

BECKWOURTH PEAK

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Proposed Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District Information Sheet

LESSG BACKGROUND

- A Local Emergency Services Study Group (LESSG) was created in January 2020 to explore ways to strengthen and improve fire and emergency services throughout the region. LESSG is represented by The City of Portola, Beckwourth FPD, Gold Mountain CSD, and Sierra Valley FPD.
- The representing boards of the Group consensus was to collectively fund a feasibility study to determine solutions to best fulfill fire, rescue, and emergency medical services.
- The feasibility study confirmed substantial benefits by forming one new fire protection district (FPD) with coordinated divisions representing each existing stations to serve Eastern Plumas communities*.
**The new FPD does not include areas served by Eastern Plumas Rural FPD.*

CURRENT FIRE-RELATED DISTRICTS AND CHALLENGES

- Eastern Plumas County is served by:
 - **City of Portola:** two modern stations in the city limits and currently contracts with Beckwourth Fire Protection District (FPD).
 - **Beckwourth FPD:** serves the greater Beckwourth community and is under contract with the City of Portola.
 - **Gold Mountain Community Services District (CSD):** currently under contract with Beckwourth FPD to provide fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS).
 - **Sierra Valley FPD:** serves a 220 square mile area and is contracted to provide services to Hallelujah Junction FPD in Lassen County.
- Current challenges include:
 - rising costs of equipment,
 - increase in severe wildfires,
 - increasing demands to provide emergency medical services,
 - limited volunteer recruitment and retention programs,
 - inadequate levels and types of training opportunities,
 - limited administrative capacity to address growing organizational requirements, and
 - insufficient funding to cover growing expenses including:
 - replacement of aging safety equipment and apparatus,
 - communication equipment and infrastructure improvements,
 - insurance and worker's compensation,
 - training and certification for volunteers, and
 - fire station maintenance.

NEW FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT JUSTIFICATION

- In 2021, Beckwourth and Sierra Valley volunteer departments responded to over 500 emergency incidents within the proposed boundary of the new FPD.
- Approximately 70% of the total annual call volume are medical related (including vehicle accidents).

- Critical non-fire life safety calls have increased over time and require more medical resources and trained volunteers to adequately serve those in need.
- Continued growth and scattered residential development have resulted in dispersed areas where there is a demand for services. These areas are currently outside of any local jurisdictional boundary assigned to provide services.
- Local agencies often respond to calls outside of the jurisdiction but do not receive reliable revenue or compensation for providing services.
- A new FPD would merge the operations of the four agencies into one efficient, effective, and sustainable emergency services system. The new FPD would provide a regional district with an improved economy of scale and associated benefits.

HOW WILL REORGANIZATION/FORMATION BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY?

- The new FPD will be able to continue to respond to fires, medical distress calls, vehicle accidents, hazardous material spills and the many other calls received.
- Forming a new FPD will establish a consistent, long-term community-based and locally controlled revenue source to support the sustainable delivery of provided services.
- Given widespread wildfires in recent years, fire insurance is more difficult to obtain in rural areas. Being located within the boundaries of an FPD may benefit the ability to obtain fire insurance or keep current policies.
- The new FPD will be eligible to apply for grant funding and access tax revenue that is available only to local government entities (FPDs).

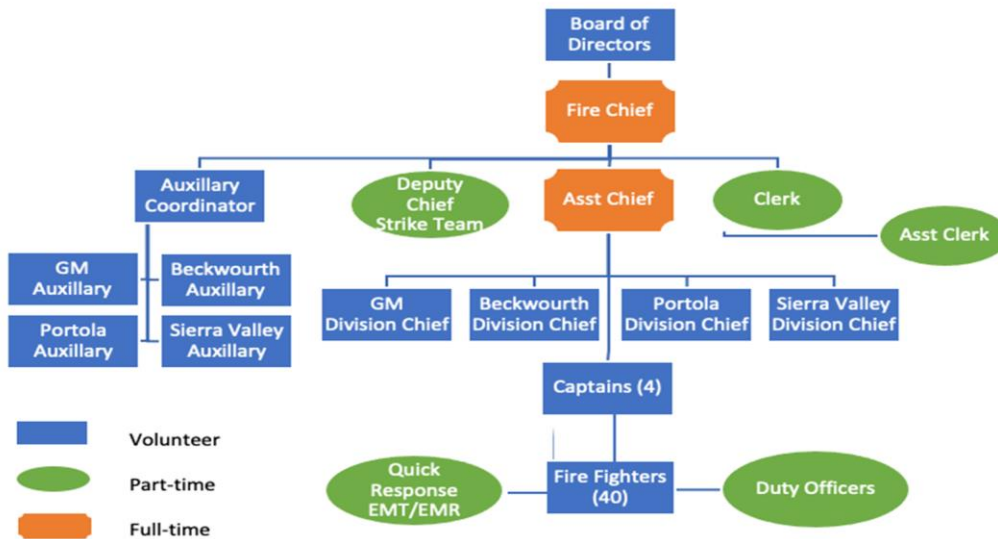
IS CALFIRE AN OPTION TO PROVIDE SERVICES?

No, it is not.

HOW WILL THE NEW FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT SOLVE THE ISSUE OF ATTRACTING VOLUNTEERS/DIRECTORS?

- A stable, adequately funded singular FPD will attract quality volunteers for firefighting services and volunteers to serve on one FPD Board of Directors.
- The new district will provide a more organized, stable, cohesive district with strong leadership to support its volunteers.
- The new district will have more revenue to support its volunteer firefighters through increased training opportunities, improved equipment, as well as training attendance and call response stipends.
- Rigorous training and certification programs will create career opportunities as well as professional-grade volunteers to serve the FPD.

**HOW WILL THE NEW FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BE STAFFED?
PROPOSED ORGANIZATION CHART**



WHAT POSITIONS WILL BE PAID?

The backbone of the New FPD will be volunteer members who are essential to the operation of FPD's in rural America today. A small number of part-time paid positions will be created, as illustrated in the organization chart above. The Chief and Assistant Chief will be full-time paid positions.

IS MY PROPERTY WITHIN THE PROPOSED NEW FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOUNDARY?

- Please use this [link](#)¹ to access an online map that shows the proposed New FPD boundary:
 - The proposed new FPD is intended to include all of the parcels where it will most likely be called as the primary local responder.
 - The proposed new FPD will now officially include residents who are part of Eastern Plumas County that are out of the “boundaries” of current service providers but still receive services.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR FORMING THE NEW FPD?

- A Resolution of Application will be approved by the City of Portola and each partner agency requesting the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) take proceedings for a reorganization that includes a new Fire Protection District formation.
- Plumas LAFCo will hold a hearing to adopt a resolution requesting the Board of Supervisors to call an election and place a measure on the November 7, 2023 ballot.
 - A District Election will be called by the Board of Supervisors.
 - Registered voters who reside within the New FPD boundary will vote on the following: 1) Forming a fire protection district, 2) Establishing a new special tax, and 3) electing the governing board of directors.
 - Two-Thirds (2/3) of the votes cast by registered voters need to be in favor of the new special tax for the new FPD formation to move forward.

HOW WILL THE NEW FPD BE FUNDED?

- **Special Tax:** A new revenue source will be required to support the New FPD’s ability to build and sustain adequate community fire and rescue services for the entire service area. An annual special tax, based on

land use types, will be proposed for parcels located within the New FPD boundary, in the following manner:

Description	Base	Base Includes			If Exceeds Base Amount Add			Max	# of Parcels each rate
		SqFt	Acres	# of Units	\$/addSF	\$/addAc	\$/addUnit		
Residential Improved	\$110.00	1,800			\$0.02			\$200	1,568
Unimproved Land	\$55.00		2			\$1.00		\$75	1,769
Ag & Timber	\$55.00		80			\$0.05		\$75	407
Multiple Residential Imp	\$82.50			1			\$82.50	\$3,500	48
Commercial Improved	\$165.00	2,700			\$0.06			\$1,500	136
Industrial Improved	\$192.50	3,150			\$0.07			\$1,500	17
Religious	\$137.50	2,250			\$0.05			\$250	9
Recreational	\$220.00	2,700			\$0.08			\$3,500	12
Non-Taxable/Exempt									360

- If approved on the November 7, 2023 ballot, all existing special taxes and assessments used to fund community fire protection and rescue services by the City of Portola, and Beckwourth FPD would terminate and no longer be levied. Gold Mountain CSD will retain a portion of or all of their Special Tax currently assessed. No such taxes are currently levied within the Sierra Valley Fire FPD.
- **Tax Exchange Agreement with the County:** In addition to proposing the new special tax, the new FPD will work with the County to receive a portion of the property taxes currently collected to support the New FPD, which will generate revenue in addition to revenue generated by the special tax.
 - The revenue provided the District through County tax-sharing will come out of property taxes already paid at no additional cost.

One Will Not Work Without the Other: The approval of a new special tax by the registered voters AND the successful execution of a tax exchange agreement with the County are conditions of the FPD formation. The revenue generated by these two key funding sources and continued fundraising, donations and grants will establish a reliable budget for the new FPD.

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