

Communication Plan



Communication Plan  
Fire Protection in Plumas County: Public Education and information  
relating to residents residing outside of a Fire District

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## **BACKGROUND**

Plumas County has 19 different fire departments, the U.S. Forest Service and CAL FIRE that provide fire protection services. Not all populated areas are located within an established district that provides structural fire protection. The U.S. Forest Service provides the majority of wildland fire suppression, however, structural fire protection responsibility lies with local Fire Departments located throughout the county. The total acreage of Plumas County is 1,672,119 acres. May 2011 statistics from the Plumas County Building and Planning Department show that 71% of the lands in Plumas County are in public ownership. 20,824 persons reside in Plumas County and 95% of that population lives within a structural fire protection district. 4.56% of the population lives in areas without structural fire protection services, mostly in existing communities established from the late 1800's through the 1960's. These areas are the result of historic settlement patterns rather than planned communities.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

A wide variety of circumstances account for non-inclusion in a fire district. Issues identified in previous studies by the Plumas County Fire and Emergency services Feasibility Study Group were:

- Historically lots were created without regards to fire protection.
- Residents may not be aware that they are not in a fire district.
- Many assume that their property taxes are providing fire protection services.
- Fire protection options differ for seasonal recreation properties vs. full time residences.
- Many do not understand the role of the U.S. Forest Service vs. local fire department fire suppression capabilities in regards to structure fires.
- Many do not understand the process involved in annexation of their property or how to find out if they can get a service contract with a local fire department for fire protection services.

## **GOALS**

Utilize technology to inform residents and the public of fire district boundaries and indicate the status of fire protection coverage countywide.

Provide fire districts a framework for further discussion of fire protection issues and funding mechanisms for fire protection services.

Educate residents and property owners on costs associated with Fire Protection coverage, and the consequences of not having it.

Work with fire districts on identifying areas in their sphere of influence that may be feasible to annex.

Ensure updated Plumas County General Plan policies provide for structural fire protection for new developments.

Disseminate information on the wildland fire issue in Plumas County, and mitigation measures homeowners can take to better prepare their home in the event of a wildfire.

## **AUDIENCES**

### Internal

#### **Plumas County Board of Supervisors**

Responsible for decisions relating to property tax exchanges in Plumas County. Establishes county policy on land use and entitlements. Need updates on Fire Protection issues and opportunities in areas not currently covered by Fire Protection Services in each Supervisorial District.

#### **Plumas County Planning and Building Departments**

Plays a key role in educating landowners and builders about fire prevention requirements and fire protection status as part of the permitting process.

#### **LAFCO**

Local Agency Formation Commission responsible for review of district operations including spheres of influence and out of area service agreements.

#### **Plumas County Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group**

The Committee's Mission is to, "*Determine the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County*". The committee's objectives are to; increase funding for all emergency services, mitigate existing and future hazards that impact public health and safety, and provide a uniform level of service county wide that meets federal, state, and local mandates.

#### **Plumas County Fire Chiefs**

Responsible for Fire Protection and response to incidents in their spheres of influences and emergency response areas.

### External

#### **Fire Protection District and / or Community Service District Boards of Directors**

The Boards determine whether or not their Districts are capable of annexing properties not currently covered by Fire Protection Services.

#### **Plumas National Forest Fire Staff**

Responsible for wildland fire protection in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and National Forest Lands in Plumas County outside of the Lake Almanor Basin. The Forest Service should be provided update in status changes of Fire Protection District boundaries.

## **CAL FIRE**

Responsible for wildland fire protection in the Lake Almanor Basin SRA lands. Forestry and Fire Prevention staff routinely works with local landowners on fire prevention and timber harvest Public Resource Code requirements relating to Forest and Fire Laws. CAL FIRE should be provided update in status changes of Fire Protection District boundaries.

## **Plumas Firesafe Council**

The council's mission is "To reduce the loss of natural and manmade resources caused by wildfire through Firewise community programs and pre-fire activities". This council routinely works with homeowners and property owners throughout Plumas County and coordinates the Plumas County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

## **TACTICS**

### Internal

#### **County email communication**

Provide timely updates to managers of Environmental Health (OES), Planning Director and County Assessor of potential new annexations to Fire Districts.

#### **Updates to Board of Supervisors**

Provide quarterly project updates to Board of Supervisors quarterly. Contact individual District Supervisor for any status updates in their Supervisorial District.

#### **Updates to Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association**

Provide updates of action plan item status at quarterly Fire Chiefs meetings.

### External

#### **Residents of Plumas County**

Inform residents and prospective property buyers of issues relating to fire district locations and fire protection in Plumas County utilizing web based information and handouts.

#### **Realtors**

Provide information on where to get information relating to location of fire district boundaries and fire protection responsibilities for wildland and structure fires.

#### **Plumas County Homeowners Associations outside Fire Districts**

Work cooperatively with US Forest Service fire management on communicating the role of the USFS as it relates to out of fire district response to fires in their area. Provide information of sphere of influence boundaries relating to their homeowners associations.

#### **Community neighborhoods with no formal common infrastructure**

Work cooperatively with local fire districts to establish key contacts for these areas. Communities with no CSD, Water District or road association will require specialized outreach.

## ACTION PLAN

Activity	Purpose	Product
Communication Plan	Guidance and references to utilize when discussing the fire protection coverage in Plumas County. Framework to begin discussing fire protection issues and options for communities without structural fire response coverage.	Document titled: Communication Plan Fire Protection in Plumas County: Public education and information relating to residents residing outside of a fire district
Fire protection coverage in Plumas County: Questions and answers for fire districts	Background for fire districts use. Questions and answer format for discussing fire protection issues in their communities.	Document titled: Background information for Fire Protection Districts: Commonly asked questions by the public about obtaining fire protection coverage
Fire Protection in Plumas County: Question and answers for the public handout	An informational handout for builders on properties located outside a fire district. Housed on <a href="http://www.plumascounty.us">www.plumascounty.us</a> Links to Building dept. handout and on OES site.	Document titled: My property is not within a Fire Protection District. What's that mean? Answers for owners of properties located outside a Fire Protection District
Understanding your Fire Protection brochure	An informational Question and Answer brochure for Realtors and Fire Districts to provide background on the structural fire protection issue and how to find out if your parcel is in or out of a fire district for public.	Tri fold Brochure Understanding your fire protection – Plumas County
Public assess to fire district locations and boundaries	Web access to inform residents and property owners of fire protection district boundaries. Housed on <a href="http://www.plumascounty.us">www.plumascounty.us</a> GIS dept.	Access through Plumas County website Google Earth interface and County interactive web map. Fire District layer is available.
Example of cost for homeowner insurance example.	Sample comparison of homeowner insurance policy cost for different ISO ratings	Sample homeowner insurance differences in policy price for 2012.
Public awareness of fire prevention and fire protection concerns	Educate the public on issues relating to fire responses outside fire districts and responsibilities of property owners.	Include messages in Plumas County newspaper “Inside the firehouse” column.

Sample bill for services for extinguishing structure fire.	Illustration of cost for a response to a structure fire.	Sample bill for services
LAFCO process for annexation: Questions and answers Sample Resolution	* Q&A for Annexation Process * Sample Resolution Provided for fire districts and their boards understand the LAFCO process for annexation of properties in to a fire district.	Documents
Invitation to public meeting flyer	Announcement of public meeting to invite residents to discussion of fire protection opportunities with local fire district.	Flyer
Meeting agenda for public meeting to talk about fire protections services and annexation.	Guideline for presenters to use at meeting. Includes suggested presenters.	Agenda
Logistics checklist for holding a Fire Protection / Annexation public meeting	Logistics to do list for meeting host	Checklist

## APPENDICES

1. Background information for Fire Protection Districts: Commonly asked questions by the public about obtaining fire protection coverage
2. My property is not within a Fire Protection District. What's that mean? Answers for owners of properties located outside a Fire Protection District
3. Understanding your Fire Protection Brochure
4. Sample bill for services for response outside fire district
5. Sample Fire Insurance homeowner policy price differences for different ISO ratings
6. LAFCO annexation process:
  - a. Annexation Q & A
  - b. Sample Resolution
7. Graeagle Fire District example: Annexation Guidelines
8. Meeting announcement flyer
9. Meeting agenda
10. Meeting logistics guidelines



## **Appendix 1**

### **Background information for Fire Protection Districts: Commonly asked questions by the public about obtaining fire protection coverage**

Wildfire is the primary concern to private property owners in Plumas County. Structural Fire Response resides with the one of the 19 different Fire Departments in Plumas County. Not all communities or subdivisions are located within a Fire Protection District. Each community offers different fire protection services with a variety of Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings utilized for securing homeowner fire insurance policies.

#### **How can I find out if I'm in a Fire District?**

Contact your closest fire department to your property. Do not assume you are in a Fire District because you live in a community with many homes. Some communities with fire hydrants are located outside fire district boundaries. Payment of property taxes does not mean you are automatically in a fire district that provides structural fire response services. Many of our small communities are not in a fire district. Larger communities not in a fire district are: Belden, Caribou, Storrie, Twain, Mohawk Vista, Keddie, Clio, Blairsden, Canyon Dam, Johnsville, Bucks Lake, Little Grass Valley, and Warner Valley.

### **BUILDING A HOME OUTSIDE A FIRE DISTRICT**

#### **Does this mean no one will come if I have a fire or a medical emergency?**

Plumas County 911 will dispatch the appropriate responders whether or not you are in a district. Fire departments will do a modified response for calls outside their district. Departments cannot send their entire firefighting force to calls and leave their own districts without coverage. Taxpayers in the district are paying for this service and contributing to the infrastructure of their community.

#### **How much will it cost if the fire department responds to a call outside the district?**

One example of a response to a small fire at a residence that required 4 hours by firefighters to extinguish was close to \$8,000. Some fire departments are actively billing for their services to recoup operating expenses. Expect to see more and more fire departments in Plumas County initiating bills for services outside their fire district.

#### **Homeowner and Business Insurance Issues**

We are hearing more and more of policies getting dropped for property owners in forested areas. Large wildland fires in the western United States, such as the 2007 Angora Fire at South Lake Tahoe, burned 242 residences and 67 commercial structures. This has led insurance companies to look more closely at who they insure. Many insurance companies will not insure homes located outside a fire district unless they have a contract for fire protection services.

**If I want to obtain fire protection services how do I go about it?**

Your first point of contact should be with the Fire Department closest to you. Find out if they are willing to provide those services by contract or annexation in to their district. Fire Districts will look at things like access to your property, closest water sources and basic infrastructure of your area.

**What is the benefit if I annex or get a service contract for fire protection services with a fire district? The fire department will respond whether or not I am in a district.**

**Out of fire district response:** If the fire department responds to a medical or fire emergency, most departments are encouraged to obtain reimbursement for costs. Responses outside a fire district and are at the discretion of each department and may be a modified response.

**Responses inside a fire district or to service contract holders:**

Medical responses: You will not be billed by the fire department for their response.

Fire Responses: You are paying for fire protection services with these fees. With this fee, you will have the knowledge that the fire department will know where you are located, understand you area access, water delivery capabilities and respond to emergencies at your residence.

**How much does it cost?**

For persons residing inside a fire district boundary in Plumas County, the current range of annual fee assessment can run between \$100-\$350 per parcel. Some newer subdivisions may be higher. These costs vary according to which district you are in.

Compare this fee to other subscription services. Most of us subscribe to health insurance, vehicle collision and homeowner insurance. Other things we subscribe to are:

Internet- \$49 a month, Satellite TV- \$90 a month and cell phones- \$60 a month.

A \$350 annual fire protection service contract is averages out to \$29 a month.

If annexation is being considered, the County and LAFCo will play a role as well.

**HOW TO ANNEX INTO A FIRE DISTRICT OR A SPECIAL DISTRICT FOR FIRE PROTECTION**

**I live in a community where a group of residents are interested in officially annexing in to a district to obtain fire protection coverage.**

For a territory to be annexed into a fire district of fire service provider, a simple majority of the registered voters or the property owners owning a majority of the property tax assessed valuation must support the annexation. To begin the process, a property owner should contact the fire district or service provider you are interested in annexing in to. Discuss if they have the capacity to accept annexation. The next point of contact is the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO). Individuals and small communities should contact LAFCO staff at (530) 283-7067 to reassess the costs, complexity and timelines that currently exist. Each annexation request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**What to expect:**

1. Annexations may be initiated by resolution of the fire district board or service provider by registered voter petition.
2. LAFCO fee deposits are charged for annexations. There are differences in costs depending on how many properties are requesting annexation. Basically, the more that are annexed in at one time, the lower the individual cost.
3. A map and boundary description of the area to be annexed, prepared by a licensed land surveyor or engineer licensed to prepare maps and boundary descriptions, is required. This must meet the state Board of Equalization requirements.
4. In addition, the process involves notice to landowners, and public hearing before LAFCO. Property Tax Exchange negotiations are also part of the process through the Board of Supervisors and the fire district or fire service provider board of directors.

**INFORMATION FOR PROPERTY OWNERS IN SEASONAL ACCESS AREAS**

Some properties in Plumas County have poor or limited seasonal access and there may be no possibility of having structural fire protection services. Fire response may be limited to the U.S. Forest Service during fire season. The Forest Service will apply strategy and tactics to keep wildland fires from reaching structures, as prudent to do so, considering risk management for firefighters and publics, fire behavior, values at risk including natural resources, availability of firefighting resources, and jurisdictional authorities.

The Forest Service shall not:

- Take direct suppression actions on structures other than those that tactically reduce the threat of fire spread to them.
- Enter structures or work on roofs of structures for the purpose of direct suppression actions.

Residents in these rural areas should take extra caution in ensuring their properties have more than the California State required defensible space requirements. Extra water supplies should be considered with 2 accesses into the property in the case of fire. For phone contact and more information on how to make your property safe from wildfire contact the Plumas Firesafe Council. [www.plumasfiresafe.org](http://www.plumasfiresafe.org).

## **Appendix 2**

### **Handout for attachment to planning and building permits in Plumas County**

#### **My property is not within a Fire Protection District. What's that mean? Answers for owners of properties located outside a Fire Protection District**

Like many rural areas, not all private property in Plumas County is located within a fire protection district. If you own a home outside a district or are planning to build one, here are some things you should know about residential fire protection.

#### **Who is responsible for residential fire protection in Plumas County?**

There is no County fire department, but residential fire protection is provided by one of 19 local Fire Departments in the County. Depending on where your property is located, your local fire department may have paid staff or be strictly volunteer.

#### **What are the levels of service provided by the local departments?**

Each department offers different fire protection service levels depending on the fire equipment, training, staffing levels and other specifics like the presence of fire hydrants. These differences affect the ISO (Insurance Service Office) ratings, which then affect rates and availability of homeowners' fire insurance. If your home is not in a district, you may find it difficult or expensive to get fire insurance.

#### **Doesn't the US Forest Service or CAL FIRE provide residential fire protection?**

No. USFS will only protect forest lands and try to keep fires from spreading to nearby structures. There are no CAL FIRE fire stations in Plumas County.

#### **Does this mean no one will come if I have a fire?**

Plumas County 911 will dispatch the nearest fire department whether you are in a district or not. The department will respond if they have enough personnel and resources. In some instances, the response to out-of-district calls can be delayed and only a limited response, such as one fire truck, may be sent. The Fire Departments' primary obligation is to the residents of their district who are paying for this service through their property taxes and often through a special tax assessment. If you're not in the district, your taxes do not support them.

#### **Will I get a bill for service?**

It depends. Most departments will send a bill for fire or medical calls that are outside of their district. Departments follow specific guidelines on when and how to send a bill for out-of-district calls.

**Can I join a district?**

Perhaps. Your first point of contact should be with the Fire Department closest to you. Find out if they are able to or willing to provide those services by contract or annexation. Fire Districts will look at things like distance from district boundaries, access to your property, closest water sources and basic infrastructure of your area. If annexation is being considered, the County and LAFCo will play a role as well. Many rural areas like Warner Valley or the Feather River Canyon have no nearby structural Fire Departments. In these areas, residents may want to start their own volunteer department like the one recently started at Bucks Lake.

**What is the benefit if I annex or get a service contract with a Fire District?**

If you annex or get a service contract, you will be adding safety measures for your family and your home, your fire insurance situation should improve. Furthermore, you will be supporting your nearby fire district and helping ensure its future. Without adequate funding, some departments may be forced to stop responding outside of their district. In addition, you will not be charged if the department needs to respond to your home. Finally, the Fire Department will know where you are located, understand your access, water supply options, and be much better prepared to respond to emergencies at your home.

**Where can I get more information?**

Contact your local fire department, or visit one of the following websites:  
Plumas County Office of Emergency Services [www.plumascounty.com](http://www.plumascounty.com)  
Plumas Firesafe Council [www.plumasfiresafe.org](http://www.plumasfiresafe.org)

## Appendix 3

### Informational Handout for Realtors

**How can I find out if my property is located in or near a Fire District?**

Plumas County has two interactive mapping systems available for you to find out where Fire District boundaries lie in relationship to your property. On the web go to [www.plumascounty.us](http://www.plumascounty.us) and link to the Geographic Information System (GIS) Department. Here you will find directions on using the **Interactive Web Map** or the Google Earth map platform.



Plumas County **Interactive Web Map** showing Graeagle Fire Protection District boundary in gold.



Google Earth map layer showing Camp Layman, parcels and address points.

For more information on GIS maps contact Plumas County GIS Planner 530-283-6420

**Where can I get more information about Fire Protection?**

For a list of local fire departments in Plumas County, California on the web:

Plumas County Office of Emergency Services  
[www.plumascounty.us](http://www.plumascounty.us)



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR FIRE PROTECTION



† PLUMAS COUNTY ‡

Like many rural areas, not all private property in Plumas County is located within a fire protection district. If you own a home outside a district or are planning to build one, here are some things you should know about residential fire protection.




Photo by Mike Grant

### Firefighters are our neighbors

Plumas County firefighting services are provided by 19 fire local departments. Many of our neighbors are volunteer firefighters or work for wildland firefighting agencies. We are very fortunate to have these dedicated men and women responding to fire, medical and other emergencies. People like this truly make Plumas County a wonderful place to live and recreate. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter contact your local fire department.

## If there is a fire will someone come?

### Who is responsible for residential fire protection in Plumas County?

There is no County fire department, but residential fire protection is provided by one of 19 local Fire Departments in the County. Depending on where your property is located, your local fire department may have paid staff or be strictly volunteer. **If your house is not in one of these fire districts, you have no assurance of fire protection.**

### What are the levels of service provided by the local departments?

Each department offers different fire protection service levels depending on the fire equipment, training, staffing levels and other specifics like the presence of fire hydrants. These differences affect the ISO (Insurance Service Office) ratings, which then affect rates and availability of homeowners' fire insurance. **If your home is not in a district, you may find it difficult or expensive to get fire insurance.**

### Doesn't the US Forest Service or CAL FIRE provide residential fire protection?

No. The USFS has responsibility for vegetation fires and will try to keep fires from spreading to nearby structures. There are no CAL FIRE fire stations in Plumas County.

### Does this mean no one will come if I have a fire?

In most cases, fire dispatchers will dispatch the nearest fire department whether you are in a district or not. The department will respond if they have enough personnel and resources. In some instances, the response to out-of-district calls can be delayed and only a limited response, such as one fire truck, may be sent. The Fire Departments' primary obligation is to the residents of their district who are paying for this service through their property taxes and often through a special tax assessment. If you're not in the district, your taxes do not support them.

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If you annex or get a service contract, you will be adding safety measures for your family and your home, your fire insurance situation should improve. Furthermore, you will be supporting your nearby fire district and helping ensure its future. Without adequate funding, some departments may be forced to stop responding outside of their district. In addition, you will not be charged if the department needs to respond to your home. Finally, the Fire Department will know where you are located, understand your access, water supply options, and be much better prepared to respond to emergencies at your home.

## Appendix 4

### Sample Bill for Services

This example is a fire response involving a faulty fireplace that caused a structure fire. Multiple fire departments were dispatched to this structure fire under a mutual aid agreement and took suppression action on the fire.

The costs are based on State Office of Emergency Services standard rates for California in 2012.

### Fire Department 2012 Invoice for Services

<b>Personnel:</b>	<b>Rate of pay</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Total</b>
Chief	\$81.14	4	\$324.56
Division Chief	\$46.94	4	\$187.76
Captain	\$43.14	4	\$172.56
Captain	\$43.14	4	\$172.56
Firefighter	\$33.45	4	\$133.80
Firefighter	\$33.45	4	\$133.80
Total amount personnel:			\$1125.04
Workers Compensation Insurance rate 12.9%			\$145.13
Unemployment Insurance rate 3.4%			\$38.25
<b>Subtotal Personnel:</b>			<b>\$1308.42</b>
<b>Vehicles:</b>	<b>Rate of pay</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Total</b>
Command Type 1	\$96.00/day	1	\$96.00
Engine Type 1	\$100.00/hr.	4	\$400.00
Engine Type IV	\$70.00	4	\$280.00
Engine Type III	\$70.00	4	\$280.00
Total amount vehicles:			\$1056.00
Total amount Personnel:			\$1308.42
<b>Total:</b>			<b>\$2364.42</b>
Administrative rate 10%:			\$206.44
<b>Single Fire Department Response cost:</b>			<b>\$2570.86</b>
Additional response from other Departments for Mutual Aid:			\$5141.72
<b>All Departments total fire suppression cost:</b>			<b>\$7712.58</b>

## **Appendix 5**

### **Homeowner Insurance Policy differences in cost**

There are many variations and price examples from insurance companies that choose to insure homeowners in Plumas County. This example was a quote for a home located in the 96103 zip code. The quote was obtained in April 2012.

#### **Homeowner policy for a dwelling valued at \$370,000**

Included in the policy was personal property replacement, loss of use, liability and medical payments.

Home located in ISO rating of 4 or 5 within 1000' of a hydrant: \$1354 / year

Home located in fire district ISO rating 9 with no hydrants \$1640 / year

Home located outside fire district with ISO rating of 10 \$1930 / year



## Appendix 6

### **Annexation process and guidelines for property owners currently not residing within the boundaries of a Fire Protection District 5/6/2013**

Questions and answers on the steps involved in the Plumas LAFCo (Local Agency Formation Commission) annexation process.

#### ***Point of Contact for parcel owners interested in officially annexing in to a district to obtain fire protection coverage.***

The first point of contact should be with the Fire Department closest to them. Find out if they are able to or willing to provide those services by contract or annexation. Fire Districts will look at things like distance from district boundaries, access to your property, closest water sources and basic infrastructure of your area. If annexation is being considered, LAFCo will play a role as well.

#### **Example of typical process and timeline involved for multiple property owners located outside a fire district to do group annexation in to a fire district.**

1. Property must be within a Fire Districts Sphere of Influence.
  - a. The property must be located in the fire district's Sphere of Influence (SOI). An SOI is a LAFCo-approved plan that designates an agency's probable future boundary and service area.
  - b. Cost: No cost if currently residing in updated Spheres of Influence. There will be additional costs if the new territory has to be brought into a Sphere of Influence. In most cases, this means additional mapping and costs associated with the processing of a Sphere of Influence amendment to meet the requirements of state law. Fire Agencies are encouraged to be proactive in the Sphere of Influence Update and (or) amendment process.
2. Initiation by Petition or Resolution by the fire agency
  - a. The landowner(s) works with the fire department to submit a petition of application. In this case the landowner is initiating the application to begin the process. Often a community meeting is held to discuss this process, timelines and estimated costs with interested parties before submitting the application to ensure there is a commitment from interested parties. Alternatively, the Fire District may initiate the process by approving a resolution. In either case it is advisable to discuss initiation of an application before LAFCo with LAFCo staff.
  - b. Cost: No cost to file this form.
3. LAFCO fee deposit required.
  - a. The application goes to LAFCo where it is processed. At this point, a LAFCo fee deposit is required.
  - b. Cost: Typically the fee deposit is \$5,775. The LAFCo charge out rate is \$165 per hour to cover both direct and indirect costs of complying with state law. If there are multiple owners wishing the annex, the LAFCO fee deposit and the state Board of Equalization fee may be divided among each of the owners depending upon location and proximity to one another - cost will be shared among multiple property owners. If the application is later withdrawn for any reason, LAFCo will refund the unused fee deposit back to the applicant(s). If the LAFCo application is not complicated, a

greater portion of the fee deposit will be returned to those applying upon completion of the process. This is generally the case with small annexation proposals. However, if controversy with the application occurs costs may be higher than the required fee deposit based on the level of controversy.

4. LAFCO mapping fee
  - a. Part of this process includes LAFCo to create updated GIS shape file map used for County assessor's maps, voter registration, GIS planning and Emergency Response Maps.
  - b. Cost: Estimate \$200
5. Map required by licensed surveyor.
  - a. The applicant is required to pay for and provide a map and perimeter boundary description to LAFCo of the area to be annexed. The map and boundary description must be prepared by a licensed land surveyor or a qualified engineer of the applicant's choice. The map and description must meet the State Board of Equalization requirements. Applicants need to contract directly with a surveyor or engineer for this service.
  - b. Sample map:  
[http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/7\\_Sample\\_map\\_&\\_legal\\_copy.pdf](http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/7_Sample_map_&_legal_copy.pdf)
6. Environmental review (CEQA)
  - a. Review of the area is required. Documentation of the results is required with the application. Typically small annexations to fire districts are exempt from CEQA. However, if a proposal includes a land division the environmental review will be prepared by the County as part of its overall entitlement process.
  - b. Filing of an exemption with the County Clerk costs \$50.00.
7. Plan for providing service documentation.
  - a. The fire department and LAFCo have examples for you to use of this format.
  - b. There is no cost associated with preparing a plan for services. However, details must be worked out with the local fire agency.
8. Completed package to Plumas County Board of Supervisors- Tax Exchange negotiations
  - a. Once an Application is initiated, LAFCo staff will forward the application to the Board of Supervisors and the appropriate fire agencies, the County Assessor and Auditor to conclude a property tax sharing agreement. This process defines the amount of property tax revenue to be received the fire agency after the annexation is completed. LAFCo is not a party to the Tax Exchange process. This process is between the affected fire agency and the Board of Supervisors.
  - b. Cost: No cost specifically associated with this action item. Costs are included in the application fee.

9. Public Comment period

- a. After the tax negotiation is agreed upon by the County and the fire agency, then LAFCo may set a public hearing for this item and publish a 21-day notice in the newspaper.
- b. LAFCo Staff will prepare an Executive Officer's report and proposed resolution for consideration by the LAFCo Commission.
- c. Cost: Costs are included in the application fee.

10. Public Hearing

- a. The LAFCo Commission sets a public hearing for this item and may approve, deny or modify the proposal. If the proposal is modified by the Commission, the applicant (s) are responsible for paying additional mapping costs.
- b. If all landowners consent to the annexation then LAFCo will waive the protest hearing process and after 30 days after LAFCo approval will record as final the annexation and the LAFCo process is completed excepting the filing with the State Board of Equalization.
- c. Cost: There is a fee required to be submitted to the State Board of Equalization (BOE) along with maps and descriptions meeting their specific requirements. LAFCo will request the fee, which will vary depending upon the acreage included from the application proponents at this time and file all the required information with the BOE. The BOE Fee is based on sliding scale by acreage. See document [http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/6\\_jurboundaryreq\\_copy2005.pdf](http://www.calafco.org/local/Plumas/6_jurboundaryreq_copy2005.pdf)

The costs examples above are provided at a starting point to understand the steps involved and timelines to guide you through the process.

For specific costs call John Benoit, LAFCo Executive Officer at (530) 283-7069 or email at [johnbenoit@surewest.net](mailto:johnbenoit@surewest.net) to reassess the costs, complexity and timelines that currently exist. Each annexation request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Sample Resolution**

RESOLUTION No 2012-\_\_\_\_\_

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

\_\_\_\_\_  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
COUNTY OF PLUMAS, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

*A RESOLUTION OF APPLICATION BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ (district name) \_\_\_\_\_ FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT REQUESTING THE PLUMAS LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION TO TAKE PROCEEDINGS FOR THE ANNEXATION FOR \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the annexation) \_\_\_\_\_.*

RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the \_\_\_\_\_ (district name) \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Protection District that:

WHEREAS, the \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Protection District herein referred to as "District" desires to initiate proceedings pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, commencing with Section 56000 of the California Government Code, for the annexation; and

WHEREAS, Notice of Intent to adopt this Resolution of Application has not been given to each interested and subject agency; and

WHEREAS, the territory proposed to be annexed is inhabited and a map and description of the boundaries of the property are set forth in Exhibits "A" and "B" attached hereto and by this reference incorporated herein; and

WHEREAS, There are no affected cities or districts within the meaning of Subdivision (2) of Section 56700 of the Government Code; and

WHEREAS, this proposal is consistent with the Sphere of Influence of the District; and

WHEREAS, the District realizes a municipal services review and sphere of influence update is required by state law and recognizes these documents may be required if determined by the Local Agency Formation Commission; and

WHEREAS, it is desired to provide that the proposed annexation be subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. All costs incurred to complete the annexation and environmental review including but not limited to the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission, Plumas County government, State Agencies, and the State Board of Equalization will be borne by the property owner(s) within the territory to be annexed; and

2. All applicable, fees, special taxes and (or) assessments previously authorized by the District will be applied within the annexation territory after the completion of the annexation proceedings; and

3. *(Other terms and conditions the district may wish for LAFCO to consider); and*

WHEREAS, the reasons for the proposed annexation are as follows:

1. The annexation of the \_\_\_\_\_ Area will allow the District, who currently services the area, to provide enhanced emergency fire suppression and pre-suppression services as well as emergency medical services as part of its district.

2. The landowners and (or) residents in the annexation area have no other means of acquiring such services. The District realizes a Property Tax Exchange Agreement will be required pursuant to Revenue and Taxation Code Section 99(b).

3. A plan for services containing the information required in Government Code Section 56653 is attached as Exhibit "C" and a justification statement as Exhibit "D".

4. After a Public Hearing held on \_\_\_\_\_, 2012, it was determined by the Board of Directors of the District that adequate community support exists to initiate an annexation application to the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission.

WHEREAS, since the District currently provides services within the \_\_\_\_\_, the District Board of Directors finds that this annexation is categorically exempt from CEQA, Class 20, Section 15320 of the CEQA Guidelines and hereby adopts a Notice of Exemption; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the District certifies that pursuant to Section 99(b) of the Tax and Revenue Code, negotiations of property tax exchange has not commenced and realizes the annexation cannot be completed absent a negotiated property tax exchange; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the District currently provides services within the proposed annexation territory, the district Board of Directors finds that this action is categorically exempt from CEQA, Class 19 & 20, Section 15319 and 20 of the CEQA guidelines.

WHEREAS, the District Board of Directors has reviewed LAFCo's application requirements and will provide 2 copies of all required documents and, provided the District has received funds from the property owners, will authorize payment of LAFCo's application fee deposit for an Annexation; and

WHEREAS, upon receipt of adequate deposit of funds from the property owners, the President or Chair of the District Board of Directors is authorized to sign LAFCo's Agreement to Pay and Indemnification Form and LAFCo's application for the Annexation on behalf of the District's Board of Directors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this resolution of application for an Annexation is hereby adopted and approved by the Board of Directors of the District and the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission is hereby requested to take annexation proceedings for the territory shown and described in Exhibits "A" and "B" (map and boundary description), respectively according to the terms and conditions stated above and in the manner provided by the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Directors as a Resolution of the \_\_\_\_\_ District at a regular Board Meeting held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ by the following vote:

AYES: \_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

NOES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
ABSENT: \_\_\_\_\_

ABSTAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTESTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
(name & title)

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

Exhibits "A" and "B" - Map and Boundary Description

Exhibit "C" - Plan of providing Services

Exhibit "D" - Justification Statement

EXHIBIT "C"

PLAN FOR PROVIDING SERVICES  
IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
ANNEXATION OF \_\_\_\_\_

The Proposed Annexation to the District will provide services to the subject territory as outlined below:

1. Enumerate and describe the services to be extended to the affected territory.

Structural fire protection and emergency medical services and those specific services authorized by in 13862 of the Health and Safety Code including rescue services and hazardous material emergency response services and ambulance services, pursuant to Division 25 (commencing with Section 1797).

2. Specify the level and range of those services.

Specifically, the same services to be provided within the \_\_\_\_\_ Area will be the same Fire and Emergency Medical Services provided in the existing district.

3. Indicate when those services can feasibly be extended to the affected territory.

The services are presently being provided to the annexation area and will merely be continued upon annexation.

4. Indicate any improvements or other conditions the local agency would impose or require within the affected territory if the change of organization or reorganization is completed.

LAFCO will require the extension of any previously authorized taxes and (or) assessments for the provision of the above mentioned services.

5. Provide information about how each of those services will be financed.

Funding for the annexation territory will be covered with authorized taxes, property taxes, fees and assessments thereby reducing financial liability of the District.

The annexation territory will also be funded by the existing taxes extended into the territory upon annexation. Other revenue sources are currently in place or may be used in the future including Benefit Assessments, Impact Fees, Rentals, Fees, Donations and other miscellaneous sources.

EXHIBIT "D"

\_\_\_\_\_  
ANNEXATION  
STATEMENT OF JUSTIFICATION

The annexation of Area will allow the District, who currently services the area, to provide enhanced emergency fire suppression and pre-suppression as well as emergency medical services as part of its District.

The Area has no other means of acquiring such services.



## Appendix 7

### Sample Annexation Guidelines Graeagle Fire Protection District

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#### **GRAEAGLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

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P.O. Box 64  
7620 Highway 89  
Graeagle, CA 96103  
530-836-1340  
Fax 530-836-2645  
gfpd@psln.com



#### **GRAEAGLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ANNEXATION GUIDELINES**

It is the intent of Graeagle Fire Protection District (GFPD) to adhere to the following procedures when annexing new areas into the District.

1. District will not annex properties that do not lie within the GFPD Sphere of Influence.  
*Where amendment to the Sphere of Influence is necessary, it should be accomplished as a separate action, prior to initiation of annexation proceedings.*
2. District will process only annexations where there is a minimum 2/3 petition sign-up of all applicants within the petitioned area.  
*Although a 100% sign-up would preclude the necessity of a separate LAFCO protest hearing, it is realized that 100% may not be realistic in all cases (e.g.: Blairsden).*
3. District will only process two annexations per fiscal year.  
*It is unrealistic to expect to move more than two annexations per year through the LAFCO and District annexation process.*
4. Applicants agree to pay 100% of incidental expenses prior to the effective date of annexation.  
*It is not practical to expect GFPD to bankroll the incidental expenses (as a part of the assessment) for a period of time.*
5. District will only pursue annexations where there is preliminary agreement to a satisfactory tax negotiation with the County.
6. Applicant(s) agree to a Special Benefit Assessment, to insure revenue neutrality.
7. GFPD will only annex the whole of parcels within the boundary of the annexation.  
*Annexing only portions of (Assessor's) parcels results in administrative and assessment problems and difficulties.*
8. Applicant agrees to satisfy special conditions of annexation, if any, prior to the effective date of annexation.  
*Some annexations may warrant or require special conditions, such as: road improvements, obtaining easements, construction of emergency water supplies, extension of water system, or purchase of equipment.*

Adopted November 20, 2008

**DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA FOR ANNEXATIONS  
GRAEAGLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**Road Access Rights**

County Road / State Highway, or

Private right of way held by a homeowners association, with easement for emergency response agencies, or

Private right of way per "Road Maintenance Agreement," or

Private road with grant of easement for the whole to GFPD.

**Road Condition**

Two lane roadbed, and

Looped to primary road or having a turnaround at the end, per Plumas County standards.

Surfaced with asphalt concrete or Portland cement concrete or a minimum of 2" of compacted Class 2 aggregate base.

**Road Maintenance** (road condition and snow removal)

Public agency, or

Homeowners association, or

Contracted, continual services by a local equipment contractor.

**Driveway Condition** (per Plumas County Fire Safe Regulations)

One 10' lane with turnouts (where driveway is more than 150' long).

Turnaround at residence.

Road grade of 13% or less.

November 20, 2008

Appendix 8

Sample meeting Flyer

## **GRAEAGLE FIRE DEPARTMENT PRESENTS:**



**Thursday June 21, 2012  
6:00 PM Mohawk Resource Center**

### **An open invitation to Residents and Businesses of Blairsden:**

- **Did you know you are not inside a Fire District?**
- **What are the consequences of not being part of a Fire District?**
- **If you have a fire or medical emergency what kind of response will you get from the Fire Department?**
- **Is there a cost involved if the Fire Department responds?**

*Join members of the Graeagle Fire Protection District for a discussion of options and costs to the residents in Blairsden to obtain Fire Protection Services from the Graeagle Fire Dept.*

**Guest: Jon Kennedy, District 5 County Supervisor**  
Snacks and beverages provided by Graeagle Fire Association

**For more information contact Graeagle Fire Department  
836-1340**



## Appendix 9

### Suggested Meeting Agenda

#### Fire Protection Awareness:

**What do you know about your medical and fire protection services where you live?**

**Host:** \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Protection District

**Date:** Insert day of week and date @ Insert time      **Location:**

**Suggested Presenters:** Fire Chief, FPD Board member Board Member, Representative from Office of Emergency Services, Area USFS Fire Management representative, District County Supervisor

<b>Introductions</b> Opening remarks County wide fire protection overview Comments from OES perspective	County Supv. OES Rep
<b>Introduction and welcome on meeting objective:</b> Background to area residents of their status of fire protection ( <i>Fire District wall map</i> )	Fire Chief
<b>Fire history of Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>USFS Fire Response- Their role in structure fire suppression. Discussion of what they cannot do. Wildland Fire History Map.</li> <li>Structure and medical response statistics (<i>Statistics on flip chart</i>)</li> </ul>	USFS Fire Chief
<b>Fire Response Jurisdiction and Authority:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US Forest Service fire suppression policy</li> <li>Local FPD fire suppression</li> </ul>	USFS Fire Chief
<b>Understanding the differences in responses from local FD to in district vs. out of district residences</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Services provided inside district and for persons that have Service Agreements</li> <li>Modified responses for residents outside district</li> </ul>	Fire Chief
<b>Understanding Service Contracts offered by Graeagle Fire Protection District.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of cost vs. benefit of having a service contract with GFPD: Service fee discussion: what you receive for your fee</li> <li>Yearly cost for service contract</li> <li>Case examples of a response cost to residents out of District</li> </ul>	FPD Board member
<b>Looking to the future:</b> Service contracts and annexations in to the FPD	Fire Chief

## Appendix 10

### Logistics for Fire Protection Awareness Community meeting

<b>Task</b>	<b>Who's Responsible</b>
Agenda	
Flyer for presentation to be delivered to residents	
Rent meeting location	
Invite County District Supervisor, local Forest Service Division Chief and Board member to presentation (discuss expectations of what you would like them to cover)	
Sign up sheet for meeting attendees	
If using as a handout, print copy of a service contract for attendees	
Copy meeting flyer and deliver to targeted residents	
Phone targeted residents to let know about meeting (If utilizing this method)	
Obtain Wildland Fire History Map for display at meeting	
Get list of response statistics for Fire District and put on flip chart	
Post map of fire District boundaries	
Snacks and drinks. Bring napkins, sodas, and water.	