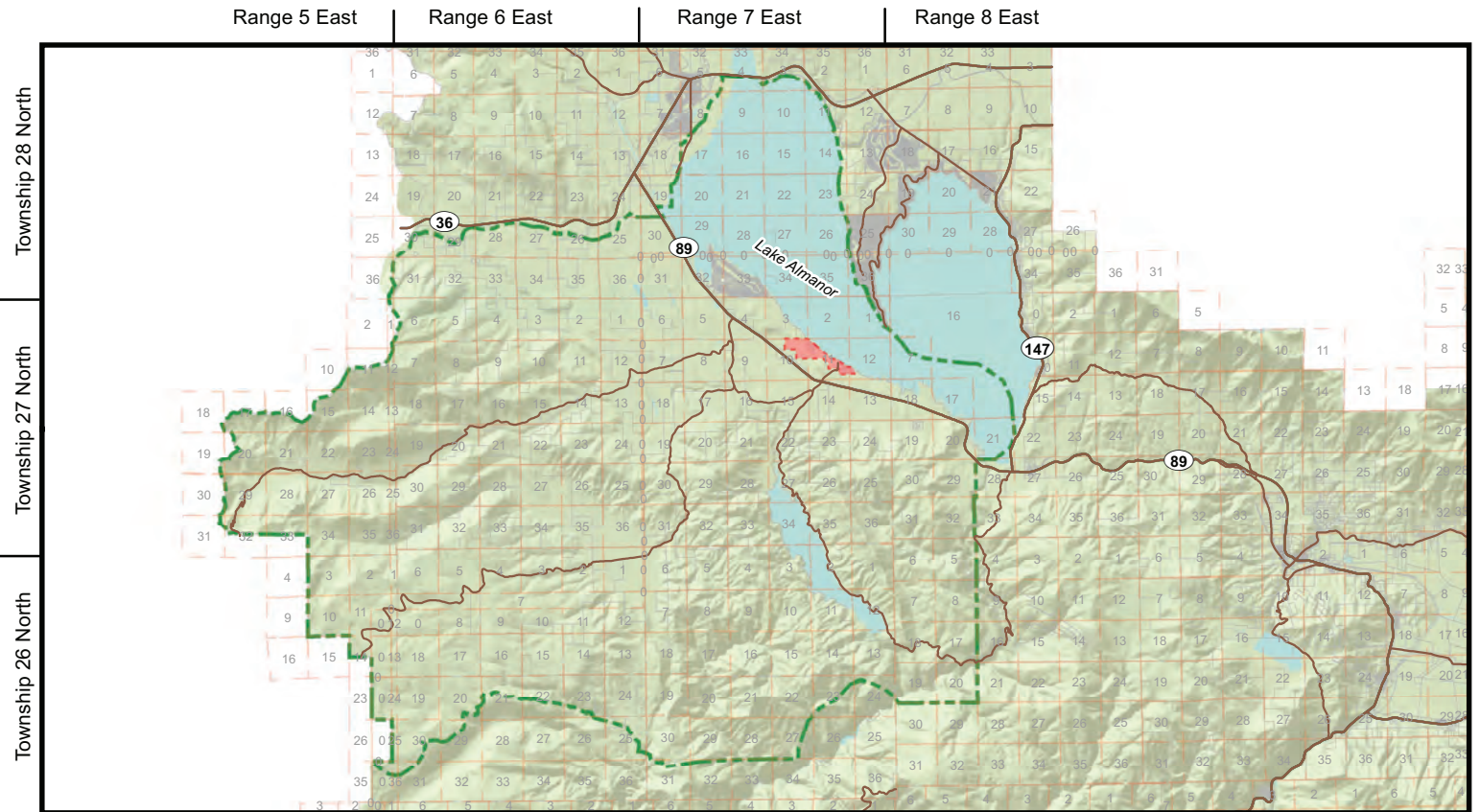
¹³⁰ LAFCo resolution 83-06.

¹³¹ Plumas LAFCo, *Sphere of Influence Findings and Recommendations, Prattville-Almanor FPD*, January 21, 1983.

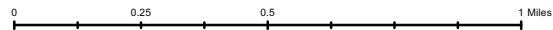
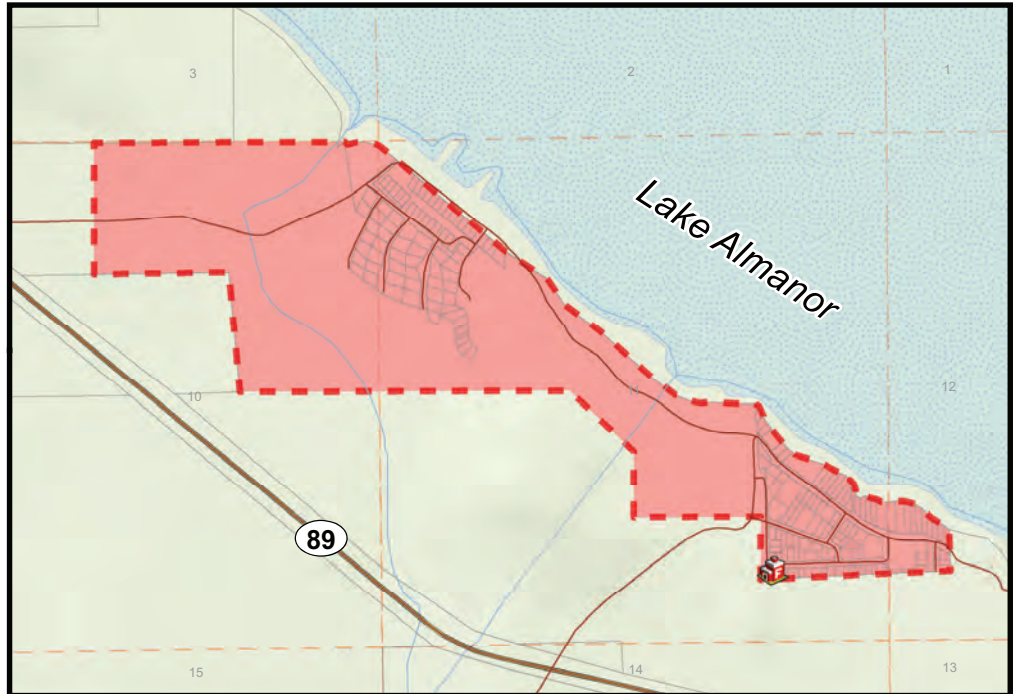
Areas of Interest

The area of WACSD is of particular interest to PAFPD. The functional consolidation contract expired on June 30, 2012, and while both districts are strongly considering consolidation, it has been postponed at this time. Instead, the districts will expand their contract; under the new agreement WACSD will take over administration duties for PAFPD.











Prattville - Almanor Fire Protection District



Location Map (Not to Scale)



Legend

-  Highways
-  Major Roads
-  Stream / River
-  Waterbodies
-  Parcels
-  Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
-  Fire Station
-  Prattville-Almanor FPD
-  Prattville-Almanor FPD (SOI)
-  Fire Department Service Area



Prattville-Almanor FPD
 Resolution: 63-1328
 Formed: January 7, 1963

Prattville-Almanor FPD (SOI)
 Resolution: 83-12
 Adopted: January 21, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 4/25/2012

Accountability and Governance

PAFPD is governed by a three-member Board of Directors who are to be elected by cabin owners at general meetings. There are currently two Directors, both of whom were appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 10-2.

The Board meets every season at the fire house on Scott Drive. Agendas are posted at the fire station, on the bulletin board at Almanor Homesites, and by the mailboxes at the bottom of Center Street. Minutes are circulated at the meetings and available upon request.

Figure 10-2: Prattville-Almanor FPD Governing Body

Prattville-Almanor FPD				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Fire Chief, Ken Wilson			
Address:	2267 Scott Drive, Canyon Dam, CA			
Telephone:	(530)259-3911			
Email/website:	kwilson@digitalpath.net			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Alan Ramsey	Chair	November 2013	Appointed	4 years
Gary Mangin	Director	November 2013	Appointed	1 year 3 months
Vacancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Every season.			
Location:	Meetings are held at the fire station.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the fire station, bulletin board and mailboxes.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through participating in community pot lock events during the summer months. PAFPD also has an auxiliary support group—Fire Crackers—that fundraises on behalf of the District.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints can be submitted to the Board of Directors at board meetings or through a letter. The chief is responsible for handling complaints. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2011.

PAFPD demonstrated partial accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District cooperated with interview and document requests. The questionnaire was responded to by WACSD on behalf of PAFPD. PAFPD was unable to respond to questionnaires and interview requests in a timely fashion; however, all information was eventually provided.

Planning and Management Practices

The District has one chief, one accounts receivable clerk and four firefighters, who are all volunteers. Daily operations are managed by the fire chief. According to the new agreement with WACSD, which is currently being drafted, the WACSD chief will also be the fire chief for PAFPD. Currently, the PAFPD chief reports to the Board. The clerk and firefighters report to the chief.

The District does not perform employee evaluations or evaluations of the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

The District tracks staff training hours through a training log, similar to WACSD. Work hours and tasks performed by volunteers are not tracked.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. PAFPD's financial statements are audited every five years, due to the small size of the District. The District conducts capital improvement planning informally on an as-needed basis.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Land uses within the District are residential and recreational. The District's bounds encompass nearly 0.5 square miles.

Population

According to Census 2000, the District's population was 28.¹³² Based on census designated place population in the 2010 Census, there are 33 permanent residents within the District.¹³³ Because the District is small in absolute numbers, an increase in only five full-time residents resulted in an increase in population of 18 percent over the last ten years.

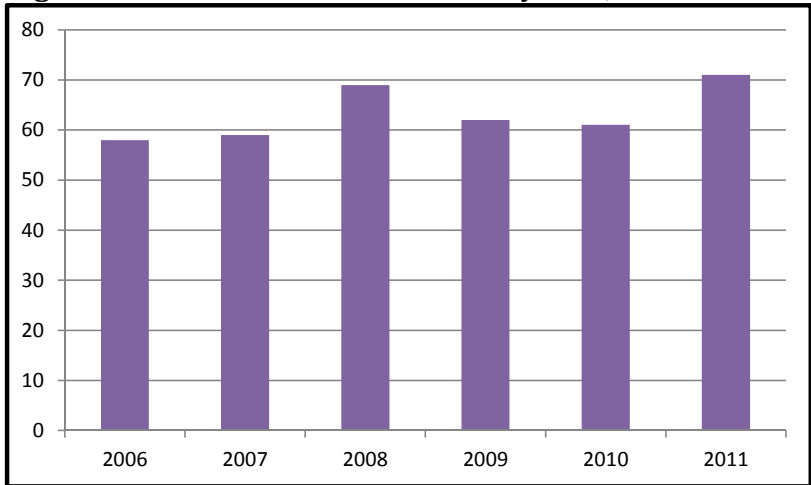
Existing Demand

The peak fire service demand times for the District are in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

¹³² Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

¹³³ Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

Figure 10-3: PAFPD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011



The District reported that it had observed an increase in the level of fire service demand in the last few years. The chief believes that it is due to out-of-district visitors.

As shown in Figure 10-3, there was a surge of fire service calls in 2008, after which the call volume went back down in 2009 and 2010, and again returned to peak levels in 2011. Since, PAFPD and WACSD are dispatched to all of each other's calls, the annual number of calls is the same for both districts.

Projected Growth and Development

WACSD anticipates growth in service demand within the District in the next few years. The community of Prattville is mostly built out with three to four empty lots, but service demand is expected to increase due to tourist activity. There are multiple planned RV hook-ups within Plumas Pines Resort and the National Forest area. A new campground, boat launch, and P.G.&E. beach are also expected to add to the District's service demand.

The District does not create population projections, as it relies entirely on an all-volunteer staff and limited funding. In addition, even in case of a foreseen increase in demand, PAFPD would not be able to hire additional personnel. However, an increase in demand within PAFPD could ultimately affect personnel decisions for WACSD. Therefore, the two districts should collaborate to forecast service needs within PAFPD to be able to adequately respond to each incident.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 33 in 2010 to approximately 35 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 together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

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

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.¹³⁴
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.¹³⁵
- 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.¹³⁶
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.¹³⁷
- 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.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

¹³⁵ Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- 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.¹³⁹
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.¹⁴⁰
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.¹⁴¹
- 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.¹⁴²
- 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.¹⁴³
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.¹⁴⁴

The County is in the process 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.

¹³⁹ Ibid.,

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

¹⁴⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 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.¹⁴⁵

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on solving an “out-of-district problem” when properties that are located outside of fire district boundaries are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

PAFPD, similarly to WACSD, reported the District was willing to consider including one small pocket of about 35 to 40 lots called Big Meadows in its SOI. PAFPD believes that it is in a better position to annex the area because its station is located only about two miles away from Big Meadows. There have been no serious annexation discussions with Big Meadows.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it was interested in consolidation with WACSD. Currently, the two districts have a functional consolidation contract renewable every July 1st. The districts decided not to proceed with consolidation at this time and, instead, to expand the existing agreement. Under the new agreement, which is currently being drafted, WACSD will take over the Prattville-Almanor FPD administration. The WACSD chief will also act as the PAFPD chief. The contract will be

¹⁴⁵ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

automatically renewed annually until the districts decide to proceed with consolidation, change the conditions of the agreement, or to cancel the agreement altogether.

Financing

The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. Although PAFPD experienced a reduction in funding due to termination of an equipment lease to CalFire, the situation has been mitigated by a recently passed assessment.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 10-11 was \$25,950. Revenues included property tax revenue (87 percent), interest from investments (one percent), state and federal aid (one percent), and other revenue (11 percent).

The primary source of funding is a share of the county property taxes, which varies with the assessed valuation of Prattville parcels. In November 2011, voters of the District approved a benefit assessment of \$75 per year, which is not reflected as part of the FY 10-11 revenues.

PAFPD's expenditures were \$16,116 in FY 10-11. Of this amount, 83 percent was spent on services and supplies, 14 percent on salaries and benefits and three percent on fixed assets.

Prattville-Almanor FPD currently pays WACSD \$5,000 to share in the cost of operations which includes fuel, manpower, equipment maintenance, vehicle insurance, and training expenses.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. Needs are assessed through input from firefighters, WACSD's chief and the PAFPD Board of Directors. Capital improvements are financed through fundraising and donations from the Fire Crackers auxiliary.

PAFPD has a financial reserve for engine needs, which is not a formal policy but an informal management practice. The District reports that about \$10,000 annually goes into the reserve. At the end of FY 10-11, the engine fund contained \$66,426.

The District does not participate in any joint ventures under joint powers agreements (JPAs).

FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

Service Overview

Prattville-Almanor FPD provides structural fire protection, basic life support, limited rescue services, and some fire prevention services. Calfire and USFS conduct most fire prevention activities in the area. The District contracts with Chester PUD fire department for ambulance service.

Collaboration

The District has a functional consolidation contract with West Almanor CSD according to which WACSD provides operations, training and automatic aid response to all emergency calls and incidents in the PAFPD boundary area. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses. West Almanor CSD, according to the contract is responsible for training of all PAFPD sworn personnel. The contract is valid for one year and is renewable every July 1st. PAFPD and WACSD are in the process of writing up a new agreement, under which WACSD will also take over PAFPD's administration. The new contract will be renewable annually.

The District maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County, CalFire and USFS. PAFPD is a member of Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District 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 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 (including PAFPD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center. Susanville Interagency Fire Center is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. The Susanville Interagency Fire 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.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. There is a possibility that when PAFPD changes its radio systems to the mandated narrow banding in the near future it may cause decrease in radio reception that could further result in communications issues.

Staffing

PAFPD has five sworn personnel—one volunteer fire chief and four volunteer firefighters. None of the volunteers get compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 52, with a range from 18 to 70.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. PAFPD tries to recruit more volunteers to help support the fire department, but due to mostly transient nature of the homeowners within the District, it is hard to find willing volunteers.

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.¹⁴⁶ PAFPD has one Firefighter II and one EMT I certified personnel. All of the District's firefighters are Firefighter I certified.

All training is conducted by West Almanor CSD. On average, 40 hours of training are required prior to obtaining Probationary Firefighter status. Currently, all of the District's volunteers are trained to Firefighter I level standards. Over 140 hours of training per year are available to volunteer firefighters. The primary challenge to meeting state-mandated training levels is that district personnel are volunteers and some of them are not year-round residents, which makes it hard for them to commit the necessary amount of hours.

Facilities and Capacity

The District owns and maintains one fire station, located at 2977 Scott Drive, Canyon Dam, which was built in 1974. Prattville-Almanor station was reported to be in good condition. It houses one type 2 fire engine, one type 1 tactical water tender and one rescue unit.

PAFPD is served by two water providers. Each provider has a 20,000 gallon storage tank for resident and firefighting use. Both systems are low pressure; and pressure must be boosted for firefighting purposes. In addition, the District has the lake and a well system to draw from.

¹⁴⁶ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Infrastructure Needs

Longer-term capital improvement needs for the District include replacing multiple pieces of equipment with smaller more up-to-date ones.

Immediate needs consist of improvements to the water supply. The existing supply line from the well system was reported to be inadequate to hook up to, and in need of enhancements in order to operate adequately.

Challenges

The District does not have any areas within its boundary area that are difficult to reach.

The biggest challenge for PAFPD is not having enough volunteer personnel available to respond and provide service in a safe and efficient manner. For this reason, mutual aid agreements are in place to help alleviate potential staffing issues on a fire scene.

Service Adequacy

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. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. PAFPD has no ISO rating as it has never been evaluated. PAFPD is hoping to be evaluated in the near future.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.¹⁴⁷

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 includes the rural and wilderness classifications. PAFPD does not track its response times.

¹⁴⁷ Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

It was reported that since West Almanor CSD responds to all PAFPD calls, the average response time for a duty officer is within two minutes of dispatch. The PAFPD engine response is about four to five minutes. When PAFPD personnel are available in the area, response time is within three to four minutes. CalFire tracks response times for each incident PAFPD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported by CalFire that the District's average response time in 2011 was 3.4 minutes inside its bounds. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 67. An area that PAFPD could improve upon is tracking and logging its response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would allow for more structured response and enhanced efficiency and consistency.

The service area size¹⁴⁸ for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Although the PAFPD's service area is 198 square miles, because WACSD and PAFPD cover the same service area and each of them has one station, the 198-square mile territory is served by two stations, each of which is serving 99 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 Lake Almanor area vary from 31 call firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

¹⁴⁹ PAFPD and WACSD have the same service area, share resources and get dispatched to each other's calls. Many of their service adequacy indicators are the same, including firefighters per 1,000 residents, since resourced are pooled to serve both districts.

Figure 10-4: Prattville-Almanor Fire Service Profile

Fire Service					
Facilities					
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
PAFPD Station	2977 Scott Drive, Canyon Dam, CA	Good	Unstaffed	1 Type 2 fire engine, 1 Type 1 tactical water tender and 1 rescue unit.	
Facility Sharing					
Current Practices: The District has an automatic aid agreement with WACSD The two agencies share resources and conduct joint trainings.					
Future opportunities: The District does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other agencies.					
Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies					
Capital imprvement needs include improvements to water supply line from well system and replacement of equipment.					
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls ⁵	71*
Stations Serving District	2*	EMS	Direct	% EMS	52%
Sq. Miles Served per Station ¹	99*	Ambulance Transport	CPUD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	4%
Total Staff ²	6	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	8%
Total Full-time Firefighters	0	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency	13%
Total Call Firefighters	5	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency	23%
Total Sworn Staff per Station ³	5	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	10%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	59*	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people	234*
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2011	Lake of reliable roads and winter storms present chellenges to WACDS.			
Average Response Time (min) ⁴	3.4	Training			
Percentage of response times under 5 min	67%	Over 140 hours of training per year are available to all volunteers. All personnel trained to Firefighter I standards.			
ISO Rating	None				
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements					
The District has automatic aid agreement with WACSD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the County, 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.					
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.					
5) PAFPD had 71 calls, as reported by the District. According to CalFire, PAFPD responded to 48 service calls.					
* Based on pooled resources, response to same service calls and identical service area of WACSD and PAFPD these service indicators are the same for two districts.					

PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ Present full-time population of Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District (PAFPD) is 33. A majority of the District's population is seasonal.
- ❖ Based on DOF projections, the District's population would increase to approximately 35 in 2020.
- ❖ The District's boundary area is built out and majority of service demand increase is expected to be a result of tourist activity in the region.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and short-term growth.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include improvements to water supply line from the well system and equipment replacements.
- ❖ It is recommended that the County Sheriff's Office work with the fire districts to update the ESN map that is used for dispatching, in order to adequately address any communication concerns and recent boundary changes.
- ❖ Currently, capital improvement projects are planned on an as-needed basis. The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify financing needs and sources for these needs.
- ❖ An area that PAFPD could improve upon is tracking response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on information exchange.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. The situation especially has improved with the approval of an assessment.
- ❖ PAFPD experienced reduction in funding due to termination of equipment leased to CalFire, but the situation has been mitigated by a recently passed assessment.
- ❖ The District has a reserve engine fund which receives \$10,000 a year. The balance at the end of FY 10-11 was \$66,426.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ PAFPD collaborates with other fire providers in Plumas County through informal mutual aid agreements and common trainings, and with WACSD through an automatic aid agreement and functional consolidation contract. WACSD and PAFPD share resources and conduct joint trainings. Under the new agreement, WACSD will take over PAFPD administration.
- ❖ PAFPD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District did not identify any additional opportunities to share its facilities with other agencies in the future.

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

- ❖ PAFPD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ Governmental structure options are annexation of Big Meadows and consolidation with WACSD. Consolidation with other fire districts offers opportunities for shared resources and finances.

11. SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT

Seneca Healthcare District (SHD) is a small, critical access hospital district, providing comprehensive medical services in the Lake Almanor area of Plumas County through a hospital, skilled nursing facility, an emergency room, and a hospital-based outpatient clinic. This is the first Municipal Service Review for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

SHD was formed in 1947 as an independent special district to meet the healthcare needs of the area residents.¹⁵⁰ The district did not start operating until 1952. The hospital opened its doors in 1954. In 1976, a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) was approved by a vote of the district residents and was constructed as a south wing to the existing hospital. In 1996, a hospital-based outpatient clinic including family practice physicians, surgeons, and consulting specialists was established.¹⁵¹

The principal act that governs the District is the Local Health Care District Law.¹⁵² The principal act empowers healthcare districts to provide medical services, emergency medical, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of residents' health and lives.¹⁵³ 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.

Boundaries

SHD is located in the town of Chester in northern Plumas County, within the Lake Almanor area. The District's boundary is entirely within Plumas County, and includes the communities of Chester, Lake Almanor Country Club, Hamilton Branch, Lake Almanor West, Prattville, and East Shore. The District starts at the Shasta and Lassen County borders in the north, borders Tehama and Lassen counties in the west and east respectively, and

¹⁵⁰ SBOE records.

¹⁵¹ <http://www.senecahospital.org/>

¹⁵² Health and Safety Code §32000-32492.

¹⁵³ Health and Safety Code §32121(j).

extends to the southern shore of Lake Almanor. The District’s boundaries encompass approximately 283 square miles.¹⁵⁴

There have been one annexation and two boundary revisions since the formation of SHD. The annexation took place in 1974 and involved 215 acres of property on the west shore of Lake Almanor.

Figure 11-1: SHD List of LAFCo Approved Border Changes

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Seneca Healthcare District	Formation	1947	SBOE
Unknown	Exclusion and Boundary Revision	1952	SBOE
Lake Almanor West	Annexation	1974	SBOE, LAFCo
Unknown	Boundary Revision	1975	SBOE
Unknown	Remove Bonds	1979	SBOE

Sphere of Influence

SHD’s SOI extends outside its boundaries to the southwest to the Tehama county line. The SOI was originally adopted in 1976,¹⁵⁵ and there have been no updates or amendments since that time. The District’s SOI is about 354 square miles compared to 283 square miles of boundary area.

Extra-territorial Services

SHD does not specifically provide services at facilities outside its bounds, but will provide services to patients that reside outside of the District’s boundaries and come to SHD-owned facilities. SHD serves both district residents and non-residents, and charges them equal fees notwithstanding of residency status.

Areas of Interest

The District reported that areas of interest include the territories of the Plumas Healthcare District and the Eastern Plumas Healthcare District. SHD expressed possible interest in consolidating with either or both of the districts; however, the District indicated that it did not think such a consolidation would occur in the near future.

¹⁵⁴ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 18, 2012. The data is not considered survey quality.

¹⁵⁵ Plumas LAFCo Resolution No. 76-11.

Seneca Healthcare District

Range 5 East

Range 6 East

Range 7 East

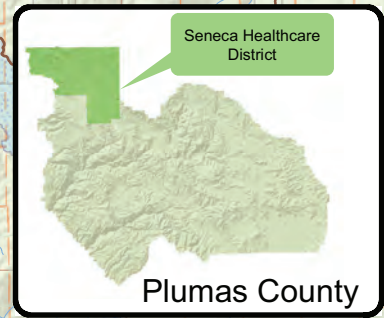
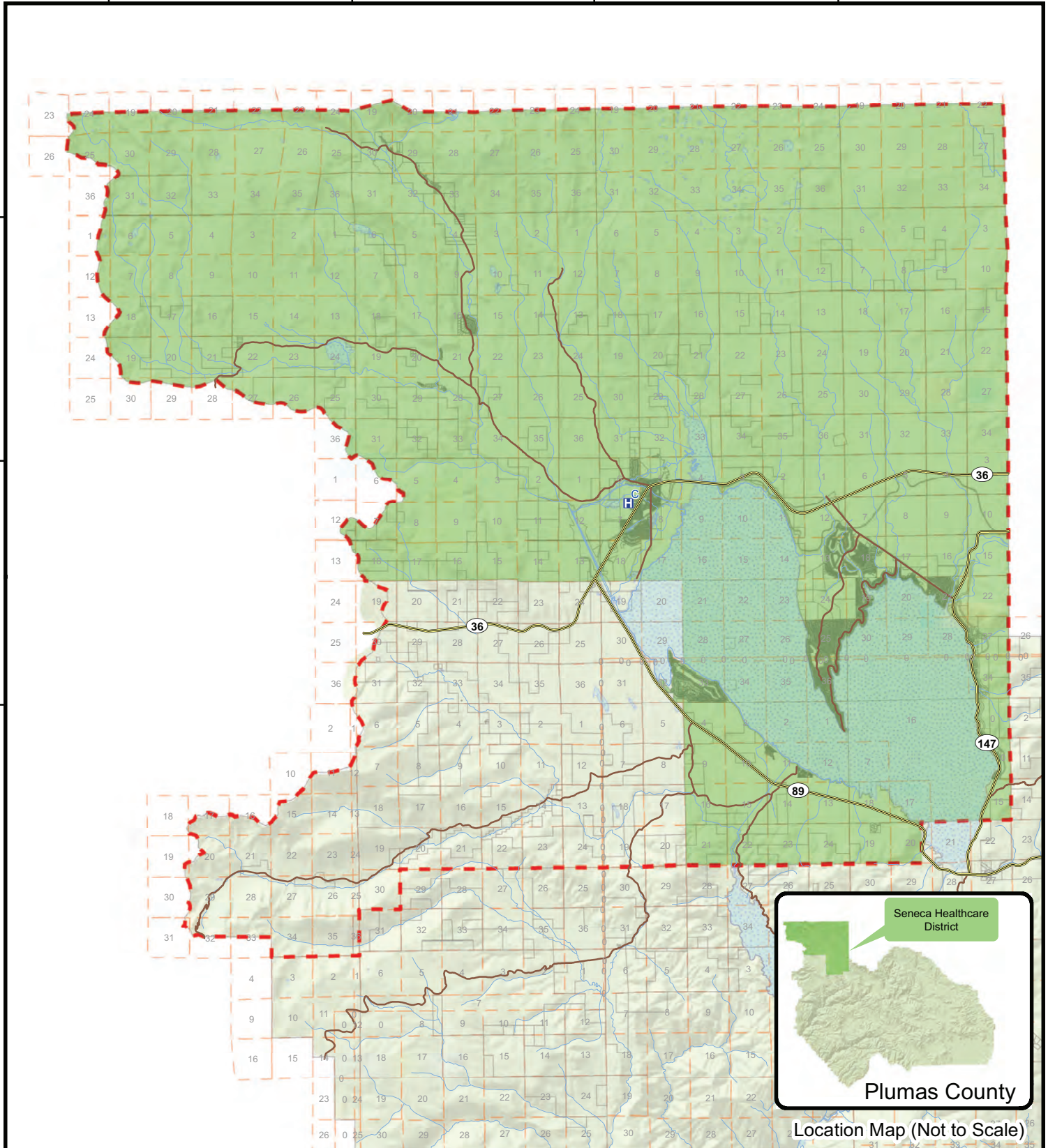
Range 8 East

Township 30 North

Township 29 North

Township 28 North

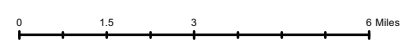
Township 27 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Seneca Healthcare District (SOI)
- Seneca Hospital
- Lake Almanor Clinic
- Seneca Healthcare District



Seneca Healthcare District
 Resolution:
 Formed: July 7, 1947

Seneca Healthcare District (SOI)
 Resolution: 76-11
 Adopted: January 28, 1976

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 4/20/2012

Accountability and Governance

The principal act orders that the governing body of a healthcare district must have five members. Directors may be appointed or elected, pending circumstances.¹⁵⁶ SHD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are elected to staggered four-year terms. The board members were elected at large, and there are currently no vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 11-3.

The Board meets once a month on the last Thursday at the Lake Almanor Clinic Conference Center. Board meeting agendas are posted at the post office in Chester, outside of the hospital front door and in the fire halls in the area. They are also made available to the public through a radio station in Susanville and in the local newspaper. Minutes of board meetings are passed out to the board members and the County Clerk. They are available to the general public upon request. Although the District maintains a website, agendas and minutes are not made available on it.

Figure 11-3: Seneca Healthcare District Governing Body

Seneca Healthcare District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Linda Wagner, Interim CEO			
Address:	199 Reynolds Road, Chester, CA			
Telephone:	866-507-2195			
Email/website:	www.senecahospital.org			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Ronald Longacre	President	December 2012	Elected	4 years
Loretta Gomez	Vice President	December 2014	Elected	4 years
Bob Caton	Secretary	December 2014	Elected	4 years
David Slusher Jr.	Treasurer	December 2012	Elected	4 years
Richard Rydell	Assistant Secretary/Treasurer	December 2014	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Last Thursday of every month at 3pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at Lake Almanor Clinic Conference Center.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the post office in Chester, outside of the hospital front door and in fire halls. Advertised on radio station in Susanville and in a newspaper.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request. Distributed to the Board and the County Clerk.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, SHD does public outreach through its presence at the local health fair and by collaborating with the County to administer free flu shots. The District maintains a website and advertises its elections and upcoming vacancies through articles in a local newspaper.

¹⁵⁶ Health and Safety Code §32100.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted by contacting the administration of SHD in person, sending a letter or addressing the Board directly at a board meeting. The person responsible for handling complaints depends on the nature of the complaint. The District does not keep records of its complaints, but estimated that it had about 15 complaints filed in 2010. The complaints were largely related to billing, charges, patient experience, and hospital administration.

SHD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District participated in an interview and cooperated with the document requests.

Planning and Management Practices

The District employs about 100 full-time equivalents (FTEs)—65 medical and 35 administrative. Altogether, there are 125 employees. In addition there are over 150 volunteers who provide services through membership in the Seneca Hospital Auxiliary, Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, and Sierra Hospice.

The District is administered through four departmental groups—Clinical, Business, Ancillary, and Rural Health. The head of each department, as well as the heads of medical staff and auxiliary, are accountable to the chief executive officer (CEO). The executive assistant and human resource manager also report directly to the CEO who is accountable to the Board of Directors and the contractor organization, Renown Health, by which he is employed.

SHD performs staff evaluations annually. Each department head conducts evaluations of employees within the relevant department. The CEO evaluates the department heads, the executive assistant and the human resources director. The CEO is evaluated by the management of Renown Health.

The District does not evaluate its own performance. However, its performance is evaluated by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) through benchmarking with other providers. Employee workload is tracked through timesheets that help SHD determine if staffing levels and types are correct and effective.

With regard to financial planning, the District adopts an annual budget; financial statements are audited by an independent auditor annually. The District does not have a capital improvement plan. SHD reported that it does not presently have the financial means to produce a capital improvement plan. The District plans its capital improvements by establishing a list of infrastructure needs with a planning horizon of two to three years. The list is compiled with input from the CEO, department heads and physicians. It is then confirmed by the Board and updated annually. The District currently does not have any other planning documents, such as a master or strategic plan; however, is planning to start working on a strategic plan later this year and get it adopted in 2013.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Designated land uses within the District consist primarily of general forest, general agriculture and timberland production in the northern part of SHD, and recreational and residential around Lake Almanor.¹⁵⁷ The total boundary area of SHD is approximately 283 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 3,957 residents within the District, based on census tract population in the 2010 census.¹⁵⁸

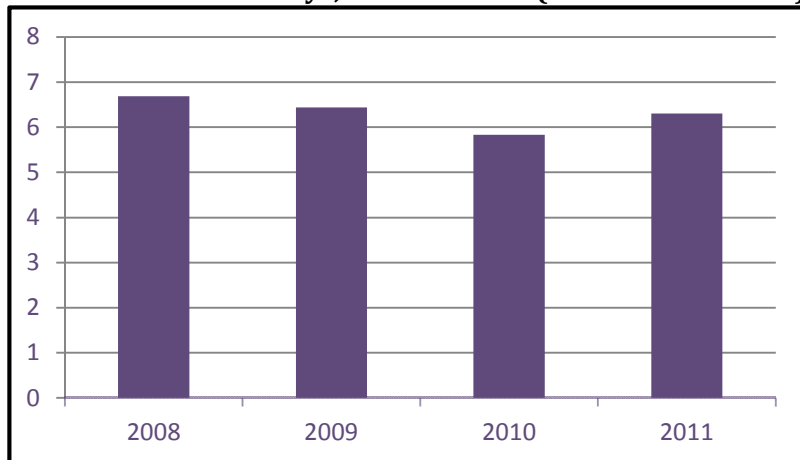
It is estimated that the population of the Lake Almanor Basin grows to over 20,000 during the summer season from a winter population of 5,000.¹⁵⁹

Existing Demand

The District reported that service demand has been decreasing in the last few years. Residents have been migrating out of the area, due to the recent recession. The region has been hit especially hard economically, as many residents are only part time and maintain second homes and investment homes that have been increasingly going vacant. In addition, there has been a significant decline in the timber industry, which has caused an outflow of young people seeking employment elsewhere.

Figure 11-4: Total Patient Days, in Thousands (FY 2008 – FY 2011)

The District had a total of 6,302 patient days in FY 10-11,¹⁶⁰ which equates to an estimated population served of about 264 patients.¹⁶¹ The estimated population served by SHD in FY 10-11 was approximately five percent higher than the estimated population served by SHD in FY 09-10, meaning that more individual patients were



¹⁵⁷ Plumas County Parcel Application.

¹⁵⁸ Census Tracts 5.01 and 5.02 in Plumas County.

¹⁵⁹ www.senecahospital.org

¹⁶⁰ OSHPD, Hospital Summary Individual Disclosure Report, 07/01/2010-06/30/3011.

¹⁶¹ Author's estimate based on average lengths of stay in days per type of care.

served in FY 10-11. The average length of stay was also slightly longer in FY 10-11 than it was in FY 09-10. There were less patient days in FY 09-10 than in FY 10-11 for both medical/surgical acute and skilled nursing types of care.

The District experiences peak service demand in summer months when the Lake Almanor area attracts a lot of tourists and part-time residents.

Projected Growth and Development

Although no formal population projections have been made by the District, SHD believes there will be limited or no growth in the next few years. SHD attempts to project future demand by reviewing property tax revenue and income from charges. The District forecasts for the future based on trends for revenues and number of patient visits.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 3,957 in 2010 to approximately 4,155 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

There are two potential developments throughout the District, both of which are currently on hold. The Walker Ranch development contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course. Another planned project is the Dyer Mountain Ski Resort, which is stalled due to litigation. If built, it has the potential to not only increase the off-season population in the area, but also result in higher service demand for SHD due to increased ski-related injuries.

The District appears to have the capacity to serve potential growth areas. SHD did not identify any areas where it would have difficulty providing adequate levels of service.

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 District does not take part in reviewing plans for proposed developments.

With regard to future growth opportunities, SHD identified its willingness to consolidate with other healthcare districts. The District reported that it discussed consolidation with EPHD and PHD, and as a result concluded that there were too many varying interests in the County and each district desired to maintain an independent hospital in order to retain a particular community identity and control. Therefore, SHD has concluded that consolidation of the healthcare districts in the County will likely not occur in the near future.

Financing

The District reported that its current financing level was adequate to deliver services. However, the District faces some minor challenges, due to the current economic climate. SHD observed that tax revenues had declined, because of the population outflow from the area. Income from service charges has also been decreasing, due to a decline in primary care visits and reimbursements from Medicare and Medi-Cal. The District tries to compensate for these losses by offering new services. By adding orthopedic and pain management services, the District was able to raise additional income. In the future, SHD sees an opportunity to add urology services and potentially perform surgeries, which are anticipated to be in demand, due to aging population of the region.

Rates charged to patients for services constitute the District's primary income. The District's rates are determined based on a rate study called Ingenix. Ingenix is a product of the United Health Group, which sells databases of physician and healthcare facility pricing, among other services. SHD serves both district residents and non-residents, and charges them equal fees notwithstanding of residency status. The District also accepts all patients regardless of their ability to pay. A patient is classified as a charity patient by reference to certain established policies of the District. Essentially, these policies define charity services for which no payment is anticipated. Because SHD does not pursue collection of amounts determined to qualify as charity care, they are not reported as net patient service revenues.

SHD renders services to patients under contractual arrangements with the Medicare and Medi-Cal programs, health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and preferred provider organizations (PPOs). Patient service revenues from these programs approximate 96 percent of gross patient service revenues.

The Medicare program reimburses the District on a cost-basis payment system for inpatient and outpatient hospital services. The cost based reimbursements is determined based on filed Medicare cost reports. Skilled nursing services are reimbursed at predetermined amounts based on the Medicare rates for the services. The District contracts to provide services to Medi-Cal, HMO and PPO inpatients on negotiated rates. The skilled nursing facility is reimbursed by the Medi-Cal program on a prospective per diem basis subject to audit by the state. Medicare and Medi-Cal revenue accounted for approximately 64 percent of the District's net patient revenues for FY 09-10.

The District divides its revenues into operating and non-operating. Operating revenues result from exchange transactions associated with providing healthcare services, which is the District's primary activity. Non-operating revenues are those transactions not considered directly linked to providing healthcare services.

The District's total operating revenue for FY 09-10 was \$12,843,525; the operating revenue for FY 10-11 was \$13,412,029. Non-operating revenues for FY 09-10 and FY 10-11 were \$756,761 and \$655,994 respectively. Total revenue for FY 10-11 was \$14,068,023 and consisted of net patient service income (95 percent), other operating revenue (0.6 percent), property tax revenue (three percent), non-capital grant revenues (0.4 percent), other non-operating revenue (0.8 percent) and investment income (0.1 percent). The gross

patient revenues (both inpatient and outpatient) in FY 10-11 were \$24 million. After all the deductions in the same year, the District's net income from charges was 51 percent. The deductions consisted of contractual allowances¹⁶² (84 percent), charity discount (less than one percent), other allowances (seven percent), and bad debt (nine percent).

Occasionally, the District receives grants from various governmental agencies and private organizations. The District also receives contributions from related foundations and auxiliary organizations, as well as from individuals and other private organizations. Capital grants and contributions are listed as a separate category in the SHD financial statements. In FY 09-10, they amounted to \$90,071 and in FY 10-11 to \$36,180.

Similar to revenues the District's expenses are divided into operating and non-operating. Operating expenses are all expenses incurred to provide healthcare services, other than financing costs. Non-operating expenses are transactions that are not considered directly linked to providing healthcare services. The District's operating expenses in FY 09-10 were about \$14 million and \$13,529,785 in FY10-11. Operating expenditures were composed mainly of salaries and wages (32 percent), professional fees (27 percent), provision for bad debt (eight percent), employee benefits (nine percent), and purchased services (eight percent). Other expenses include supplies, repairs and maintenance, utilities and telephone, rentals and leases, insurance, depreciation and amortization, and other operating expenses. Non-operating expenses are represented by interest expense, which was \$88,211 in FY 09-10 and \$95,580 in FY 10-11.

The District's operating expenses in FY 10-11 amounted to \$2,147 per patient day, or \$51,249 per patient.

The District had long-term debt of \$2.4 million as of the end of FY 10-11. The debt consisted of loans, notes payable and lease obligations, the details for which are shown in Figure 11-5.

Figure 11-5: SHD Loans and Leases

<i>Payee</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Beginning Balance</i>	<i>Monthly Payment</i>	<i>Term</i>	<i>Maturity Date</i>
USDA #1	Generator-LAC Building	\$39,500.00	\$248.00	20 years	Dec-26
USDA #2	Generator-LAC Building	\$27,070.00	\$170.00	20 years	Dec-26
USDA #3	Generator-LAC Building	\$5,392.00	\$34.00	20 years	Dec-26
Siemens Medical	Microsan AS-4 Analyzer	\$25,412.00	\$525.00	60 months	Feb-13
Siemens Medical	Coagulation Analyzer	\$13,000.00	\$269.00	60 months	Mar-13
Siemens Medical	Xpand Analyzer	\$105,927.00	\$2,194.00	60 months	Mar-13
Plumas Bank Loan	LAC	\$2,017,317.55	\$16,206.99	20 years	Aug-15
Enloe Notes Payable	Unknown	\$212,230.00	\$2,026.92	120 monts	Jun-15
Total		\$2,445,848.55	\$21,673.91		

¹⁶² Contractual allowances are computed deductions based on the difference between gross charges and the contractually agreed upon rates with third party government-based programs such as Medicare and Medi-Cal, and other third party insurers. These allowances are accrued based on estimates derived from historical collection experiences by payor category and type of account (inpatient, outpatient or clinic), adjusted for known exposures attributable to any given account.

The District has a management practice to maintain an emergency reserve fund, the target goal of which is \$500,000 or 15 days of operational income. Currently, SHD has \$1,050,000 or about 30 days of operational income in its reserve fund.

The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPAs) or joint financing mechanisms.

HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Service Overview

The District owns and operates a public general acute care hospital and a skilled nursing facility (SNF). The SNF provides for patients to be transferred from acute care to SNF and not leave the area. Other services provided by the District include outpatient laboratory and x-ray services including mammography, sonography, and CT scanning, including bone density, in-house pharmacy, hospice, anesthesia, inpatient and outpatient surgical services, stress testing, respiratory care, nutritional counseling, EKG, and patient education. In addition, SHD provides emergency services, and runs a hospital-based outpatient clinic that includes family practice physicians, surgeons, and consulting specialists.

SHD occasionally provides services to other organizations in the area. In particular, it frequently performs drug testing for some local employers. The District also contracts with other entities for several services, such as billing that is performed by Healthcare Resources Group, and lab work provided by Lab Core. SHD contracts for CEO services with Renown Health based in Reno, NV.

The District contracts to provide services to Medicare, Medi-Cal, HMO, and PPO inpatients.

The District made multiple attempts to collaborate with other healthcare districts in the County, however, these attempts have failed, due to lack of a common goal.

Staffing

SHD has 125 employees, out of which 65 are medical and 35 are administrative. There are approximately 100 full time equivalents (FTEs). The District's medical staff represents specialties in cardiology, internal medicine, orthopedics, pathology, pediatrics, radiology, podiatry, gastroenterology, ophthalmology, and urology.

The emergency room has a physician on call 24 hours daily. Emergency response is provided by the Chester Fire Department, Westwood Fire Department and the Peninsula Fire Department ambulances. The ambulance services are staffed by paramedics and/or emergency medical technicians qualified to deliver advanced cardiac life support. Emergency transfers to hospitals in Chico, Reno, or other urban areas are available by aircraft and ground transport.

All doctors, nurses, and practitioners are expected to have appropriate certifications, and licenses as mandated by law in order to practice in SHD, or oversee its hospital, emergency room and clinic.

The District also has over 150 volunteers who provide services through membership in the Seneca Hospital Auxiliary, Retired Seniors Volunteer Program, and Sierra Hospice.

Facilities and Capacity

The District owns and operates Seneca Hospital, the Skilled Nursing Facility, and the hospital-based outpatient clinic.

Seneca Hospital, which provides inpatient services, has ten acute care beds and 16 skilled nursing/long-term care beds. The hospital began its operations in 1954 and was reported to be in fair condition. Much of the original acute care structure is still in use today; however, it has been remodeled continuously. The District provides emergency medical services through its emergency room, which is staffed by an on-call physician 24 hours daily.

In 1976, a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) was approved by a vote of the district residents and was constructed as a south wing to the existing hospital. This facility was also reported to be in fair condition. It allows for the patients to be transferred from acute care at the hospital to SNF for long-term care without leaving the area.

In 1996, the District established a hospital-based outpatient clinic that now includes family practice physicians, surgeons, and consulting specialists. The clinic is in good condition. Medical staff members provide family practice, cardiology, internal medicine, surgery, orthopedics, pathology, pediatrics, radiology, dermatology, diabetes and nutrition, urology, podiatry, physical therapy, sports medicine, screening colonoscopies, mammography, bone density studies and emergency medical care to the community.

The District owns three vehicles:

- ❖ A pickup truck is used primarily for running errands for the District and for plowing snow on district premises.
- ❖ A tractor is used primarily for plowing snow and for transporting heavy articles around campus.
- ❖ A van is used for transporting SNF/LTC residents as necessary and for running district errands.

Infrastructure Needs

The District has multiple infrastructure needs that are classified by priority. Repair or replacement of emergency ramp roofing was categorized as very high priority. High priority projects include clinic and mechanical building exterior painting, physical therapy

roofing replacement, physical therapy parking area repair, emergency generator battery replacement, staff house roofing material replacement, acute hallway floor cover replacement, professional maintenance of emergency generator, cardiac central monitoring station and antennae replacement, Brentwood house painting, Brentwood house ramp repair and resurface, education building painting, pump house painting, service rite broiler, replacement of dietary hood extinguisher system (currently in progress), hospital parking lot resurfacing, replacement of tires for grounds tractor, computer network upgrade, floor covering replacement in ER and patient rooms, and back fence repair. Medium priority needs are replacement of computer monitors with flat screens, hospital building roof repair, clinic parking lot crack repair, clinic building sealing, Meyers plow replacement, replacement of maintenance vehicle, and software installation. Hospital bed replacement and purchase of high-speed floor burnisher are low priority projects.

Capital improvement projects planned for FY 11-12 are estimated to cost over \$99,000 and are as follows:

- ❖ Clinic boiler reseal and re-tube;
- ❖ Clinic elevator load test;
- ❖ Emergency ramp/hospital front entrance roof repair;
- ❖ Physical therapy building roof replacement;
- ❖ Replacement of emergency generator start batteries;
- ❖ Resurface acute corridor;
- ❖ CT Ramada painting and repair;
- ❖ Brentwood house ramp repair;
- ❖ Replacement of front tires on the ground tractor;
- ❖ Back fence repair;
- ❖ Floor covering replacement in ER hall and ER rooms;
- ❖ Clinic and mechanical building painting; and
- ❖ Floor covering replacement in patient rooms 1-7.

The District currently does not have any plans to construct new facilities.

Challenges

The District reported the following challenges to providing adequate services:

- ❖ Decline in population in the area resulting in a decline in the District's revenues; and
- ❖ Dramatically declining reimbursements from Medicare and Medical.

SHD sees opportunities to improve its financing by enhancing specialty services as determined by a needs assessment. The District is anticipating an increasing need for these services, due to the aging population in the area.

Service Adequacy

There are several benchmarks that may define the level of healthcare service provided by an agency, such as complaints, patient outcomes, occupancy rates, staffing levels, costs, emergency room closures and workload, operating room use and the extent to which residents go to other hospitals for service. Complaints, costs and staffing levels were discussed in the previous sections of this chapter. Indicators of service adequacy discussed here include 1) treatment response rates to heart attacks and pneumonia, 2) hospital occupancy rate, 3) pneumonia mortality rates, 4) mortality rates related to other conditions, 5) EMS ambulance diversion rates, 6) operating room use, 7) the extent to which residents go to other hospitals for service, and 8) accreditation information. These indicators for measuring service adequacy are established by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Studies (CMS)¹⁶³ and Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD).

Although this data is not available specifically for SHD or even for Plumas County, it is important to discuss Prevention Quality Indicators (PQIs).¹⁶⁴ Due to small population sizes, twenty-four counties were reported using seven groupings of two to five counties each. Groups were used because the count of selected hospitalizations in some counties was too small for meaningful analysis. Plumas County was grouped together with Lassen, Modoc, Sierra, and Nevada into the Northeastern Group. This group had California's best (lowest) rates for PQIs, suggesting that residents there have the best access to outpatient care. When a person receives early and proper treatment for specific medical conditions, disease complications may be reduced or eliminated, disease progression may be slowed, and hospitalization may be prevented.

Community-acquired pneumonia is one of the leading causes of death both nationwide and in California. For this reason, OSHPD chose it to be one of the conditions studied in the California Hospital Outcomes Program (CHOP), an initiative mandated by the State of

¹⁶³ EPHD website, "Quality Measures" document

¹⁶⁴ The Prevention Quality Indicators (PQIs) are a set of measures that can be used with hospital inpatient discharge data to identify quality of care for "ambulatory care sensitive conditions" in adult populations. These are conditions for which good outpatient care can potentially prevent the need for hospitalization or for which early intervention can prevent complications or more severe disease. The Prevention Quality Indicators represent hospital admission rates for the following 14 ambulatory care sensitive conditions.

California. The latest reports available are for 2002-2004. In 2004, SHD had lower rates of community-acquired pneumonia than the State average. Rates for Plumas Healthcare District were lower as well, while, Eastern Plumas Healthcare District had similar rates to the State average.

Inpatient Mortality Indicators (IMIs) for SHD are available for congestive heart failure, acute stroke, gastro-intestinal hemorrhage and pneumonia for 2009.¹⁶⁵ Evidence suggests that high mortality may be associated with deficiencies in the quality of hospital care provided. The IMIs are part of a suite of measures called Inpatient Quality Indicators (IQIs), developed by the Federal Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), that provide a perspective on hospital quality of care. IMIs are calculated using patient data reported to OSHPD by all California-licensed hospitals. All IMIs include risk-adjustment, a process that takes into account patients' pre-existing health problems to "level the playing field" and allow fair comparisons among hospitals. The District's mortality rates in 2009 for congestive heart failure were zero percent compared to three percent statewide, zero percent for gastro-intestinal hemorrhage compared to two percent statewide, zero percent for acute stroke compared to ten percent statewide, and 12.6 percent for pneumonia compared to 4.6 percent statewide. SHD is considered not significantly different from the statewide average for all Inpatient Mortality Indicators.

The District's hospitals had an occupancy rate of 61.4 percent in 2010, compared to a statewide average of 71 percent.¹⁶⁶ According to the report submitted by the District, but unaudited by OSHPD yet, the SHD hospital occupancy rate in 2011 was 66.4 percent. These occupancy rates suggest that service adequacy is satisfactory, and there are enough hospital beds in the area to serve patients as needed.

Emergency room closure data was not available for recent years. The last year when this information was reported was 2007. The SHD was closed for a total of zero hours during that year. For 2010, in lieu of emergency closure rates, EMS ambulance diversion rates were used as an indicator for emergency room use. In 2010, ambulances were not diverted to other hospitals from SHD.

The operating room at the SHD hospital was used for surgeries approximately two percent of the available time in 2010.¹⁶⁷ The operating room was used for outpatient surgery over ten times more than for inpatient surgery. The operating room has abundant capacity to accommodate existing demand and possible future growth.

¹⁶⁵ OSHPD did not report mortality rates for other conditions (for esophageal resection, pancreatic resection, abdominal aortic aneurism repair, craniotomy, percutaneous transluminal coronary angioplasty, carotid endarterectomy, acute myocardial infarction, and hip fracture) for the District because fewer than three procedures were performed or conditions were treated.

¹⁶⁶ OSHPD, Annual Financial Disclosure Report, June 30, 2010, 1. CDC, Table 116. Occupancy rates in community hospitals and average annual percent change, by state: United States, selected years 1960–2008. Latest figure found for State of California was 2008.

¹⁶⁷ Operating room use rates are calculated as the number of surgery-minutes divided by the annual capacity of the operating rooms (number of minutes in a year is based on 24-hour use).

The adequacy of hospital facilities and services in meeting the needs of Chester and Lake Almanor residents can be gauged by the extent to which residents travel outside their region to receive hospital services. The rates were calculated based on patient discharge data from OSHPD. Residential location was approximated by zip code. About 34 percent of residents who live within Seneca HD boundaries patronize the district hospital. To compare, approximately 73 percent of Eastern Plumas County residents patronize the hospital in Portola.

There are several major healthcare-related accreditation organizations in the United States: Healthcare Facilities Accreditation Program (HFAP), Joint Commission (JC), Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP), Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC), The Compliance Team – Exemplary provider programs, Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation (HQAA), and DNV Healthcare, Inc. (DNVHC). For the State of California the primary accreditation organization is the Joint Commission. The Joint Commission is a not-for-profit organization that accredits and certifies more than 19,000 health organizations and programs in the country. Accreditation can be earned by an entire healthcare organization, for example, hospitals, nursing homes, office-based surgery practices, home care providers, and laboratories. In California, the Joint Commission is part of the joint survey process with State authorities. Hospitals are not required to be accredited in order to operate. Accreditation generally recognizes outstanding performance by a healthcare provider. SHD does not maintain any accreditations.

Figure 11-6: Seneca Healthcare Protection District Profile

Healthcare Services			
Facilities			
Hospitals/Clinics	Location	Condition	Owner
Seneca Hospital	130 Brentwood Drive, Chester, CA	Fair	SHD
Skilled Nursing Facility	130 Brentwood Drive, Chester, CA	Fair	SHD
Lake Almanor Clinic	199 Reynolds Road, Chester, CA	Good	SHD
Service Challenges			
The District's challenges include a decline in residential population and consequently in revenues, and a decline in government reimbursements through Medicare and Medical.			
Facility Needs/Deficiencies			
District infrastructure needs include multiple replacements and repairs in all of its facilities. SHD classifies its planned projects by priority. There is one very high priority project, 19 high priority, eight medium priority, and two low priority. Fourteen projects were planned for FY 11-12 that will cost over \$99,000.			
Facility Sharing			
Current Practices:			
The District currently does not share facilities with other agencies.			
Future Opportunities:			
The District does not see any opportunities for facility sharing in the future. SHD indicated that it tried to collaborate with PHD and EPHD on joint electronic records and common laundry and physician contracts; however, the efforts fell through, due to the lack of a unified common goal among the three districts.			
Service Adequacy			
Occupancy rate, 2010	61.4% (versus statewide average of 71%)		
Hospital usage by residents	34% of residents (versus 73% in EPHD)		
Accreditations	No accreditations maintained		

SENECA HEALTHCARE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 3,957 residents within Seneca Healthcare District (SHD).
- ❖ The District experienced a decrease in service demand in the last few years due to residents migrating out of the area because of the recent recession.
- ❖ Little or no growth in population and in service demand is expected within the District in the next few years.
- ❖ There are two potential developments throughout the District, both of which are currently on hold.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and potential future growth.
- ❖ SHD has multiple infrastructure needs classified by priority, including facility and parking lot repairs and equipment replacements.
- ❖ The District plans its capital improvements by establishing a list of infrastructure needs with a planning horizon of two to three years.
- ❖ The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify financing needs, potential revenue sources for these needs and timing of the improvements.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services; however, the District faces some minor challenges, due to the current economic climate.
- ❖ The District tries to compensate for the financing challenges by offering new services.
- ❖ The District had long-term debt of \$2.4 million as of the end of FY 10-11.
- ❖ SHD has a management practice to maintain an emergency reserve fund, the target goal of which is \$500,000 or 15 days of operational income.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ SHD currently does not share facilities with other agencies.
- ❖ The District does not see opportunities to share facilities with other agencies in the future.
- ❖ SHD indicated that it tried to collaborate with PHD and EPHD on joint electronic records and common laundry and physician contracts; however, the efforts fell through, due to the lack of a unified common goal among the three districts.

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

- ❖ SHD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ The District conducts extensive outreach through its website and in the community.
- ❖ A governmental structure option is consolidation with other healthcare districts in Plumas County, possibly with EPHD and/or PHD. However, the District reported that consolidation is not likely to occur in the near future.

12. WALKER RANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Walker Ranch Community Services District (WRCSD) provides domestic/emergency water and sewer collection, treatment and disposal services. Additionally, WRCSD is charged with inspecting all drainage ditches on a monthly basis to ensure that they are kept free of debris or materials which could affect stormwater runoff. WRCSD also provides snow removal on private roads around the water and sewer systems in order to gain access to the systems in the winter months. The District pays PG&E for electricity related to street lighting. This is the first Municipal Service Review (MSR) for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

Walker Ranch CSD was formed in 1995¹⁶⁸ as a dependent special district of the County. The purpose for the formation, according to the formation resolution, was to ensure adequate and orderly maintenance of community services for the Walker Ranch property.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.¹⁶⁹ 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).¹⁷⁰

WRCSD is located on the north end of the Lake Almanor peninsula. The nearest adjacent water and wastewater utility service providers include Hamilton Branch CSD to the east and West Almanor CSD to the southwest.

¹⁶⁸ LAFCo File Number 1-F-94.

¹⁶⁹ Government Code §61000-61226.5.

¹⁷⁰ Government Code §61106.

Boundaries

WRCSD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County and includes the Walker Ranch Subdivision. The District's boundaries encompass approximately 4.4 square miles.¹⁷¹ The District's boundaries are depicted in Figure 12-1.

There have been no annexations to or detachments from the District since its formation.

Sphere of Influence

The District has not had an SOI adopted by LAFCo. The Commission will adopt an SOI during the SOI updates to follow this MSR.

Extra-territorial Services

The District has not served water or wastewater connections outside of its boundaries to date.

Areas of Interest

WRCSD identified two areas of interest where drainage and traffic projects are under consideration. Water and wastewater projects are discussed later in this chapter in their relevant sections.

Big Cove Road Drainage Improvement Project

There is a flooding problem that occurs at the intersection of Big Cove Road and Peninsula Drive. Staff has retained a consultant and has determined that existing culvert sizes need to be increased. The project has been designed, but there is an easement dispute (between Peninsula Drive and Lake Almanor) that first needs to be resolved. Funding of the project was initially expected to be on a fair-share basis with certain development contractors, but the present day economic situation is impeding that effort.

Clifford Road Traffic Corridor Improvements

The Department of Public Works has conducted a traffic study that focused on level of service and speeds within the Clifford Road corridor. The project is presently in progress. Proposed funding for the construction phase funding has not yet been finalized and may include contributions from the infrastructure fund.

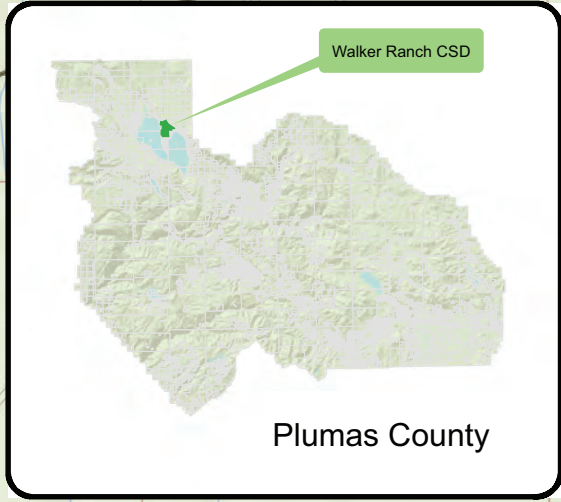
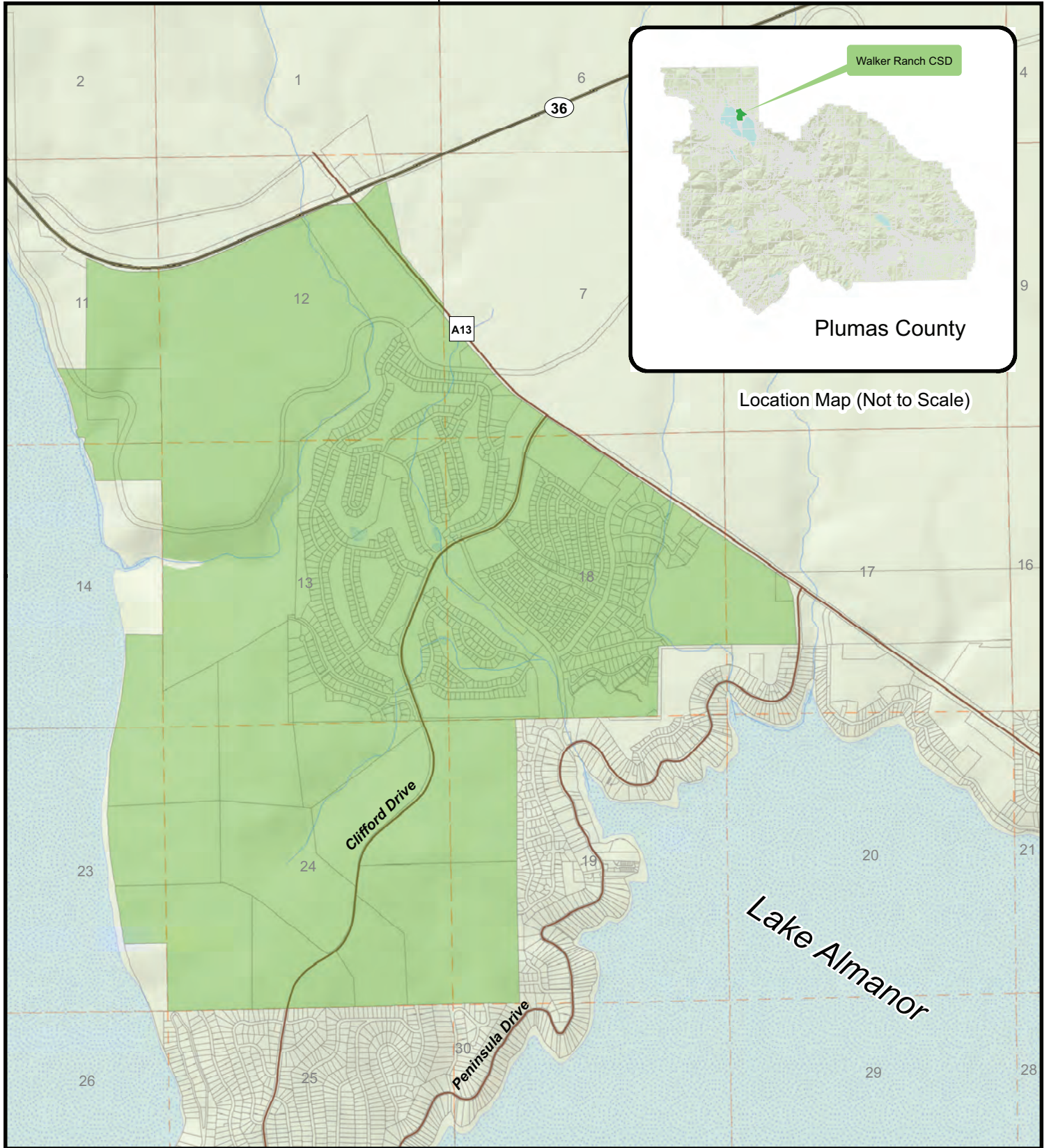
¹⁷¹ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2012. The data is not considered survey quality.

Walker Ranch Community Services District

Range 7 East

Range 8 East

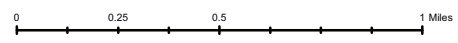
Township 28 North



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies
- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Walker Ranch CSD



Walker Ranch CSD
 Resolution: 95-10
 Formed: June 15, 1995

Walker Ranch CSD (SOI)
 Resolution: None
 Adopted:

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 7/26/2012

Accountability and Governance

WRCSO is governed by a governing body that consists of the five Supervisors of the Plumas County Board of Supervisors. Board members are elected by supervisorial district and serve staggered four-year terms. Current governing board members are Terry Swofford, Robert Meacher, Sherrie Thrall, Lori Simpson, and Jon Kennedy.

The Governing Board meets on the first three Tuesday mornings of every month in the Courthouse Board of Supervisor’s Chambers. The Governing Board meeting agendas are part of the Board of Supervisor’s agendas and are posted on the Plumas County website. Governing Board meeting .minutes are also available on the Plumas County website.

Figure 13-2: Walker Ranch CSD Governing Body

Walker Ranch CSD				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Robert Perreault, General Manager, Plumas County Engineer			
Address:	555 Main Street, Quincy, CA 95971			
Telephone:	530-283-6222			
Email/website:	bobperreault@countyofplumas.com			
<i>Governing Body</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration ¹	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Terry Swofford	District 1	December 2012	Elected	4 years
Robert Meacher	District 2	December 2012	Elected	4 years
Sherrie Thrall	District 3	December 2014	Elected	4 years
Lori Simpson	District 4	December 2012	Elected	4 years
Jon Kennedy	District 5	December 2014	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	First three Tuesdays of every month.			
Location:	Board of Supervisors Chambers in the Courthouse			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted on the Plumas County website			
Minutes Distribution:	Posted on the Plumas County website			
Notes: 1) Expiration of term” does not include information on the current election cycle.				

Plumas County makes available its budget, general plan, emergency operations plan and other documents on its website. Online CSD information includes financial information contained in the County budget and a webpage with a short description on the County website. As part of its outreach efforts, WRCSO annually mails the State-required consumer confidence report on the District’s water quality.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints may be submitted to the operator. The District’s general manager is notified of any unresolved complaints and oversees the process until complaints are resolved. During its last inspection of the WRCSO system, the County Environmental Health Agency noted a concern that there is no written complaint response program and recommended that one be initiated. The District received no complaints in 2011.

Walker Ranch CSD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.

Planning and Management Practices

The Plumas County Engineering Department manages the District. The County Engineer acts as the general manager of the District and is supported by two other county staff. Other staff members from the Department of Public Works are also available for support as circumstances dictate. The District also contracts with Sierra Water Management for operation and maintenance of the water and wastewater facilities. The District contracts with Sierra Water Management for one operator for both, water and wastewater facilities. The operator occasionally hires part-time help. The District contracts with another company to perform water testing services and an outside accountant for billing services.

County employees are evaluated at a minimum of once a year. County employees track hours worked for WRCSD in a timesheet. The operator is evaluated at times of contract renewals. WRCSD reports that it does not perform formal evaluations of overall district performance, such as benchmarking or annual reports. Incidents are addressed as they arise. The District is regulated by the Plumas County Environmental Health Agency. Regular inspections are completed by the Agency, which evaluates the District's system and operations. The most recent inspection was completed in 2010.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are completed by the County and are not audited individually, but are combined with all other county finances in the County's audit report. Other planning documents include master plans for the Foxwood and Bailey Creek Subdivisions. There is a lack of an overall master plan for the entire District; instead plans have been made for each individual subdivision. Capital improvements are budgeted in the annual budgets when necessary. WRCSD staff has recognized the need for an updated Engineer's Report and has initiated the process to retain a consultant to prepare the updated report.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Land uses within the District are primarily residential, with some areas planned for commercial and light industrial uses,¹⁷² including a golf course. The area within the District's boundaries is approximately 4.4 square miles.

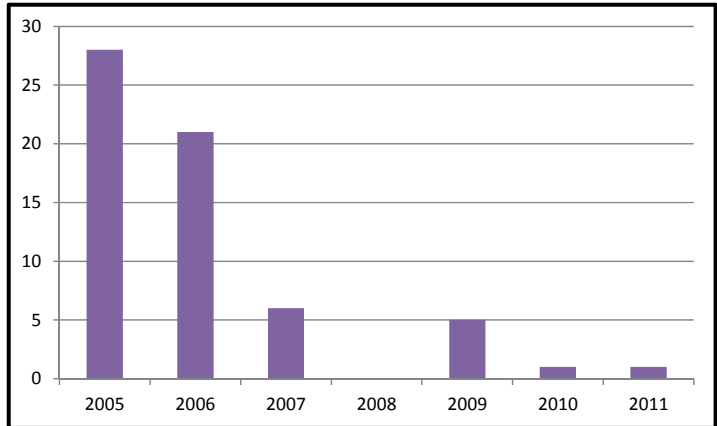
Population

Based on census designated place and census block population in the 2010 census, there are 469 permanent residents within the District.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Plumas County Parcel Application.

Existing Demand

Figure 12-3: Number of New Connections (2005-2011)



The District reported that it had observed little change in the level of service demand during the last few years. Generally there have been only a few new water and wastewater connections each year. As shown in Figure 12-3, construction of new dwelling units stalled around 2007. Between 2002 and 2007, WRCSD had between 17 and 33 new connections a year. In 2007, that number drastically declined to six connections in a single year, and new connections have been consistently very low since.

Projected Growth and Development

The District anticipates growth in population and similarly in service demand in the future should the economy recover. At present, the District reported that it anticipates population growth similar to that projected by Caltrans in its recent Almanor Regional Transportation Assessment (ATRA), which assumes a future growth rate of one percent per year in the region.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District’s population would increase from 469 in 2010 to approximately 492 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 the Walker Ranch subdivision has the potential to experience high growth, but the recent recession stalled development. Empty lots are located throughout the property. There are 1,500 unconstructed lots that are proposed to be developed within the Lake Front subdivision. The Trail Head development has 20 empty lots, and Bailey Creek has one development phase left; however, both of these developments are presently in receivership.

The District anticipates an increase in demand for services as the construction economy recovers. Any new major development would require additional water and wastewater capacity, as the existing infrastructure was designed to serve the two existing subdivisions. WRCSD reports that, traditionally, a master plan to address infrastructure needs related to new development would be proposed by the developer, approved by the County, and

¹⁷³ Census designated place Lake Almanor Peninsula, and Tract 5.02 Blocks 1000, 1014 and 1022 in Plumas County.

financed by the developer. For example the Lake Front development includes plans for a wastewater plant to serve the subdivision, which will be expandable for CSD use should the need arise. As future development of the District occurs, however, it will likely be necessary for the District to self-fund its own master plans as part of the future updated engineer 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 Plumas County.

WRCSO does not have an SOI proposal for LAFCO's consideration at this time.

In regards to government structure alternatives, someday, there may be the potential of consolidation of the water systems with Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company (MWC). However, no steps have been taken by either entity towards consolidation at this time; and, to date, there have been no serious discussions of such a future concept. During the SB 610/221 hearings held in 2008, there was a consensus between the water system agencies that an emergency intertie between the two water systems is desirable. Accordingly, a condition of approval imposed on the Lake Front Subdivision development is to provide the materials to WRCSO as a fair-share contribution towards such a future intertie connection for use during emergency situations.

Financing

WRCSO reported that the current financing level was adequate to deliver services; however, the District's revenues have been negatively affected by the economic recession. Due to a slowdown in new development, the District has experienced a decline in connection fee and standby fee revenue. However, WRCSO feels confident about its financing level, due to a high fund balance. At the end of FY 10-11, the District's unreserved cash fund balance was \$113,450, and the reserved cash fund balance was \$1.8 million.

The District operates out of a single fund for administration costs of both water and wastewater services. Total revenue for FY 10-11 was \$141,722, which included 62 percent of income from service charges, 26 percent from engineering charges, eight percent from use of money and property, 3.5 percent from connection fee revenue, and 0.5 percent from reimbursements and refunds. The District does not receive revenue from property taxes or benefit assessments.

The District charges fees for providing services. Connection fees consist of \$1,500 for sewer, \$1,000 for water and \$500 for recreation. The recreation fee is a one-time fee for the establishment of accounts for operation and maintenance of open space, street lights, walking trails and other open space items excluding the golf course. The recreation fee is due and payable at the time of issuance of the permit for connection to the public sewer. Standby fees are \$11 per month for sewer and \$14 per month for water; however, the Board suspended the standby fees about two years ago, as the economy was in decline.

Sewer service charges amount to \$26 per month. For water service, the District charges \$27 per month for the first 10,000 gallons of water used per month, with use of additional water billed at \$1 per 1,000 gallons. It should be noted that while WRCSD has a tiered rate that is intended to promote conservation, that regular single family household use is generally below the threshold of 10,000 gallons that is included in the District's flat monthly charge. These fees and charges were adopted in 1997 upon formation of WRCSD, and have not been updated since.

Since the District operates out of a single fund for both utilities, actual expenditures by service type are not available. The District reported that the completion of an updated engineers report will result in segregation of the expenditures. Total expenditures for FY 10-11 were \$118,058. Expenditures included professional services (57 percent), utilities (25 percent), insurance (six percent), special department expenditures (six percent), equipment maintenance (two percent), office expenses (one percent), well testing services (one percent), and overhead (two percent). Professional services consisted of operator, engineering (including water testing) and accounting services.

Every year the contracted operator submits to the District an estimate of projected costs, including labor and time spent. In the notes, the operator indicates items that may have variable costs depending on certain circumstances. In FY 10-11, WRCSD paid \$57,041 for the services of the operator.

Smaller capital improvement projects are included in the annual budget. Large projects are planned for in advance to ensure availability of sufficient funds. Currently, there is one large project planned by the District. The Big Cove Drainage Improvement Project is estimated to cost over \$100,000. A construction schedule will be established after resolution of the easement problem noted above. Capital improvements are financed from the Capital Improvement Fund.

The District did not have any long-term debt at the end of FY 10-11.

WRCSD has one financial reserve which finances capital improvement projects. A portion of the water and sewer service charges and connection fee fund the reserve. Establishment and use of the capital improvement reserve is the District's management practice, and not a previously adopted formal policy.

The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPAs) or joint financing mechanisms.

WATER SERVICES

Service Overview

WRCSD provides retail water services consisting of groundwater extraction, treatment and distribution to developed lots throughout its boundaries.

Staffing

Water system operation and maintenance are provided by a contract operator. The operator dedicates approximately 15 hours to the WRCSD water system each week. The current operator possesses a certification level of D2 for distribution and T1 for treatment, which exceeds the required certification levels of the water system.

Facilities and Capacity

The District owns and maintains two wells, one of which is inactive. The water supply for the area is provided entirely through the single active well with a capacity of 1,100 gallons per minute. The well water is treated on an as-needed basis by a stand-by chlorine solution with a metering pump.

Water is provided entirely from the Lake Almanor Valley groundwater basin. The water is considered to be generally of excellent quality, but is most vulnerable to turbidity, lead, copper, total coliforms, fecal coliforms, and terrorist attacks. Lake Almanor Valley Basin has locally high levels of copper, lead, iron, manganese, calcium, and boron.¹⁷⁴

There are three water storage tanks—two welded steel bulk storage tanks with a combined storage capacity of one million gallons and one captive air tank with a capacity of 3,500 gallons.

The distribution system consists entirely of C900 PVC piping and is considered to be in good condition.

Infrastructure Needs

WRCSD must find additional sources of water for back-up to the single Well 1. The back-up sources, in combination with bulk storage, must be sufficient to meet the maximum hourly and daily demands with Well 1 off-line. Additional possible sources include an inter-tie between nearby public water systems and/or drilling additional source wells.

¹⁷⁴ State Water Resources Control Board, *Lake Almanor Valley Groundwater Basin – California's Groundwater Bulletin 118*, 2003, p. 2.

At the most recent inspection of the facilities, the County Environmental Health Agency noted that the underside of the vent cap on Tank 1 should be scraped to remove peeling paint and the surface recoated to protect from corrosion and possibly flaking into the water. Additionally, the bung on the roof of Tank 2 needed to be fitted with a tight-fitting cap or plug to effectively block the entrance of rain and snowmelt. The District reported that these repairs had been made.

The stand-by generator was non-functional at the time of the County's inspection according to the system operator. As the generator is included in the operating permit, the water system must maintain an operational generator that is capable of providing sufficient back-up power to operate the water system. The operator has received quotes to get the generator repaired, but the improvement has yet to be made.

No needs were identified with respect to the active well. With regard to the distribution system, the District reported that there are eight air relief valves that need to be replaced, and two pressure reducing valves that need to be installed.

It was recommended by the County, in 2012, that the District establish a written main distribution line disinfection program, as well as written valve maintenance and water line flushing programs. In response to this recommendation the District prepared an operation plan that includes these three written programs, as well as others.

Future water system needs for the entire District were recently considered by County agencies during the approval phase of the Lake Front Subdivision. In particular, and in accordance with SB 610/221, the Governing Board conducted public hearings on water supply assessment studies for the Lake Front Subdivision. On January 15, 2008 a motion was adopted to accept the water supply assessment report and supporting findings.

Challenges

The District reported that there were no particular challenges to providing an adequate level of water services.

Service Adequacy

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 2010, the Agency noted that WRCSD's facilities were generally in good condition; however, there were a few infrastructure needs identified, most significant of which were the lack of a an operational generator, and the lack of sufficient water supply

to weather a long-term outage at Well 1. Additionally, the County found that WRCSD needed to establish several written plans for regular maintenance of the various aspects of the system, which the District has completed.

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 2000, the District has had no health or monitoring violations. By comparison, the other water providers in the Lake Almanor region of the County had an average of 2.16 violations per 1,000 connections served during that same time frame. The median water service provider in the region was in compliance 100 percent of the time in 2011. The District was in compliance with drinking water regulations 100 percent of the time, which was equal the regional average.

Figure 13-4: WRCSD Water Service Adequacy Indicators

Water Service Adequacy and Efficiency Indicators			
Service Adequacy Indicators			
Connections/FTE	405	O&M Cost Ratio ¹	\$1,058,740
MGD Delivered/FTE	0.30	Distribution Loss Rate	16%
Distribution Breaks & Leaks (2011)	0	Distribution Break Rate ²	0
Water Pressure	30 to 85 psi	Total Employees (FTEs)	0.375
Customer Complaints CY 2011:	Odor/taste (0), leaks (0), pressure (0), other (0)		
Drinking Water Quality Regulatory Information³			
	#	Description	
Health Violations	0		
Monitoring Violations	0		
DW Compliance Rate ⁴	100%		
Notes:			
(1) Operations and maintenance costs (exc. purchased water, debt, depreciation) per volume (mgd) delivered.			
(2) Distribution break rate is the number of leaks and pipeline breaks per 100 miles of distribution piping.			
(3) Violations since 2000, as reported by the U.S. EPA Safe Drinking Water Information System.			
(4) Drinking water compliance is percent of time in compliance with National Primary Drinking Water Regulations in 2011.			

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in 2011 and the rate of unaccounted for distribution loss. The District reported that no breaks and leaks occurred in 2011, while other providers in the region had a median rate of 11 breaks per 100 pipe miles. The District estimates that the loss rate is approximately 16 percent during peak usage months (May through October), and no loss during winter months (November through April) between the water source and the connections served. By comparison, other providers in the area averaged 12 percent distribution losses.

Figure 13-5: WRCSD Water Service Tables

Water Service Configuration & Infrastructure				
<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	<i>Water Service</i>	<i>Provider(s)</i>	
Retail Water	WRCSD	Groundwater Recharge	None	
Wholesale Water	None	Groundwater Extraction	WRCSD	
Water Treatment	None	Recycled Water	None	
Service Area Description				
Retail Water	Developed parcels within WRCSD's bounds.			
Wholesale Water	NA			
Recycled Water	NA			
Water Sources		Supply (Acre-Feet/Year)		
Source	Type	Average	Maximum	Safe/Firm
Lake Almanor Valley	Groundwater	125	1,775	Unknown
System Overview				
Average Daily Demand		111,508 gpd	Peak Day Demand	
			594,000 gpd	
Major Facilities				
Facility Name	Type	Capacity	Condition	Yr Built
Well 1	Well	1,100 gpm	Good	1997
Well 2	Well	Inactive	Good	NA
Storage Tank 1	Storage	500,000 gallons	Good	1997
Storage Tank 2	Storage	500,000 gallons	Good	2000
Captive Air Tank	Storage	3,500 gallons	Good	1997
Other Infrastructure				
Reservoirs	-	Storage Capacity (mg)	1 mg	
Pump Stations	4	Pressure Zones	2	
Production Wells	2	Pipe Miles	45	
Other:				
Facility-Sharing and Regional Collaboration				
Current Practices: Administration for the District is provided by the County, which operates out of county facilities with other county departments.				
Opportunities: There may be the potential of consolidation with Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company (MWC). No steps have been taken by either entity towards consolidation at this time; however, the proximity of the two water systems presents the opportunity for collaboration in emergency situations. The District plans to install an intertie between the two agencies.				
Notes:				
(1) NA means Not Applicable, NP means Not Provided, mg means millions of gallons, af means acre-feet.				

Water Demand and Supply							
<i>Service Connections</i>	<i>Total</i>		<i>Inside Bounds</i>		<i>Outside Bounds</i>		
Total	152		152		0		
Irrigation/Landscape	3		3		0		
Domestic	143		143		0		
Commercial/Industrial/Institutional	6		6		0		
Recycled	0		0		0		
Other	0		0		0		
Average Annual Demand Information (Acre-Feet per Year) ¹							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	NP	Unknown	125	128	131	135	138
Residential	NP	Unknown	38	39	40	41	42
Commercial/Industrial	NP	Unknown	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Irrigation/Landscape	NP	Unknown	86	89	91	93	95
Other	NP	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supply Information (Acre-feet per Year) ²							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Total	NP	Unknown	145	149	152	156	160
Imported	NP	0	0	0	0	0	0
Groundwater	NP	Unknown	145	149	152	156	160
Surface	NP	0	0	0	0	0	0
Recycled	NP	0	0	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Drought Supply and Plans							
Drought Supply (af) ³	Year 1: Unknown		Year 2: Unknown		Year 3: Unknown		
Storage Practices	Storage is for treatment and short-term emergency supply only.						
Drought Plan	The District does not have a drought contingency plan; however the operator has attended an emergency response and drought contingency planning class, offered by the California Rural Water Association and received training on how to plan for the District.						
Water Conservation Practices							
CUWCC Signatory	No						
Metering	Yes						
Conservation Pricing	Yes						
Other Practices	None						
Notes:							
(1) Projected demand based on assumed growth in demand of 0.5 percent annually.							
(2) Amount supplied based on reported 16 percent water loss from the system.							
(3) The District has not estimated available supply during a three year drought.							

Water Rates and Financing			
Residential Water Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 11-12¹			
	Rate Description	Avg. Monthly Charges	Consumption²
Residential	\$27 per month for the first 10,000 gallons of water used per month, with use of additional water billed at \$1 per 1,000 gallons	\$27	7,600 gal/month
Rate-Setting Procedures			
Most Recent Rate Change	1997	Frequency of Rate Changes	Never
Water Development Fees and Requirements			
Fee Approach	Adopted cover the cost of anticipated capital needs in the system.		
Connection Fee Amount	\$1,000/parcel		
Development Impact Fee	None		
Notes:			
(1) Rates include water-related service charges and usage charges.			
(2) Water use assumptions were used to calculate average monthly bills. Assumed use levels are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.			

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Service Overview

WRCSD provides collection and disposal of wastewater from 149 septic systems in two community leachfield systems—one in the Baily Creek Subdivision and one in the Foxwood and Trailhead Subdivisions.

Staffing

Wastewater system operation and maintenance are provided by a contract operator. The operator dedicates approximately 15 hours to the WRCSD wastewater system each week. The operator has a Grade 2 certification level, which meets the required certification levels of the system.

Facilities and Capacity

WRCSD operates two leach fields with sand filtration systems and 50 miles of collection lines.

The community wastewater treatment system consists of privately-owned individual septic tanks with pump chambers and submersible pumps discharging to a recirculating sand filter followed by disposal to one of two common leach fields. Poor soil conditions and high groundwater required the developer to provide alternatives to individual on-site sewage disposal.

The District is regulated by Waste Discharge Requirements (Order No. 96-264), which were issued in 1996. An update to the permit was considered in 2008 by the Regional Water Quality Control Board; however, to date, no new requirements have been adopted.

Within the Bailey Creek development, the existing Bailey Creek leach field is located on private property, under a golf course fairway, owned by Bailey Creek Golf Course. WRCSD does not own the leach field, as the property or easement was never transferred to the District. However, WRCSD continues to maintain the leach field as that was the reasoning behind the formation of the District. In addition, within the Bailey Creek development, there are four lots identified for a future leach field, three of which WRCSD owns in fee, with reservations for the use and construction of a leach field by Bailey Creek. The other lot is owned by the Bailey Creek development. The Bailey Creek leach field was reported as being in good condition. The leach field has a capacity of 2.3 million gallons per year or approximately 6,300 gallons per day. At present, the average dry weather flow into this leach field is 14,833 gallons, which is approximately 235 percent of the system's capacity. While this flow is double the District's permitted capacity, this is the peak demand period when other wastewater systems would generally be experiencing low flows.

Sometime after construction of the Bailey Creek subdivision, and following approval of the Foxwood Subdivision, an 18-acre parcel was granted to WRCSD for wastewater disposal for the Foxwood Subdivision parcels. This currently is home to the Foxwood and Trailhead subdivision leach field. The leach field has a capacity of approximately 20,000 gallons per day.

WRCSD reported that the sand filter is the only form of treatment and is an open air filter bed, which is vulnerable to precipitation and dirt and weeds and consequently reduces effluent flow.

At the time the subdivision developments were first being considered, wastewater treatment expansion was planned to be phased in as the influent flow increased during build out. The initial phase was installation of a recirculating sand filter followed by subsurface disposal to two community leach fields. Phase 2 was planned to be construction of an advance secondary package treatment plant with effluent quality sufficient to be used as reclaimed water for golf course irrigation. At present, the demand for wastewater services is not sufficient to warrant development of a treatment plant.

Infrastructure Needs

WRCSD has considered adding an office building on location within the District's bounds. Presently, the operator works out of his residence. An office building would allow the District's work to be done on site.

Future wastewater system needs for the entire CSD were recently considered by County agencies, during the approval phase of the Lake Front Subdivision. As part of the subdivision review process, the County Engineer requested that a report be prepared by the subdivision applicant that addressed consolidation and regionalization of wastewater treatment. The civil engineer for the subdivision applicant prepared the following reports: *Walker Ranch Community Services District Wastewater Treatment System Consolidation Study* and the *Lake Almanor Peninsula Regional Wastewater Treatment Concept Report*. The reports outlined the potential for regionalized wastewater services, as opposed to the piecemeal approach that had been followed previously.

Challenges

WRCSD reported that there were no particular systemic challenges to providing adequate wastewater service levels, other than the long-range need for a sewer system master plan.

Service Adequacy

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

The District had no priority violations between the period from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2011. WRCS D did have a single non-priority violation during that same time period for failing to adopt a Sewer System Management Plan as required by State law. As a result of this violation, the District was issued a notice of violation in 2010.¹⁷⁵ The District has acquired the services of an engineering firm to come into compliance with this requirement. One violation equates to almost two violations per 1,000 population served. By comparison, other wastewater providers in the Lake Almanor region of the County averaged one violation per 1,000 population served.

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. The District reported that in 2011, it was never out of compliance with effluent quality requirements. Other wastewater providers in the Lake Almanor region of Plumas County were not out of compliance in 2011.

Figure 13-6: WRCS D Wastewater Service Adequacy Indicators

Wastewater Service Adequacy and Efficiency			
Regulatory Compliance Record, 2009-11			
Formal Enforcement Actions	0	Informal Enforcement Actions	1
Enforcement Action Type		Description of Violations	
Notice of Violation	2010	Failure to adopt a Sewer System Management Plan	
Total Violations, 2009-11			
Total Violations	1	Priority Violations	0
Service Adequacy Indicators			
Treatment Effectiveness Rate ²	100%	Sewer Overflows 2009 - 2011 ³	0
Total Employees (FTEs)	0.375	Sewer Overflow Rate ⁴	0
MGD Treated per FTE	0.029	Customer Complaints CY 11: Odor (0), spills (0), other (0)	
Source Control and Pollution Prevention Practices			
The largest connection with the most unique load is the Bailey Creek Golf Course Club House. The District does not have a source control program.			
Collection System Inspection Practices			
The system has never been inspected by CCTV, there are check valves in line in the main at all intersections.			
Notes:			
(1) Order or Code Violations include sanitary sewer overflow violations.			
(2) Total number of compliance days in 2011 per 365 days.			
(3) Total number of overflows experienced (excluding those caused by customers) from 2009 to 2011 as reported by the agency.			
(4) Sewer overflows from 2009 to 2011 (excluding those caused by customers) per 100 miles of collection piping.			

Wastewater agencies are required to report sewer system overflows (SSOs) to SWRCB. Overflows reflect the capacity and condition of collection system piping and the

¹⁷⁵ WRCS D reported that there was an administrative error by the State in the issuance of the Notice of Violation in 2010, pertaining to reporting requirements, resulting in lack of notification to the CSD's general manager until 2012. Subsequently, an agreement was reached between the State and WRCS D to rectify the violation by the end of 2012, without further action by the State. Accordingly, in August 2012, the District's general manager retained Vestra Resources, Inc. to provide the necessary engineering support services to rectify the situation by the end of 2012.

effectiveness of routine maintenance. The sewer overflow rate is calculated as the number of overflows per 100 miles of collection piping. The District reported no overflows during the period from 2009 thru 2011, and consequently the overflow rate is zero. Other providers in the region averaged an SSO rate of three per 100 miles of collection piping.

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. The District's high tourist population during the summer makes it hard to calculate a peaking factor that is indicative of the true amount of I/I that is entering the system. As reported, wet weather flow is actually lower than dry weather flow, due to the high summer demand. The District reported that the part of the system that is underground is pressurized, and consequently, is not susceptible to I/I. However, the sand filter, which is not covered, is susceptible to infiltration due to atmospheric precipitation. WRCS D has not calculated the degree of infiltration at the sand filter, but since the source is precipitation, and the square footage of the sand filter is minimal, it is assumed that the amount is not significant.

Figure 13-7: WRCSD Wastewater Profile

Wastewater Service Configuration and Demand				
<i>Service Configuration</i>				
Service Type		Service Provider(s)		
Wastewater Collection		WRCSD		
Wastewater Treatment		WRCSD		
Wastewater Disposal		None		
Recycled Water		None		
<i>Service Area</i>				
Collection:		Bailey Creek, Foxwood and Trailhead subdivisions		
Treatment:		Bailey Creek, Foxwood and Trailhead subdivisions		
Recycled Water:		None		
<i>Service Demand</i>				
Type	Connections (2011) Total	Inside Bounds	Outside Bounds	Flow (mgd) Average
Total	149	149	0	0.011
Residential	143	143	0	Unknown
Commercial	6	6	0	Unknown
Industrial	0	0	0	-
<i>Historical and Projected Demand (ADWF in millions of gallons per day) ²</i>				
2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Unknown	0.015	0.015	0.016	0.016
Note:				
(1) NA: Not Applicable; NP: Not Provided.				
(2) ADWF was only reported for the Baily Creek leach field. Projections are based on the 0.05 percent annual average growth rate projected by DOF for the entire County.				

Wastewater Infrastructure				
Wastewater Collection, Treatment & Disposal Infrastructure				
System Overview				
Treatment level: Primary				
Disposal method: Leach field				
Facility Name	Capacity	Condition	Year Built	
Bailey Creek Leach field	6,300 gpd	Good	1997	
Foxwood Leach field	20,000 gpd	NP	2005	
Collection & Distribution Infrastructure				
Sewer Pipe Miles	50	Sewage Lift Stations	0	
Treatment Plant Daily Flow (mgd)				
Leach field	ADWF (mgd)	% of ADWF Capacity in Use	Peak Wet (mgd)	Peaking Factor
Bailey Creek	0.015	235%	0.009	NA
Foxwood	NP	NP	NP	NP
Infiltration and Inflow				
The District reported that the part of the system that is underground is pressurized, and consequently, is not susceptible to I/I. However, the sand filter, which is not covered, is susceptible to infiltration due to atmospheric precipitation.				
Wastewater Facility Sharing				
Facility Sharing Practices				
Administration for the District is provided by the County, which operates out of county facilities with other county departments.				
Facility Sharing Opportunities				
No further facility sharing opportunities with regard to wastewater services were identified.				

Wastewater Rates and Financing			
<i>Wastewater Rates-Ongoing Charges FY 10-11</i> ¹			
Connection Type	Rate Description	Charges	Demand ²
Residential	Flat monthly rate of \$26.	\$26.00	250 gpd
<i>Rate Zones</i>			
None			
<i>Rate-Setting Procedures</i>			
Last Rate Change	1997	Frequency of Rate Changes	Never
<i>Wastewater Development Fees and Requirements</i>			
Fee Approach	Adopted cover the cost of anticipated capital needs in the system.		
Connection Fee Amount	\$1,500 per single family residence		
Development Impact Fee	None		
Notes:			
(1) Rates include wastewater-related service charges and strength and flow charges.			
(2) Wastewater use assumptions by customer type were used to calculate average monthly charges. Assumed use levels are 250 gallons per home per day, and are consistent countywide for comparison purposes.			

WALKER RANCH COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ Walker Ranch Community Services District (WRCSD) serves a population of approximately 469 permanent residents.
- ❖ The District has experienced little growth in recent demand, due to the economic recession and decline in the housing market.
- ❖ Based on DOF projections of approximately 0.5 percent growth annually throughout the County, the District's population would increase to approximately 492 in 2020; however, the DOF's projections may be low, given the development potential in the area.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ There is a need to address drainage issues around Big Cove Road and Peninsula Drive. The District has plans to complete these improvements.
- ❖ The capacity of the water system appears to be more than sufficient to serve current and long-term demand, as the District uses on average less than 10 percent of the available supply daily.
- ❖ The remaining capacity of the two leach field systems is unclear, due to the high demand during the summer months, which are averaged out during the low demand periods throughout the remainder of the year.
- ❖ WRCSD lacks a master plan for all areas within its bounds. The District relies on the plans specific to each new development in the area, and for developers to come up with a means to address needed water and wastewater services. It is recommended

that the District develop a master plan to better prepare for orderly future growth and development.

- ❖ The District needs to establish a written main distribution line disinfection program, as well as written valve maintenance and water line flushing programs.
- ❖ Water system infrastructure needs an additional water source should Well 1 become nonoperational, an operational generator, and storage tank improvements.
- ❖ WRCSD has considered adding an office building on location within the District's bounds; at present, the contract operator works out of his residence.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ WRCSD reported that the current financing level was adequate to deliver services; however, the District's revenues had been negatively affected by the economic recession.
- ❖ Due to a slowdown in new development, the District has experienced a decline in connection fee and standby fee revenue. However, WRCSD feels confident about its financing level, due to a high fund balance.
- ❖ WRCSD's rates were adopted in 1997 and have not been updated since then. The water and wastewater rates are below the regional median, and it may be appropriate to review the rates to ensure that they are adequately covering services and capital needs.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ Administration for the District is provided by the County, which operates out of county facilities with other county departments.
- ❖ There is the potential to collaborate with Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company for emergency situations, as well as sharing of specialized equipment.

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

- ❖ There may be the potential of consolidation with Almanor Lake Mutual Water Company (MWC). No steps have been taken by either entity towards consolidation at this time; however, the proximity of the two water systems presents the opportunity for collaboration in emergency situations.
- ❖ WRCSD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its outreach efforts to constituents and through cooperation with the MSR process.

- ❖ It is a recommended practice that districts maintain a website where all district information is readily available to constituents.

13. WEST ALMANOR COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD) provides emergency medical response, fire protection and suppression, fire prevention, other emergency support such as rescue and hazmat incidents, groundwater quality monitoring, and effluent collection.

This is the first municipal service review for WACSD.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

WACSD was originally formed as Plumas County Service Area (CSA) #2 in 1974¹⁷⁶ by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors, at the request of the developer of the Lake Almanor West subdivision, Mr. Edward C. Clifford. The CSA was a division of county government and controlled by the Board of Supervisors. A local advisory board was appointed to oversee daily operations and report back to the County Board.

The services authorized were “extended county services” which included over 15 types of services. From the outset, services were limited to fire protection, emergency medical services, auto accidents, well testing, hazardous materials limited security (fire chief patrolling the area), and mainlining the septic system for eight lots on Osprey Loop.

After some years of consideration, CSA #2 was reorganized on September 24, 1993, as West Almanor CSD. There were no changes to district boundaries or authorized services. The purpose of the reorganization was to provide services more efficiently in the West Almanor area by reducing duplication of administrative services, improving the utilization of equipment, decreasing overall costs, and expanding services that can be provided to residents of the District.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.¹⁷⁷ 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

¹⁷⁶ LAFCo Resolution 74-2583.

¹⁷⁷ Government Code §61000-61226.5.

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).¹⁷⁸

WACSD is located within the community of Lake Almanor West which is situated along the western shore of Lake Almanor in northern Plumas County. It lies immediately east of SR 89. The District does not border any other fire districts in the County, because it is surrounded by forest. Prattville-Almanor FPD is located south of WACSD.

Boundaries

WACSD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The boundaries of CSA #2 were set up to be those of the Lake Almanor West subdivision. The current boundaries of WACSD are the same as the initial boundaries of CSA #2 at formation. The District's bounds encompass approximately 0.96 square miles.

Following formation, the CSA did not undertake any annexations or detachments. In 1993, CSA #2 was reorganized into West Almanor CSD. Since the reorganization there have been no annexations to or detachments from the CSD.

Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.¹⁷⁹ The SOI was further revised on January 21, 1983.¹⁸⁰ The sphere of influence was made coterminous with the District's boundaries, since the majority of WACSD bordered along the lake and the remaining boundaries abutted areas which were not thought to allow further development.¹⁸¹ No other changes to the District's SOI have been made since the 1983 update.

Extra-territorial Services

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, WACSD provides services outside of its bounds. WACSD has a formal automatic aid agreement with Prattville-Almanor FPD (PAFPD). WACSD also maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County and makes itself available to CalFire and USFS as needed.

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 WACSD, the District is aware of its service area as per the Emergency Response Area map, but does not recognize that the

¹⁷⁸ Government Code §61106.

¹⁷⁹ LAFCo resolution 76-35.

¹⁸⁰ LAFCo resolution 83-06.

¹⁸¹ Letter from Plumas County Planning Department to LAFCo, *Sphere of Influence Recommendation Basis, Peninsula Fire Protection District*, January 3, 1983.

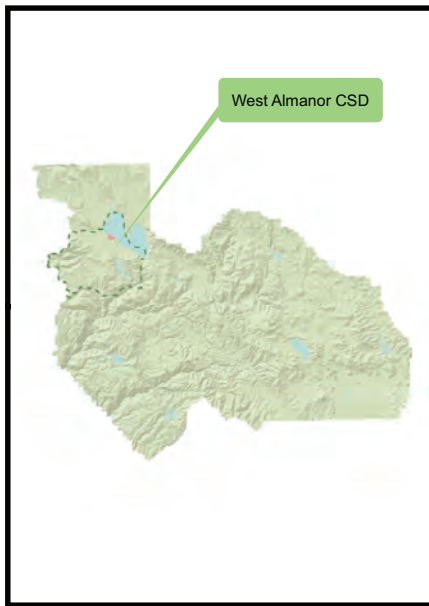
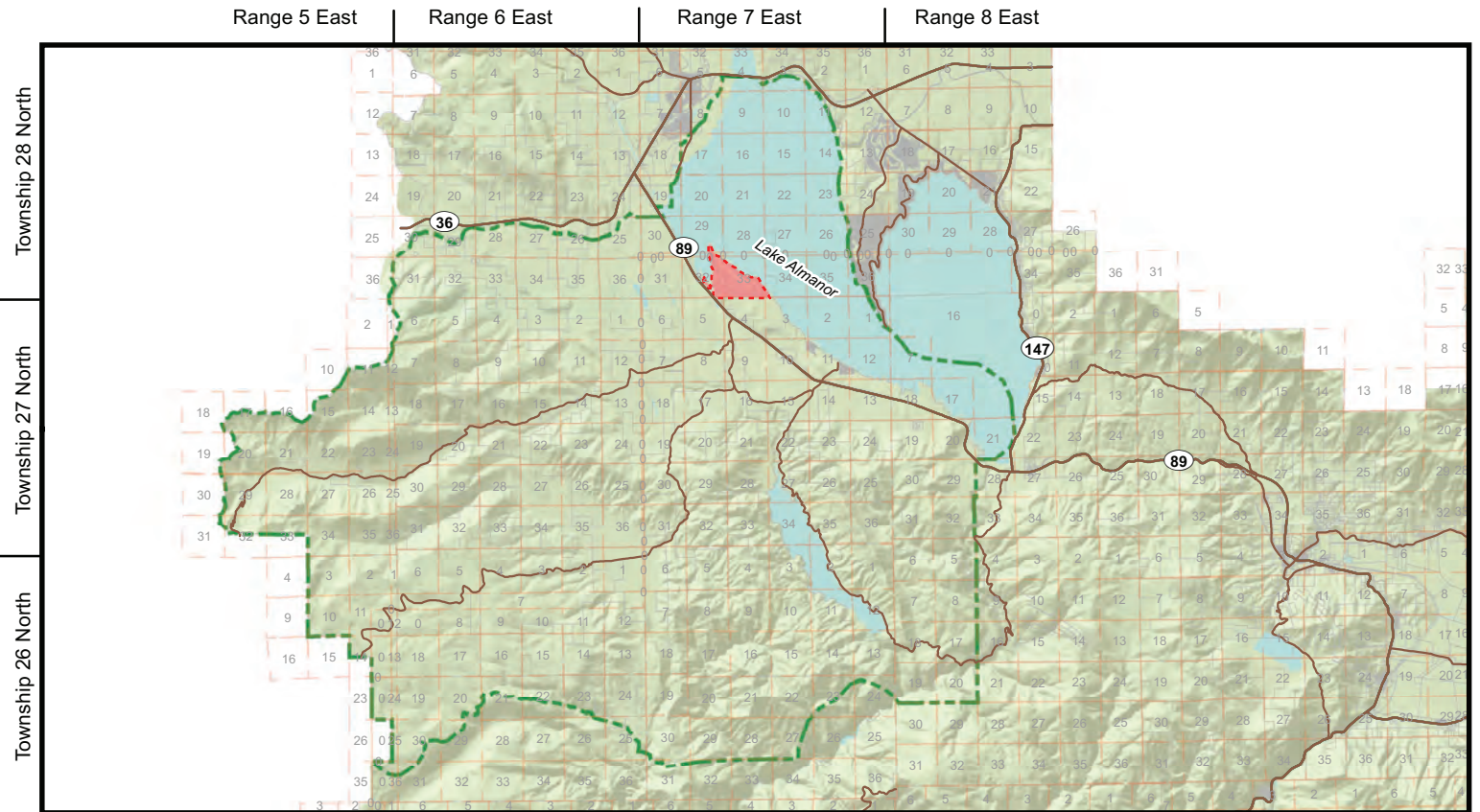
District entered into the agreement. WACSD reported that it would only provide services outside of its boundaries if resources were available to ensure that services could still be provided within its bounds. The service area for WACSD is the same as PAFPD's service area and includes the western portion of Lake Almanor and extends south and southwest to include a large territory that spreads all the way to Butte County. The service area encompasses about 198 square miles compared to 0.96 square miles of boundary area. WACSD does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect would provide free services, if it responded to these areas without reimbursement.

WACSD has a functional consolidation contract with Prattville-Almanor FPD according to which identities and budgets for the two districts remain separate. West Almanor CSD provides PAFPD operations, training and automatic aid services. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses within either district. West Almanor CSD is responsible for training all paid and volunteer personnel. And in addition, WACSD responds to all emergency calls and incident in the Prattville-Almanor FPD as part of automatic aid.

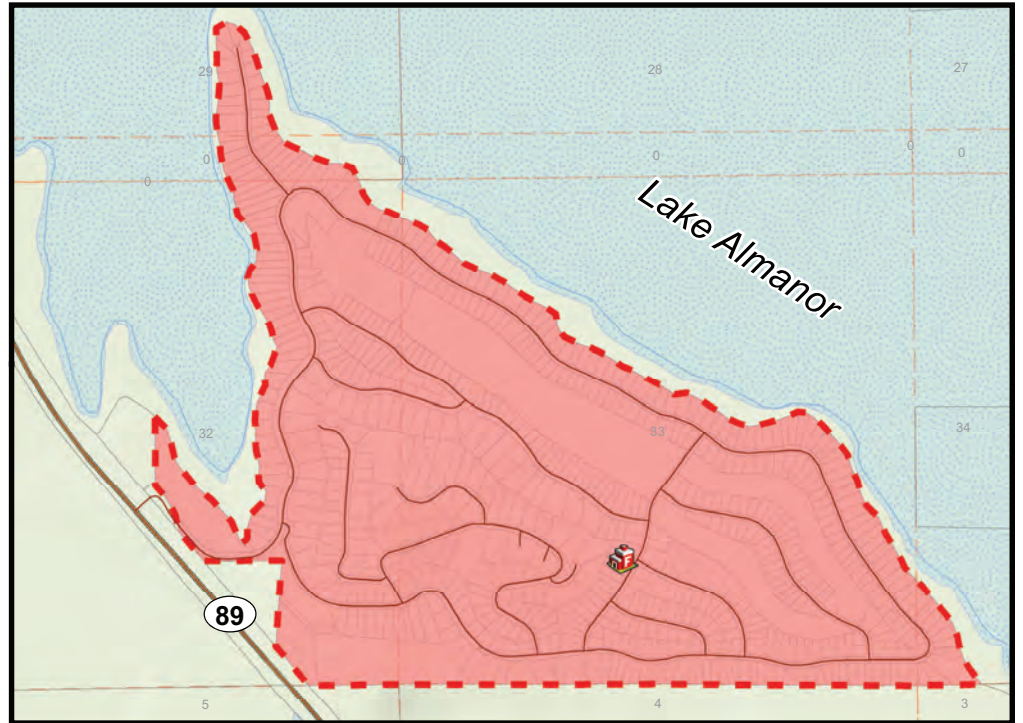
Areas of Interest

The area of Prattville-Almanor FPD is of a particular interest to WACSD. The functional consolidation contract expired on June 30, 2012, and while both districts are strongly considering consolidation, it has been postponed at this time. Instead, the districts will expand their contract; under the new agreement WACSD will take over administration duties for PAFPD.

West Almanor Community Services District



Location Map (Not to Scale)



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

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

- West Almanor CSD
- West Almanor CSD (SOI)
- Fire Department Service Area



West Almanor CSD
Resolution: 74-01
Formed: January 25, 1974

West Almanor CSD (SOI)
Resolution: 83-06
Adopted: January 21, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 4/25/2012

Accountability and Governance

WACSD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are to be elected at large by community residents to staggered four-year terms. There are currently five Directors, all of whom were elected at large. There has not been a contested election in the last few years. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 13-2.

The Board generally meets on the last Thursday of every month at three in the afternoon at the fire station. Agendas are posted at the fire station, on the website and on the three community bulletin boards located at the post office boxes in the area. Minutes are available upon request.

Figure 13-2: West Almanor CSD Governing Body

West Almanor CSD				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Fire Chief, General Manager, Randy Fluke			
Address:	947 Long Iron Drive, Chester, CA			
Telephone:	(530)259-5112			
Fax	(530)259-5113			
Email/website:	westalmanorfd@citlink.net , http://www.citlink.net/~westalmanorfd/			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Thomas Fullerton	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Dale Knutsen	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
Richard Fording	Chair	December 2013	Elected	4 year
John Fricke	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
John Gonzales	Director	December 2015	Elected	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Last Thursday of every month at 3pm			
Location:	Meetings are held at the fire station.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the fire station, on website, and on three bulletin boards at PO boxes.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through its website. WACSD also holds open houses at the station, offers CPR classes and accommodates children’s educational field trips.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints must be submitted in writing to the Board of Directors and signed by the complainant. The Board considers the matter at the next available meeting and places it on the agenda for the following meeting. Upon consideration of the matter, the Board notifies the complainant by certified mail of the outcome and requests a written reply of whether the results are satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The District reported that there had been no complaints in the last few years.

WACSD 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.

Planning and Management Practices

The District's fundamental mission is to provide the following services to the Lake Almanor West development: 1) fire protection and fire prevention; 2) emergency medical response; 3) ground water quality monitoring; 4) septic system monitoring; and 5) common leach field and effluent collection system for nine specified residential parcels. WACSD's objective is to provide these services in an effective and affordable manner, placing first priority on the health and safety of those involved.

Daily operations are managed by the general manager who is also the fire chief. The general manager reports to the Board. The secretary reports to the general manager. The assistant chief is accountable to the fire chief; and all captains are under the supervision of the assistant chief. The firefighters report to the captain.

The District has one full-time paid chief. The assistant chief and captain are part-time employees who receive per-diems. There is one paid secretary and ten volunteer firefighters. The Board evaluates the general manager/chief annually. The chief is currently in the process of developing an annual employee evaluation form for both, paid staff and volunteers. The chief/general manager manages the wastewater system; however, due to the small size and type of the system, it generally only requires limited occasional maintenance.

The District tracks the workload handled by its staff through incident and training logs. WACSD also tracks paid employee work hours. The District reported that it did not perform evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports. However, WACSD attempts to monitor itself through board meeting discussions, and review of the policy and procedures manual.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited every two years. WACSD adopts a ten-year master plan. The last master plan was adopted in 2002. The District conducts capital improvement planning informally during Board meetings on an as-needed basis.

The District achieved the designation of a Firewise Community, as is documented in the 2009 community assessment report.¹⁸²

¹⁸² The Firewise Communities/USA program is a nationwide effort to provide an effective management approach for preserving Wildland living aesthetics. Its focus is on communities that exist in the midst of or in close proximity to areas that can be characterized as "wild" and undeveloped, typically containing large amounts of natural fuels such as trees, brush or heavy grass.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Land uses within the District are residential and recreational. The District's bounds encompass nearly one square mile.

Population

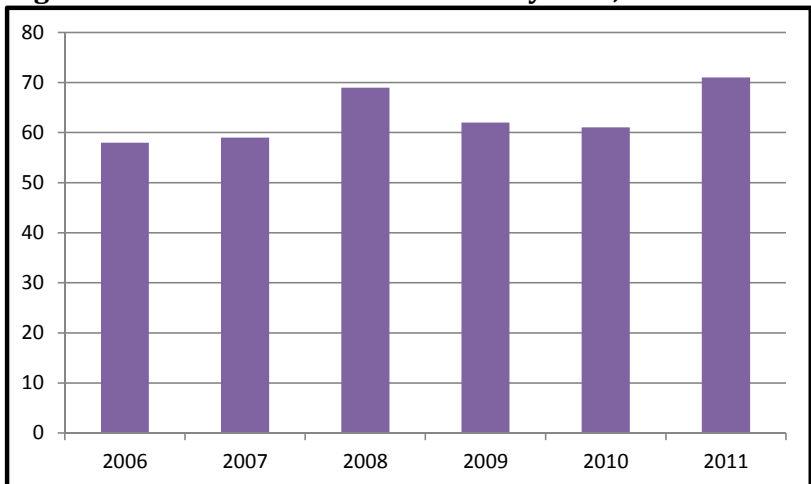
According to Census 2000, the District's population was 329.¹⁸³ Based on census designated place population in the 2010 Census, there are 270 permanent residents within the District,¹⁸⁴ indicating that the District's full-time population has declined by about 18 percent over the last ten years. There are approximately 475 housing units within the District's bounds with only 28 percent of those units occupied full-time.

Existing Demand

The peak fire service demand times for the District are in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

Demand for sewer services has remained constant as there have been consistently only five developed parcels being served over the last few years.

Figure 13-3: WACSD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011



The District reported that it had observed little change in the level of fire service demand in the last few years. As shown in Figure 13-3, there was a surge of fire service calls in 2008, after which the call volume went back down in 2009 and 2010, and again returned to a peak level in 2011. Since, PAFPD and WACSD are dispatched to all of each other's calls, annual number of calls is the same for both districts.

¹⁸³ Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

¹⁸⁴ Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

Projected Growth and Development

WACSD anticipates slight growth in population and similarly in fire service demand within the District in the next few years. Although the Lake Almanor West subdivision will not expand, there are existing empty lots throughout the community, which have the potential to be developed. Even during the recession, the community observed construction of about half a dozen homes a year. Within the last year there has been a slight surge in construction.

Demand for wastewater services has the potential to increase if the remaining four lots designed to be served by the District are developed. WACSD has the capacity to serve these additional four connections, as the system was designed to serve the nine parcels in the area.

The District does not make formal population projections, but attempts to plan for future needs by keeping an eye on new and planned construction. As part of the chief's duties he reviews new construction plans for fire safety. Observing demographics and seasonal traits also gives him tools to better project for the future.

The District reported that it had the capacity to serve anticipated future growth and possibly the territory of PAFPD, should annexation occur. WACSD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 270 in 2010 to approximately 284 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 together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

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

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.¹⁸⁵
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.¹⁸⁶
- 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.¹⁸⁷
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.¹⁸⁸
- 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.¹⁸⁹
- 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.¹⁹⁰
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.¹⁹¹
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁵ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

¹⁸⁶ Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*,

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

- 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.¹⁹³
- 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.¹⁹⁴
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.¹⁹⁵

The County is in the process 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.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

¹⁹⁵ Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on solving an “out-of-district problem” when properties that are located outside of fire district boundaries are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

WACSD reported that the District was willing to consider including one small pocket of about 35 to 40 lots called Big Meadows in its SOI. The District already provides services there but is not getting compensated for responses in the area. WACSD would consider eventually annexing this small subdivision; however, residents in Big Meadows have not formally requested to be annexed.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it was interested in consolidation with PAFPD. Currently the two districts have a functional consolidation contract renewable every July 1st. The districts decided not to proceed with consolidation at this time and, instead, to expand the existing agreement. Under the new agreement, which is currently being drafted, WACSD will take over administration of Prattville-Almanor FPD. The WACSD chief will also act as the PAFPD chief. The contract will be automatically renewed annually until the districts decide to proceed with consolidation, change the conditions of the agreement, or to cancel the agreement altogether.

Financing

The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. However, it was also reported that WACSD has faced a few challenges, including increasing prices of fuel and electricity, additional funding required for state mandated training, and reduced property tax revenues as a result of economic conditions.

In order to enhance funding, WACSD applies for grants. There are currently no applications pending, but once the next FEMA grant becomes available, the District plans to

¹⁹⁶ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

apply for acquisition of a breathing air compressor. In addition, to improve its financing, WACSD asked its residents for a special assessment increase. The ballot measure was approved with an overwhelming majority on May 8, 2012. The District reported that since the assessment was recently passed, financing levels are presently sufficient.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 10-11 was \$204,047. Revenues included property tax revenue (69 percent), special assessment (30 percent), state homeowners property tax¹⁹⁷ (0.6 percent) and interest from investments (0.2 percent).

The primary source of funding is a share of the county property taxes, which varies with the assessed valuation of Lake Almanor West parcels. Since 1988, the District has also had a voter-approved special assessment, which was a fixed annual amount per parcel. It was then updated in a 2001 election to an annual rate of \$90 per parcel, which expired in July 2012. And most recently, as it was mentioned before, voters approved an increase in the special assessment from \$90 to \$195. The new assessment will expire in seven years. The chief reported that the \$105 increase from the original assessment is to make up the difference from the loss of funding caused by decreased property values and the increase in costs to the fire department.

Each lot owner pays \$1,000 to connect into the sewer system. These fees are used to maintain the system.

Another source of the District's revenues is the service and contract charges. Prattville-Almanor FPD currently pays WACSD \$5,000 to share in the cost of operations which includes fuel, manpower, equipment maintenance, vehicle insurance, and training expenses. WACSD also has an agreement with California Emergency Management Agency for local government fire and emergency assistance to the State of California and Federal fire agencies. According to this agreement, the District's strike team gets reimbursed based on rank of responders and apparatus and equipment used.

The District receives some financial help from the community auxiliary which also gives charity donations to other entities. In 2011, the auxiliary gave WACSD \$5,000 for a thermal imaging camera; however, normally annual donations amount to about \$1,000 to \$2,000.

WACSD's expenditures were \$268,834 in FY 10-11. Of this amount, 56 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 25 percent on services and supplies, and 19 percent on fixed assets and capital improvements. Out of \$268,834, the District spent \$7,271 on wastewater operations: \$6,577 was paid to the State Water Resource Board and \$694 was spent on laboratory testing. All remaining expenditures were for fire services.

¹⁹⁷ Every year the Auditor's office files a claim to the State which calculates the amount of tax loss resulting from Homeowners Property Tax Exemptions. The State then reimburses the County in four increments throughout the year. The Auditor's office apportions taxes 3 times a year (December, April, and June). Each time it apportions, it distributes the amount received from the State to all the districts. It distributes the amount using the current AB8 factors.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed, usually informally during Board meetings. In the last decade, WACSD assumed ownership of the fire station and replaced an old fire engine. In 2009 and 2010, the District created a multi-purpose room and replaced the station roof. WACSD just recently obtained a tractor for snow removal. It is financed for four years from GE Financial and listed in the budget under trucks. The annual payments will be \$10,600. The District is making an annual payment of over \$26,000 to the USDA for a loan to finance a fire truck purchased in 2003. The last payment on the fire truck will be due in 2013. In addition, the District has budgeted \$8,000 for a restroom upgrade.

Some of the District's goals include keeping a full-time fire chief/general manager, increasing part-time summer staffing, maintaining facilities and equipment, replacing the oldest fire engine, replacing the tractor and command/tow vehicles, and continuing proper training.

The District does not have any financial reserves. The fire chief/general manager is trying to get a policy adopted that would allow for one or more types of reserve. Currently WACSD has a rollover fund which has been diminishing every year. The newly passed assessment is expected to help the District with establishing financial reserves.

The District does not participate in any joint ventures under joint powers agreements (JPAs); however, as mentioned previously, a small portion of WACSD's operations are funded jointly with PAFPD.

FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

Service Overview

WACSD provides fire protection and suppression, emergency medical response, fire prevention and other emergency support, such as rescue, smoke checks, standby at gas leaks, and accidents and hazmat incidents. The District is responsible for providing structure, vehicle, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and other types of fire protection within its boundaries, and assists CalFire on all vegetation fires within the subdivision of Lake Almanor West. The subdivision is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) for fire protection. Fire protection is also provided outside the District under automatic aid, county, state and federal mutual aid agreements. Fire prevention is conducted within the District using adopted Uniform Fire Code (UFC), Plumas County Code, California Administrative Code Title 19, Public Resources Code (PRC), and Health and Safety Codes. The District performs inspections, advice and support on fuel reduction efforts.

The majority of WACSD emergency responses are for medical assistance. The District provides emergency medical services through the use of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) trained and certified to the standards set by the Northern California Emergency Medical Service. All volunteers are trained in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and in the use of universal precautions when they are involved in patient care.

WACSD contracts with Chester PUD fire department for ambulance transport service.

Collaboration

As mentioned previously, the District has a functional consolidation contract with Prattville-Almanor FPD according to which WACSD provides operations, training and automatic aid response to all emergency calls and incidents in the PAFPD boundary area. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses. West Almanor CSD, according to the contract is responsible for training of all paid and volunteer personnel. WACSD and PAFPD are in the process of writing up a new agreement under which WACSD will also take over PAFPD's administration. The new contract will be renewable annually.

The District maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County, CalFire and USFS. WACSD is a member of Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District 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 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 (including WACSD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire

Center. Susanville Interagency Fire Center is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. The Susanville Interagency Fire 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.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. There is a possibility that WACSD will change its radio systems to the mandated narrow banding in the near future, which may cause a decrease in radio reception that could cause further communication issues.

Staffing

WACSD has 13 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one assistant chief, one captain, and ten volunteer firefighters. The chief is a full-time paid employee; the assistant chief and captain are part-time and receive per-diems. When the chief is on duty, the station is staffed 24/7. When somebody else is on duty, the station is staffed from nine to five. The median age of the firefighters is 66, with a range from 29 to 71.

The full-time fire chief's salary is \$62,244 per year. Per-diem employees are paid \$175 per shift. Volunteers do not get compensated.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. WACSD tries to recruit more volunteers to help support the fire department, but due to mostly retirement-aged residents within the District, it is hard to find willing volunteers.

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.¹⁹⁸ WACSD has two firefighter II certified personnel, one fire officer, one paramedic, and two EMTs. Most of the District's volunteers have hazardous materials-awareness level, with three at the operations and decontamination level.

Training is conducted through in-house programs on a bi-weekly basis and through additional cross training with other agencies. WACSD conducts training for its own and

¹⁹⁸ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

PAFPD sworn staff at least six times a month. The District currently trains all personnel to Firefighter I standards. WACSD is planning to start conducting medical training for all personnel to at least the Emergency Medical Responder level.

Facilities and Capacity

The District owns and maintains one fire station located at 947 Long Iron Drive in Chester, which was built in 1979. The chief's quarters were added in 1992. The station, which was reported to be in good condition, houses one 2003 Type 1 fire engine, one 1985 Type 2 engine, one 1993 quick attack/rescue unit, one 2002 SUV command/tow vehicle and one 2003 jetcraft fire and rescue boat. Departmental resources also include up-to-date firefighter gear for all responders (i.e., protective clothing, breathing apparatus, radios), necessary firefighting tools and appropriate medical response equipment and supplies found on the several vehicles.

All of the developed areas at Lake Almanor West are served by a residential fire hydrant system. The domestic water supply and hydrant supply system are gravity fed from two large storage tanks each with a 224,000-gallon capacity and located on the hilltop area of the development. Water can be replenished to the tanks at a rate of more than 1,500 gallons per minute when all three domestic well pumps are operating. The basic flow rate at the individual hydrants typically varies from 750 to over 1,000 gallons per minute depending on hydrant location; even higher flow rates are available if the water is drawn by the fire engine.

Infrastructure Needs

The District recently created a multi-purpose room and replaced the station roof. WACSD also acquired a tractor for snow removal. The District is currently in the process of upgrading its restroom to meet ADA standards.

Some of the District's goals include replacing its oldest fire engine (1985) and the command/tow vehicle.

Challenges

The lack of roads in and out of the community presents a potential problem. During an emergency, evacuating residents will have to share the same roads with fire apparatus, which could cause a life-threatening situation. WACSD collaborated with the Almanor Ranger District to restore a supplementary emergency access road into the development in early summer 2012.

Winter storms can isolate firefighters located at the station. Heavy snow loads can close highways and high winds can topple hundreds of trees in a single storm.

WACSD also faces the challenges of increasing emergency call volume, additional training and certification mandates, and public demand for higher levels of service.

Not having enough volunteer personnel available to respond and provide service in a safe and efficient manner also presents a challenge. For this reason, mutual aid agreements are in place to help alleviate potential staffing issues on the fire scene.

Other challenges identified include:

- ❖ Minimal staffing,
- ❖ Declining volunteer membership and participation,
- ❖ Difficulty in compliance with Cal-OSHA and federal mandates,
- ❖ Increasing demand for services and call volumes,
- ❖ Difficulty planning for apparatus replacement,
- ❖ Decreasing tax revenues, and
- ❖ A need to upgrade emergency equipment and improve capabilities with the jaws of life.

Service Adequacy

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. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. WACSD enjoys an ISO rating of three, which is the best in Plumas County. The District was last evaluated in 1999.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.¹⁹⁹

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

¹⁹⁹ Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones includes the rural and wilderness classifications. CalFire tracks response times for each incident WACSD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported that the District's average response time in 2011 was two minutes inside its bounds. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 100. An area that WACSD could improve upon is tracking and logging its response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would allow for more structured response and enhanced efficiency and consistency.

The service area size²⁰⁰ for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Although the PAFPD's service area is 198 square miles, because WACSD and PAFPD cover the same service area and each of them has one station, the 198-square mile territory is served by two stations, each of which is serving 99 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 Lake Almanor area vary from 31 call firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD.²⁰¹

²⁰⁰ Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

²⁰¹ PAFPD and WACSD have the same service area, share resources and get dispatched to each other's calls. Many of their service adequacy indicators are the same, including firefighters per 1,000 residents, since resourced are pooled to serve both districts.

Figure 13-4: West Almanor CSD Fire Service Profile

Fire Service					
Facilities					
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
WACSD Station	947 Long Iron Drive Chester, CA	Good	Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by the full time fire chief and per-diem employees.	1 2003 type 1 fire engine, 1 1985 type 2 fire engine, 1 1993 quick attack/rescue unit, 1 2002 SUV command/tow vehicle and 1 2003 23' Jentcraft Fire and Rescue boat.	
Facility Sharing					
Current Practices: The District has an automatic aid agreement with PAFPD. The two agencies share resources and conduct joint trainings.					
Future opportunities: The District does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other agencies.					
Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies					
The District is currently in the process of upgrading its restroom. Other goals include replacing oldest engine and command vehicle.					
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	1	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls ⁵	71*
Stations Serving District	2*	EMS	Direct	% EMS	52%
Sq. Miles Served per Station ¹	99*	Ambulance Transport	CPUD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	4%
Total Staff ²	14	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	8%
Total Full-time Firefighters	1	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency	13%
Total Call Firefighters	10	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency	23%
Total Sworn Staff per Station ³	13	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	10%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	59*	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people	234*
Service Adequacy			Service Challenges		
Response Time Base Year	2011	Lack of reliable roads and winter storms present challenges to WACDS.			
Average Response Time (min) ⁴	2	Training			
Percentage of response times under 5 min	100%	Volunteers train at least six times per month. All personnel trained to			
ISO Rating	3 (1999)	Firefighter I standards.			
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements					
The District has automatic aid agreement with PAFPD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the County, 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.					
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.					
5) WACSD had 71 calls, as reported by the District. According to CalFire, WACSD responded to 76 service calls.					
* Based on pooled resources, response to same service calls and identical service area of WACSD and PAFPD these service indicators are the same for two districts.					

WASTEWATER SERVICES

Service Overview

During the development of Lake Almanor West it was determined that eight lots in Unit 4 of the subdivision would not be able to accommodate both a septic tank and a leach field. When created, CSA #2 started providing sewer effluent collection and disposal. In 1982, the CSA assumed responsibility for repair and maintenance of a sewer system to serve lots 67-71 on Osprey Loop and lots 79-81 on Raccoon Trail, for a total of eight lots in unit 4 of the Lake Almanor West subdivision. In 2002 a ninth lot was added to the common septic system when the layout of the residence on lot 87, unit 4 on Raccoon Trail was found to preclude the placement of a leach field there.

Construction, by the developer, of a leach field system was completed in 1991. The system allows each of the nine lots access to a common collection, which transfers effluent from their individual septic tanks to a distribution box and leach field located in lot 197 of Unit 4. Ownership of the common line, distribution box and leach field was passed on to CSA #2.

The effluent flows from each residence to septic tanks on their properties first and after that to the common leach field.

The District performs ground water monitoring. WACSD responsibilities include maintaining in good repair a series of test wells, and ensuring that sampling of water from each active well occurs twice yearly (in April and in October). Sampling analyzing and reporting is performed by the Fruit Growers Laboratories of Chico.

WACSD has a septic system maintenance plan:

- ❖ Conduct an ongoing public education program on the importance of proper septic system usage and maintenance by including articles in newsletter mailings and presentations at property owners' association meetings.
- ❖ Contact all property owners in the subdivision to determine the maintenance history of each septic system.
- ❖ Maintain records of all septic system maintenance activity within the subdivision.
- ❖ Submit an annual report of all septic system maintenance activity to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region.

Staffing

Wastewater operations are managed by the WACSD general manager/fire chief with the support of the district secretary.

Facilities and Capacity

WACSD has the capacity to serve nine connections. Currently only five properties are built out and receive service. The remaining four are still vacant.

The District owns and operates a leach field and five test wells, two of which are non-operational. The system was reported to be in good condition.

Infrastructure Needs

In a meeting held in 1996, it was agreed that Well 1 was severely damaged but did not need to be repaired since the remaining test wells provide adequate sample gathering locations. It was also agreed the Fruit Growers Laboratories of Chico would furnish written results of each testing to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, as well as WACSD.

The District reports that there are no current infrastructure needs. As part of regular maintenance, the settling tank is pumped out every five to six years.

Challenges

The District did not identify any challenges to operating and maintaining the system.

Service Adequacy

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

Between the time period January 1, 2007 and June 1, 2012, WACSD has had no recorded violations and has not been issued any enforcement orders, which equates to no violations per 1,000 population served.

Wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by RWQCB. WACSD is not responsible for treatment of effluent and therefore has not been 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. WACSD reported no overflows during the period from January 1, 2008 thru June 1, 2012, and consequently the overflow rate is zero.

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. In the case of WACSD, the amount of I/I is unknown, as the system is self-contained and flow

into the leach field is not tracked during dry and wet periods. Due to the relatively young age of the system, it is assumed that there is relatively low I/I.

WEST ALMANOR CSD DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ Present full-time population of West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD) is 270.
- ❖ Based on DOF projections, the District's population would increase to approximately 284 in 2020; however, the DOF's projections may be low given the development potential in the area.
- ❖ Although the development cannot grow outwards, there are multiple scattered undeveloped lots throughout the community.
- ❖ A majority of the District's population is seasonal.

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

- ❖ 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.

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

- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and short-term growth.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include restroom upgrades and replacement of the oldest engine and command vehicle. The station was reported to be in good condition.
- ❖ It is recommended that the County Sheriff's Office work with the fire districts to update the ESN map that is used for dispatching, in order to adequately address any communication concerns and recent boundary changes.
- ❖ Currently, capital improvement projects are planned on an as-needed basis during Board meetings. The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify financing needs and sources for these needs.
- ❖ An area that WACSD could improve upon is tracking response times for each incident and collaborating with CalFire on information exchange.

- ❖ The District operates one leach field and five testing wells, two of which are non-operational. The District has capacity to serve the nine connections for which the system was designed.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services and accommodate anticipated growth. The situation further improved with the approval of an assessment increase.
- ❖ The District gets reimbursed for assisting federal and state fire providers.
- ❖ The current economic conditions and rising prices of services and supplies were identified as a challenge to financing. However, the new assessment passed this year helped eliminate financial constraints that the District previously faced.
- ❖ WACSD hopes to increase its funding through potential grants.
- ❖ The District does not have reserve funds, but is in the process of setting up a policy to create one or more.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ WACSD collaborates with other fire providers in Plumas County through informal mutual aid agreements and common trainings, and with Prattville-Almanor FPD through an automatic aid agreement and functional consolidation contract. WACSD and PAFPD share resources and conduct joint trainings. Under the new agreement, WACSD will take over PAFPD administration.
- ❖ WACSD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District did not identify any additional opportunities to share its facilities with other agencies in the future.

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

- ❖ WACSD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ Governmental structure options are annexation of Big Meadows and consolidation with PAFPD. Consolidation with other fire districts offers opportunities for shared resources and finances.