

9. EASTERN PLUMAS RECREATION DISTRICT

Eastern Plumas Recreation District (EPRD) provides recreational opportunities by making funding available to various recreational facilities and programs in the surrounding area. This is the first Municipal Service Review for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

When an attempt to form the Eastern Plumas Recreation District was first made in 1991, the application was disapproved by LAFCo.¹⁴⁷ In 2002, a second attempt was approved by the Commission and later by the voters.¹⁴⁸ The District was formed to promote recreation and provide facilities for recreational activities to residents and landowners within its boundaries.¹⁴⁹

The principal act that governs the District is the Recreation and Park District Law.¹⁵⁰ The principal act empowers Recreation and Park Districts to 1) organize, promote, conduct, and advertise programs of community recreation, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, parking, transportation, and other related services that improve the community's quality of life, 2) establish systems of recreation and recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, and 3) acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, both inside and beyond the district's boundaries.¹⁵¹ Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise latent powers, that is, those services authorized by the principal act but not provided by the district by the end of 2000.¹⁵²

EPRD is located in the eastern part of Plumas County. It borders Sierra County in the south, Lassen County in the east and north, and Cromberg, Greenhorn and National Forest in the west. The incorporated territory of the City of Portola, as it existed at the end of

¹⁴⁷ LAFCo Resolution 1-F-90.

¹⁴⁸ LAFCo File Number 1-F-00.

¹⁴⁹ Blomberg & Griffin Accountancy Corporation, *Eastern Plumas Recreation District Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2009*, 2009, p. 11.

¹⁵⁰ California Public Resources Code §5780-5791

¹⁵¹ California Public Resources Code §5786.

¹⁵² Government Code §56824.10.

2003, is excluded from the District.¹⁵³ The City's territory was excluded in the formation resolution, and two subsequent annexations (2003) to the City were processed with applicable detachments from EPRD; however, it appears that city annexations that were processed after 2003 did not result in detachments from the District.

Boundaries

EPRD is entirely within Plumas County. The initial boundaries of the District were the same as they existed for Eastern Plumas Healthcare District on August 15, 2000, excluding the legal boundaries of the City of Portola.¹⁵⁴ The District's boundaries encompass approximately 541,946 acres or 847 square miles.¹⁵⁵ Since formation, there have been two detachments from the District—North Joy Parcels¹⁵⁶ and Teanna Ranch¹⁵⁷. Both detachments took place in 2003; the territory was detached from both EPRD and Eastern Plumas Rural Fire Protection District, and simultaneously annexed by the City of Portola.

Sphere of Influence

Based on LAFCo archives, it appears that an SOI for the District was never adopted. LAFCo will adopt an SOI for EPRD during the upcoming cycle of SOI updates for the eastern region of Plumas County.

Extra-territorial Services

The District provides services outside of its boundaries within the City of Portola where it has donated financing for pool equipment and benches. The District has an MOU with the City for this cooperative effort. In addition, non-residents may use district-financed facilities and programs.

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest where there are particular challenges to providing services or where the District would like to extend its boundaries.

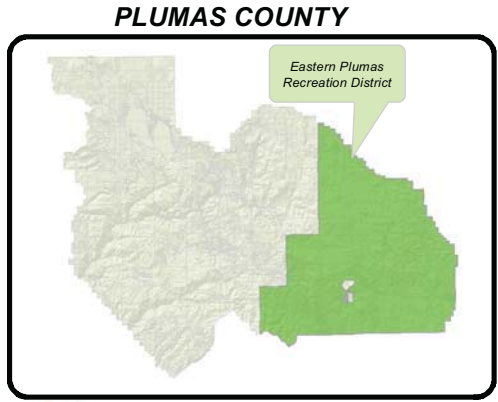
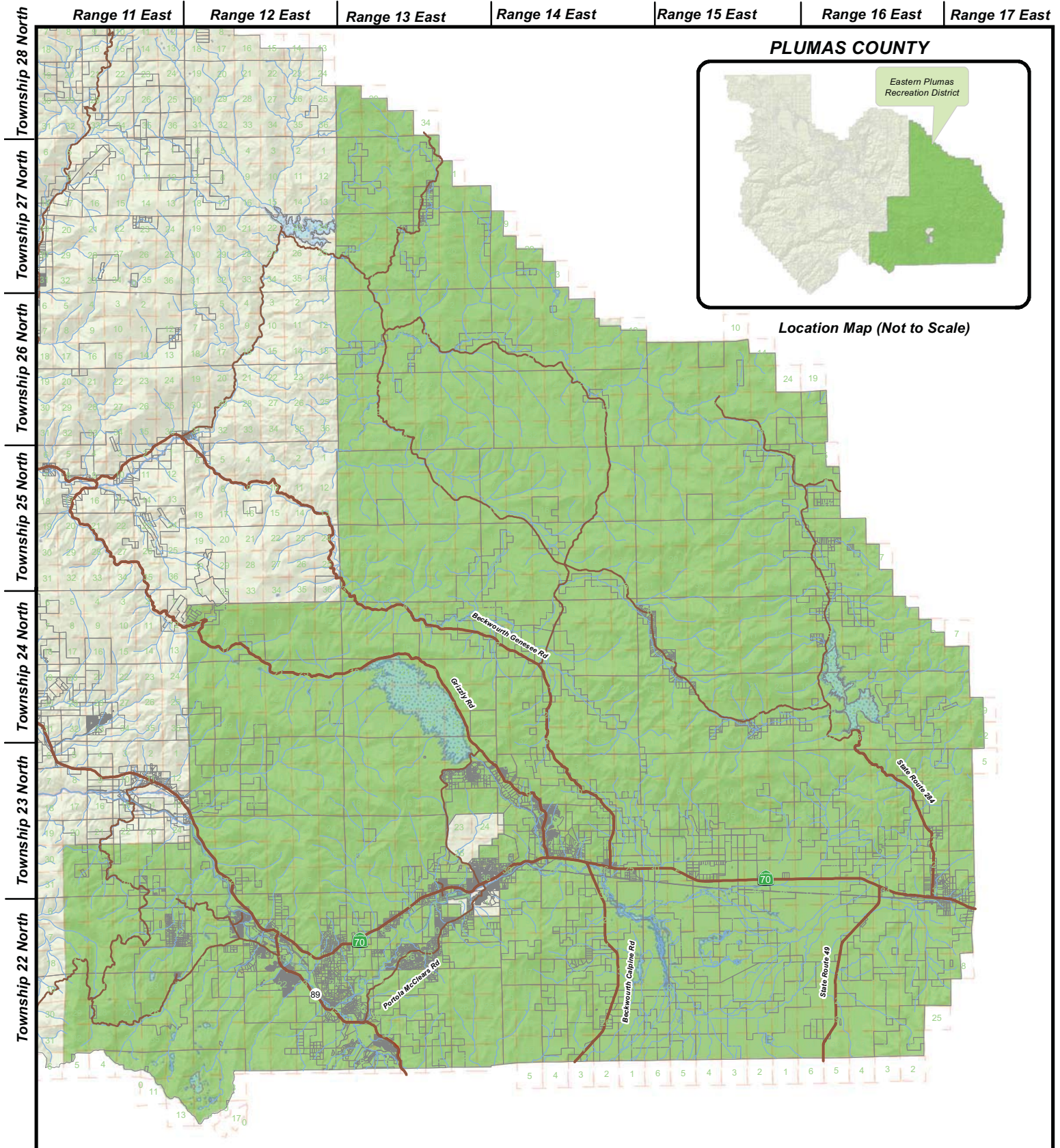
¹⁵³ LAFCo Resolution 2001-006.

¹⁵⁴ 1-F-00.

¹⁵⁵ Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2011. The data is not considered survey quality.

¹⁵⁶ 2002-ANNX-004 and State Board of Equalization.

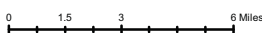
¹⁵⁷ 2002-ANNX-001 and State Board of Equalization.



Location Map (Not to Scale)

Legend

- CA State Highway
- Major Roads
- Roads
- Parcels
- Waterbodies
- Stream / River
- Eastern Plumas Recreation District
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)



Eastern Plumas Recreation District
 Resolution: 2001-003
 Adopted: 5/30/2002

Eastern Plumas Recreation District (SOI)
 Resolution:
 Adopted:

Accountability and Governance

EPRD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are to be elected at-large to staggered four-year terms. The initial Board was appointed by the Board of Supervisors.¹⁵⁸ There are currently four members, three of whom were elected. One member was appointed for two years and is up for election in November 2011. The Board has one vacancy. There has never been a contested election. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 9-2.

The Board meets once a month at the Chalet View Lodge, which is owned by one of the board members. Board meeting agendas are posted at the post offices in Portola and Graeagle. Minutes are available upon request.

Figure 9-2: EPRD Governing Body

Eastern Plumas Recreation District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Mark Smith, Treasurer			
Address:	P.O. Box 879, Graeagle, CA 96103			
Telephone:	530-836-0444			
Email/website:	marksmith@psln.com			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Robert Murrey	President	November 2011	Elected	4 years
Jennifer Condliffe	Secretary	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Mark Smith	Treasurer	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Robert Hickman	Director	November 2011	Appointed	2 years
Vacancy				
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Once a month.			
Location:	Chalet View Lodge.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted at the post offices in Portola and Graeagle.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

Besides the required agendas and minutes, the District does not do any additional public outreach activities.

If a customer is dissatisfied with District's services, the complaints may be submitted to the Board of Directors by means of a letter. The person responsible for handling complaints is the President of the Board. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2009 and 2010.

¹⁵⁸ John M. Gullixson, *Impartial Analysis for the Formation for the Eastern Plumas Recreation and Park District*.

EPRD demonstrated accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to questionnaires and interview requests.

Planning and Management Practices

The District has no employees and is managed by the volunteer Board of Directors, as such, the District does not conduct employee evaluations or tracking of employee productivity.

The District reported that it does not conduct formal evaluations of district performance as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

The District tracks its financial contributions to recreational facilities and activities through Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the City of Portola, Graeagle Community Services District, Plumas Corporation and Plumas Ski Club.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The financial statements are audited once a year. The District provided an audited financial statement for FY 08-09. The District's FY 10-11 budget and financials for FY 09-10 were provided by the County to Plumas LAFCo for review. The District does not adopt other planning documents, such as a capital improvement plan or master plan.

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Designated land uses within the District are primarily wildland and agricultural with some residential, suburban and recreational uses around the communities of Chilcoot, Beckwourth, Lake Davis, Delleker, Iron Horse, Whitehawk Ranch, Valley Ranch, Clio, Mohawk Vista, C-Road, Blairsden, Graeagle, Johnsville and Plumas Eureka.¹⁵⁹ The total boundary area of EPRD is about 847 square miles.

Population

There are approximately 4,242 residents within the District, based on census tract population in the 2000 census.¹⁶⁰ Population information at the census tract level was not yet available for the 2010 census, as of the drafting of this report; however, based on the lack of growth experienced throughout the County over the last decade, and in some cases population decline, it can be assumed that the approximate population has not changed much since 2000.

¹⁵⁹ Plumas County Parcel Application.

¹⁶⁰ Census Tracts 3 and 2.01 in Plumas County.

Existing Demand

The District reported that it had observed no population growth in the last few years.

Projected Growth and Development

The agency anticipates little or no growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years; however, no formal population projections have been made by the District.

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 4,242 in 2010 to approximately 4,459 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 reported that to their knowledge there were no anticipated developments within the boundaries; however, based on reports from the County, there is one approved development that has been approved but is currently on hold due to financial constraints. The development consists of 99 lots and is located in Graeagle. According to other districts there are a number of other potential developments: one small 21-home development within Sierra Valley FPD, three areas in Whitehawk Ranch that will add over 40 dwellings, Village of Plumas Pines in Plumas-Eureka, empty lots throughout the Gold Mountain subdivision, and Willow Creek development located three and a half miles west of Delleker that would consist of 210 residential units. Due to the unpredictable nature of the existing economy and housing market, these areas will likely not be developed within the short-term; however, they may be indicative of the long-term potential for growth.

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. The District does not take part in reviewing plans for proposed developments.

A governance option for the District is its dissolution, if a permanent funding source cannot be found. However a downside of the dissolution would be lack of a recreation agency in the area and elimination of the services that it presently provides.

Financing

According to the District, the current financing levels are not adequate to deliver services, due to a lack of funding sources and reduced funding from the County. The District does not receive property tax revenue, nor is there a special tax or benefit assessment on the land within the District. EPRD was expected to be funded by user fees, grants and State money available to recreation districts; however EPRD does not charge its residents any fees because it does not own or operate any recreational facilities, and EPRD was not

formed in time to receive grant money from a 2000 Parks Bond Act.¹⁶¹ At present, the only regular revenue is from the County. The District reported that the funding from the County has slowly declined, particularly after the recent recession hit. Currently, EPRD receives an annual donation of \$2,500 from the County. EPRD is contemplating dissolution of the District, if reoccurring and sustainable revenue sources cannot be established to support the development of recreational opportunities in eastern Plumas County by the District.¹⁶²

At the beginning of 2010, the District applied for Proposition 84 (passed in 2006) funds as part of an MOU group that consists of over 20 public and private agencies and is led by the Plumas Ski Club.¹⁶³ The application was still pending, as of the drafting of this report.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenue and expenditures. The District's total revenues for FY 09-10 were \$45,139. Revenue sources include unspecified state funds (93 percent), Plumas County donations (six percent), and interest income (one percent).

The District's expenditures in FY 09-10 were \$53,128, of which, the entire amount was spent on services and supplies.

The District does not have a financial reserve or reserve policy. The District had a balance of \$32,285 at the end of FY 09-10.

EPRD does not have any long-term debt. The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPAs) or joint financing mechanisms outside of the contributions to the recreation facilities and programs discussed in the next section.

¹⁶¹ Plumas LAFCo Staff Report, *Public Hearing for Formation of Eastern Plumas Recreation and Park District (LAFCo file No. 1-F-00)*, 2001, p. 2.

¹⁶² Interview with Mark Smith, EPRD Treasurer, January 5, 2011.

¹⁶³ Proposition 84 Bond Grant Application, Plumas Eureka Ski Bowl Upgrade, 2010, pp. 6-7.

PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES

Service Overview

EPRD provides recreational opportunities by making funding available to recreational facilities and programs.

Staffing

The District has no staff. It is run by a volunteer Board of Directors.

Facilities and Capacity

The District does not own or operate any facilities. It donates money to the following facilities and entities:

- ❖ City of Portola swimming pool;
- ❖ Benches and shade in the City of Portola;
- ❖ Little league;
- ❖ Plumas Ski Club; and
- ❖ Plumas Corporation – the nonprofit economic development entity.

The current primary project for EPRD is the opening of a ski hill. The District, in cooperation with Plumas Corporation and Plumas Ski Club, is working towards signing a full operating agreement with the State for the ski hill, and raising money for the development of the slope.

Infrastructure Needs

No infrastructure needs were identified by the District.

Challenges

The District reports that its biggest challenges to adequate service provision are the financial constraints described previously in the Financing Section.

Service Adequacy

Indicators for evaluating the EPRD's service adequacy are limited as the District does not own or operate any facilities, and does not directly offer any recreation programming.

The District operates purely as a financing mechanism for projects and programs managed by other agencies, by providing a conduit service for other agencies who wish to apply for and obtain funding from bond and grant initiatives, by applying for and distributing funds to partner agencies, and providing donations to support recreational activities. At present, the District has limited financing to be used for this purpose. In order to improve the District's level of service, EPRD is searching for additional revenue sources. If this fails, the District will consider dissolution, as effective programming and capital improvements cannot be adequately financed with the District's existing budget.

EPRD could improve upon its public outreach activities, in order to keep constituents informed about the activities of the District. It is recommended that all districts maintain a website where public documents are made available to the public to enhance transparency and accountability.

EASTERN PLUMAS RECREATION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 4,242 residents within the District.
- ❖ Over the past few years, the District has experienced little or no growth in population.
- ❖ Minimal growth is expected within the District over the next 10 years.

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

- ❖ The District does not own or operate any facilities.
- ❖ EPRD reports that current financing levels are inadequate to deliver services. If additional financing sources are not identified, the District will consider dissolution.
- ❖ The District, in cooperation with Plumas Corporation and Plumas Ski Club, is working towards signing a full operating agreement with the State for the ski hill, and raising money for the development of the slope.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are inadequate to deliver services.
- ❖ The District requires increased revenues to continue operating.

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

- ❖ While EPRD does not share facilities with other districts, it does participate in joint financing of some facilities, such as the Portola swimming pool.
- ❖ The District is collaborating with the Plumas Corporation and Plumas Ski Club to jointly develop and operate a ski slope.

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

- ❖ The District does not conduct outreach efforts except for the required activities. It is recommended that all agencies maintain websites where public documents are made available.
- ❖ The District provides services outside of its boundaries within the City of Portola where it has donated financing for pool equipment and benches. The District has an MOU with the City for this cooperative effort. A governance structure option may be including the City within the District's boundaries.
- ❖ Dissolution of the District is a possibility if a permanent financing source cannot be found.