

**Municipal Service Review
And
Sphere of Influence Recommendation
Mammoth Lakes 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 Strategic Plan and its Master Facilities Plan.
- Accelerated development will place more pressure on the Mammoth Lakes FPD to augment its service capacities.
- The replacement of existing equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment over time will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has planned for its future equipment needs in its Strategic Plan and its Master Facilities Plan.

2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

- The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan allows for significant additional growth in the area served by the Mammoth Lakes FPD.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to include a wide spectrum of residential, resort, commercial, and industrial uses.
- The population in the area served by the Mammoth Lakes FPD is projected to increase to 52,000 PAOT by 2025, creating an increased demand for fire and emergency medical services.

3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

- The Mammoth Lakes FPD's future financing will continue to rely 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 agencies to reduce costs.

4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

- Mammoth Lakes is a discrete geographic area within Mono County; there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries.
- The district strives to keep operations and maintenance costs low by sharing services and training with other districts.
- Cooperation among fire districts can be an important part of reducing costs.

- The cost of volunteer training is unavoidable and may be lost when trained volunteers leave the district. Most of the district's volunteers are paid part-time and receive 401k benefits.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has a Strategic Plan and a Master Facilities Plan that address the demands imposed by growth within the district.
- The district participates in JPAs in order to reduce insurance costs (workers compensation, dental, and vision).
- The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that have administrative costs associated with the overall management of those districts or the Town. There could be some duplication of services among the districts and the Town, particularly in areas such as personnel management, insurance, risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

- All funding mechanisms have inherent limitations that may prevent their implementation, use or restructure.
- The district imposes Development Impact Fees and fees for a variety of other services. Revenues from the development impact fees are used to fund capital improvements only. 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 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 and the Town, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, and local fire protection districts.
- The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that require facilities to support their services. There may be other opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the Town. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

7. Government Structure Options

- Due to the distances between communities in Mono County, it is infeasible for the Mammoth Lakes FPD to consolidate with another FPD since the closest ones are located approximately 10 to 15 miles north and south along US 395.
- Several special districts, along with the Town, provide public services within the Town of Mammoth Lakes.
- The boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

- The Mammoth Lakes FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, and division chiefs.
- 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 added a 24-hour full-time staffed engine, which reduces the load on the volunteers, and provides a faster response time.
- The district has committed resources to future facilities and operations, including resources to maintain a largely volunteer department.
- The district has a Strategic Plan, a Master Facilities Plan and an Equipment Replacement Plan. The district updates its plans as changes occur in the town.

9. Local Accountability and Governance

- The Mammoth Lakes 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 and services.
- The district provides educational programs in Mammoth Lakes.
- The Fire Chief, at the invitation of the Town Manager, attends weekly town staff meetings. This increases communications and coordination between both entities.

Sphere of Influence Findings

1. Present and Planned Land Uses

Present land uses within the district and Town boundaries include resort uses, commercial uses, public uses, multiple-family residential uses, and single-family residential uses. The residential uses are a mix of fulltime residential uses and seasonal residential uses. Planned land uses within the Town's Urban Growth Boundary are similar with future development occurring within and adjacent to existing development. The Town's population at buildout is forecast to increase to 52,000 PAOT (people at one time), from the current PAOT of 34,265 with an average peak of 41,000 persons. Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services

The Mammoth Lakes 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 shares social and economic interests with the entire incorporated area of the Town. These shared interests promote a coordinated approach to service provision in the Mammoth area. Several special districts, along with the Town, provide public services within the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Sphere of Influence Recommendation

The Sphere of Influence for the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District should remain as it is, coterminous with the boundaries of the district. LAFCO should study fire protection within the area north of SR 203 and US 395 in order to determine whether sphere of influence and/or district boundaries need to be reorganized in that area. Such a study should occur only with the participation of all affected entities. Any reorganization recommended by LAFCO should occur only with the concurrence of the Boards of Directors of all affected entities.

Reorganization Recommendation

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature finds and declares that a single multipurpose governmental agency is accountable for community service needs and financial resources and, therefore, may be the best mechanism for establishing community service priorities especially in urban areas. Nonetheless, the Legislature recognizes the critical role of many limited purpose agencies, especially in rural communities. 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.

At some point in the future, the fire protection services currently provided by the district might best be provided under the authority of the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The feasibility of such a reorganization should be determined by a reorganization committee consisting of representatives of the Fire Protection District, the Town, and Mono LAFCO. If a reorganization is proposed that involves the Fire Protection District, the Town, and any other special districts in the Mammoth area, the feasibility of such a reorganization should be determined by a reorganization committee consisting of representatives of all involved districts, the Town, and Mono LAFCO, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Cortese-Knox Act. Any reorganization of the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District and the Town of Mammoth Lakes should occur only with the concurrence of the Board of Directors of the District and the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

The current Board of Directors has no desire to consider reorganization.

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 Mammoth Lakes 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. MAMMOTH LAKES FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Service Area

The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District (Mammoth Lakes FPD) was established in 1948 as a combined water and fire district known as the North Mammoth Fire Protection District. In 1956, the water and fire districts separated, and in 1976 the fire district's name was changed to the Mammoth Lakes FPD. The district boundaries are coterminous with the Town of Mammoth Lakes boundaries with one exception. The Mammoth Yosemite Airport, which is included in the Town's boundaries, is not included in the District's boundaries. The district boundaries include approximately 24 square miles, of which only 4.6 square miles are privately owned (see Figure 1). Ninety percent of the privately owned land is developed with over 7,500 permanent residents and 1.5 million square feet of commercial development.

Mammoth Lakes is surrounded by recreational lands and open space managed by the Inyo National Forest. Mammoth Mountain Ski Area is northwest of the developed portion of the Town, on Forest Service land within the district's boundaries. The Lakes Basin, in the southwest portion of the district, is a popular recreation spot for both visitors and residents, with cabins, lodges, and campgrounds. Mammoth Creek, flowing from the Lakes Basin through the town into Long Valley, attracts fishermen and other recreational users.

Wilderness areas surround the town and district to the south and west, and Devil's Postpile National Monument is located west of the town and district in Madera County. June Lake, Mono Lake, Bodie State Historic Park, and the eastern entrance to Yosemite National Park are located north of Mammoth Lakes. US 395 and SR 203 provide the major access to and through the area. Old Mammoth Road and Lake Mary Road provide secondary access throughout the community. Surface waters in the area include the lakes in the Lakes Basin and Mammoth Creek. Topography in the area is characterized by a relatively flat area in the center of the town, and by steep slopes surrounding the town center. Vegetation throughout the area includes sagebrush scrub, bitterbrush, wetland and riparian areas, red fir, jeffrey and lodgepole pines.

The district's boundaries include extensive residential and commercial uses, light industrial uses, recreational and resort uses, and public uses such as parks, schools, a library, and government offices (see Figure 2).

Population Characteristics

Mono County GIS estimates that there are 4,197 parcels in the district, including 3,082 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). The Mammoth Lakes FPD estimates that there are approximately 7,500 fulltime residents within the district and 10,000 units receiving services.

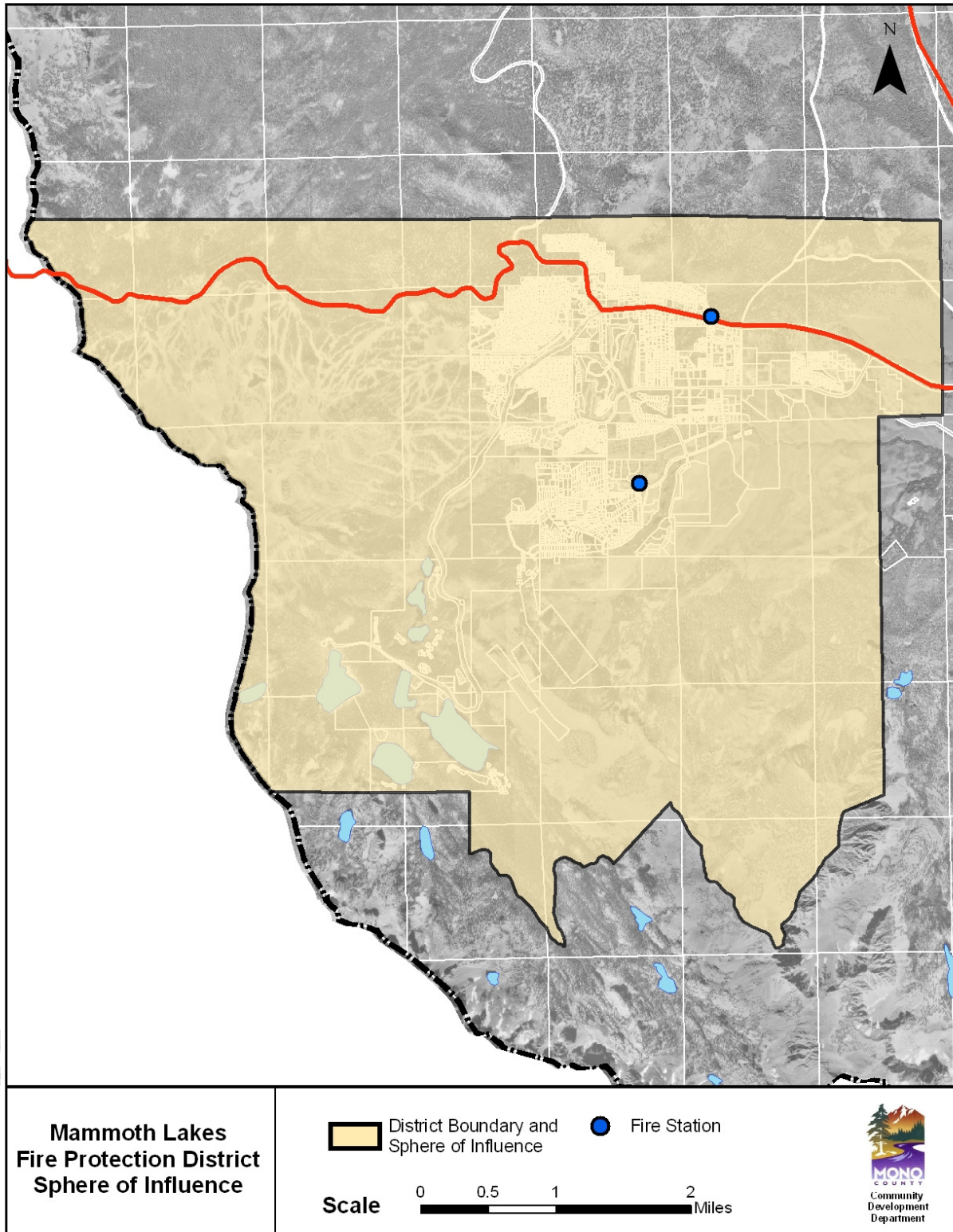


Figure 1
Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Boundaries

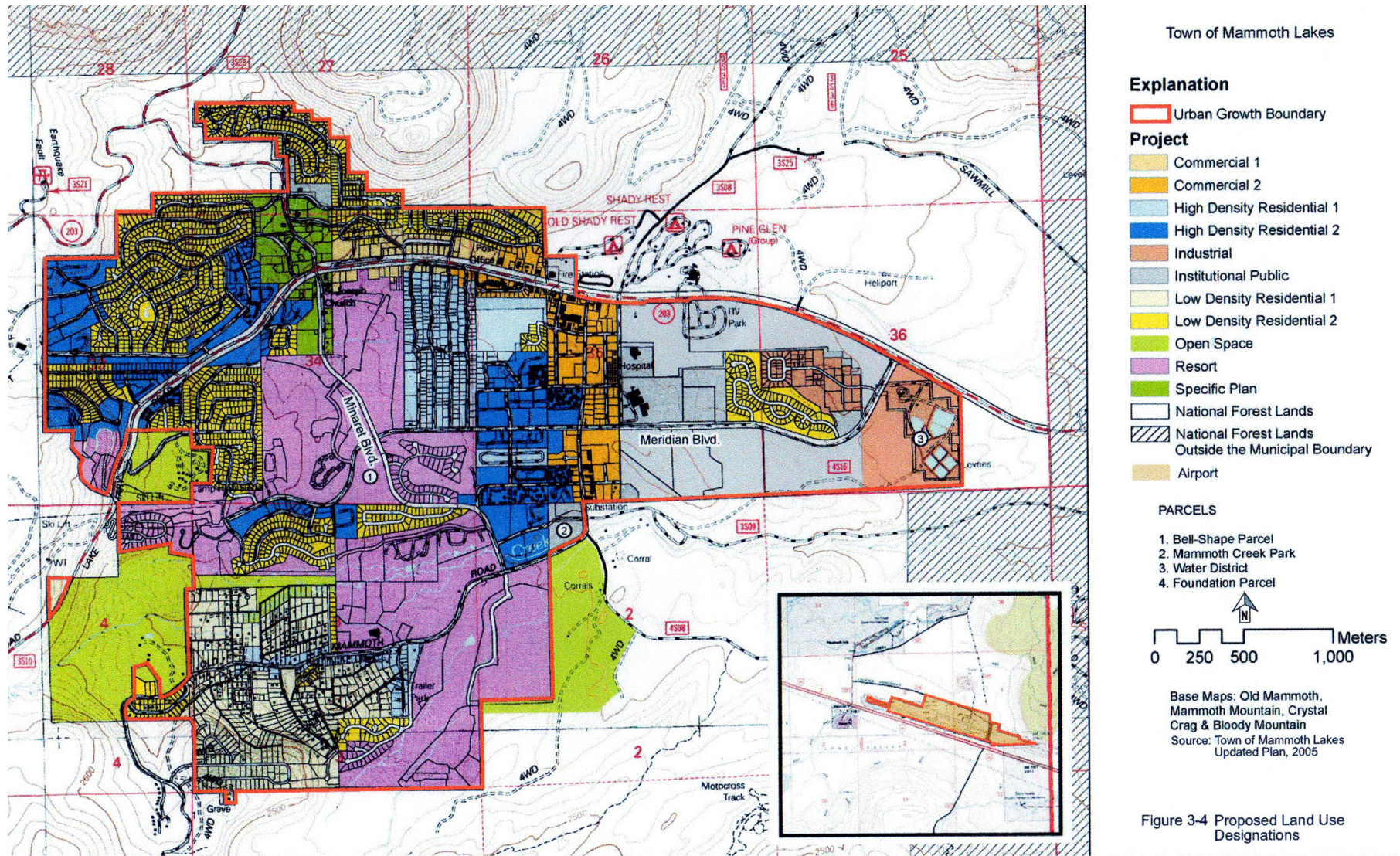


Figure 2 – Town of Mammoth Lakes Proposed Land Use

Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the resident population of the Town of Mammoth Lakes to be 7,094 in 2000 and 7,560 in 2007 (Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table 3, Mono County Housing Element; DOF, Table E-1). As a destination resort, the Town of Mammoth Lakes experiences high visitor populations. The average peak population calculated by the town in 2004 was 34,265 PAOT (people at one time). That figure includes permanent residents, transient residents, and visitors and represents the peak population on an average winter Saturday (Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan Update, Chapter 4.9, Population, Housing and Employment).

Services Provided

The district serves a full time residential population as well as business and industrial uses and a large visitor population throughout the year. The district provides fire prevention and suppression services, emergency medical response services, search and rescue, wildland firefighting, hazmat handling, technical rescue, fuel reduction programs, 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 Mammoth Lakes FPD is 3/9.

Land Ownership

The Mammoth Lakes FPD includes approximately 2,500 acres (4 square miles) of privately owned land in the developed portion of the 27 square mile incorporated area. The remaining incorporated area is publicly owned and is managed by the Inyo National Forest. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) owns several parcels of land to the east of Mammoth Lakes adjacent to the junction of SR 203 and US 395.

Surrounding Fire Protection Facilities

The closest fire protection district to the Mammoth Lakes FPD is the Long Valley Fire Protection District. The Long Valley FPD's main station is located in Crowley Lake, approximately 10 to 15 miles south of the district via SR 203 and US 395. The westernmost boundary of the Long Valley FPD is located approximately 2 miles east of the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

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). In response to a recommendation from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the District has designated a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone within its boundaries (see Figure 3). The District has also designated the entire incorporated area as a

Wildland Rural Interface Area (WRI) (see Figure 4). The district has not completed a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which includes a map designating fire hazard severity zones. The district also recently adopted the entire Building Code to apply to new construction within the Wildland Rural Interface Area.

Planned Land Uses

The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan provides for additional development within the Urban Growth Boundary established for the incorporated area (see Figure 2). The additional development allowed by the General Plan would be a mix of resort uses, commercial uses, public uses, multiple-family residential uses, and single-family residential uses. The residential uses would be a mix of fulltime residential uses and seasonal residential uses.

Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport. The Federal Aviation Commission will not allow building in the no fly zone. The Town of Mammoth Lakes, the owner and operator of Mammoth Yosemite Airport, established scheduled air service at the airport in December, 2008.

Fire Prevention

The District's fire prevention activities include the identification of fire hazard zones, plan checks, pre-plans, building inspections, minimum requirements for fire resistive construction, an aggressive and extensive wildland fire prevention and fuel modification program, and an aggressive public education program. The District has a full-time Fire Marshal and investigator, who enforces fire codes and regulations and who has the authority to issue citations to violators. The District has adopted the California amended version (2007) of the International Fire Code and has generated specific changes to the state code to address conditions in Mammoth Lakes.

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. The Fire Safe Council in Mammoth Lakes has recently been reactivated to help with the district's fire prevention and fuel modification program.

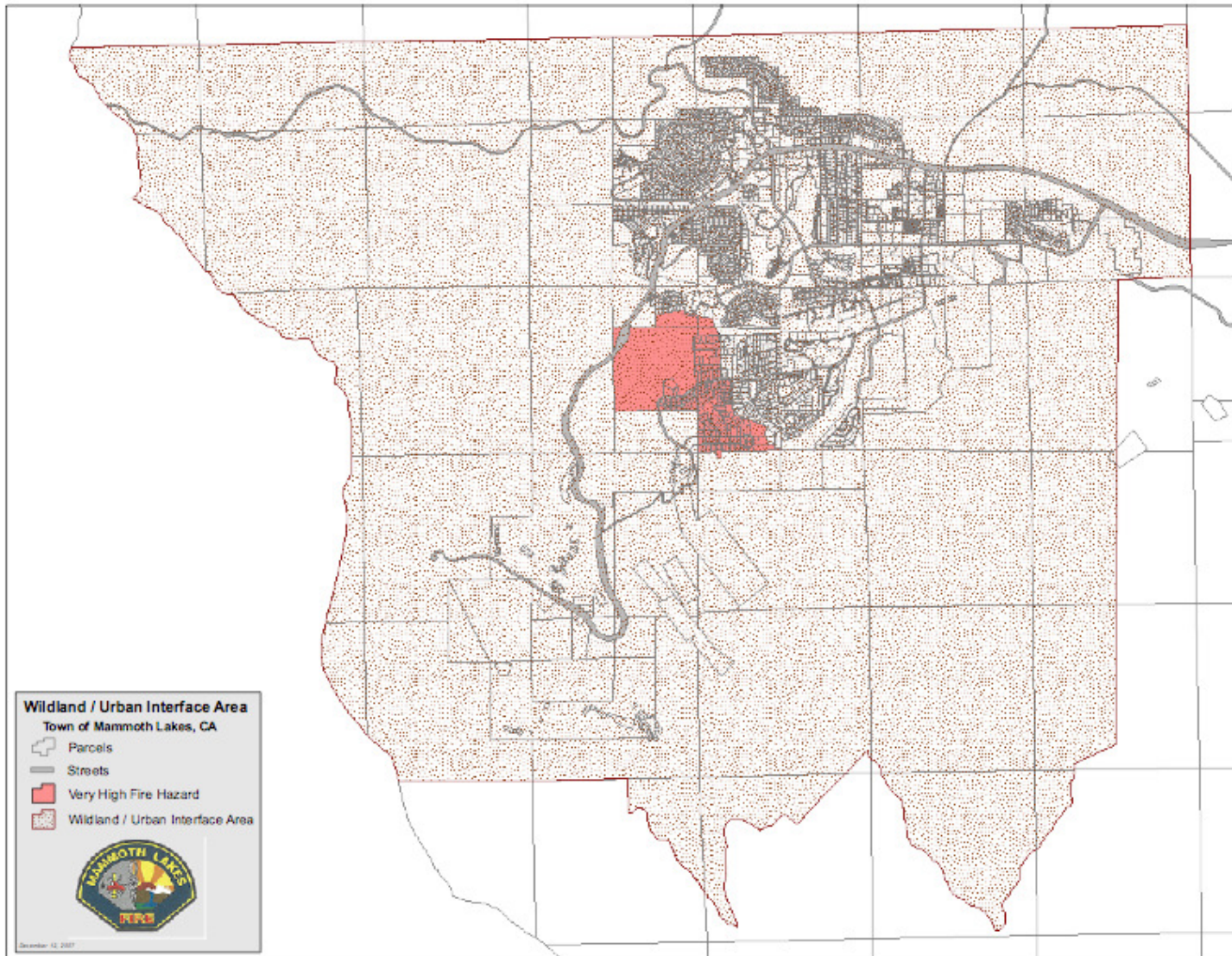


Figure 3 – Mammoth Lakes Wildland/Urban Interface Area

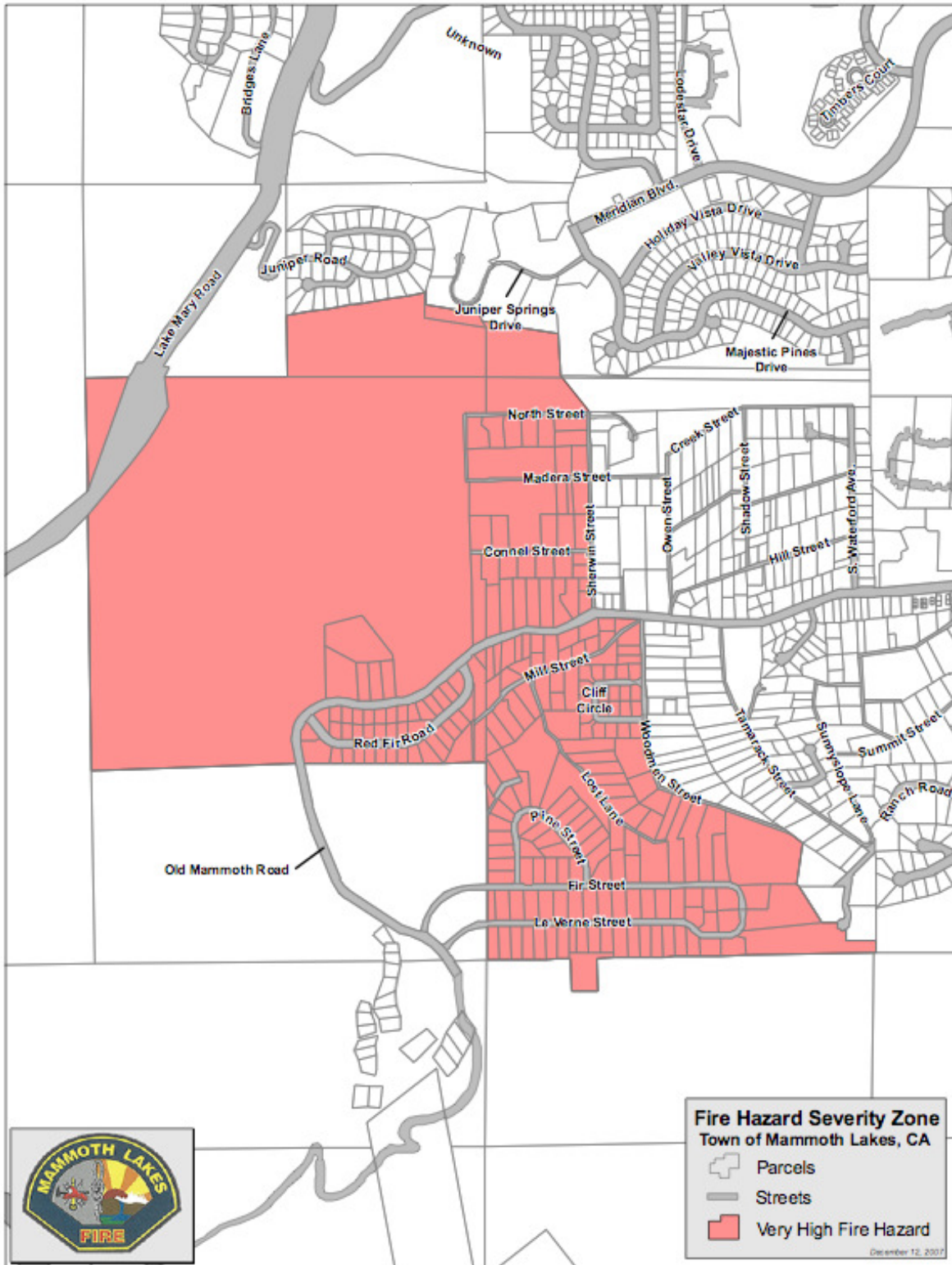


Figure 4 – Mammoth Lakes Fire Hazard Severity Zone

District Issues of Concern

The district has indicated a number of concerns, including:

- the development of high-rise structures within the town;
- obtaining additional equipment;
- obtaining better wireless service and more repeaters;
- additional time for training;
- receiving a proportionate share of Proposition 172 funds; and
- consistent addressing.

District Planning

The district has a Mission Statement, a Strategic Plan, and a Master Facilities Plan. The Master Facilities Plan identifies capital facilities and the costs associated with developing those facilities.

The district has updated its Strategic Plan, based on the current economic situation in the town. The Strategic Plan contains goals and recommended programs to improve the district's provision of services, including (but not limited to) the following:

- MLFD will remain a "volunteer dominant" fire department. Volunteers will continue to be the backbone of the department and a considerable amount of resources will be dedicated to maintaining this valuable resource.
- The district has hired another prevention/inspection person, who is working on getting all of the businesses up to date.
- The district moved into a new station (Station #1) at Main Street and Forest Trail in September, 2007.
- The district is working with the US Forest Service and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area to put another station in the vicinity of the main lodge. This is in the initial discussion stages.
- The Strategic Plan also calls for another station at Mammoth Yosemite Airport in cooperation with the Town and Long Valley FPD. Due to the building moratorium at the airport, and the uncertainty concerning development plans there, the district has had limited discussions concerning this.
- The Strategic Plan calls for increased cooperation with all the public safety providers. This has been instituted and is very successful.
- The district has implemented a very aggressive fuels program to reduce the wildland fire threat.
- The Strategic Plan calls for an upgrade in the district's capabilities in providing Emergency Medical Services in cooperation with the Mono County Paramedics.
- The Strategic Plan calls for an increase in the capability of special teams; hazardous materials and technical rescue.

DISTRICT SERVICES

Fire Suppression

The district provides structural fire protection from two stations in Mammoth Lakes. Station #1 is a new building at the corner of Main Street (SR 203) and Forest Trail. Station #1 houses the district's administrative offices and the Mono County paramedic unit stationed in Mammoth Lakes. Station #2, located on Old Mammoth Road in the Snowcreek area, is a two-story, 2 bay station with a training area and a drill tower.

The district has ten career firefighters and 50 part-time volunteer dispatchers, firefighters, engineers, and captains. There are approximately 800 fire hydrants within the district, which are installed and maintained by the Mammoth Community Water District. The FPD estimates that 85 percent of the populated area within the district is accessible within 3 minutes, 11 percent is accessible within 7 minutes, and the remaining 4 percent of the district is accessible within 15-20 minutes. The lengthier response times are generally for areas with limited access. As a result, the average response time to an emergency within the district is approximately 5 minutes. The district's goal is to reach all fires within the town within 4 minutes, and all fires in the Lakes Basin within 15 minutes.

The district also responds to calls in the Red's Meadow/Devil's Postpile area in Madera County west of the district, to calls at the geothermal plants at the junction of SR 203 and US 395, to calls along all of SR 203, to calls along US 395 from the Caltrans Station at Deadman Grade south to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport, to calls at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, and to calls at the base of the Sherwin Mountains south of Mammoth Lakes.

Emergency Medical Response

The County Division of Emergency Medical Services operates the paramedic service in the county; a paramedic unit is based at Station #1 on Main Street. The district provides first responder service and acts as a backup for the county paramedic unit. The district operates one BLS ambulance. All of the district's personnel have received formal training in emergency medical response. Twenty-eight have completed the training for EMT1.

Other Services

All district personnel are trained in HazMat response; seven have completed HazMat technician training. All district personnel are also trained in Wildland Firefighting. All personnel have received training in technical rescue techniques including high and low angle rescue, and building collapse ice rescue. The district also reviews development proposals and building permits, tests active systems and hydrants, and provides school safety programs, CPR training, fuel reduction, and firesafe/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 chiefs 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

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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 Long Valley FPD to serve the Geothermal Plants, Mammoth Yosemite Airport, and US 395. The district also maintains mutual aid agreements with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the US Forest Service (USFS), and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF).

Table 1: Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Services and Programs

Type of Service	Provider	Service Capacity and Other Notes
<i>Fire Services</i>		
Fire Suppression	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>		
High and Low Angle	Staff	All staff trained
Building Collapse	Staff	All staff trained
Extrication/Vehicle Rescue	Staff	All staff trained
<i>Medical Services</i>		
Basic Life Support	28 EMTs	
First Responder	Staff	All staff trained
<i>Other Safety Services and Programs</i>		
Public Education Programs	Staff	
School Programs	Staff	
Community Activities	Staff	CPR training
<i>Development</i>		
Plan Review	Staff	
Development Reviews	Staff	
Permit Approvals	Staff	

Infrastructure and Facilities

District facilities include two fire stations. Station #1 houses the district’s administrative offices, the full-time engine crew, and a Mono County paramedic unit. Station #2 includes a training area and drill tower. District equipment is listed in Table 3. All of the equipment was purchased new.

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

Table 2: Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Facilities

Existing Facility: Type/Size	Year Built or Remodeled	Facilities	Characteristics
Station #1 Main St & Forest Trail	2007		Houses administrative offices, full-time crew, Mono County paramedic unit
Station #2 Old Mammoth Road	1988		Includes training area and drill tower

Table 3: Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection Equipment and Vehicles

Vehicle/Year/Model	Capacity & GPM¹	Location and Other Notes
3331-1998 Freightliner	500/1000	Combo Type 2
3332-2006 Westmark	500/1000	Wildland Type 3
3333-2002 Weststates	500/1750	Engine Type 1
3334-1995 Freightliner	500/1000	Combination Engine Type 2
3335-1990 Hush	500/1500	Engine Type 1
3361-2008 Pierce	350/2000	100’ Aerial Platform
3362-1994 Weststates	350/1500	75’ Aerial Ladder
3371-2001 Chevy	-	Ambulance
3381-2001 Kenworth	3000/250	Water Tender

Communications

Fires and medical emergencies are dispatched to the Mammoth Lakes FPD from the Mono County Sheriff’s Office in Bridgeport via the county’s 911 emergency system. The district currently contains cell phone towers but those towers do not provide adequate reception in some areas. The district has complete internet access. The district also has a modern dispatch center which is activated for alarms and special needs.

¹ GPM= gallons per minute.

Administration and Staffing

The district is managed by an elected board of commissioners. The board meets once a month at Station #1. Most Board meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m.. Meeting agendas are posted at Stations # 1 and #2, as well as at the Town offices.

The district is staffed by a fire chief, an operations chief, a fire marshal, a training chief, administrative staff, 10 career firefighters, and approximately 50 volunteer firefighters. The members receive training on a regular basis (twice a week for new volunteers, once a week for others), covering a wide variety of topics. The district also participates in joint training exercises with other fire districts and the US Forest Service. District personnel also attend seminars and training courses outside of the district.

Service Activity

The Mammoth Lakes FPD responded to 491 calls in 2007. The Mammoth Lakes FPD's service calls are 26% percent emergency medical calls and 5% percent vehicle accident calls.

Table 4: Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Call Log--2007

<i>Incident Type Summary</i>	Number of Responses	Percentage (%)
Structural	9	1.8%
Vehicle Accident	26	5.4%
Emergency Medical	129	26.2%
HazMat	50	10.1%
Rescue	7	1.5%
Wildland Fire	16	3.2%
False Alarm	164	33.4%
Other	90	18.3%
TOTAL	491	100%

Funding and Budget

The Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District relies heavily on property tax revenue for its funding. Salaries are the greatest expense of the Mammoth Lakes FPD, at approximately 52 percent of the total budget. Supplies represent 11 percent of the budget, services 11 percent, equipment 5 percent, liability insurance 2 percent, and training 1.6 percent. The district has one outstanding loan for the construction/remodeling of Station #1 and a second loan to purchase the new aerial.

Table 5: Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District Revenues and Expenditures, FY 2006-2007

Revenues	
<i>Taxes and Assessments</i>	
Current Secured and Unsecured (1%)	\$2,316,025
Property Assessments	915,875
Prior Year and Penalties	290,892
Licenses, Permits, and Franchises	19,018
 <i>Revenue from Use of Money and Property</i>	
Interest Income	28,850
 <i>Intergovernmental</i>	
State	39,696
Other Governmental Agencies	<u>84,757</u>
Total Revenues	3,695,113
 Expenditures	
Salaries, Wages, Benefits	1,028,297
Services and Supplies	467,985
Retirement of Longterm Debt	150,427
Interest Expense	197,613
Fixed Assets	<u>4,913,223</u>
Total Expenditures	6,757,545
 Revenues Under Expenditures	 (3,062,432)
 Operating Transfers In	 3,155,412
 Revenue Sources Over Expenditures	 92,980

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 Mammoth Lakes 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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD--Facilities

The Mammoth Lakes FPD currently has two fire stations, Station #1 at Main Street and Forest Trail, and Station #2 on Old Mammoth Road. The district is in the preliminary planning stages with the US Forest Service and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area (MMSA) for another station in the vicinity of MMSA's Main Lodge. The district's Strategic Plan also calls for the development of a fire station at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, in cooperation with the Town and the Long Valley FPD.

Mammoth Lakes FPD--Apparatus and Other Equipment

All of the district's equipment was purchased new. The district's Master Facilities Plan contains plans to purchase additional equipment to serve development throughout the district. The district also has a replacement plan for equipment.

Mammoth Lakes FPD--Personnel

The district has a current volunteer staff of 50, along with 10 career firefighters. Currently, approximately 30 volunteers are available to respond during the middle of the day. At least 4 career firefighter are on duty at all times. Although Mammoth Lakes has a large population of residents aged 18-64, it also has a large seasonal work force.

Mammoth Lakes 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 Mammoth Lakes FPD has its own modern

dispatch center that is staffed following the initial dispatch from the Mono County Sheriff's office.

Fire districts have indicated that improvements could be made in addressing and mapping, 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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD--Roadways

Major access roads throughout the district are paved, four-lane roads. Secondary access roads are predominantly two-lane paved roads. Some roads, particularly in Old Mammoth, may not be paved or may be narrower than standard road widths.

Mammoth Lakes FPD--Water Supply

Within the district, water for domestic and fireflow purposes is provided by the Mammoth Community Water District. There are approximately 800 hydrants in the district, which are installed and maintained by the water district.

Mammoth Lakes FPD—Future Service Demand

Projected future growth in Mammoth Lakes includes a mix of single-family residential uses, multi-family residential uses, commercial, industrial, and resort uses. Many of the planned uses are a different scale and type of development than existing uses.

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 Strategic Plan and its Master Facilities Plan.
- Accelerated development will place more pressure on the Mammoth Lakes FPD to augment its service capacities.
- The replacement of existing equipment and/or the purchase of additional equipment over time will be needed to maintain or increase the quality of service provided by the district. The district has planned for its future equipment needs in its Strategic Plan and 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 Growth Patterns in Mammoth Lakes

The Town of Mammoth Lakes, in its General Plan Update, has calculated buildout over the 20-year life of that plan. The General Plan projects that the Town would be fully built out in twenty years. The population projections presented in the General Plan include permanent residents, transient residents, and visitors, as indicated by the term “people at one time” (PAOT). The Town’s General Plan limits the peak population of permanent and seasonal residents and visitors to 52,000 people (Town of Mammoth Lakes, General Plan Update, Land Use Policy L.1.A). The Town’s General Plan notes that:

Determining a reasonable build-out forecast for the 20-year planning period of the General Plan is challenging. Although many different approaches can be used to make projections, any forecast must acknowledge that because of changing demographics, market and economic conditions, numbers will be constantly changing.

The potential buildout population for the General Plan was calculated using a recreational trend forecast, a demographic and economic trend forecast, and a land use capacity analysis. The General Plan concludes that:

The assumptions of the three models support the projection that the total number of residents, visitors and workers on a winter weekend will grow to between 45,000 to 52,000 by the year 2025. Based on these analyses, the General Plan establishes a policy of a total peak population of residents, visitors and employees at 52,000 people. Ultimately, these land use designations could result in a build-out population over 52,000 but less than 60,000 if all land were built to capacity.

Determinations

- The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan allows for significant additional growth in the area served by the Mammoth Lakes FPD.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to include a wide spectrum of residential, resort, commercial, and industrial uses.
- The population in the area served by the Mammoth Lakes FPD is projected to increase to 52,000 PAOT by 2025, creating an increased demand for fire and emergency medical 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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD

The Mammoth Lakes FPD depends on property taxes, fees for various services, and a Development Impact Fee (DIF) from new development.

In 2007, 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. A Development Impact Fee (DIF) Justification Report calculated the development impact fees necessary to fund those required projects. Following the completion of those reports, 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:

- Addition of diesel exhaust system to fire station #2 (project completed)
- Fuels modification program Mammoth Creek (project in progress)
- Funding for Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
- Fuels modification grant for Old Mammoth area including associated equipment (project completed)

Determinations

- The Mammoth Lakes FPD's future financing will continue to rely 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 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.

Mammoth Lakes 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. Mammoth Lakes is its own discrete geographic area; the nearest community is Long Valley, approximately 10 to 15 miles to the south.

The Mammoth Lakes FPD is managed and administered by an elected board of commissioners, a chief, division chiefs, career firefighters, and volunteer/part-time 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. The district's Strategic Plan states that the district will remain a "volunteer dominant" fire department and that a considerable amount of resources will be dedicated to maintaining the volunteer resource.

The district has a Strategic Plan and a Master Facilities Plan, which contain plans for additional facilities and equipment to serve the proposed development in the town. The district also has an equipment replacement plan. The district also participates in Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs) in order to reduce insurance costs for workers compensation and dental and vision insurance.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that have administrative costs associated with the overall management of those districts or the Town. There could be some duplication of services among the districts and the Town, particularly in areas such as personnel management, insurance, risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

Determinations

- Mammoth Lakes is a discrete geographic area within Mono County; there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries.
- The district strives to keep operations and maintenance costs low by sharing services and training with other districts.
- Cooperation among fire districts can be an important part of reducing costs.
- The cost of volunteer training is unavoidable and may be lost when trained volunteers leave the district. Most of the district's volunteers are paid part-time and receive 401k benefits.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has a Strategic Plan and a Master Facilities Plan that address the demands imposed by growth within the district.
- The district participates in JPAs in order to reduce insurance costs (workers compensation, dental, and vision).
- The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that have administrative costs associated with the overall management of those districts or the Town. There could be some duplication of services among the districts and the Town, particularly in areas such as personnel management, insurance,

risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

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, DIFs, augmentation funds, and other smaller revenue sources (grants, fundraisers, etc.). Each of these categories has inherent constraints that prevent an agency from restructuring them.

Mammoth Lakes 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 (DIFs) to offset the impacts of new development. Fees for a single-family non-transient residence are \$1,500. 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.

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.

Other Fees – The district imposes fees for a variety of other services, such as inspections, plan reviews, and events.

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 district imposes Development Impact Fees and fees for a variety of other services. Revenues from the development impact fees are used only for capital improvements. 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 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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD --- Sharing Facilities with Other Fire Districts

Due to the geographic distance between most communities in the county, sharing facilities among fire districts 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 Mammoth Lakes FPD shares resources with other fire districts/departments 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 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.

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.

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-8: The county and the town should appoint a fire hazard coordinator with the responsibility for developing fire plans for the county, participating in the Eastern Sierra Regional Firesafe Council and the California Fire Alliance, coordinating with local, state, and federal fire protection and suppression entities, developing and implementing public education and awareness programs concerning fire safety including safe building materials and landscaping, and applying for funding for fire hazard mitigation such as fuel reduction programs.

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.

Mitigation W-11: Help local landowners participate in CDF's hazardous fuel reduction program.

Mitigation W-12: Help local 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 and the Town, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, local fire protection districts, and the County Office of Emergency Services.

Mammoth Lakes FPD --- Sharing Facilities with Other Entities within Mammoth Lakes

The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that require facilities to support their services. The Fire District currently provides space for a Mono County Paramedic unit within Station #1. There may be other opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the Town. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

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 and the Town, the Regional Planning Advisory Committees, and local fire protection districts.
- The Town of Mammoth Lakes includes other special district service providers, as well as the Town itself, that require facilities to support their services. There may be other opportunities for shared facilities among the districts and the Town. Further studies

would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the districts and the Town.

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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD

The Town of Mammoth Lakes is isolated from the nearest fire district facilities and equipment by 10-15 miles and terrain that is often hazardous in winter. The geographic constraints make it infeasible for the Mammoth Lakes FPD to consolidate with another FPD.

There are four other special districts within the town boundaries (see Figure 5), i.e.:

- ***Mammoth Community Services District (MCSD)***
The CSD provides road maintenance and snow removal services to a small portion of the Old Mammoth area.
- ***Mammoth Community Water District (MCWD)***
The Water District provides sewer services and water for domestic and fireflow uses to the developed portion of the Town of Mammoth Lakes.
- ***Mammoth Mosquito Abatement District (MMAD)***
The MAD provides mosquito abatement services to a small portion of the Old Mammoth area.
- ***Southern Mono Healthcare District (SMHD)***
The district provides acute care hospital services and medical services at its facilities in Mammoth Lakes and at leased facilities in Bridgeport and Bishop. The district’s

Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District -- Municipal Service Review

boundaries include portions of Southern Mono County, from Deadman Summit to the Inyo County line, including all of Mammoth Lakes.

The Town of Mammoth Lakes also provides a variety of municipal services, including:

- Airport;
- Community Development;
- Finance Department;
- Mammoth Lakes Housing;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Police;
- Public Works (Infrastructure, Roads, Snow Removal);
- Transit; and
- Visitor's Bureau.

As Figure 5 shows, the boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature finds and declares that a single multipurpose governmental agency is accountable for community service needs and financial resources and, therefore, may be the best mechanism for establishing community service priorities especially in urban areas. Nonetheless, the Legislature recognizes the critical role of many limited purpose agencies, especially in rural communities. 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.

The consolidation of some special district services under the Town government could result in cost savings and the elimination of administrative and operational overlap. The Town, as a general purpose government, may offer potential benefits which a single purpose agency, such as the special districts in Mammoth Lakes, does not. The broad powers under which general purpose governments operate generally provide more extensive financial resources than do single purpose agencies, making them better able to respond to short term and long term service demands. General purpose governments also typically have greater community exposure than single purpose agencies, which allows for greater public accessibility and accountability.

Determinations

- Due to the distances between communities in Mono County, it is infeasible for the Mammoth Lakes FPD to consolidate with another FPD since the closest ones are located approximately 10-15 miles north and south along US 395.
- Several special districts, along with the Town, provide public services within the Town of Mammoth Lakes.
- The boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special

Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District -- Municipal Service Review

district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

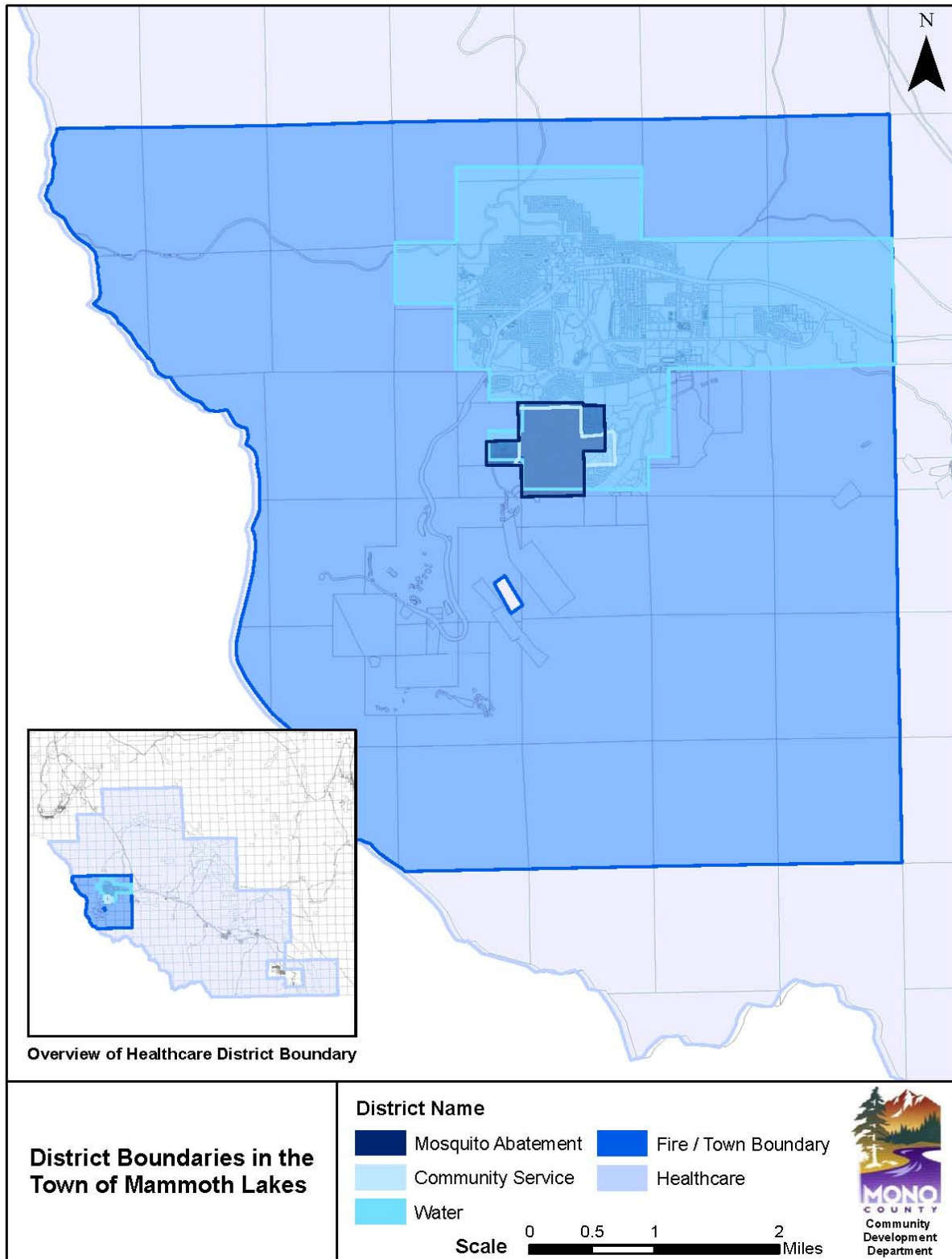


Figure 5 – Special District Boundaries, Town of Mammoth Lakes

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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD

The Mammoth Lakes FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, and division chiefs. Management input is also provided during Mono County fire chief meetings. The district has a Mission Statement, a Strategic Plan, and a Master Facilities Plan. The Master Facilities Plan identifies capital facilities and the costs associated with developing those facilities.

The district has updated its Strategic Plan, based on the current economic situation in the town. The Strategic Plan contains goals and recommended programs to improve the district’s provision of services, including (but not limited to) the following:

- MLFD will remain a "volunteer dominant" fire department. Volunteers will continue to be the backbone of the department and a considerable amount of resources will be dedicated to maintaining this valuable resource.
- The district has hired another prevention/inspection person, who is working on getting all of the businesses up to date.
- The district moved into a new station (Station #1) at Main Street and Forest Trail in September, 2007.
- The district is working with the US Forest Service and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area to put another station in the vicinity of the main lodge. This is in the initial discussion stages.
- The Strategic Plan also calls for another station at Mammoth Yosemite Airport in cooperation with the Town and Long Valley FPD. Due to the building moratorium at the airport, and the uncertainty concerning development plans there, the district has not had any discussions concerning this.

- The Strategic Plan calls for increased cooperation with all the public safety providers. This has been instituted and is very successful.
- The district has implemented a very aggressive fuels program to reduce the wildland fire threat.
- The Strategic Plan calls for an upgrade in the district's capabilities in providing Emergency Medical Services in cooperation with the Mono County Paramedics.
- The Strategic Plan calls for an increase in the capability of special teams; hazardous materials and technical rescue.
- The Strategic Plan calls for cooperation with the college concerning training programs.

The district's current ISO rating is 3/9.

Determinations

- The Mammoth Lakes FPD is managed by an elected board of commissioners, a fire chief, and division chiefs.
- 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 added a 24-hour full-time staffed engine, which reduces the load on the volunteers and provides a faster response time.
- The district has committed resources to future facilities and operations, including resources to maintain a largely volunteer department.
- The district has a Strategic Plan, a Master Facilities Plan and an Equipment Replacement Plan. The district updates its plans as changes occur in the town.

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.

Mammoth Lakes FPD

The Mammoth Lakes FPD complies with the minimum open meetings and public information requirements. The board meets monthly at Station #1, generally on the third Tuesday at 2 p.m.. Meeting notices and agendas are posted at Stations #1 and #2 and at the Town Offices.

The district engages in a wide variety of public education activities:

- An extensive and aggressive wildland fire prevention and fuels modification program, including reactivation of the Fire Safe Council, weekly newspaper articles during the summer, presentations to the Town Council and Board of Supervisors, presentations to civic groups and homeowner associations, and individual property inspections.
- Yearly school fire safety program.
- Articles in the local newspaper concerning fire prevention, use of wood stoves, propane safety, hydrant adoption, etc.
- General presentations to civic groups.
- Inspections of all condos and businesses.
- Presentations on the local TV channel.
- The district is a sponsor and participant for CERT.

In addition, the Fire Chief, at the invitation of the Town Manager, attends weekly town staff meetings. This increases communications and coordination between both entities.

Determinations

- The Mammoth Lakes 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 and services.
- The district provides educational programs in Mammoth Lakes.
- The Fire Chief, at the invitation of the Town Manager, attends weekly town staff meetings. This increases communications and coordination between both entities.

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 Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District.

1. Present and Planned Land Uses

Discussion:

The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan provides for additional development within the Urban Growth Boundary established for the incorporated area (see Figure 2). The additional development allowed by the General Plan would be a mix of resort uses, commercial uses, public uses, multiple-family residential uses, and single-family residential uses. The residential uses would be a mix of fulltime residential uses and seasonal residential uses.

The Town's General Plan calculates the Town's population as PAOT (people at one time), a figure that includes permanent residents as well as transient residents and visitors. The Town of Mammoth Lakes General Plan limits the PAOT at buildout to 52,000 persons. Currently, the PAOT is approximately 34,265 persons, with an average peak population of 41,000 persons.

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.

Finding:

Present land uses within the district and Town boundaries include resort uses, commercial uses, public uses, multiple-family residential uses, and single-family residential uses. The residential uses are a mix of fulltime residential uses and seasonal residential uses. Planned land uses within the Town's Urban Growth Boundary are similar with future development occurring within and adjacent to existing development. The Town's population at buildout is forecast to increase to 52,000 PAOT (people at one time) from the current PAOT of 34,265 with an average peak of 41,000 persons. Additional development may also occur at Mammoth Yosemite Airport.

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 additional demand for emergency services.

Finding:

The Mammoth Lakes 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:

As discussed in the “District Services” section of this report, the FPD currently provides fire protection and emergency medical services to approximately 2,500 acres of developed land within its boundaries. The district also provides structural fire protection to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, and responds to calls in the Red’s Meadow/Devil’s Postpile area in Madera County west of the district, at the geothermal plants at the junction of SR 203 and US 395, along all of SR 203, along US 395 from the Caltrans Station at Deadman Grade south to the Mammoth Yosemite Airport, at Mammoth Yosemite Airport, and at the base of the Sherwin Mountains south of Mammoth Lakes.

At buildout in 2024, the Town’s population is expected to increase to 52,000 PAOT (people at one time), from the current PAOT of 34,265 with an average peak of 41,000 persons.

The district’s ISO rating is currently 3/9. The district has identified future service needs and capital improvements in its Strategic Plan and its Master Facilities Plan, along with the associated costs of implementing those capital improvements.

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:

Mammoth Lakes is the only incorporated community in Mono County and serves as a social, administrative, and economic center for much of the county. Residents of communities throughout the county may interact socially and economically with the Town of Mammoth Lakes but that interaction is limited due to the physical distances involved. The physical distance between unincorporated communities and the town, and the fact that the town is an incorporated entity and other communities are not, make the interdependence of the communities irrelevant in determining the sphere of influence for the district.

Within the Town of Mammoth Lakes, public services are provided by the town, the county, and several special districts:

- Mammoth Community Water District – Water and sewer services, boundaries include the developed area of town within the Urban Growth Boundary.
- Mammoth Lakes Community Services District – Road maintenance and snow removal, boundaries include a small area in Old Mammoth.
- Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District – Fire protection and emergency medical services, boundaries are the same as the town boundaries.
- Mammoth Lakes Mosquito Abatement District – Mosquito abatement for a small area in Old Mammoth.
- Mono County – Regional services including Assessor, Clerk Recorder, Courts, District Attorney, Public Health, Probation, Social Services, Treasurer/Tax Collector.
- Town of Mammoth Lakes – Municipal services including Airport, Community Development, Finance, Mammoth Lakes Housing, Parks and Recreation, Police, Public Works, Transit, and Visitors Bureau.
- Southern Mono Healthcare District – Medical services and acute care hospital services.

The boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature finds and declares that a single multipurpose governmental agency is accountable for community service needs and financial resources and, therefore, may be the best mechanism for establishing community service priorities especially in urban areas. Nonetheless, the Legislature recognizes the critical role of many limited purpose agencies, especially in rural communities. 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.

The consolidation of some special district services under the Town government could result in cost savings and the elimination of administrative and operational overlap. The Town, as a general purpose government, may offer potential benefits which a single purpose agency, such as the special districts in Mammoth Lakes, does not. The broad powers under which general purpose governments operate generally provide more extensive financial resources than do single purpose agencies, making them better able to respond to short term and long term service demands. General purpose governments also typically have greater community exposure than single purpose agencies, which allows for greater public accessibility and accountability.

Finding:

The district shares social and economic interests with the entire incorporated area of the Town. These shared interests promote a coordinated approach to service provision in the Mammoth area. Several special districts, along with the Town, provide public services within the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The boundaries of the special districts in Mammoth Lakes overlap with each other and with the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The only entity that includes all of the special

district boundaries within its boundaries (with the exception of the SMHD) is the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

Sphere of Influence Recommendation

The Sphere of Influence for the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District should remain as it is, coterminous with the boundaries of the district. LAFCO should study fire protection within the area north of SR 203 and US 395 in order to determine whether sphere of influence and/or district boundaries need to be reorganized in that area. Such a study should occur only with the participation of all affected entities. Any reorganization recommended by LAFCO should occur only with the concurrence of the Board of Directors of all affected entities.

Reorganization Recommendation

Section 56001 of the California Government Code states that:

The Legislature finds and declares that a single multipurpose governmental agency is accountable for community service needs and financial resources and, therefore, may be the best mechanism for establishing community service priorities especially in urban areas. Nonetheless, the Legislature recognizes the critical role of many limited purpose agencies, especially in rural communities. 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.

At some point in the future, the fire protection services currently provided by the district might best be provided under the authority of the Town of Mammoth Lakes. The feasibility of such a reorganization should be determined by a reorganization committee consisting of representatives of the Fire Protection District, the Town, and Mono LAFCO. If a reorganization is proposed that involves the Fire Protection District, the Town, and any other special districts in the Mammoth area, the feasibility of such a reorganization should be determined by a reorganization committee consisting of representatives of all involved districts, the Town, and Mono LAFCO, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Cortese-Knox Act. Any reorganization of the Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District and the Town of Mammoth Lakes should occur only with the concurrence of the Board of Directors of the District and the Mammoth Lakes Town Council.

The current Board of Directors has no desire to consider reorganization.

V. REFERENCES

References Consulted

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Special Districts Annual Report, Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

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Persons Consulted

Mammoth Lakes Fire Protection District

Brent Harper, Chief

Thom Heller, Fire Marshal