

**Municipal Service Review
And
Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

**Long Valley Fire Protection District
Mono County, California**

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SUMMARY

Municipal Service Review Determinations

1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

- The expansion and renovation of existing facilities will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district, as well as to serve development at buildout. The district has planned for the required expansion and renovation of its facilities in its Master Facilities Plan.
- Accelerated development will place more pressure on the Long Valley FPD to augment its service capacities, particularly in the southeastern and northwestern portions of the district. Those areas of the district may require new and increased infrastructure. The district has planned for new infrastructure at Sunny Slopes and at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport; those projects are included in the Master Facilities Plan.
- The replacement of aging equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has also planned for its future equipment needs in its Master Facilities Plan.

2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for significant additional growth in the area served by the Long Valley FPD.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to be primarily single-family residential development with a mix of multi-family residential development and commercial uses in Crowley Lake.
- The residential population in the area served by the Long Valley FPD is projected to increase to 1,865 by 2,020 and 2,005 by 2,030, creating an increased demand for fire and emergency medical services.
- The population will continue to age, creating an increased demand for emergency medical services.
- In addition to the projected residential growth, Long Valley's population experiences significant seasonal increases due to tourism. If additional development occurs at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district may increase substantially.
- Visitors to the area will continue to increase demand for services such as emergency medical response and vehicular accident response while providing no commensurate increase in revenues available to provide those services.

3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

- The Long Valley FPD's future financing will continue to rely heavily on property tax revenues.
- The adequacy of property tax revenues to fund local facilities and services has steadily declined over time. There is a need to ensure that property tax assessments are kept current.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain existing service levels as costs increase over time.

- The district recently developed a Master Facilities Plan and revised its Development Impact Fees in order to ensure that new development pays for the infrastructure and equipment necessary to provide service to that development.
- There are opportunities to coordinate with other fire districts and agencies to reduce costs.

4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

- Long Valley is a discrete geographic area within Mono County; there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries.
- The Long Valley FPD is a volunteer department with an elected board of commissioners—administrative costs are generally low.
- The district strives to keep operations and maintenance costs low by sharing services and training with other districts.
- Cooperation among fire districts is an important part of reducing costs.
- The cost of volunteer training is unavoidable and may be lost when trained volunteers leave the district. A possibility exists for the district to offer benefit contracts so that a volunteer agrees to be with the district for a specific amount of time or to reimburse the district for training costs. LVFPD offers a volunteer length of service award. With a minimum of 10 years of service the volunteer receives \$60 to \$120 per month at age of 60 as long as they have attended 33% of the training and attended 60% of the calls for three years. Cost to LVFPD is ~ \$5,000 per year.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has a Master Facilities Plan that addresses the demands imposed by growth within the district.

5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

- All funding mechanisms have inherent limitations that may prevent their implementation, use or restructure.
- The Long Valley FPD should seek additional opportunities to reduce costs through cooperation and sharing with other agencies.
- The district should continue to seek grant funding.

6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities and Resources

- The largest impediment to greater sharing of resources and facilities in Mono County is geographic separation between fire protection districts.
- Fire districts in Mono County can share resources through joint training sessions, shared purchasing, and the implementation of mutual aid agreements.
- The **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mono County** contains a number of mitigation measures to address fire hazard planning in the county's communities. While the focus of the plan is on mitigation planning for wildland fire hazards, the mitigation measures identified in the plan apply to all fire hazards in the area. Responsibility for implementing those fire hazard planning measures rests with the County, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, and local fire protection districts.
- USFS and BLM Federal Fuels Management Projects adjacent to private lands from Long Valley to Tom's Place, including Sunny Slopes that provide an opportunity for sharing resources.

7. Government Structure Options

- In regions of the county with separate, distinct communities that are geographically remote from each other, public services are most logically provided by single purpose special districts rather than by a larger entity such as the county.

8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

- The Long Valley FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, an assistant chief, a division chief for equipment, a training officer and a part time board secretary.
- The district has planned for the future in order to maintain its service levels while providing for the needs of future development.
- The district has a Master Facilities Plan and an Equipment Replacement Plan.

9. Local Accountability and Governance

- The Long Valley FPD complies with the minimum requirements for open meetings and public records.
- The district seeks to inform the community and affected groups of district activities.
- The district provides educational classes in Crowley Lake.

Sphere of Influence Findings

1. Present and Planned Land Uses

Present land uses in the area served by the Long Valley FPD includes residential, commercial, and public uses in the communities in the southern portion of the district and commercial and industrial uses in the northern portion of the district. The planned land uses for community areas are similar with future development concentrated primarily within and adjacent to existing development. If additional development occurs at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district may increase substantially.

2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services

The Long Valley FPD has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve the increasing and planned development in the area.

3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has identified a need to improve both its facilities and services in order to serve additional development and to improve services to existing development.

4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest

The district area exhibits social and economic interdependence with Mammoth Lakes, the only incorporated community in the County. However, since Mammoth Lakes is an incorporated community and Long Valley is part of the county's unincorporated area, that interaction is not relevant in establishing the sphere of influence for the Long Valley FPD.

Sphere of Influence Recommendation

The Sphere of Influence for the Long Valley Fire Protection District should remain as it is, coterminous with the boundaries of the district.

Reorganization Recommendation

Mammoth Yosemite Airport, which is owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, is located within the boundaries of the Long Valley FPD. Currently, both the Long Valley FPD and the Mammoth Lakes FPD respond to emergencies at the airport and have similar response times to the airport. The Long Valley FPD and the Mammoth Lakes FPD have established agreements to enhance response levels in the airport vicinity.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes, as the FAA permitted airport operator, has the responsibility for aircraft firefighting and rescue. Long Valley FPD has responsibility for structural fire protection, although the district also responds to all incidents involving aircraft. The Long Valley FPD has a small auxiliary station at the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery, which is intended to provide additional coverage in response to recent development at the airport until additional facilities can be completed at the airport.

The airport is an island of property owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, outside of the Town boundaries. Town governmental departments fulfill administrative, managerial, and operational functions at the airport. The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District is a special district and a separate legal entity from the Town of Mammoth Lakes. As such, it would not be appropriate for the Mammoth Lakes FPD to assume responsibility for structural fire protection at the airport. However, should the Mammoth Lakes FPD become a town department, then the town's fire department should assume responsibility for structural fire protection at the airport.

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature also finds that, whether governmental services are proposed to be provided by a single-purpose agency, several agencies, or a multipurpose agency, responsibility should be given to the agency or agencies that can best provide government services.

If a change in service provider appears warranted, such a change should occur only with the support of the Long Valley FPD and only when it can be demonstrated that service will be improved by the change of provider.

I. INTRODUCTION

Municipal Service Reviews

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) to conduct comprehensive reviews of all municipal services in each county in California and to periodically update that information. The purpose of the municipal service reviews is to gather detailed information on public service capacities and issues.

Relationship Between Municipal Service Reviews and Spheres of Influence

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act requires LAFCOs to develop and determine the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each applicable local governmental agency that provides services or facilities related to development. Government Code Section 56076 defines a SOI as “a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency.” Service reviews must be completed prior to the establishment or update of SOIs (§56430(a)). Spheres of influence must be reviewed and updated as necessary, but not less than once every five years (§56425).

The information and determinations contained in a Municipal Service Review are intended to guide and inform SOI decisions. Service reviews enable LAFCO to determine SOI boundaries and to establish the most efficient service provider for areas needing new service. They also function as the basis for other government reorganizations. Section 56430, as noted above, states that LAFCO can conduct these reviews “before, in conjunction with, but no later than the time it is considering an action to establish a SOI.”

The Long Valley Fire Protection District Municipal Service Review is being conducted in response to, and in conjunction with, an update of the sphere of influence for the district.

II. LONG VALLEY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Service Area

The Long Valley Fire Protection District (Long Valley FPD) was formed in 1974 to provide fire protection to the communities in Long Valley, i.e. Sunny Slopes, Aspen Springs, Crowley Lake, McGee Creek, and Long Valley. The district boundaries include approximately 114 square miles of public and private lands along Highway 395 in Long Valley (see Figure 1).

Long Valley is bordered to the south by the Sierra Nevada Mountains, to the east by the Volcanic Tablelands, to the north by the Glass Mountains, and to the west by the Mammoth Lakes area. Highway 395 provides the major access through the area. Crowley Lake Drive provides secondary access to local communities. Surface waters in the area include Lake Crowley and a number of streams throughout the valley. Topography in the area is characterized by the relatively flat floor of the valley, gently sloping hills to the sides of the valley floor and steep slopes above the hills. Vegetation on the valley floor includes pastureland and wetlands. Vegetation on the surrounding hills includes sagebrush scrub, junipers, and pinyon pines.

The district covers a large disperse area along Highway 395, from the Highway 395 and State Route 203 junction in the northwest to Tom's Place in the southeast. The district also provides service outside its boundaries, south along Highway 395 to milepost MNO 3.5 on the Sherwin Grade, up Rock Creek Canyon to Rock Creek Lake, and north on Benton Crossing Road. The district boundaries include the Mammoth Pacific Geothermal Plant, Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery, business and industrial uses at Sierra Business Park, resort uses at Convict Lake, recreational uses at Whitmore Park, housing and research facilities at the Sierra Nevada Aquatic Lab (SNARL), and a Caltrans road maintenance facility and housing. The communities in Long Valley, with the exception of Crowley Lake, include predominantly single-family residential development. Crowley Lake includes residential and commercial uses, a county park, community center and ball fields, county road facilities, and a water treatment facility. Tom's Place also includes limited commercial uses.

Population Characteristics

Mono County GIS estimates that there are 1033 parcels in the district, including 504 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). The Long Valley FPD estimates that there are approximately 2000 residents within the district and 485 households receiving services.

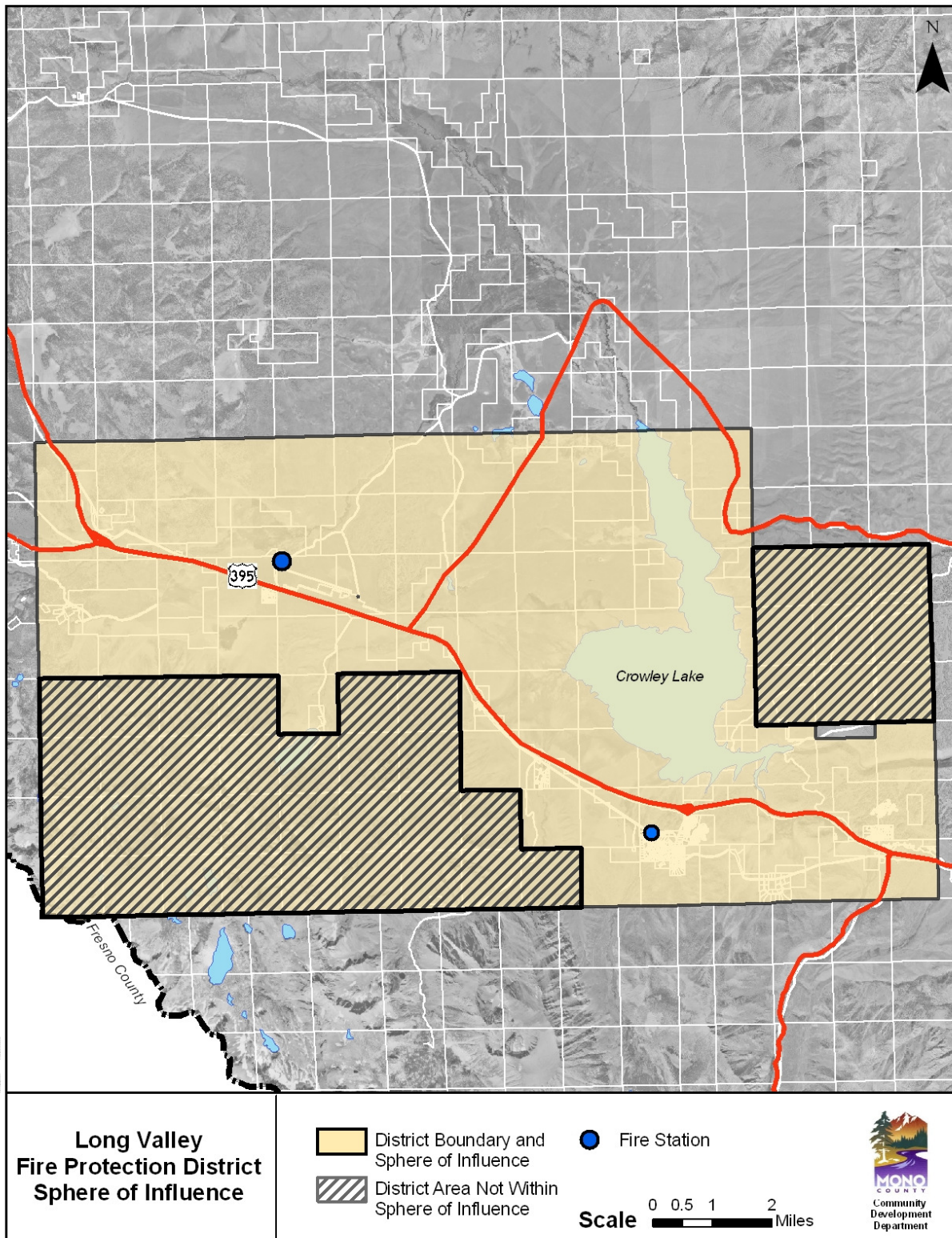


Figure 1
Long Valley Fire Protection District Boundaries

Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population of Long Valley to be 1,147 in 2000 and 1,170 in 2003 (Table 3, Mono County Housing Element). In 2000, 5 percent of the population in Long Valley was under 5 years old, 22 percent was 5-17 years old, 68 percent was 18 to 64, and 6 percent was over 65 (Table 8A, Mono County Housing Element). At that time, Long Valley had one of the highest percentages of school-age children and one of the lowest percentages of seniors in the unincorporated areas.

In 2000, there were 440 households in Long Valley (Table 12, Housing Element). Eighty-five percent of the households were owner-occupied and 15 percent were rented (Table 12, Housing Element). At that time, Long Valley had the lowest percentage of renters in the unincorporated area.

Services Provided

The district serves a full time residential population in the Crowley Lake communities as well as business and industrial uses at the Geothermal Plant, Mammoth Yosemite Airport, and Sierra Business Park, and travelers along Highway 395. It provides fire prevention/suppression and emergency medical response services, search and rescue, wildland firefighting, hazmat handling, technical rescue, hydrant testing, school safety programs, community education, permit approvals and development proposal reviews.

ISO Rating

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is a private organization that supplies information used by underwriters to evaluate and price particular risks, including fire protection. ISO staff gathers information on individual properties and communities and, in turn, insurers use that information in underwriting personal and commercial property insurance, commercial liability and workers compensation policies. The ratings range from a score of 10 (no fire protection at all) to 1 (best fire protection possible). The ISO rating for the Long Valley FPD is 5/9. The LVFPD qualifies for and has applied for an 8B rating because the department is capable of pumping 200/gpm for 20 minutes and they have 4,000 gallons on wheels.

Land Ownership

The district includes private lands surrounded by large areas of public lands. Private lands are concentrated in the Crowley Lake communities. Much of the valley floor is public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the Inyo National Forest. Crowley Lake and the land surrounding it are owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, which, along with the BLM, is the largest landowner in the district.

Surrounding Fire Protection Facilities

The closest fire protection district to the Long Valley FPD is the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District, which is located approximately 15 miles north of the district via US 395 and SR 203.

Fire Hazard

Wildfire hazards are considered to be one of the most prevalent natural hazards in Mono County due to their repeated occurrence, the damage they have caused in the past, and the geographically widespread nature of the hazard (Mono County Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan). Most of the developed parcels in the Long Valley FPD are in areas identified by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) as Wildland Fire Hazard Areas (see Figure 2). Inyo County, U.S.F.S. and Inyo National Forest participated in the Wildland Hazard Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Mono County chose not to participate.

Planned Land Uses

The Mono County Land Use Element provides for substantial additional development in Long Valley, primarily in the communities along Crowley Lake Drive. The additional development allowed by the plan in community areas would be a mix of single-family residential uses, multiple-family residential uses, and commercial uses. Additional development is also proposed for the commercial and industrial uses in the northern part of the district (Mammoth Geothermal Plant, Sierra Business Park).

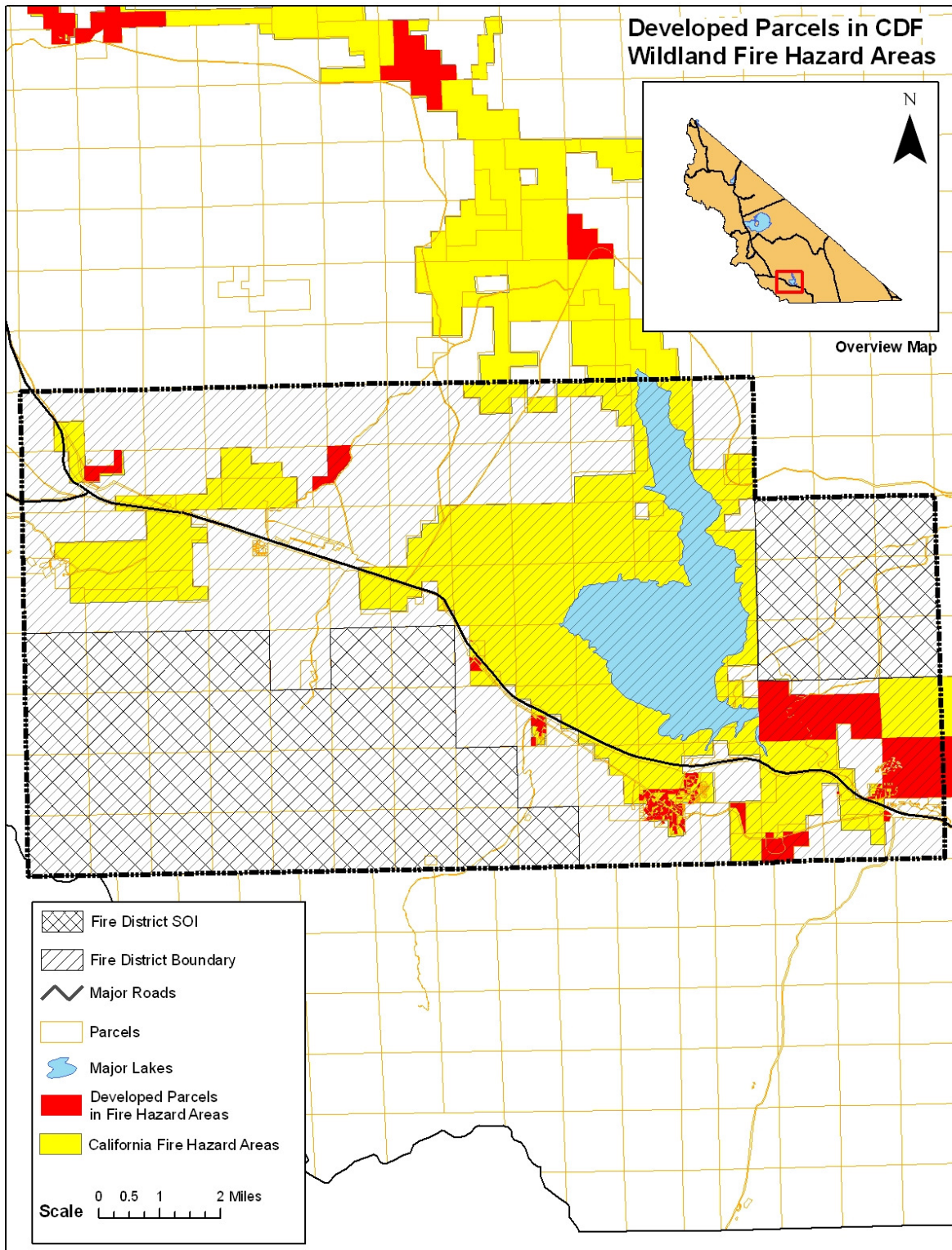
Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Due to legal and environmental considerations, there is currently a building moratorium on all new construction at the airport. The Town of Mammoth Lakes, the owner and operator of Mammoth Yosemite Airport, plans to reestablish scheduled air service at the airport by December, 2008. When air service is resumed, the longterm future development plans for the airport may be amended.

Mono County Fire Safe Standards

The Mono County Fire Safe Standards (Chapter 22 of the Mono County Land Development Regulations) apply to new development in State Responsibility Areas, generally areas outside fire district boundaries. They are intended to provide the same practical effect as the State's Fire Safe Regulations. The Fire Safe Standards establish basic wildland fire protection standards in the State Responsibility Areas of Mono County for emergency access; signing and building numbering; private water supply reserves for fire use; roof covering standards; and vegetation modification.

Fire Safe Council

Fire safe councils are non-profit organizations created to advise citizens how best to deal with the threat of wildfires to homes, communities and natural resources in the urban/wildland interface. Fire safe councils provide information on creating defensible space around structures, creating fire safe landscaping, and provide home inspections. The Eastern Sierra Regional Fire Safe Council provides fire safe information to homeowners and communities throughout Inyo and Mono Counties. Many communities in Mono County have local fire safe councils. An attempt was made to form a local fire safe council within the boundaries of the Long Valley Fire Protection District. That attempt was sponsored by the Long Valley Regional Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC) but failed due to insufficient community support.



Source: Mono County GIS, CA Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection

Figure 2
Long Valley Wildland Fire Hazard Areas

District Issues of Concern

The district has indicated a number of ongoing needs to support its services, including:

- working with the Town of Mammoth Lakes to develop a comprehensive public safety infrastructure to support development at Mammoth Yosemite Airport;
- improving communication between the county, the town, and the district;
- training and keeping an adequate volunteer force of EMTs;
- obtaining a paramedic ambulance for the area;
- complying with CAL-OSHA requirements for volunteer fire departments;
- additional support in the County Auditor's office which acts as the accounting department for all fire districts in the county except the Mammoth Lakes FPD; and
- conducting county business that pertains to the volunteer fire departments at a time when volunteers can participate without taking time off from their regular employment.
- The LVFPD is audited annually and contracts with a private contractor to conduct the audit.

District Planning

The district has a Strategic Plan, a five-year Master Plan, and a five-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In addition, the district commissioned a Development Impact Fee Nexus Calculation Report to assess land use and long range needs and to proposed projects to meet those needs.

DISTRICT SERVICES

Fire Suppression and Emergency Medical Response

Structural fire protection is provided from the district's main fire station in Crowley Lake. The district has a second small station at Hot Creek Fish Hatchery, where one engine is housed. Two volunteers live at the fish hatchery. The district has one career firefighter and 30-35 volunteer firefighters. There are approximately 75 fire hydrants within the district. The district estimates that 90 percent of the populated area within the district is accessible within 5 minutes and the remaining 10 percent of the populated area is accessible within 10 minutes. As a result, the average response time to an emergency within the district is approximately 5 minutes. The district also responds to calls south along the Sherwin Grade area of Highway 395 to the sand shed (MNO 3.5) and to calls in Rock Creek Canyon south to Rock Creek Lake. They also attends calls on Benton Crossing Road to Wildrose Summit and to the end of Rock Creek Road in Inyo County. AB 1004 prohibits fire departments from billing for services.

The district provides emergency medical response with 12 of the volunteer firefighters qualified as EMT1s. All volunteers receive formal training in emergency medical response. Fourteen of the volunteers have completed First Responder Training and one is qualified as an EMT Paramedic. The County Division of Emergency Medical Services does not operate a paramedic ambulance in Long Valley; the nearest ALS ambulance is in Mammoth Lakes.

All district personnel are trained in HazMat response and Wildland Firefighting. Ten personnel have received training in technical rescue techniques including low angle, swiftwater, and ice rescue. The district also reviews development proposals and building permits, tests active systems and hydrants, and provides school safety programs, CPR training, and fire safe/wildland fire prevention information.

Mutual Aid and Service Agreements

Mono County contains eleven fire protection districts, all of which belong to a county fire service association and are party to a countywide mutual aid agreement. The agreement formalizes the procedure for each district to send personnel and equipment to fires and emergencies beyond district boundaries when needed. The districts have also established informal service areas for the unserved private lands that are outside of any local fire protection district. These informal service areas reflect a recognized moral – not legal – responsibility of the districts to assist in the protection of life and property in such areas.

The district maintains an automatic aid agreement with the Mammoth Lakes FPD and a sphere of influence agreement with the Bishop Fire Department covering areas located outside of both districts. The district also maintains assistance by hire with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Forest Service (USFS), and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF).

Table 1: Long Valley Fire Protection District Services and Programs

Type of Service	Provider	Service Capacity and Other Notes
<i>Fire Services</i>		
Fire Suppression	All Staff	
Residential Inspection	Staff	
Commercial Inspection	Staff	
Burn Permits		Not provided
Fire Safe Inspections	Staff	
Hydrant Inspections	Staff	
Defensible Space/Brush Reduction	Staff	
HazMat	Staff	All staff trained
<i>Rescue Services</i>		
Swift Water Rescue	Staff	20 trained
Rope Rescue	Staff	20 trained
Extrication/Vehicle Rescue	Staff	30 trained
<i>Medical Services</i>		
Basic Life Support	12 EMTs	1 EMT Paramedic
First Responder	14 First Responders	
<i>Other Safety Services and Programs</i>		
Public Education Program	Staff	
School Programs	Staff	
Community Activities	Staff	CPR training
<i>Development</i>		
Plans Review	Chief	
Permit Approval	Chief	
Will-Serve Letters	Chief	

Infrastructure and Facilities

District facilities include the main fire station in Crowley Lake and a second station at Hot Creek Fish Hatchery. The district also owns a parcel of land in Sunny Slopes on which it intends to build an additional fire station.

District equipment includes the following: four engines/pumpers, one water tender three rescue vehicles, two are capable of patient transport, and two command vehicles. Seventy-five percent of the equipment was purchased new; the remainder was purchased used.

In addition, the district has safety equipment for all volunteers, including personal alert safety systems (PASS) and personal protective clothing (PPE), as required by Federal, State and local laws and standards, including those established by OSHA and NFPA. The district has 30 self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA).

Table 2: Long Valley Fire Protection District Facilities

Existing Facility: Type/Size	Year Built or Remodeled	Facilities	Characteristics
Main Fire Station Crowley Lake	Latest remodel in 2003	7 bays, 3 baths, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, day room	Master Facilities Plan contains projects and improve facilities at the Main Fire Station
Hatchery Station Hot Creek	---	2 bays only	1 engine kept there, 2 volunteers live at the Hatchery

Table 3: Long Valley Fire Protection Equipment and Vehicles

Vehicle/Year/Model	Capacity & GPM¹	Location and Other Notes
Ford Expedition SUV		Command Vehicle
Ford Bronco		Command Vehicle
Rescue Vehicle		BLS equipment, no patient transport
Rescue Vehicle		BLS equipment, patient transport
Engine	1000 gpm, 1000 gallons	
Engine	1000 gpm, 500 gallons	
Engine	750 gpm, 500 gallons	
Engine		To be utilized as a rserve engine and for major incidents
Water Tender	500 gpm, 3200 gallons	

Communications

Fires and medical emergencies are dispatched to the Long Valley FPD from the Mono County Sheriff's Office in Bridgeport via the county's 911 emergency system. The district currently contains no cell phone towers and cell coverage is inadequate. The district has complete internet access. The district has indicated that it has a need to replace some of its pagers and handheld radios as they age. The LVFPD and Los Angeles Department of Water and power are pursuing an agreement to construct a cell tower at the station.

Administration and Staffing

¹ GPM= gallons per minute.

Long Valley Fire Protection District -- Municipal Service Review

The district is managed by an elected board of commissioners. The board meets once a month at the main fire station. Notice of meetings is posted on the outside bulletin board at the Main Station and at the public bulletin board at the Crowley Lake Store. Minutes are posted on the bulletin board at the main station.

The district is staffed by a fire chief, an assistant chief, a division chief for equipment, a clerk/secretary, and 30-35 volunteer firefighters. The volunteers receive training on a regular basis (approximately 10 hours a month), covering a wide variety of topics. The training officer arranges for qualified instructors. The district also participates in multi-agency drills run by the Mono County Fire Chief's Association. Volunteers also attend seminars and training courses outside of the district.

Service Activity

The Long Valley FPD responded to 99 calls in 2005. The Long Valley FPD's service calls are 41 percent emergency medical calls and 35 percent vehicle accident calls.

Table 4: Long Valley Fire Protection District Call Log--2004

<i>Incident Type Summary</i>	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Structural	6	6%
Vehicle Accident	35	35%
Emergency Medical	41	41%
HazMat	2	2%
Rescue	3	3%
Wildland Fire	4	4%
False Alarm	1	1%
Other	7	7%
TOTAL	99	100%

Funding and Budget

The Long Valley Fire Protection District relies heavily on property tax revenue for its funding, with fire mitigation fees providing a much smaller source of revenue. The district has one outstanding loan which will be paid off in 2013. The building loan is expected to be paid in full by December 2009 and the new rescue vehicle is a ten year loan.

Table 5: Long Valley Fire Protection District Funding, FY 2007-2008

Revenues	
Tax Allocation	\$314,540
Homeowners Exemption	793
Interest	20,756
Fire Mitigation Fees	49,729
Other	<u>39,375</u>
<i>Total Revenues</i>	425,193
Expenditures	
Equipment: Lease Payment	52,243
Service and Supplies	255,398
Insurance	<u>22,772</u>
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	330,413
Revenues Over Expenditures	94,780

Note: Unknown impact on the LVFPD with the current downturn of the economy.

III. SERVICE REVIEW ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATIONS

Government Code §56430 requires the analysis of nine factors when assessing the capabilities of public service agencies. Each of the required factors is discussed below as it pertains to fire protection districts in general and the Long Valley Fire Protection District specifically.

1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies of a district in terms of capacity, condition of facilities, service quality, and levels of service and its relationship to existing and planned service users

The infrastructure elements of fire protection and emergency services include facilities (stations), rolling stock (engines and ambulances), dispatch systems, water supplies and roadways. Service also depends on trained personnel.

In the context of fire and emergency services, infrastructure needs and deficiencies are indicated by facilities that do not provide adequate capacity to accommodate current or projected demand for service in the affected area. Adequacy of service can be measured by reviewing response times, coverage, mutual aid, staffing and the underlying water and roadway systems.

Long Valley FPD--Facilities

The Long Valley FPD currently has two fire stations, the main station in Crowley Lake and an auxiliary station at Hot Creek Fish Hatchery. The district's Master Facilities Plan contains plans to upgrade the main fire station in Crowley Lake to include 24-hour housing capability in order to meet the demands of development at General Plan buildout, to participate in the construction of a fire station at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport in order to serve the demands of development in the more northerly area of the district, and to construct a station in on a parcel of land the district owns in Sunny Slopes to serve development there. There is currently a building moratorium at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport so the district is utilizing the station at Hot Creek Fish Hatchery for calls in the northern portion of the district.

Long Valley FPD--Apparatus and Other Equipment

Seventy-five percent of the district's equipment was purchased new; the remainder was purchased used. The district's Master Facilities Plan contains plans to purchase additional equipment to serve development throughout the district; specifically in the Sunny Slopes area and the Mammoth Yosemite Airport area.

Long Valley FPD--Personnel

The district has a current volunteer staff of 30-35. Currently, 15-20 volunteers are available to respond during the middle of the day. Although Long Valley has a large population of residents aged 18-64, the majority of them work outside of the community in which they live, either in Mammoth Lakes or Inyo County.

Long Valley FPD--Dispatch System

The emergency services dispatch system in Mono County is operated by the Mono County Sheriff's office from facilities in Bridgeport. The district has indicated that improvements could be made in addressing and mapping for the district area, specifically the County's parcel database should be in a format usable by the fire districts and discrepancies in 911 address data need to be corrected.

Mono County, along with the Town of Mammoth Lakes and emergency service providers throughout the county, is in the process of a 911 Addressing Project for the entire county. Addresses are being input into the county's GIS system and being field checked for accuracy. Once the project is complete, 911 dispatchers in Bridgeport will see the location of a call displayed on an interactive map on their computer and will be able to describe the location more accurately and quickly to emergency services personnel.

Long Valley FPD--Roadways

The main access through the district is Highway 395, a paved, four-lane highway. Secondary roads within the district are primarily paved, two-lane county-maintained roads.

Long Valley FPD--Water Supply

Within the district, water is provided by several small water companies. There are approximately 75 hydrants in the district. In addition, the district owns a large water tender and intends to acquire a small water tender that has the speed necessary to respond along with a pumper.

Determinations

- The expansion and renovation of existing facilities will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district, as well as to serve development at buildout. The district has planned for the required expansion and renovation of its facilities in its Master Facilities Plan.
- Accelerated development will place more pressure on the Long Valley FPD to augment its service capacities, particularly in the southeastern and northwestern portions of the district. Those areas of the district may require new and increased infrastructure. The district has planned for new infrastructure at Sunny Slopes and at the Mammoth Yosemite Airport; those projects are included in the Master Facilities Plan.
- The replacement of aging equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has also planned for its future equipment needs in its Master Facilities Plan.

2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate service needs based on existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.

Existing and Anticipated Residential Growth Patterns in Long Valley

Residential development in the district is concentrated in the communities located in the southern portion of the district. Future residential growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed residential areas. Aside from development in Crowley Lake, most existing and planned development will be single-family residential development. Existing and planned development in Crowley Lake includes single-family and multi-family residential development, commercial uses, lodging, and public facilities. The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in the Long Valley:

Table 6: Buildout Figures for Long Valley

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
ER Estate Residential	1 du/acre	349	123 ^a
RR Rural Residential	1 du/acre	143	24 ^{b & d}
SFR Single-Family Residential	5.8 du/acre	339	896 ^c
MFR-M Multiple-Family Residential – Moderate	15 du/acre	4	60
MFR-H Multiple-Family Residential – High	15 du/acre	9	135
MU Mixed Use	15 du/acre	37	555
C Commercial	15 du/acre	39	585
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	34	---
AG Agriculture	1 du/2.5 ac.	3	1
SP Specific Plan	---	80	114 ^e
Total Private Lands		1,037	2,493
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	10,270	---
OS Open Space – LADWP	1 du/80 acres	8,625	107
Total		19,932	2,600

Notes: du = dwelling unit

- a. 10 acres designated ER 1.5 (1.5-acre min. lot size); 188 acres designated ER 3(3-acre min. lot size); 122 acres designated ER 5 (5-acre min. lot size).
- b. 71 acres designated RR 10 (10-acre min. lot size); 69 acres designated RR 5 (5-acre min. lot size).
- c. 6 acres designated SFR 10,000 (10,000 square feet min. lot size); 179 acres designated SFR 15,000 (15,000 square feet min. lot size); 80 acres designated SFR 0.5 (0.5-acre min. lot size); 50 acres designated SFR 1 (1 acre min. lot size); 24 acres designated SFR 7,500 (7,500 sq. ft. min. lot size).
- d. 58 acres in Long Valley covers an area impacted by avalanches which requires special studies for development. No development plan has been submitted for that area.
- e. 80 acres in Hilton Creek is the Lakeridge Ranch Specific Plan, which permits the development of 114 single-family residences.

Commercial and Industrial Uses

The Long Valley FPD boundaries include a number of large commercial and industrial uses, spread out over the district. Some small-scale commercial and industrial uses are located in the Crowley Lake communities. Most of the larger commercial and industrial uses are located in the northern part of the district at Sierra Business Park, Mammoth Pacific Geothermal Plant, and in the vicinity of Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Additional development at the business park and the geothermal plant would be similar to existing development at those sites.

Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Due to legal and environmental considerations, there is currently a building moratorium on all new construction at the airport. The Town of Mammoth Lakes, the owner and operator of Mammoth Yosemite Airport, plans to reestablish scheduled air service at the airport by December, 2008. When air service is resumed, the longterm future development plans for the airport may be amended.

Seasonal Population

In addition to the projected residential growth, Long Valley's population experiences significant seasonal increases due to tourism, and to a lesser degree to second homeowners. Long Valley and surrounding areas accommodate large numbers of recreational users and are a vacation destination for outdoor and wilderness activities such as fishing and hiking. Should all of the planned development occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district will increase substantially.

While these visitors cause an increased demand for services such as emergency medical response, vehicular accident response, and search and rescue, there is no commensurate increase in revenues available to provide those services. Highway 395 also experiences heavy recreational use with traffic headed to Mammoth Lakes. Vehicular accidents on Highway 395 form a large component of the district's responses.

Residential Population Projections

Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the residential population in Long Valley to be 1,467 in 2000 and 1,497 in 2003. In 2000, there were 440 households in Long Valley. The population in the Long Valley FPD is projected to increase to 1,865 by 2020 and 2,005 by 2030 (State Department of Finance Report P-3, Population Projections). Overall, the population in Mono County is aging. The median age in the unincorporated area increased from 33 in 1990 to 40.1 in 2000 (Mono County Housing Element). The number of seniors 65 years and older increased from 10 percent of the unincorporated population in 1990 to 12 percent in 2000. Of the communities in the county, Long Valley had a smaller size population of seniors 65 years and older and a larger population of school-aged children.

Determinations

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for significant additional growth in the area served by the Long Valley FPD.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to be primarily single-family residential development with a mix of multi-family residential development and commercial uses in Crowley Lake.

- The residential population in the area served by the Long Valley FPD is projected to increase to 1,865 by 2,020 and 2,005 by 2,030, creating an increased demand for fire and emergency medical services.
- The population will continue to age, creating an increased demand for emergency medical services.
- In addition to the projected residential growth, Long Valley's population experiences significant seasonal increases due to tourism. If additional development occurs at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district may increase substantially.
- Visitors to the area will continue to increase demand for services such as emergency medical response and vehicular accident response while providing no commensurate increase in revenues available to provide those services.

3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate factors that affect the financing of needed improvements.

Expenses for special districts generally fall into one of three categories: (1) acquisition of facilities and major capital equipment, (2) employee expenses, and (3) ongoing operations and maintenance costs. The primary criteria that should be considered when evaluating adequacy of potential funding sources is availability, adequacy to meet the need, equity between existing and future residents, stability, and ability to cover on-going operating and maintenance costs.

Long Valley FPD

The Long Valley FPD is dependent on property taxes as its single most important source of revenue, with fire mitigation fees as a much smaller source of revenue. In 2003, the district commissioned a Master Facilities Plan (MFP) to undertake a comprehensive identification of the capital projects and capital acquisitions necessary to preserve the existing levels of service currently provided for and paid for by the existing community as well as to provide for additional growth. The report also calculated the development impact fees necessary to fund those required projects. Following the completion of the report, the district adopted new development impact fees/fire mitigation fees. The district intends to periodically review and adjust the development impact fees in order to insure that the district collects sufficient funds to construct the additional infrastructure and obtain the equipment necessary to serve new development.

The district regularly applies for and receives grant funding. In recent years, the district has received the following grants:

BLM Fire Assistance 90/10 Grants—3 grants in the last 7 years totaling \$45,000
CDF Rural Fire Assistance 50/50 Grants—3 grants in the last 7 years totaling \$48,000
Office of Traffic Safety—2 grants totaling \$26,000

The district notes that:

“The Fire District annually applies for Grants from various sources for specific projects. With the passage of time the Grant environment is changing and we anticipate fewer dollars available in the future. For example, the ‘Assistance to Firefighters’ grant program is funded until 2010 with no guarantee that it will be refunded. Long Valley has utilized the grants it has received to augment District equipment purchase dollars as part of the Districts efforts operate with equipment in compliance with NFPA Standards and CALOSHA requirements. We will continue to utilize this approach and not anticipate using grant receipts to support other operational costs.”

(Long Valley FPD letter, October 20, 2007)

Determinations

- The Long Valley FPD’s future financing will continue to rely heavily on property tax revenues.
- The adequacy of property tax revenues to fund local facilities and services has steadily declined over time. There is a need to ensure that property tax assessments are kept current.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain existing service levels as costs increase over time.
- The district recently developed a Master Facilities Plan and revised its Development Impact Fees in order to ensure that new development pays for the infrastructure and equipment necessary to provide service to that development.
- There may be opportunities to coordinate with other fire districts and agencies to reduce costs.

4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

Overview

Purpose: To identify practices or opportunities that may aid in eliminating unnecessary costs.

Cost avoidance opportunities are defined as actions to eliminate unnecessary costs derived from, but not limited to, duplication of service efforts, higher than necessary administration/operation cost ratios, use of outdated or deteriorating infrastructure and equipment, underutilized equipment or buildings or facilities, overlapping/inefficient service boundaries, inefficient purchasing or budgeting practices, and lack of economies of scale.

Long Valley FPD

Generally, in Mono County each community area is a discrete geographic area and, as a result, there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries. Long Valley is its own discrete geographic area; the nearest community is Mammoth Lakes, approximately 10 miles to the north.

- The Long Valley FPD is managed and administered by an elected board of commissioners, a chief, assistant chief, division chief for equipment, a training officer and a part time board secretary, and volunteer firefighters. The department conducts joint training with other fire departments. As the level of cooperation among fire districts in the county has increased in recent years, the districts routinely share information and best

practices in order to reduce or avoid unnecessary costs. One cost that is difficult to avoid is volunteer training because the state and federal government mandate required training and they also require mandatory equipment standards. Small districts may spend limited resources to train volunteer personnel only to have those qualified volunteers leave the district.

Since some of the district's infrastructure and equipment is old, the district has developed a Master Facilities Plan, which contains plans to renovate and expand existing facilities as well as to develop new facilities to serve additional development. The district also has an equipment replacement plan.

Determinations

- Long Valley is a discrete geographic area within Mono County; there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries.
- The Long Valley FPD is a volunteer department with an elected board of commissioners—administrative costs are generally low.
- The district strives to keep operations and maintenance costs low by sharing services and training with other districts.
- Cooperation among fire districts is an important part of reducing costs.
- The cost of volunteer training is unavoidable and may be lost when trained volunteers leave the district. A possibility exists for the district to offer benefit contracts so that a volunteer agrees to be with the district for a specific amount of time or to reimburse the district for training costs.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has a Master Facilities Plan that addresses the demands imposed by growth within the district.

5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

Overview

Purpose: To identify opportunities to positively impact rates without decreasing service levels.

As noted in the Financing Constraints and Opportunities Section, funding for fire protection districts in Mono County relies heavily on property tax revenues combined with mitigation fees, augmentation funds, and other smaller revenue sources (grants, fundraisers, etc.). Each of these categories has inherent constraints that prevent an agency from restructuring them.

Long Valley FPD

Property taxes – In California, the maximum property tax assessed on any land is generally 1% of the property's value.

Fire Mitigation Fees – The district charges development impact fees to offset the impacts of new development. Fees for a single-family residence are \$2,157. All the other fire protection districts in the county charge mitigation fees ranging from \$.30 to \$.75 per square foot of new construction, or a set fee. The countywide average is \$.63 per square foot. Set fees range from

\$832 in June Lake, with an additional fee for construction above 2000 square feet, to \$3,119 in Wheeler Crest.

Grants – Grant money is a one-time source that is useful in funding certain special projects but may be too unreliable or variable for ongoing expenses or recurring needs. The district has applied for and received grant funding in the past.

Determinations

- All funding mechanisms have inherent limitations that may prevent their implementation, use or restructure.
- The Long Valley FPD should seek additional opportunities to reduce costs through cooperation and sharing with other agencies.
- The district should continue to seek grant funding.

6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.

Sharing facilities and resources can result in a more efficient and cost-effective delivery of resources.

Long Valley FPD

Due to the geographic distance between most communities in the county, sharing facilities is not possible. Fire districts do share resources through mutual aid agreements. The most beneficial sharing of resources to residents in the County is the practice of deploying the nearest resource to an emergency. While there are costs associated with mutual aid and/or automatic aid, there is a direct benefit when an agency can rely on its neighbors for support. This ensures that residents of the County can be assured that there will be someone who will respond to an emergency without regard to jurisdictional issues. The fire districts in Mono County tend to do this very well.

The Long Valley FPD shares resources in several other ways:

- They attend shared training sessions with other fire departments.
- They maintain mutual aid agreements with BLM, CDF, USFS (for wildland fires), and all fire districts in the county through the fire chiefs association.
- They attend monthly county fire chiefs meetings.

The **Multi-Jurisdictional Local Hazard Mitigation Plan** prepared for Mono County and the Town of Mammoth Lakes identified a number of mitigation measures to address fire hazard planning in the county's communities. While the focus of the **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan** is on mitigation planning for wildland fire hazards, the mitigation measures identified in the plan apply to all fire hazards in the area, i.e.:

Mitigation W-3: Review and, if necessary update, the County's General Plan land use policies and regulations and building regulations to ensure that they address fire hazard planning as a component of the development process.

- Statewide California Building Code 7A incorporated into Chapter 22 of the Mono County General Plan.

Mitigation W-5: Develop community-level fire plans for communities throughout the county, utilizing resources and assistance from the California Fire Alliance. These fire plans should address the following:

- Developing an informed, educated public that takes responsibility for its own decisions relating to wildfire protection.
- Developing an effective wildfire suppression program for local communities.
- Developing an aggressive hazardous fuel management program.
- Revising land use policies and standards to ensure that they protect life, property and local resource values.
- Implementing construction and property standards that provide defensible space.
- CWPP – Community Wildlife Community Plan.
- Each property owner has been sent California Public Resources Code for hazard mitigation.

Mitigation W-6: Develop and implement an ongoing countywide program to increase public awareness of wildland fire hazards.

Mitigation W-7: All communities and fire protection districts should participate in the Eastern Sierra Regional Firesafe Council.

Mitigation W-10: Help local landowners participate in the state's Vegetation Management Program (VMP), when applicable. The Vegetation Management Program (VMP) is a cost-sharing program that focuses on the use of prescribed fire and mechanical means to address wildland fire fuel hazards and other resource management issues on State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands. At this time only LADWP properties qualify.

Mitigation W-10: Help local landowners participate in CDF's hazardous fuel reduction program. At this time CDF does not have a hazardous fuel program – they will do inspections only.

Mitigation W-11: Help local groups of landowners participate in the BLM's Wildland Urban Interface Grant Awards program for hazardous fuel reduction.

Responsibility for implementation of these mitigation measures lies with the County, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, local fire protection districts, and the County Office of Emergency Services.

Determinations

- The largest impediment to greater sharing of resources and facilities in Mono County is geographic separation between fire protection districts.
- Fire districts in Mono County can share resources through joint training sessions, shared purchasing, and the implementation of mutual aid agreements.
- The **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for Mono County** contains a number of mitigation measures to address fire hazard planning in the county's communities. While the focus of the plan is on mitigation planning for wildland fire hazards, the mitigation measures identified in the plan apply to all fire hazards in the area. Responsibility for

implementing those fire hazard planning measures rests with the County, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, and local fire protection districts.

- USFS and BLM Federal Fuels Management projects adjacent to private land from Long Valley to Tom's Place, including Sunny Slopes that provide an opportunity for sharing resources.

7. Government Structure Options

Overview

Purpose: To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide service.

Government Code §56001 declares that it is the policy of the State to encourage orderly growth and development essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well being of the State. The Code further states that "this policy should be effected by the logical formation and modification of the boundaries of local agencies, with a preference granted to accommodating additional growth within, or through the expansion of, the boundaries of those local agencies which can best accommodate and provide necessary governmental services."

For local agency consolidations to occur there has to be significant (and popularly desired) cost savings or an increase in service. For fire protection districts, consolidations might be recommended if any of the following would occur as a result of consolidation:

1. A reduction in the number of stations where service coverage might create unnecessary overlap.
2. An increase in the staffing of stations where currently staffing is limited.
3. An increase in staffing that reduces response times can be achieved.
4. A reduction in the number of senior administrative staff can be achieved.
5. Economies of scale for costly services can be attained.

Long Valley FPD

The Long Valley communities are isolated from the nearest fire district by 10-15 miles and terrain that is often hazardous in winter. The geographic constraints make it infeasible for the Long Valley FPD to consolidate with another FPD. The boundaries of the Hilton Creek Community Service District and County Service Area #1 are included within the boundaries of the Long Valley FPD. LAFCO policy generally promotes the consolidation of districts where they overlap; however, the districts overlap primarily in the community of Crowley Lake. The FPD serves a much broader area outside of the community. Consolidation between the districts is therefore not recommended.

Determinations

- In regions of the county with separate, distinct communities that are geographically remote from each other, public services are most logically provided by single purpose special districts rather than by a larger entity such as the county.

8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate the quality of public services in comparison to cost.

As defined by OPR, the term “management efficiency,” refers to the organized provision of the highest quality public services with the lowest necessary expenditure of public funds. An efficiently managed entity (1) promotes and demonstrates implementation of continuous improvement plans and strategies for budgeting, managing costs, training and utilizing personnel and customer service and involvement, (2) has the ability to provide service over the short and long term, (3) has the resources (fiscal, manpower, equipment, adopted service or work plans) to provide adequate service, (4) meets or exceeds environmental and industry service standards, as feasible considering local conditions or circumstances, (5) and maintains adequate contingency reserves. “Management Efficiency” is generally seen as organizational efficiency including the potential for consolidation.

The purpose of management is to effectively carry out the principal function and purpose of an agency. Good management will ensure that the agency’s mission is accomplished and that the agency’s efforts are sustainable into the future. Unfortunately, “good management” is a relatively subjective issue, and one that is hard to quantify.

Long Valley FPD

The Long Valley FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, and assistant fire chief. Management input is also provided during monthly Mono County fire chief meetings. Although the district is a relatively small district with limited physical, financial, and personnel resources, it has planned for the future in order to maintain its service level for existing customers as well as to meet the needs of future development.

The district has a Master Facilities Plan and an Equipment Replacement Plan. The district’s current ISO rating is 5/9.

Determinations

- The Long Valley FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, and an assistant chief, a division chief for equipment, a training officer and a part time board secretary.
- The district has planned for the future in order to maintain its service levels while providing for the needs of future development.
- The district has a Master Facilities Plan and an Equipment Replacement Plan.

9. Local Accountability and Governance

Overview

Purpose: To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with an agency’s decision-making and management processes.

Special districts such as fire protection districts are required to adopt budgets at open public meetings and to file their budgets with the county auditor. They are required to have annual or biennial independent audits. Districts are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act for meetings, agendas and minutes. They are also subject to the Public Records Act.

Complying with the minimum open meeting and information requirements is not sufficient to allow an adequate amount of visibility and accountability. Outreach efforts, including convenient meeting times, additional notice of meetings and dissemination of district information, are desirable.

Long Valley FPD

The Long Valley FPD complies with the minimum open meetings and public information requirements. The board meets monthly at the main fire station. Meeting notices and agendas are posted at the main fire station and at the Crowley Lake Store. Minutes are posted at the fire station. The Long Valley FPD also utilizes the recently installed Crowley Area Information System radio service to provide the community with information about fire district activities.

When the district is considering the adoption or amendment of ordinances that could affect specific groups within the community, the district strives to inform those groups of the proposed action. For example, when the district proposed amendments to the most recent edition of the California Fire Code, the local Contractors Association was informed of the proposed amendments.

The district provides fire education and CPR classes in Crowley Lake.

Determinations

- The Long Valley FPD complies with the minimum requirements for open meetings and public records.
- The district seeks to inform the community and affected groups of district activities.
- The district provides educational classes in Crowley Lake.

IV. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE RECOMMENDATION

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425 requires the Local Agency Formation Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of its determination with respect to four required findings. Each of the required findings is discussed below as it pertains to the Long Valley Fire Protection District.

1. Present and Planned Land Uses

Discussion:

Present land uses in the area served by the Long Valley FPD include residential, commercial, and public uses in the communities located in the southern portion of the district and larger commercial and industrial uses located primarily in the northern portion of the district. The Mono County GIS estimates that there are 1033 parcels in the district, including 504 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population in Long Valley was approximately 1,467 in 2000 and 1,497 in 2003. In 2000, there were 440 households in Long Valley.

The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in Long Valley:

Table 6: Buildout Figures for Long Valley

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
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- d. 58 acres in Long Valley covers an area impacted by avalanches which requires special studies for development. No development plan has been submitted for that area.
- e. 80 acres in Hilton Creek is the Lakeridge Ranch Specific Plan, which permits the development of 114 single-family residences.

Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. Due to legal and environmental considerations, there is currently a building moratorium on all new construction at the airport. The Town of Mammoth Lakes, the owner and operator of Mammoth Yosemite Airport, plans to reestablish scheduled air service at the airport by December, 2008. When air service is resumed, the longterm future development plans for the airport may be amended.

In addition to the projected growth, Long Valley's population experiences significant seasonal increases due to tourism, and to a lesser degree to second homeowners. Long Valley and surrounding areas accommodate large numbers of recreational users and are a vacation destination for outdoor and wilderness activities such as fishing and hiking. Should all of the planned development occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district will increase substantially.

Finding:

Present land uses in the area served by the Long Valley FPD include residential, commercial, and public uses in the communities in the southern portion of the district and commercial and industrial uses in the northern portion of the district. The planned land uses for community areas are similar with future development concentrated primarily within and adjacent to existing development. If additional development occurs at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, the visitor population within the boundaries of the district may increase substantially.

2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services

Discussion:

Increased development throughout the district's service area will create an increased need for fire protection services now. The buildout allowed by the General Plan will create a greater demand for those services in the future. In addition, development at Mammoth Yosemite Airport may create substantial additional demand for emergency services. Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. It should be noted that the Federal Aviation Commission will not allow building in the no fly zone.

Finding:

The Long Valley FPD has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve the increasing and planned development in the area.

3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

Discussion:

The district has no latent powers; fire protection is the only service it is authorized to provide. The district provides adequate services with its existing facilities, infrastructure, and personnel. Its ISO rating is 5/9. The district has identified a number of needs to continue to provide adequate service as well as to serve additional development, i.e.: additional fire stations, additional communications devices, newer apparatus to replace some existing trucks, additional apparatus to serve new development and funding to provide all of the above.

Finding:

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has identified a need to improve both its facilities and services in order to serve additional development and to improve services to existing development.

4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest

Discussion:

The communities and scattered development in Long Valley interact socially and economically with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Interaction with other communities and regions in Mono County is limited due to the physical distances involved and the lack of commercial and social centers in other communities. Mammoth Lakes is the only incorporated community in the County; services there are provided by the Town and several special districts. Although residents of Long Valley share social and economic communities of interest with Mammoth Lakes, the physical distance between the communities and the fact that one is an incorporated entity and the others are not make the interdependence of the communities irrelevant in determining the sphere of influence for the district.

Finding:

The district area exhibits social and economic interdependence with Mammoth Lakes, the only incorporated community in the County. However, since Mammoth Lakes is an incorporated community and Long Valley is part of the county's unincorporated area, that interaction is not relevant in establishing the sphere of influence for the Long Valley FPD.

Sphere of Influence Recommendation

The Sphere of Influence for the Long Valley Fire Protection District should remain as it is, coterminous with the boundaries of the district.

The Long Valley Fire Department sphere includes the area north of Highway 203 and they have no desire to change the scope of their sphere at this time.

Reorganization Recommendation

Mammoth Yosemite Airport, which is owned and operated by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, is located within the boundaries of the Long Valley FPD. Currently, both the Long Valley FPD and the Mammoth Lakes FPD respond to emergencies at the airport and have similar response times to the airport. The Long Valley FPD and the Mammoth Lakes FPD have established agreements to enhance response levels in the airport vicinity.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes, as the FAA permitted airport operator, has the responsibility for aircraft firefighting and rescue. Long Valley FPD has responsibility for structural fire protection, although the district also responds to all incidents involving aircraft. The Long Valley FPD has a small auxiliary station at the Hot Creek Fish Hatchery, which is intended to provide additional coverage in response to recent development at the airport until additional facilities can be completed at the airport.

The airport is an island of property owned by the Town of Mammoth Lakes, outside of the Town boundaries. Town governmental departments fulfill administrative, managerial, and operational functions at the airport. The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District is a special district and a separate legal entity from the Town of Mammoth Lakes. As such, it would not be appropriate for the Mammoth Lakes FPD to assume responsibility for structural fire protection at the airport. However, should the Mammoth Lakes FPD become a town department, then the town's fire department should assume responsibility for structural fire protection at the airport.

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature also finds that, whether governmental services are proposed to be provided by a single-purpose agency, several agencies, or a multipurpose agency, responsibility should be given to the agency or agencies that can best provide government services.

If a change in service provider appears warranted, such a change should occur only with the support of the Long Valley FPD and only when it can be demonstrated that service will be improved by the change of provider.

V. REFERENCES

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Persons Consulted

Long Valley Fire Protection District

Fred Stump, Chief