

5. CRESCENT MILLS HIGHWAY LIGHTING DISTRICT

Crescent Mills Highway Lighting District (CMHLD) provides street lighting services in the community of Crescent Mills. This is the first Municipal Service Review (MSR) for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

CMHLD was formed in 1947, as a dependent special district¹⁶ of the County. The purpose of the formation was to provide lighting service on and around the public streets and highways of Crescent Mills.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Highway Lighting District Act¹⁷. The act empowers highway lighting districts to install and maintain a street lighting system on public highways within the district for the better protection of the public traveling thereon. Highway lighting districts have authority to install the lighting system and contract for service.

CMHLD is located 3.5 miles southeast of Greenville. The only other highway lighting district in the County is the Quincy HLD situated to the southeast of CMHLD.

Boundaries

The District's boundaries are entirely within Plumas County and encompass approximately 0.3 square miles. The District's boundaries are depicted in Figure 7-1.

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

Sphere of Influence

The District has not had an SOI adopted by LAFCo. The Commission will adopt an SOI for the District during the SOI updates following the completion of this MSR.

Extra-territorial Services

The District does not provide lighting services outside of its boundaries.

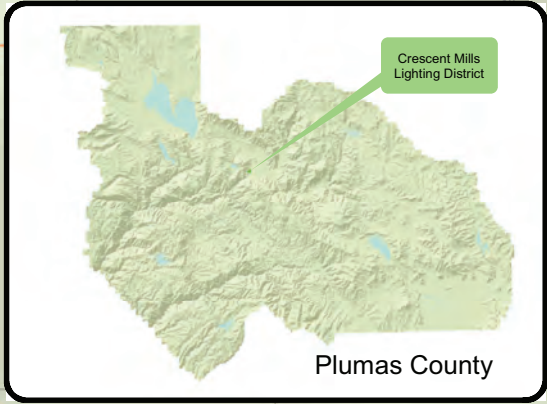
¹⁶ BOS records 0036. Formation date is from Board of Equalization records.

¹⁷ Government Streets & Highways Code §19000-19328.

Crescent Mills Lighting District

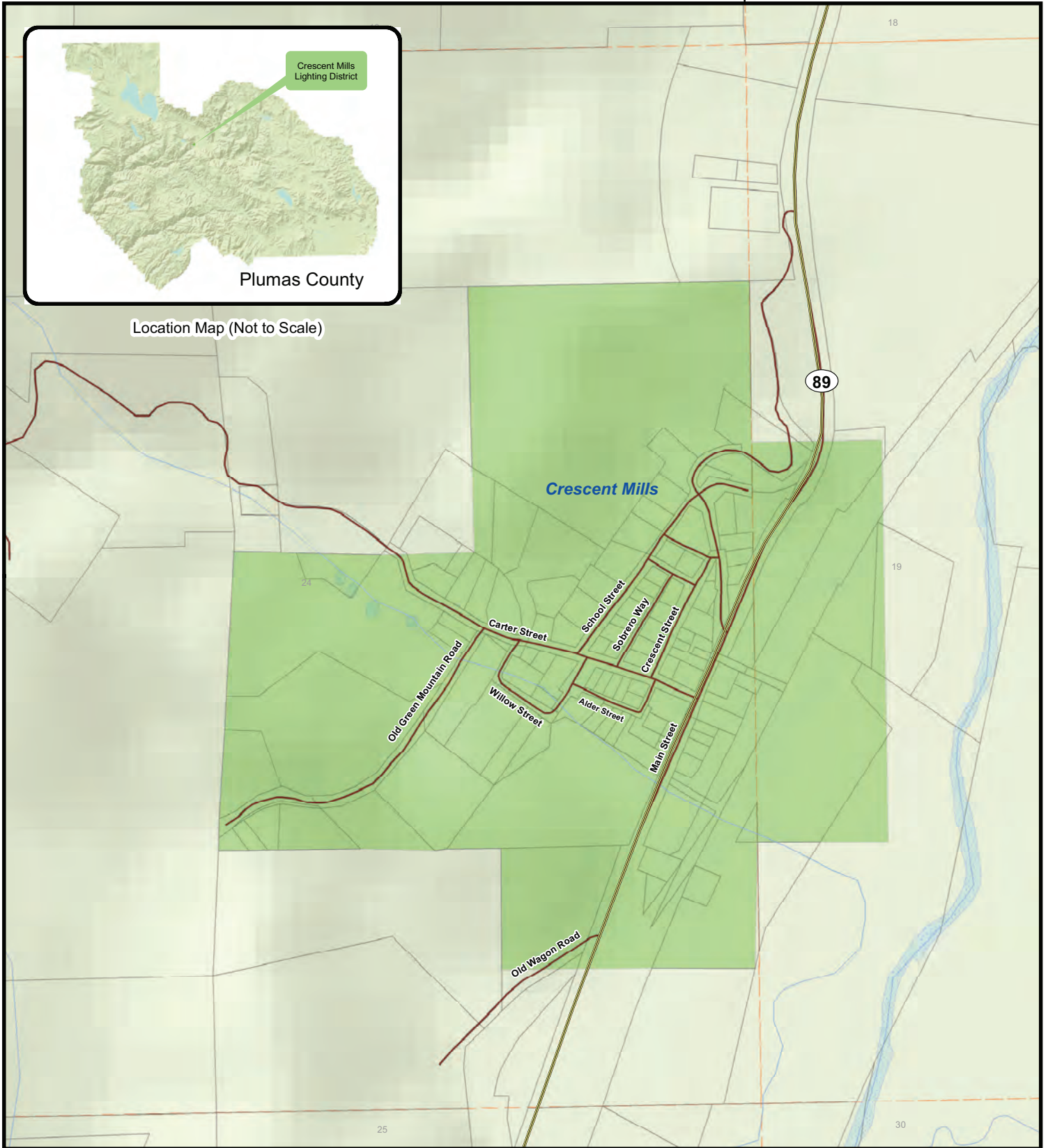
Range 9 East

Range 10 East



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Township 26 North

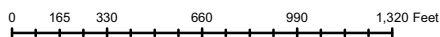


Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)

- Crescent Mills Lighting District
- Crescent Mills Lighting District No Sphere of Influence



Crescent Mills Lighting District
Resolution:
Formed: January 6, 1947

Crescent Mills Lighting District
Resolution: (No Sphere of Influence)
Adopted:

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 12/24/2013

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest.

Accountability and Governance

CMHLD is governed by a governing body consisting of the five Supervisors of the Plumas County Board of Supervisors. Board members are elected by supervisorial districts and serve staggered four-year terms. Current governing board members are Terry Swofford, Kevin Goss, Sherrie Thrall, Lori Simpson, and Jon Kennedy.¹⁸

The Governing Board meets on the first three Tuesday mornings of every month in the Courthouse Board of Supervisors’ Chambers. The Governing Board meeting agendas are a part of the Board of Supervisors’ agendas and are posted on the Plumas County website. Governing Board meeting minutes are also available on the Plumas County website. The regular meetings of the Board are live streamed over the internet. Board meeting minutes are archived on the Plumas County website.

Figure 5-2: Crescent Mills HLD Governing Body

Crescent Mills Highway Lighting District			
Governing Body			
	Name	Position	Term Ends
<i>Members</i>	Terry Swofford	District 1	2016
	Kevin Goss	District 2	2016
	Sherrie Thrall	District 3	2018
	Lori Simpson	District 4	2016
	Jon Kennedy	District 5	2014
<i>Manner of Selection</i>	Election		
<i>Length of Term</i>	4 years		
<i>Meetings</i>	First three Tuesdays of every month	Supervisors Board Room, County Court House in Quincy	
<i>Agenda Distribution</i>	Posted on County’s website		
<i>Minutes Distribution</i>	Posted on County’s website		
Contact			
<i>Contact</i>	Robert Perreault, Manager (County Engineer)		
<i>Mailing Address</i>	555 Main Street, Quincy, CA 95971		
<i>Phone</i>	530-283-6268		
<i>Fax</i>			
<i>Email/Website</i>	bobperreault@countyofplumas.com		

Plumas County makes available its budget, general plan, emergency operations plan and other documents on its website. No information about CMHLD is presently available on the County website but the Engineering Department staff has initiated construction of a

¹⁸ Jeffery Engel is District 5 County Supervisor Elect and will begin his term January 2015.

webpage for CMHLD. CMHLD does not make additional outreach efforts to the public regarding street lighting services, besides publishing the legally required agendas and minutes.

Complaints pertaining to a lighting outage or bulb replacement are directly submitted to the Pacific Gas & Electric Company (PG&E), which maintains the street lights and provides electricity for operation of the lights. Occasionally, the Sheriff or the California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers report lighting malfunctions to PG&E, which handles the repairs or replaces the lights, once notified. All other complaints are to be directed to the County Engineer. The District received no complaints in 2012.

Government Code §87203 requires persons who hold office to disclose their investments, interests in real property and incomes by filing appropriate forms each year. Unlike other counties in the State, the Plumas County Clerk-Recorder does not act as the filing officer for the independent special districts. Each district holds responsibility for collecting the Form 700s and maintaining copies in their records. However, because the District's governing consists of the Board of Supervisors, the County Clerk of the Board acts as the filing officer and maintains copies of each Supervisor's Form 700 submittals. Each of the board members have filed the required Form 700s for 2013. Engineering Department staff is responsible for maintaining Form 700 submittals for others.

Crescent Mills HLD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCO. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.

Planning and Management Practices

The Plumas County Engineer manages the District, utilizing staff of the Engineering Department. The County Engineer who acts as the general manager of the District is supported by two other county staff who prepare engineering reports and pay bills. About one to one and a half hours a month are spent regularly on district management. Additional staff time is dedicated as needed. CMHLD contracts with PG&E for light system maintenance, but the District has no record of the original agreement.

County employees are evaluated at a minimum of once a year. County employees track hours worked for CMHLD in a timesheet. The District reports that it does not perform formal evaluations of overall district performance or the contract service provider (PG&E), such as benchmarking or annual reports. Incidents are reportedly addressed as they arise.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are completed by the County and are not audited individually, but are combined with all other county finances in the County's annual audit report. Capital improvements are budgeted in the annual budgets when necessary. The District does not adopt any other planning documents.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the County Auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. Additionally, all special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has

approved a biennial or five-year schedule.¹⁹ Because CMHLD is included as part of the County's annual audit process, it is not required to submit a separate audit to the County Auditor.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District complied with this requirement for FY 12-13.²⁰

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Land uses within the District are primarily suburban residential and recreational. The area within the District's boundaries is approximately 0.3 square miles.

Population

Based on GIS analysis of 2010 Census data, there are 373 permanent residents within the District.

Existing Demand

The District reported that the number of streetlights in Crescent Mills had remained static and there were no new developments requiring additional lights.

Projected Growth and Development

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 373 in 2010 to approximately 391 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

The District does not anticipate growth in population and similarly in service demand in the next several years.

The District indicated that any new major development would require additional streetlights. New subdivisions would have to pay for their own streetlights on private roads. The District reported that in the past it has generally had sufficient capacity to provide services; however, existing financing levels are constrained and limit the District's ability to provide services. CMHLD would require additional funding in case of expansion.

Growth Strategies

The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is the County.

¹⁹ Government Code §26909.

²⁰ State Controller's Office website. <http://sco.ca.gov/mobile/News/NewsDetail.aspx?id=67>

In regards to governance structure alternatives, the District reported that a possibility of a countywide street lighting district is being considered. The formation of a countywide district would expand the base and give the County more control over new developments and opportunities for enhanced overall planning. The idea was discussed at several County Supervisor meetings. Depending on the structure of the proposed new district, if pursued by the County, formation would require a resolution of intent to form the district by the Board of Supervisors and application to LAFCo. The formation will also require an engineer's report and voter approval on any proposed additional special tax to fund the new district.²¹

Financing

CMHLD reported that the current financing level had been adequate to deliver services until last year, when the County Auditor started collecting a fee for support services of \$300-\$400, which created financial challenges for the District.

The Plumas County Road Department has for a number of years (contingent on funding availability) agreed to pay 25 percent of the street lighting cost to any Plumas County district providing lighting services and making the request for funding. The amount has been paid entirely through the Road Funds.

In the County's FY 11-12 financial audit, the auditor identified two weaknesses to internal control, one of which was determined to be a material weakness and the other a significant deficiency. The material weakness occurred when the County recorded a prior period adjustment in the Solid Waste Planning and Operations fund to correct capital assets that had not been capitalized in prior years. The significant deficiency occurred when three buses were disposed of in a prior year without proper authorization and removal from the depreciation schedule. Neither of these deficiencies impact the operations of CMHLD.

Total revenue for FY 13-14 was \$2,852, which was comprised of 75 percent transferred funds from the County's General Fund, 25 percent of property tax revenue, and a minor amount from use of money and property.

Total expenditures for FY 13-14 amounted to \$3,107 and included utilities (90 percent), overhead (nine percent) and, administration fees (one percent). The monthly charges paid to PG&E have remained constant. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$255 in FY 13-14.

No funds have been budgeted for capital improvements in FY 14-15.

The District did not have any long-term debt at the end of FY 13-14.

CMHLD does not have a policy to maintain a certain level of financial reserves. CMHLD's rollover balance at the end of FY 13-14 amounted to \$542.91. The District's reserve level has been declining over the last few fiscal years.

²¹ In November 1996, California voters passed Proposition 218, the "Right to Vote on Taxes Act". This constitutional amendment protects taxpayers by limiting the methods by which local governments can create or increase taxes, fees and charges without taxpayer consent. Proposition 218 requires voter approval prior to imposition or increase of general taxes, assessments, and certain user fees.

The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPA's) but does participate in some joint financing through the Road Fund as discussed above.

LIGHTING SERVICES

Service Overview

CMHLD provides highway lighting services and contracts with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) for the installation of new lights, maintenance and electricity service.

Staffing

The Plumas County Engineering Department dedicates three staff members to district management. The County Engineer acts as a general manager and is supported by two county personnel on as-needed basis. As previously mentioned, PG&E provides lighting system maintenance under contract. Plumas County Auditor's Office provides payment and audit services.

Facilities and Capacity

The District's infrastructure consists of an unknown number of lights located on Crescent Mills streets within CMHLD boundaries.

Infrastructure Needs

At present, the District reported that there were no infrastructure needs or deficiencies with regard to the lighting system.

Challenges

The primary challenge identified by the District is the insufficient funding particularly in comparison to the limited expenditures of the District.

Service Adequacy

This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including number of complaints and reported challenges.

The District reported that there were no complaints in 2013. The reported challenges include limited financing. CMHLD financing challenges must be addressed through a new financing source or governance structure reorganization.

CRESCENT MILLS HIGHWAY LIGHTING DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ As of 2010, the population within Crescent Mills Highway Lighting District (CMHLD) was 373.
- ❖ The number of streetlights in Crescent Mills has remained static for the last several years and there are no proposed developments requiring additional lights.
- ❖ The District does not anticipate growth in population and similarly in service demand in the next several years.

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

- ❖ The population threshold by which Plumas LAFCo will define a community is yet to be determined. Specific disadvantaged unincorporated communities and characteristics of the communities will be identified when appropriate as other areas are to be annexed to the District.

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

- ❖ CMHLD has marginal capacity to provide adequate street lighting services. Although, no complaints were reported in 2013, financing continues to be a major concern. Existing financing levels from property taxes do not cover all costs associated with the street lighting services. Future capacity expansion would require increased funding.
- ❖ District staff did not identify any particular infrastructure needs in regard to the lighting system.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reported that the current financing level was not adequate to deliver services.
- ❖ CMHLD does not have any long-term debt or maintain a particular level of financial reserves.
- ❖ The District has experienced a declining fund balance in recent years and the County has had to cover expenses with transfers from the County General Fund. The District is in need of a sustainable and adequate funding source.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ The District does not presently share facilities.
- ❖ An opportunity for future facility sharing may be consolidation of all lighting services in the County under a single countywide lighting district. Such a consolidation may allow for more efficient sharing of County resources.

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

- ❖ CMHLD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ CMHLD has initiated a web presence. CMHLD does not conduct any constituent outreach in addition to the required agendas and minutes.
- ❖ Governance structure options with regard to lighting services include the possibility of formation of a countywide lighting district.