

PLUMAS LAFCO

***Lake ALMANOR AREA
FIRE PROTECTION
AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE***

***CPUD
HBFPD
PFPD
PAFPD
WACSD***

***Chester Public Utility District
Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District
Peninsula Fire Protection District
Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District
West Almanor Community Services District***

Adopted

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LAFCo Resolution 2013-0005

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 LAFCO's Responsibilities

This Sphere of Influence (SOI) Study has been prepared for the Plumas Local Agency Formation Commission (Plumas LAFCO). Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) are quasi-legislative local agencies created in 1963 to assist the State in encouraging the orderly development and formation of local agencies. This SOI Study consists of a review of the districts which provide fire protection service near Lake Almanor in Plumas County. These districts are as follows:

- Chester Public Utility District (Chester PUD)
- Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District (HBFPD)
- Peninsula Fire Protection District (PFPD)
- Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District (PAFPD)
- West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD)

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code §56000 et seq.) is the statutory authority for the preparation of an MSR and periodic updates of the Sphere of Influence of each local agency.

A Sphere of Influence is a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency, as determined by the affected Local Agency Formation Commission (Government Code §56076). Government Code §56425(f) requires that each Sphere of Influence be updated not less than every five years as necessary, and §56430 provides that a Municipal Service Review shall be conducted in advance of the Sphere of Influence update.

1.2 Sphere of Influence Requirements

In determining the Sphere of Influence for each local agency, LAFCO must consider and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to each of the following:

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands
2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services which the agency provides, or is authorized to provide
4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency
5. Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing Sphere of Influence

1.3 LAFCO Policies and Procedures Related to Spheres of Influence

Plumas LAFCO has adopted policies and procedures related to spheres of influence that are included as part of an overall Plumas LAFCO policy, standards and procedures document adopted on June 16, 2010.

Plumas LAFCO has discussed and considered the SOI process in open session, and has adopted a schedule notwithstanding budget appropriations for completing the various municipal service reviews and sphere of influence updates for Plumas County. In this case the fire chiefs met with LAFCO staff and a map was drawn showing the proposed Sphere of Influence area. The draft map was prepared for the chiefs to review the proposed Sphere of Influence with their respective Boards of Directors. This action does not include changing or amending the Emergency Services Boundaries. That process is distinct from the LAFCO process and will be approved by another legislative body.

1.4 Description of Public Participation Process

Plumas LAFCO is authorized by the California Legislature and delegated powers as stated in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (the Act). LAFCO proceedings are subject to the provisions California's open meeting law, the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code Sections 54950 et seq.)

The Brown Act requires advance posting of meeting agendas and contains various other provisions designed to ensure that the public has adequate access to information regarding the proceedings of public boards and commissions. Plumas LAFCO complies with the requirements of the Brown Act.

1.5 Possible Approaches to the Sphere of Influence

LAFCO may recommend government reorganizations to particular agencies in the county, using the SOIs as the basis for those recommendations. Based on review of the guidelines of Plumas LAFCO as well as other LAFCOs in the State, various conceptual approaches have been identified from which to choose in designating an SOI. These seven approaches are explained below:

1) Coterminous Sphere:

A Coterminous Sphere means that the Sphere of Influence for a city or special district that is the same as its existing boundaries of the city or district. A coterminous sphere is recommended for Hamilton Branch FPD, Peninsula FPD and Chester PUD.

2) Annexable Sphere:

A sphere larger than the agency's boundaries identifies areas the agency is expected to annex. The annexable area is outside the district boundaries and inside the sphere of influence. The Big Meadows area is proposed to be annexed into the Prattville-Almanor FPD when it is combined with the West Almanor CSD.

3) Detachable Sphere:

A sphere that is smaller than the agency's boundaries identifies areas the agency is expected to detach. The detachable area is the area within the agency bounds but not within its sphere of influence.

4) Zero Sphere:

A zero sphere indicates the affected agency's public service functions should be reassigned to another agency and the agency should be dissolved or combined with one or more other agencies.

5) Consolidated Sphere:

A consolidated sphere includes two or more local agencies and indicates the agencies should be consolidated into one agency. One of the goals of LAFCO is to consider consolidation of districts. The West Almanor CSD and the Prattville-Almanor FPD have agreed to a consolidated sphere of influence in combination with an annexable sphere to allow the Big Meadows area to be annexed.

6) Limited Service Sphere:

A limited service sphere is the territory included within the SOI of a multi-service provider agency that is also within the boundary of a limited purpose district which provides the same service (e.g., fire protection), but not all needed services. Territory designated as a limited service SOI may be considered for annexation to the limited purpose agency without detachment from the multi-service provider.

This type of SOI is generally adopted when the following conditions exist:

- a) The limited service provider is providing adequate, cost effective and efficient services
- b) The multi-service agency is the most logical provider of the other services
- c) There is no feasible or logical SOI alternative
- d) Inclusion of the territory is in the best interests of local government organization and structure in the area

Government Code §56001 specifically recognizes that in rural areas it may be appropriate to establish limited purpose agencies to serve an area rather than a single service provider, if multiple limited purpose agencies are better able to provide efficient services to an area rather than one service district.

Moreover, Government Code Section §56425(i), governing sphere determinations, also authorizes a sphere for less than all of the services provided by a district by requiring a district affected by a sphere action to "establish the nature, location, and extent of any functions of classes of services provided by existing districts" recognizing that more than one district may serve an area and that a given district may provide less than its full range of services in an area.

7) Sphere Planning Area:

LAFCO may choose to designate a sphere planning area to signal that it anticipates expanding an agency's SOI in the future to include territory not yet within its official SOI. There are no anticipated sphere planning areas within Plumas County at this time.

1.6 SOI Update Process

LAFCO is required to establish SOIs for all local agencies and enact policies to promote the logical and orderly development of areas within the SOIs. Furthermore, LAFCO must update those SOIs every five years, as necessary. In updating the SOI, LAFCO is required to conduct a Municipal Service Review (MSR) and adopt related determinations, which was adopted on October 15, 2012. This report identifies SOI determinations and recommends a SOI for the five districts providing fire protection services in the Lake Almanor area.

LAFCO must notify affected agencies 21 days before holding a public hearing to consider the SOI and may not update the SOI until that hearing is closed. The LAFCO Executive Officer must issue a report including recommendations on the SOI amendment and update under consideration at least five days before the public hearing.

1.7 SOI Amendments and CEQA

LAFCO has the discretion to limit SOI updates to those that it may process without unnecessarily delaying the SOI update process or without requiring its funding agencies to bear the costs of environmental studies associated with SOI expansions. Any local agency or individual may file a request for an SOI amendment. The request must state the nature of and reasons for the proposed amendment, and provide a map depicting the proposal.

LAFCO may require the requester to pay a fee to cover LAFCO costs, including the costs of appropriate environmental review under CEQA. LAFCO may elect to serve as lead agency for such a review, may designate the proposing agency as lead agency, or both the local agency and LAFCO may serve as co-lead agencies for purposes of an SOI amendment.

Local agencies are encouraged to consult with LAFCO staff early in the process regarding the most appropriate approach for the particular SOI amendment under consideration.

Certain types of SOI amendments are likely exempt from CEQA review. Examples are SOI expansions that include territory already within the bounds or service area of an agency, SOI reductions, zero SOIs and coterminous SOI's. SOI expansions for limited purpose agencies that provide services (e.g., fire protection, levee protection, cemetery, and resource conservation) needed by both rural and urban areas are typically not considered growth-inducing and are likely exempt from CEQA. Similarly, SOI expansions for districts serving rural areas (e.g., irrigation water) are typically not considered growth inducing.

Remy et al. write:

“In *City of Agoura Hills v. Local Agency Formation Commission* (2d Dist.1988) 198 Cal.App.3d480, 493-496 [243 Cal.Rptr.740] (*City of Agoura Hills*), the court held that a LAFCO's decision to approve a city's sphere of influence that in most respects was coterminous with the city's existing municipal boundaries was not a “project” because such action did not entail any potential effects on the physical environment.”¹

Since the recommendation is to adopt a coterminous SOI for three of the districts; there will be no environmental impacts from the adoption of the updated Spheres and no environmental

¹ Remy, Michael H., Tina A. Thomas, James G. Moose, Whitman F. Manley, *Guide to CEQA*, Solano Press Books, Point Arena, CA, February 2007, page 111.

document is required. The two districts which would have a consolidated sphere in combination with an annexable sphere will not include any large tracts of land to be developed so will also not require an environmental document at this time.

1.8 Sphere of Influence Document

Information contained in this Sphere of Influence is only current as of the date of adoption. Plumas LAFCO Policy 3-C calls for an updated Municipal Service Review at the time a proposal is made and essentially requires an updated Municipal Services Review anytime a change of organization is proposed provided significant changes in the Municipal Service Review baseline occur. There have been no changes in the MSR baseline since the adoption of the Municipal Service Review in October 2012.

1.9 History of LAFCO Review of Fire Districts

LAFCO's were created in 1965 to discourage urban sprawl and to encourage orderly and efficient urban development patterns. To accomplish those objectives, LAFCOs were given two basic powers:

- 1) To establish spheres of influence of each local governmental agency within its county
- 2) To approve or disapprove proposals for annexation of territory

In 1971 the Legislature modified certain statutory language to make the adoption of spheres of influence mandatory, but no deadline was set.

In 1977 an opinion of the Attorney General concluded that, despite the absence of an explicit deadline, a LAFCO must adopt spheres within a reasonable time. The case *Resource Defense Fund v. Local Agency Formation commission of Santa Cruz County* (1983) 138 Cal.App.3d 987,989,994,188 Cal.Rptr.499.) Says before a Local Agency Formation Commission can approve an annexation, a sphere of Influence must first be determined. During the 1980's most LAFCOs completed Spheres of Influence for all agencies within their jurisdiction, including Plumas LAFCO.

In 2001 with the passage of AB 2838 LAFCO's were required to periodically update Spheres of Influence. However, in order to adopt a Sphere of Influence for an agency, LAFCO was required to do a comprehensive review of municipal services and prepare a Municipal Service Review (MSR).

The statute was later amended to clarify the content of a MSR and to clearly state a deadline to prepare Spheres of Influence. The current statute states: "On or before January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, the commission shall, as necessary, review and update each Sphere of Influence".

Plumas LAFCO approved Resolution 2012-0006 on October 15, 2012 adopting a Municipal Service review for the fire districts or fire service providers in the Lake Almanor Basin.

2 CHESTER COMMUNITY AND CHESTER PUD BACKGROUND

2.1 Chester Community

Chester (formerly Big Meadows) is a census-designated-place (CDP) located on Lake Almanor, 30 miles north-northwest of Quincy. The town is located along State Route 36. The population was 2,144 at the 2010 census, down from 2,316 at the 2000 census.

The primary industries in Chester are lumber manufacturing and tourism. Lake Almanor has developed as a vacation/tourist destination and Chester serves as the retail center for the area. Four of the Almanor basin's six gas stations are located in Chester, as well as the Almanor basin's only full-sized grocery store.

The town was founded and named by two settlers, one from Chester, Vermont, and another from Chester, Missouri. The Chester post office opened in 1894 and moved in 1908.²

The 2010 Census reported that Chester had a population of 2,144. There were 943 households, out of which 249 (26.4%) had children under the age of 18 living in them, 81 (8.6%) had a female householder with no husband present, 46 (4.9%) had a male householder with no wife present. There were 288 households (30.5%) made up of individuals and 95 (10.1%) had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.26. There were 581 families (61.6% of all households); the average family size was 2.81.

Chester has two public schools, both part of the Plumas Unified School District, as follows:

Chester Elementary School, 158 Aspen Street, Chester, CA 96020
Phone: (530) 258-3194 E-Mail: <http://www.pcoe.k12.ca.us>

Chester Junior-Senior High School, 612 First Street, Chester, CA 96020
Phone: (530) 258-2126 E-Mail: <http://www.pcoe.k12.ca.us>

2.2 Chester PUD

2.2.1 Chester PUD Location and History

Chester PUD is located on the northwestern shore of Lake Almanor in Plumas County. The District does not border any other water, wastewater or fire providers. West Almanor CSD is located to the south of Chester PUD, and Walker Ranch CSD is to the east. The District's boundaries encompass approximately 1.75 square miles.³

Chester Public Utility District (Chester PUD) provides domestic water distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, fire protection and ambulance services. In addition, Chester PUD is partially reimbursed from the County for providing street lighting services and also awards and administers a solid waste collection franchise for the area.

Chester PUD was formed in 1947 as an independent special district.⁴ It was organized to provide water and wastewater services to the residents of Chester. In 2009, Chester PUD

² Durham, David L. (1998). *California's Geographic Names: A Gazetteer of Historic and Modern Names of the State*. Quill Driver Books. p. 364. [ISBN 9781884995149](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9781884995149).

³ Plumas LAFCO, Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2011. The data is not considered survey quality.

⁴ California State Board of Equalization.

consolidated with Chester Fire Protection District (FPD), and consequently, took on fire protection and ambulance services.

Chester PUD provides extra-territorial services under an out-of-area service agreement (OASA).⁵ An agreement was entered into by Chester PUD, Collins Pine Company and the Almanor Park and Recreation District in 2010 for a 20-year lease of property known as the Truman Collins Sports Complex on a 2.3-acre area needing water, wastewater and fire and EMS services provided by Chester PUD. The Almanor Park and Recreation District, through the Collins Pine Company, filed a Plumas LAFCO application for an OASA and Chester PUD agreed to serve and provide the sports complex area with domestic water and fire and EMS services, and in the future with wastewater.

2.2.2 Chester PUD Board of Directors

Chester PUD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are elected at-large to staggered four-year terms. Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at four in the afternoon at the district office. Agendas are posted at the PUD office, courthouse, and in the newspaper. Minutes are available upon request. The District does not have a website, so its documents are not available online.

2.2.3 Chester Public Utility District Operation

Chester PUD has 12 full-time employees that include one part-time general manager/fire chief, one water/sewer foreman, two operators, 1.5 secretaries, one EMS captain, one fire captain, two to three firefighter medics, and two firefighter EMTs. The assistant chief is a per-diem employee who works part time. Until recently, the general manager/fire chief position was a full-time paid position. When the manager retired in August 2012, the Board chose to fill the position part time with a Board Member, until an adequate replacement can be found. The general manager oversees both the fire and utility functions of the Chester PUD. The water and sewer operators report to the foreman who reports to the general manager. The firefighters report to the two captains who also report to the general manager.

Chester PUD operates out of the following three enterprise funds: the Water Fund, Sanitation Fund and Fire Fund. The Fire Fund tracks fire and ambulance related revenues and expenses.⁶ Chester PUD fire and ambulance services are funded primarily by ambulance service charges (\$1.3 million) and augmented by property taxes (\$293,506) and grants (\$13,000).⁷

The fire reserve is minimal with unrestricted net assets of \$74,990 at the end of FY 10-11. The Chester PUD participates in the Fire Agency Self Insurance System (FASIS)—a joint power authority (JPA) for insurance.⁸

⁵ Plumas LAFCO File Number 2010-OASA-001.

⁶ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 80.

⁷ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 81.

⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 82.

3 CHESTER PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The recommendation for the Sphere of Influence for the Chester PUD Fire Protection Service is for the SOI to be coterminous with the District boundary. The SOI for the other services provided by the Chester PUD will be considered at a later date.

3.1 SOI Determinations on Present and Planned Land Use for the Chester Public Utility District Area

- 1-1] There are approximately 2,144 residents within the Chester PUD, based on census place population in the 2010 Census.⁹
- 1-2] The Chester PUD 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.
- 1-3] 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 2,144 in 2010 to approximately 2,251 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for fire protection service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.¹⁰
- 1-4] Chester PUD reports that there is little potential for development within its boundaries or in the areas adjacent to the District. There is one planned development just north of Chester within an area that was annexed into the District in 2007. Forty-two units were planned, but due to the recession, construction has stalled. Prior to the recession, another development was proposed with a mixture of residential and commercial land uses; however, the area was never annexed into the District.
- 1-5] The Chester PUD is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for unincorporated areas is Plumas County.

3.2 SOI Determinations on Facilities and Services: Present and Probable Need for the Chester Public Utility District

- 2-1] In order to increase efficiency and reduce costs, the Chester PUD recently (2009) consolidated with the Chester Fire Protection District, enabling it to eliminate duplication of administration functions. The District has downsized staff and the fire department has been reduced to one advanced life support (ALS) ambulance crew.
- 2-2] The District reported that the current financing level is not adequate for fire services¹¹

⁹ US Census Bureau, Census Place Chester in Plumas County.

¹⁰ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 76.

¹¹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 80.

- 2-3] Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. Chester PUD has an ISO rating of four. The District was last evaluated in 1995.¹²
- 2-4] Chester PUD has 21 sworn personnel—one part-time fire chief who is also a Chester PUD board member, two captains, two firefighter medics, two firefighter EMTs, three part-time per-diem firefighters and 11 volunteers. Captains, firefighter medics and firefighter EMTs are full-time employees. Volunteers do not get compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 35, with a range from 23 to 63.
- 2-5] According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.¹³ Chester PUD has nine firefighter I, six firefighter II, seven EMT I, five firefighter medic, and certified personnel.
- 2-6] All of the District's paid personnel must undergo two hours of training daily. For volunteers, the mandatory minimum is two drills and one Saturday per month. Chester PUD requires its paid personnel to complete 220 hours of training per year; volunteers are required to complete 156 hours with opportunities to participate in training with paid firefighters. It was reported by the Chester PUD that it is a challenge to demand 220 hours from volunteers, as required by State Firefighter Training (SFT) standards.

3.3 SOI Determinations on Public Facilities Present and Future Capacity for the Chester Public Utility District

- 3-1] Chester PUD provides structural and wildland fire suppression, emergency medical, emergency rescue, hazardous material response, fire inspection, airport crash and rescue, issuance of burn permits, and ambulance services (added in 2005). Prior to consolidation with Chester PUD, Chester FPD was an independent special district that had operated since 1941.
- 3-2] The previous district, Chester FPD, provided ambulance services since 2005. The District's primary operation area is the same as the response area previously served by the Seneca HD ambulance service. In 2005, Chester FPD and Seneca HD agreed to transfer provision of ambulance services from Seneca HD to Chester FPD. The ownership of all the inventory and equipment related to ambulance services was also transferred to Chester FPD at that time. Chester FPD, as a new ambulance service provider, was assigned to the Seneca District Hospital as its base hospital. With consolidation, ambulance services were transferred to Chester PUD. The primary response area for ambulance services provided by Chester PUD stretches eastward to the Lassen County line on SR 36, westward to Morgan Summit on SR 36 and SR 172,

¹² Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 100.

¹³ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

northward to Lassen National Park including SR 89 to the general area of Summit Lake and area accessible on the “10 Road” including Swain Mountain to the Plumas County line, and southward to the intersection of SR 147 on SR 89, CR A-13, SR 147 from the Lassen County line to the intersection of SR 89, and SR 32 to the Tehama/Butte County line.¹⁴

- 3-3] Chester PUD has a contract with Lassen National Forest to provide personnel for an Incident Management Team (IMT). The District loans out its part-time firefighters and receives reimbursement for their participation.
- 3-4] Chester PUD contracts with a billing company for its ambulance services.
- 3-5] Chester PUD operates one fire station. The Chester PUD station, acquired in 2009 and reported to be in good condition, is located at 251 Chester Airport Road. The station is staffed from eight in the morning till eight in the evening by two captains, two EMT I personnel and two firefighter medics.
- 3-6] Station 1 is used as a fire station and the Chester PUD administrative office. It houses two Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting vehicles (ARFFs), three command vehicles, one snowmobile, four engines, and three ambulance vehicles.
- 3-7] The Chester PUD’s water reserves are represented by a one-million gallon water tank and three wells.¹⁵

3.4 SOI Determinations on Social or Economic Communities of Interest for the Chester Public Utility District

- 4-1] The community of Chester is a full service community because it provides economic, social, educational, cultural and public services.
- 4-2] The fire protection service of the Chester PUD depends on community support and it is challenging to maintain that support because the community is divided between the year-round residents and the vacation residents who are primarily there during the summer months only.

¹⁴ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 97.

¹⁵ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 99.

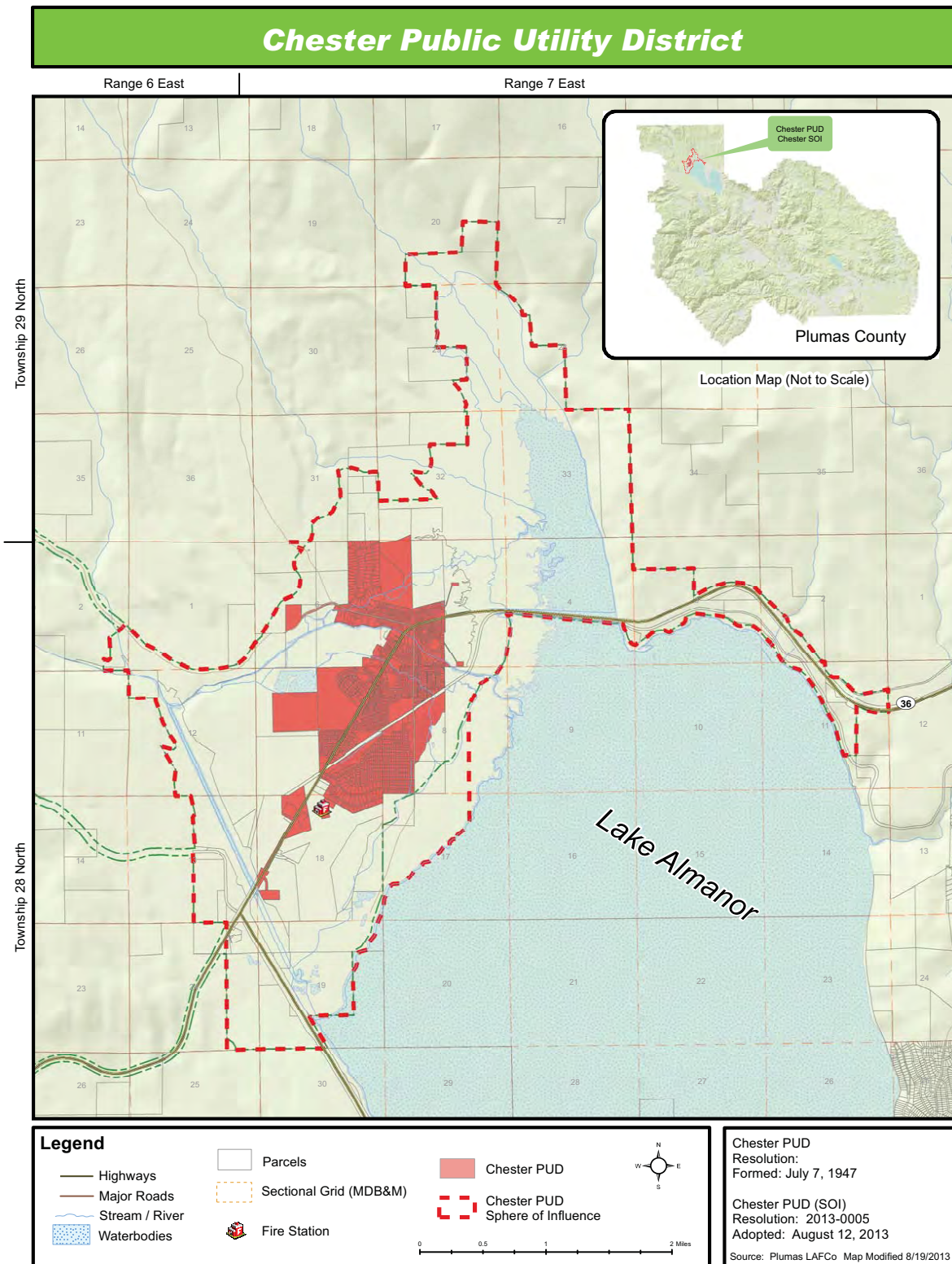
3.5 Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities within the existing Sphere of Influence

In addition to a consideration of population growth, the State Law requires LAFCO to consider whether or not an area is a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC). A DUC is an area where the Median Household Income is less than 80% of the State of California Median Household Income.

- 5-1] The Median Household Income is not available for the Chester PUD, only for Plumas County. The Plumas County Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$44,151.¹⁶ The State of California Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$61,632.¹⁷ Eighty percent of the State Median Household Income was \$49,306. Therefore, Plumas County could be considered to be a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community.
- 5-2] The purpose of this law is to consider whether a DUC could become part of an incorporated city with more services; but there are no incorporated cities near to the Chester PUD.

¹⁶ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

¹⁷ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.



4 HAMILTON BRANCH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BACKGROUND

4.1 Hamilton Branch Community

Hamilton Branch is a census-designated-place (CDP) on the northern shore of Lake Almanor east of Almanor Peninsula in Plumas County. The population was 587 at the 2000 census but decreased to 537 in 2010. The community is served by the Hamilton Branch Community Services District which operates the water system within its 0.8 square mile boundary. The Hamilton Branch CSD was formed in 1982.¹⁸

4.2 Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District (HBFPD)

4.2.1 Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Location

HBFPD's boundary is larger than the Hamilton Branch CSD and encompasses approximately 4.3 square miles. There are approximately 398 residents within the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District, based on census block population in the 2010 Census.¹⁹ HBFPD is located in the northwestern corner of Plumas County, near the County's border with Lassen County. The District is situated on the eastern shore of Lake Almanor and encompasses the communities of Hamilton Branch and East Shore, and borders the Peninsula FPD to the west.²⁰

HBFPD was formed in 1965 as an independent special district.²¹ The District was formed to provide structural fire and emergency medical services to the residents on the east shore of Lake Almanor. Since its formation, the District has added water rescue, hazardous material emergency response and fire investigation services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.²² The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.²³ Districts must apply and obtain LAFCO approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.

4.2.2 Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Board of Directors

The principal act orders that the board of directors of a fire protection district must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11 members. Directors may be appointed or elected.²⁴ HBFPD is governed by a five-member board of directors elected by registered voters of the community to staggered four-year terms. All current members were elected; there is one vacancy.²⁵

The HBFPD Board of Directors meets on the second Wednesday of every month at four in the afternoon at the District's fire station. Board meeting agendas are posted at the fire station,

¹⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 108.

¹⁹ Census Blocks 3151, 3189, 3192, 3201, 3202, 3193, 3204, 2012, 2010, 2288, 2031, 2025, 2028, 2030 within Tract 5.02 in Plumas County.

²⁰ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 125.

²¹ SBOE records.

²² Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

²³ Health and Safety Code §13862.

²⁴ Health and Safety Code §13842.

²⁵ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 129.

Hamilton Branch FPD office, and in the Chester Progressive newspaper. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the Hamilton Branch FPD tries to reach its constituents with flyers, during the regular pancake breakfast and through posting information on the bulletin board. Election notices are posted at the fire station and in the newspaper to encourage voter participation.²⁶

4.2.3 Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Fire Department Operation

Daily operations are managed by the fire chief, who is paid through a contract with Peninsula FPD. There is one paid part-time secretary and 13 volunteers—one assistant chief, two captains and ten firefighters. Peninsula FPD also provides for one paid employee—a firefighter EMT I—to be at the HBFPD fire station every day, so the station is staffed 24/7.²⁷

The two captains, firefighter EMT I from Peninsula FPD and the secretary are accountable to the chief. Firefighters report to the captains who evaluate them. The captains and the secretary are evaluated by the chief. The chief is accountable to the Peninsula FPD Board of Directors. The median age of the firefighters is 46, with a range from 31 to 66. Hamilton Branch FPD tries to recruit more volunteers through advertising.²⁸ The District conducts trainings twice a month. All volunteer firefighters are required to train for a total of four hours per month.

The District's water reserves are represented by fire hydrants in part of the District and Lake Almanor, from which they can draft water when necessary.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The Hamilton Branch FPD's financial statements are audited every two years. HBFPD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District provided adopted budgets for FYs 10-11 and 11-12, audited financial statements for FY 09-10, and an unaudited balance sheet for FY 10-11. The Hamilton Branch FPD conducts capital improvement planning informally as needed and annually at board meetings. HBFPD is currently in the process of making improvements to its fire station.

²⁶ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 129.

²⁷ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 130.

²⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 138.

5 HAMILTON BRANCH FPD SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The Sphere of Influence recommended for the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District is a coterminous sphere which means that the Sphere of Influence would be the same as the District Boundary. The District would continue to function under an elected Board of Directors.

5.1 SOI Determinations on Present and Planned Land Use for the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Area

- 1-1] HBFPD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years.
- 1-2] There are currently about 40 acres of vacant lots within HBFPD's boundaries, with large portions located in the central part of the District, but there are no plans to develop these lots at this time.
- 1-3] 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%. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 398 in 2010 to approximately 418 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.²⁹
- 1-4] The Hamilton Branch FPD 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.
- 1-5] The County is in the process of updating its general plan. There are suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would help fire service providers.³⁰

5.2 SOI Determinations on Facilities and Services: Present and Probable Need for the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District

- 2-1] HBFPD provides fire suppression, basic life support, emergency medical services, water rescue, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention on parcels and for businesses, and initial fire investigation services.
- 2-2] The fire prevention efforts of the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District include fire education of the population through brochures, displays and other promotional materials.
- 2-3] HBFPD occasionally responds to wildfires. Whether the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District is reimbursed by the federal government depends on the location of the fire.³¹
- 2-4] The Hamilton Branch FPD works together with the Peninsula FPD; however, the Boards of Directors of both districts are content with the current contract and consolidation is not being formally discussed.

²⁹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Pages 131-132.

³⁰ Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

³¹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 137.

- 2-5] According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.³² HBFPD has three firefighter I and three EMT I certified personnel.³³
- 2-6] Hamilton Branch FPD owns and operates one fire station known as Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Station. The fire station, which was reported to be in poor condition, is located at 3791 Big Springs Road and was built in 1975.
- 2-7] Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District Station is used as a fire station and to house two type I fire engines, one water tender, one rescue mini pumper, and one utility vehicle.

5.3 SOI Determinations on Public Facilities Present and Future Capacity for the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District

- 3-1] The Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District reported that it had sufficient capacity to serve the anticipated future growth which, as noted above, is expected to be minimal.
- 3-2] The Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. A special tax assessment was approved by the voters in 2008. Property owners pay \$106 per parcel with no expiration on the assessment.³⁴ Since the assessment was approved in 2008, HBFPD has been able to replace three vehicles.
- 3-3] The Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District completed a \$60,000 upgrade to the outside of the fire station; the renovations inside are scheduled to begin in 2014.
- 3-4] The Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District's long term debt is represented by the Oshkosh Capital Lease dated February 2, 2008. The loan is payable in annual installments of \$43,599.77 including interest until 2023.³⁵ The purpose of this lease was to purchase two new fire engines.³⁶
- 3-5] The District participates in two joint ventures under joint powers agreements (JPAs) with the Fire District Association of California - Fire Agency Self-Insurance System (FDAC-FASIS) and the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA).³⁷

³² State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

³³ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 138.

³⁴ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 135.

³⁵ HBFPD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 09-10, p. 21.

³⁶ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 135.

³⁷ HBFPD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 09-10, p. 19.

5.4 SOI Determinations on Social or Economic Communities of Interest for the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District

- 4-1] The Hamilton Branch community is not a full-service community but there is a common social and economic interest to maintain the water service through the Community Services District and to maintain fire protection and emergency services through the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District.
- 4-2] There is one vacancy on the Hamilton Branch FPD Board of Directors. If it becomes too difficult to maintain a full, five-member, board it may be necessary to combine with the Peninsula Fire Protection District at that time.

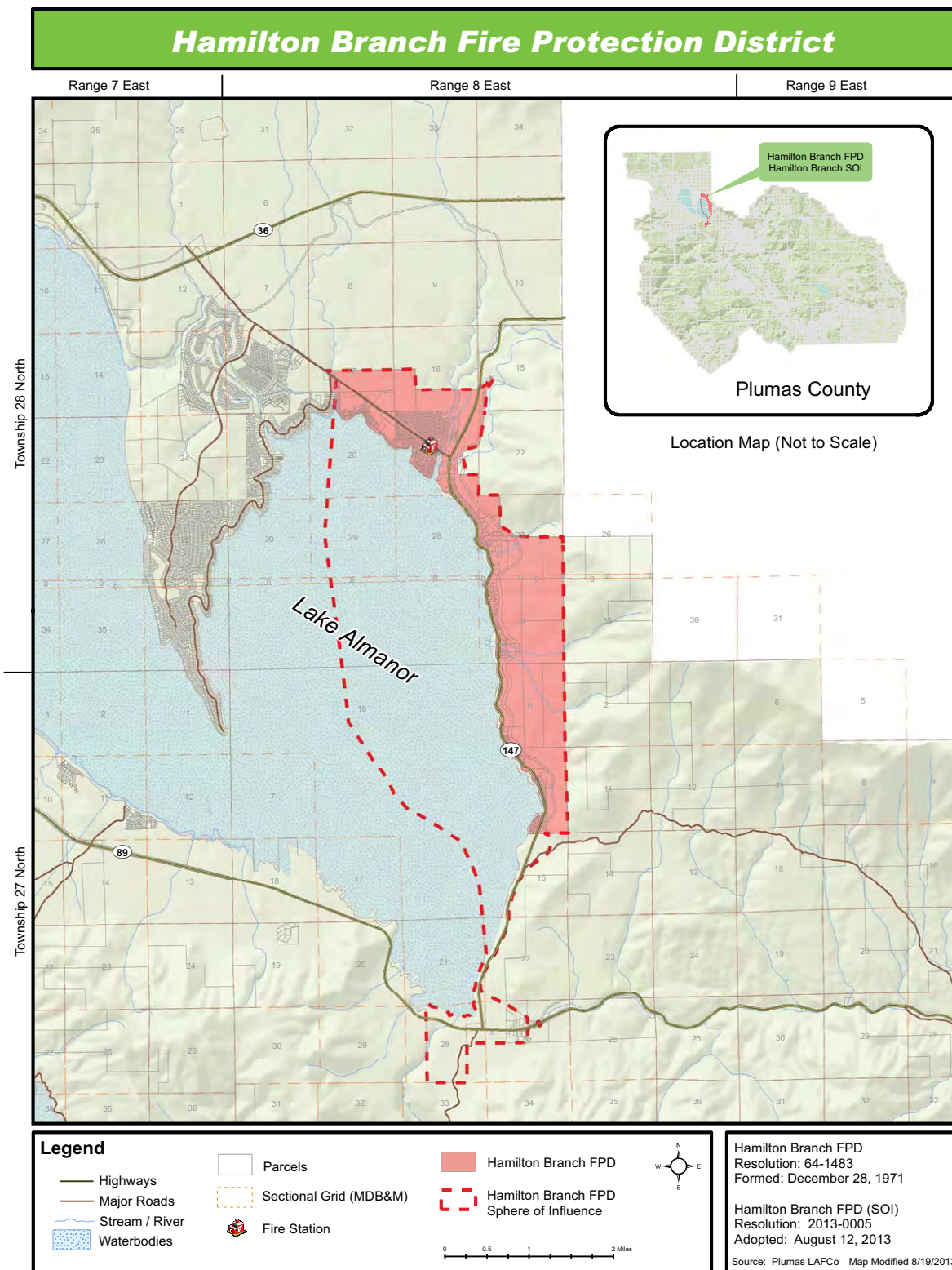
5.5 Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities within the existing Sphere of Influence

In addition to a consideration of population growth, the State Law requires LAFCO to consider whether or not an area is a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC). A DUC is an area where the Median Household Income is less than 80% of the State of California Median Household Income.

- 5-1] The Median Household Income is not available for Hamilton Branch, only for Plumas County. The Plumas County Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$44,151.³⁸ The State of California Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$61,632.³⁹ Eighty percent of the State Median Household Income was \$49,306. Therefore, Plumas County could be considered to be a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community.
- 5-2] The purpose of this law is to consider whether a DUC could become part of an incorporated city with more services; but there are no incorporated cities near to the Hamilton Branch FPD.

³⁸ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

³⁹ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.



6 PENINSULA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BACKGROUND

6.1 Peninsula Community

The Peninsula is the major east-side peninsula bisecting the Lake Almanor and is largely taken up by the Lake Almanor Country Club, the community of Almanor, and the more recent residential developments known as Bailey Creek and Foxwood. Water is supplied to the Lake Almanor Country Club by the Lake Almanor Country Club Mutual Water Company.

The Walker Ranch Community Services District (WRCSD), located on the north end of the Lake Almanor peninsula was formed in 1995.⁴⁰ The Walker Ranch Community Services District provides domestic/emergency water and sewer collection, treatment and disposal services. Additionally, WRCSD is charged with inspecting all drainage ditches on a monthly basis to ensure that they are kept free of debris or materials which could affect stormwater runoff. WRCSD also provides snow removal on private roads around the water and sewer systems in order to gain access to the systems in the winter months. The District pays PG&E for electricity related to street lighting. The District includes approximately 4.4 square miles.⁴¹ Based on census designated place and census block population in the 2010 census, there are 469 permanent residents within the Walker Ranch Community Services District.⁴²

According to Census 2000, the Peninsula Fire Protection District's permanent population was 1,183.⁴³ Based on census designated place population in the 2010 census, there are approximately 775 permanent residents within the Peninsula Fire Protection District.⁴⁴ The District's year-round residential population has declined by about 34 percent over the last ten years. The District estimates that the summer population is about 5,000 people.⁴⁵

6.2 Peninsula FPD

6.2.1 Peninsula Fire Protection District Location and Services

Peninsula FPD is located in the northwestern corner of Plumas County, near the County's border with Lassen County. The Peninsula FPD encompasses Lake Almanor Country Club and Walker Ranch Community Services District, and borders Hamilton Branch FPD in the northeast. The Peninsula Fire District (PFPD) provides fire suppression, Advanced Life Support, ambulance services, dive and ice rescue, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention, and fire investigation services. In addition the District provides staff and services to the Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District. The Peninsula Fire Protection District was formed in 1964 and the Walker Ranch area was annexed in 1996.⁴⁶ The Peninsula FPD includes 6.5 square miles.⁴⁷

6.2.2 Peninsula Fire Protection District Board

Peninsula FPD is governed by a five-member board of directors elected by registered voters of the community to staggered four-year terms. All current members were elected; there are no

⁴⁰ Plumas LAFCO File Number 1-F-94.

⁴¹ Plumas LAFCO, Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2012. The data is not considered survey quality.

⁴² US Census Bureau, Census designated place Lake Almanor Peninsula, and Tract 5.02 Blocks 1000, 1014 and 1022 in Plumas County.

⁴³ US Census Bureau Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

⁴⁴ US Census Bureau Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

⁴⁵ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 150.

⁴⁶ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Pages 144,155.

⁴⁷ <http://peninsulafire.net/>

vacancies. The Board meets on the third Wednesday of every month at five in the afternoon at Fire Station 2. The date, time and place of regular board meetings are reconsidered yearly at the annual organizational meeting of the Board. Board meeting agendas are posted at least 72 hours prior to meetings at Stations 1 and 2, the Lake Almanor Country Club office, in the Chester Progressive newspaper, and on the District's website. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request.⁴⁸

6.2.3 Peninsula Fire Protection District Operations

Peninsula FPD operates two fire stations. Station 1, which was reported to be in poor condition, is located at the entrance to the Lake Almanor Country Club and was built in 1971. Station 2, inside the country club, was also built in 1971; it was reported to be in fair condition. The District owns both stations. Both stations are staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week with two firefighters staffing each station per shift.

Besides two fire stations, the Peninsula Fire Protection District owns and operates two other facilities—an administration building and the Peninsula Fire Sirens Thrift shop. Both were reported to be in good condition. The District's water reserves are represented by fire hydrants throughout the District, several ponds and Lake Almanor from which it can draft when necessary.⁴⁹

Daily operations are managed by the fire chief. There are 22 paid employees—one chief, three captains, one secretary and 17 firefighters. Eleven employees, including the secretary, are full-time personnel; the rest are part-time staff. In addition, there are three volunteer firefighters.⁵⁰ The median age of the firefighters is 35, with a range from 23 to 52. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.⁵¹

6.2.4 Peninsula Fire Protection District Finances

The Peninsula Fire Protection District has one special tax assessment; property owners pay \$197 per improved parcel and \$182 per unimproved parcel. The assessment does not adjust for inflation. These funds are used for day-to-day operations. This assessment, that voters approved effective July 1, 2011, expires on June 30, 2014. Prior to the current assessment, the District had a special tax assessment for the same amount that was also approved for a three-year period. An additional source of income that is being considered by the Peninsula Fire Protection District is an increase in its special tax assessment.⁵²

Other revenue is primarily contract fees from Hamilton Branch FPD, but also includes donations, contributions, and proceeds from fundraisers. In 2011 through 2014, the charges for fire chief/administrative services rendered to Hamilton Branch FPD were set to be \$2,700 per month and \$285 per day for firefighter-EMT 1.⁵³ The District participates in a joint venture under a joint powers agreement (JPA) with the Special District Risk Management Authority for workers' compensation insurance coverage.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 148.

⁴⁹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 158.

⁵⁰ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 149.

⁵¹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 150.

⁵² Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 155.

⁵³ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 155.

⁵⁴ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 156.

7 PENINSULA FPD SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The recommendation for the Peninsula Fire Protection Sphere of Influence is a coterminous sphere where the sphere of influence would be the same as the District boundary. Although the District provides contract staff for the Hamilton Branch FPD; the districts do want to retain their individual spheres at this time.

7.1 SOI Determinations on Present and Planned Land Use for the Peninsula Fire Protection District Area

- 1-1] PFPD anticipates minimal growth in population and similarly in service demand within the District in the next few years. No new development has occurred in the last eight years within the District's bounds, and the District reported that it has not had a need for a growth plan.
- 1-2] 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 775 in 2010 to approximately 1,163 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.
- 1-3] The Peninsula Fire Protection District identified one undeveloped subdivision within its boundaries. Lake Almanor County Club reports 400 undeveloped lots.⁵⁵ Walker Ranch, which was annexed into the District in 1996, contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course. If the economy recovers and the subdivision is built-out, demand for services will likely increase. Developments also have to pay a mitigation fee of approximately \$1,061.84 per structure at the time of the issuance of the building permit based on construction type and presence of fire sprinklers.⁵⁶
- 1-4] The District reported that it has the capacity to serve anticipated future growth. PFPD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.⁵⁷
- 1-5] 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 Plumas County.

7.2 SOI Determinations on Facilities and Services: Present and Probable Need for the Peninsula Fire Protection District

- 2-1] PFPD provides fire suppression, Advanced Life Support, ambulance, dive and ice rescue from a 16-foot hovercraft, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention, and fire investigation services. The fire prevention efforts of the District include fire education through the website, brochures, displays and other promotional materials.
- 2-2] The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with HBFPD according to which PFPD provides the services of its fire chief to manage HBFPD's operations and a

⁵⁵ Lake Almanor Country Club, http://lakealmanorcountryclub.org/outside_home.asp, April 20, 2013.

⁵⁶ Peninsula Fire Protection District Resolution 93-12B.

⁵⁷ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 151.

firefighter EMT-1. In addition, PFPD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid agreement according to which PFPD provides ambulance services to emergency medical aid responses within the HBFPD service area. The two districts also share resources and conduct joint trainings.

- 2-3] The Peninsula Fire Protection District maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA with a CalEMA Fire Engine. PFPD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- 2-4] According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.⁵⁸ PFPD has 22 firefighter I, 11 EMT and 11 paramedic certified personnel.
- 2-5] The Peninsula Fire Protection District requires facility upgrades on both of its fire stations. The needs include new roofs, new siding, new windows, and new carpet. There are currently no specific plans to address these needs since no money is available, due to a shortfall in the budget last fiscal year. It is currently unknown when the needed improvements can be completed; however, the District reports that it is able to keep its buildings up to code.
- 2-6] The Peninsula Fire Protection District does not have any vehicle needs.

7.3 SOI Determinations on Public Facilities Present and Future Capacity for the Peninsula Fire Protection District

- 3-1] The District's long-term debt is represented by the Oshkosh Capital Lease dated December 26, 2007. The loan has an interest of 4.24 percent and is payable in annual installments of \$45,940 until 2022.⁵⁹ The purpose of this 15-year lease was to purchase two new fire engines in 2008.⁶⁰
- 3-2] Fire services in the communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization. This classification indicates the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. PFPD has an ISO rating of 4. The District was last evaluated in 2002.⁶¹
- 3-3] The District identified a long-term need for a new fire station to address future growth.

⁵⁸ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

⁵⁹ Peninsula Fire Protection District (PFPD), Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 24.

⁶⁰ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 156.

⁶¹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Pages 159-160.

7.4 SOI Determinations on Social or Economic Communities of Interest for the Peninsula Fire Protection District

- 4-1] The area within the Peninsula Fire Protection District includes two areas (Lake Almanor County Club and the Walker Ranch Community Services District) which have been developed for vacation homes with few year-round residents.
- 4-2] While the area within the Peninsula Fire Protection District may not be considered a community in the traditional sense of the word; the landowners do have an economic interest to see that fire protection and emergency services are provided so their investment in a second home will be protected.

7.5 Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities within the existing Sphere of Influence

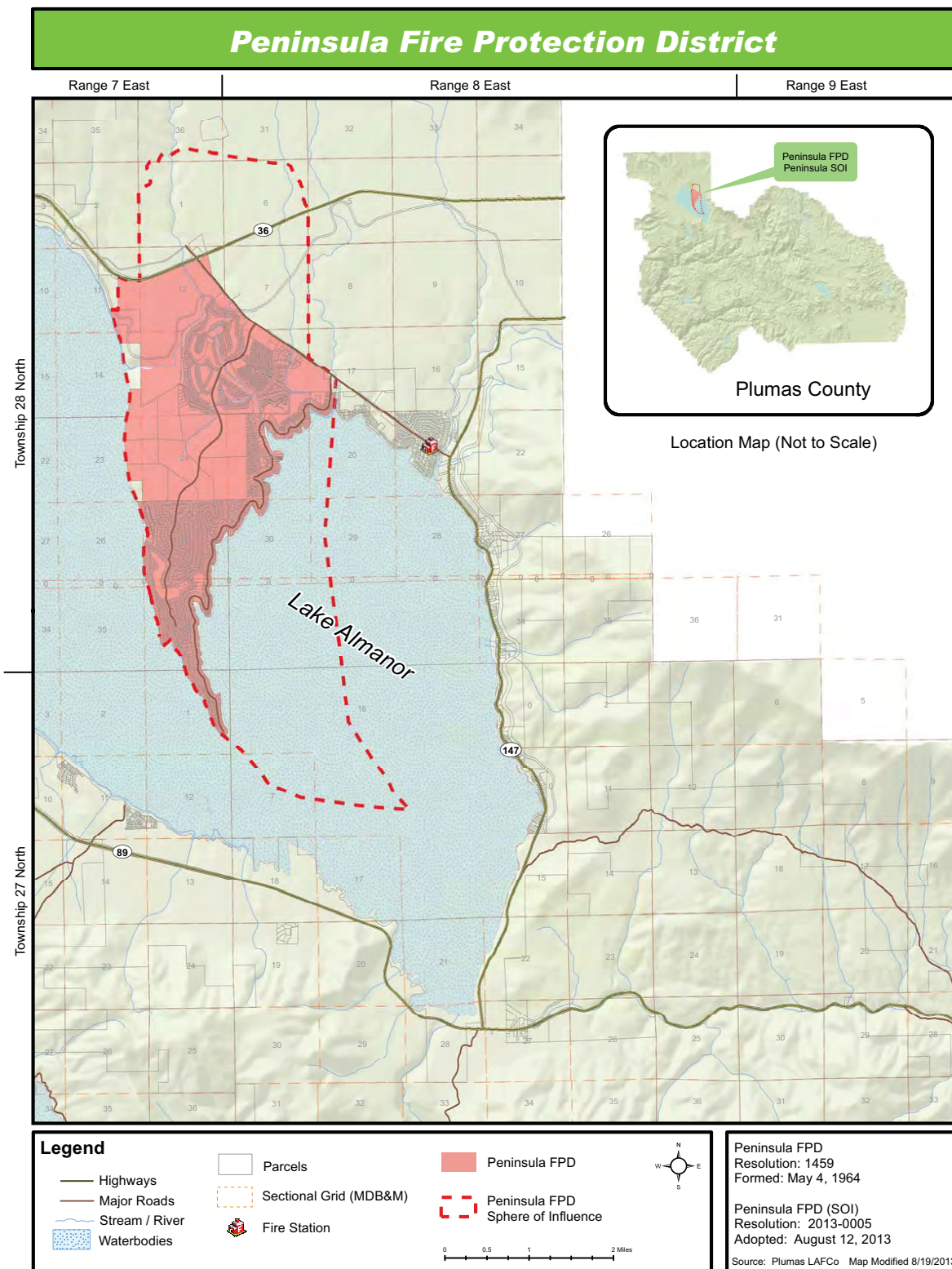
In addition to a consideration of population growth, the State Law requires LAFCO to consider whether or not an area is a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC). A DUC is an area where the Median Household Income is less than 80% of the State of California Median Household Income.

- 5-1] The Median Household Income is not available for the Peninsula Fire Protection District, only for Plumas County. The Plumas County Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$44,151.⁶² The State of California Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$61,632.⁶³ Eighty percent of the State Median Household Income was \$49,306. Therefore, Plumas County could be considered to be a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community.
- 5-2] The purpose of this law is to consider whether a DUC could become part of an incorporated city with more services; but there are no incorporated cities near to the Peninsula Fire Protection District.

⁶² US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

⁶³ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

7.6 SOI and District Boundaries for the Peninsula Fire Protection District



8 PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

8.1 Prattville Community

The Prattville-Almanor FPD encompasses the community of Prattville, which is situated along the western shore of Lake Almanor in northern Plumas County. It lies immediately east of SR 89. The District does not border any other fire districts in the County, because it is surrounded by forest and borders the lake to the east. Prattville-Almanor FPD is located southeast of West Almanor CSD (WACSD).

According to Census 2000, the District's population was 28.⁶⁴ Based on census designated place population in the 2010 Census, there are 33 permanent residents within the District.⁶⁵ Because the District is small in absolute numbers, an increase in only five full-time residents resulted in an increase in population of 18 percent over the last ten years.

8.2 Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District Overview

8.3.1 Prattville-Almanor FPD Location and Services

PAFPD was originally formed as West Shore Fire District in 1963⁶⁶ for the purpose of providing basic community services to residents and landowners within the boundaries of the District in the greater Prattville Area. In 1978, West Shore Fire District was renamed into Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District.⁶⁷ The District's bounds encompass approximately 0.5 square miles.

PAFPD has a functional consolidation contract with WACSD, according to which identities and budgets for the two districts remain separate. West Almanor CSD provides PAFPD operations, training and automatic aid services. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses within either district. West Almanor CSD is responsible for training all PAFPD firefighters. In addition, the two districts respond to each other's emergency calls and incidents as part of automatic aid. The area of WACSD is of particular interest to PAFPD. The functional consolidation contract expired on June 30, 2012, and while both districts are strongly considering consolidation, it has been postponed at this time. Instead, the districts will expand their contract; under the new agreement WACSD will take over administration duties for PAFPD.

8.3.2 Prattville FPD Board of Directors

PAFPD is governed by a three-member Board of Directors who are to be elected by cabin owners at general meetings. There are currently two Directors, both of whom were appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Board meets every season at the fire house on Scott Drive. Agendas are posted at the fire station, on the bulletin board at Almanor Homesites, and by the mailboxes at the bottom of Center Street. Minutes are circulated at the meetings and available upon request.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ US Census Bureau, Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

⁶⁵ US Census Bureau, Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

⁶⁶ Plumas LAFCO Resolution 1328.

⁶⁷ Plumas LAFCO Resolution 78-3171.

⁶⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 168.

9 WEST ALMANOR COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

9.1 Lake Almanor West Subdivision

West Almanor Community Services District (WACSD) is located within the subdivision of Lake Almanor West which is situated along the western shore of Lake Almanor in northern Plumas County. It lies immediately east of State Route 89. The District does not border any other fire districts in the County, because it is surrounded by forest. Prattville-Almanor FPD is located south of WACSD.⁶⁹

WACSD was originally formed as Plumas County Service Area (CSA) #2 in 1974⁷⁰ by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors, at the request of the developer of the Lake Almanor West subdivision, Mr. Edward C. Clifford. The CSA was a division of county government and controlled by the Plumas County Board of Supervisors.

From the outset, services were limited to fire protection, emergency medical services, auto accidents, well testing, hazardous materials limited security (fire chief patrolling the area), and mainlining the septic system for eight lots on Osprey Loop.

According to Census 2000, the District's population was 329.⁷¹ Based on census designated place population in the 2010 Census, there are 270 permanent residents within the District.⁷² This shows that the District's full-time population has declined by about 18 percent over the last ten years. There are approximately 475 housing units within the District's bounds with only 28 percent of those units occupied full-time.⁷³

9.2 West Almanor CSD Overview

9.2.1 West Almanor CSD History

CSA #2 was reorganized on September 24, 1993, as West Almanor CSD. There were no changes to district boundaries or authorized services. The purpose of the reorganization was to provide services more efficiently in the West Almanor area by reducing duplication of administrative services, improving the utilization of equipment, decreasing overall costs, and expanding services that can be provided to residents of the District. The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Community Services District Law.⁷⁴

WACSD provides fire protection and suppression, emergency medical response, fire prevention and other emergency support, such as rescue, smoke checks, standby at gas leaks, and accidents and hazmat incidents. The WACSD is responsible for providing structure, vehicle, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and other types of fire protection within its boundaries, and assists CALFIRE on all vegetation fires within the subdivision of Lake Almanor West. The subdivision is located within a State Responsibility Area (SRA) for fire protection.

⁶⁹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 224.

⁷⁰ Plumas LAFCO Resolution 74-2583.

⁷¹ Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

⁷² Census designated place Lake Almanor West in Plumas County.

⁷³ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 229.

⁷⁴ California Government Code §61000-61226.5.

9.2.2 WACSD Board of Directors

WACSD is governed by a five-member board of directors who are to be elected at large by community residents to staggered four-year terms. There are currently five Directors, all of whom were elected at large. There has not been a contested election in the last few years. The Board usually meets on the last Thursday of every month at three in the afternoon at the fire station. Agendas are posted at the fire station, on the website and on the three community bulletin boards located at the post office boxes in the area. Minutes are available upon request. In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through its website.

WACSD also holds open houses at the station, offers CPR classes and accommodates children's educational field trips.⁷⁵ The West Almanor CSD achieved the designation of a *Firewise Community*, as is documented in the 2009 community assessment report.⁷⁶

9.2.3 WACSD Operations

WACSD has a functional consolidation contract with Prattville-Almanor FPD according to which identities and budgets for the two districts remain separate. West Almanor CSD provides PAFPD operations, training and automatic aid services. The WACSD fire chief or assigned duty officer is in charge of all operations on emergency responses within either district. West Almanor CSD is responsible for training all paid and volunteer personnel. And in addition, WACSD responds to all emergency calls and incident in the Prattville-Almanor FPD as part of automatic aid.

WACSD has 13 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one assistant chief, one captain, and ten volunteer firefighters. The chief is a full-time paid employee; the assistant chief and captain are part-time and receive per-diems. When the chief is on duty, the station is staffed 24 hours per day, seven days per week. When somebody else is on duty, the station is staffed from nine am to five pm. The median age of the firefighters is 66, with a range from 29 to 71.

The West Almanor Community Service District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. WACSD tries to recruit more volunteers to help support the fire department, but due to mostly retirement-aged residents within the District, it is hard to find willing volunteers. The West Almanor Community Service District full-time fire chief's salary is \$62,244 per year. Per-diem employees are paid \$175 per shift. Volunteers do not get compensated.

The area of Prattville-Almanor FPD is of a particular interest to WACSD. The functional consolidation contract expired on June 30, 2012 and a new contract went into effect on June 28, 2013, and while both districts are strongly considering consolidation, it has been postponed at this time. Instead, the districts will expand their contract; under the new agreement WACSD will take over administration duties for PAFPD.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 227.

⁷⁶ The Firewise Communities/USA program is a nationwide effort to provide an effective management approach for preserving Wildland living aesthetics. Its focus is on communities that exist in the midst of or in close proximity to areas that can be characterized as "wild" and undeveloped, typically containing large amounts of natural fuels such as trees, brush or heavy grass.

⁷⁷ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 225.

10 PRATTVILLE-ALMANOR FPD AND WEST ALMANOR CSD SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

Both the PAFPD and the WACSD, reported that they were willing to consider including one small pocket of about 35 to 40 lots called Big Meadows in the SOI. PAFPD believes that it is in a good position to annex the area because its station is located only about two miles away from Big Meadows. There have been no serious annexation discussions with Big Meadows.

The PAFPD reported that it was interested in consolidation with WACSD. Currently, the two districts have a functional consolidation contract renewable every July 1st. The districts decided not to proceed with consolidation at this time and, instead, to expand the existing agreement. Under the new agreement, which is currently being drafted, WACSD will take over the Prattville-Almanor FPD administration. The WACSD chief will also act as the PAFPD chief. The contract will be automatically renewed annually until the districts decide to proceed with consolidation, change the conditions of the agreement, or to cancel the agreement altogether.

The recommendation for a consolidated sphere of influence in combination with an annexable sphere for the Big Meadows area will allow the two districts to work together before actual consolidation will take place.

10.1 SOI Determinations on Present and Planned Land Use for the West Almanor CSD and Prattville-Almanor FPD Area

- 1-1] Land uses within the West Almanor Community Services District and within the Prattville-Almanor FPD are residential and recreational.
- 1-2] Neither the WA CSD or the PAFPD is a land use authority. The districts do not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies. The land use authority for the unincorporated areas is Plumas County.
- 1-3] The community of Prattville is mostly built out with three to four empty lots, but service demand is expected to increase due to tourist activity. There are multiple planned RV hook-ups within Plumas Pines Resort and the National Forest area. A new campground, boat launch, and PG&E beach are also expected to add to the District's service demand.
- 1-4] 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 yearly population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections the districts would be fortunate to grow back to their 2000 population in 2020. It is estimated that the West Almanor CSD's population would increase from 270 in 2010 to approximately 284 in 2020.⁷⁸ The PAFPD population would increase from 33 to 35 in 2020.⁷⁹
- 1-5] The small population size of the districts is one of the reasons that a consolidated sphere of influence is recommended.

⁷⁸ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 230.

⁷⁹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 170.

10.2 SOI Determinations on Facilities and Services: Present and Probable Need for the West Almanor CSD and the Prattville-Almanor FPD

- 2-1] The West Almanor Community Services District reported that it had the capacity to serve anticipated future growth and the territory of PAFPD, should annexation or consolidation occur. WACSD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.⁸⁰
- 2-2] The West Almanor CSD owns and maintains one fire station located at 947 Long Iron Drive in Chester, which was built in 1979. The chief's quarters were added in 1992. The station, which was reported to be in good condition, houses one 2003 Type 1 fire engine, one 1985 Type 2 engine, one 1993 quick attack/rescue unit, one 2002 SUV command/tow vehicle and one 2003 jet craft fire and rescue boat. Departmental resources also include up-to-date firefighter gear for all responders (i.e., protective clothing, breathing apparatus and radios) and necessary firefighting tools and appropriate medical response equipment/supplies found on the several vehicles.
- 2-3] The West Almanor CSD recently created a multi-purpose room and replaced the station roof. WACSD also acquired a tractor for snow removal. The WACSD is currently in the process of upgrading its restroom to meet ADA standards.
- 2-4] The developed areas at Lake Almanor West are served by a residential fire hydrant system. The domestic water supply and hydrant supply system are gravity fed from two large storage tanks each with a 224,000-gallon capacity and located on the hilltop area of the development. Water can be replenished to the tanks at a rate of more than 1,500 gallons per minute when all three domestic well pumps are operating. The basic flow rate at the individual hydrants typically varies from 750 to over 1,000 gallons per minute depending on hydrant location; even higher flow rates are available if the water is drawn by the fire engine.⁸¹
- 2-5] The WACSD reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. However, it was also reported that WACSD has faced a few challenges, including increasing prices of fuel and electricity, additional funding required for state mandated training, and reduced property tax revenues as a result of economic conditions.
- 2-6] In order to enhance funding, WACSD applies for grants. There are currently no applications pending, but once the next FEMA grant becomes available, the District plans to apply for acquisition of a breathing air compressor. In addition, to improve its financing, WACSD asked its residents for a special assessment increase. The ballot measure approved with an overwhelming majority on May 8, 2012 increased the special assessment from \$90 to \$195. The new assessment will expire in seven years. The chief reported that the \$105 increase from the original assessment is to make up the difference from the loss of funding caused by decreased property values and the increase in costs to the fire department.

⁸⁰ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 230.

⁸¹ Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 238.

- 2-7] The West Almanor Community Services District reported that since the assessment was recently passed, financing levels are presently sufficient.
- 2-8] Prattville-Almanor FPD currently pays WACSD \$5,000 to share in the cost of operations which includes fuel, manpower, equipment maintenance, vehicle insurance, and training expenses. WACSD also has an agreement with California Emergency Management Agency for local government fire and emergency assistance to the State of California and Federal fire agencies. According to this agreement, the District's strike team gets reimbursed based on rank of responders and apparatus and equipment used. WACSD maintains mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County and is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chief's Association, Plumas County Fire Chief's Association and Plumas County Special District Association.
- 2-9] The WACSD receives some financial help from the community auxiliary which also gives charity donations to other entities. In 2011, the auxiliary gave WACSD \$5,000 for a thermal imaging camera; however, normally annual donations amount to about \$1,000 to \$2,000.⁸²
- 2-10] The PAFPD has one chief, one accounts receivable clerk and four firefighters, who are all volunteers. Daily operations are managed by the fire chief. According to the new agreement with WACSD, which is currently being drafted, the WACSD chief will also be the fire chief for PAFPD. Currently, the PAFPD chief reports to the Board. The clerk and firefighters report to the chief.
- 2-11] The PAFPD's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. PAFPD's financial statements are audited every five years, due to the small size of the District.
- 2-12] Since, PAFPD and WACSD are dispatched to all of each other's calls, the annual number of calls is the same for both districts.
- 2-13] The PAFPD owns and maintains one fire station, located at 2977 Scott Drive, Canyon Dam, which was built in 1974. Prattville-Almanor station was reported to be in good condition. It houses one type 2 fire engine, one type 1 tactical water tender and one rescue unit.
- 2-14] PAFPD is served by two water providers. Each provider has a 20,000 gallon storage tank for resident and firefighting use. Both systems are low pressure; and pressure must be boosted for firefighting purposes. In addition, the District has the lake and a well system to draw from.

⁸² Plumas LAFCO, Municipal Service Review for Lake Almanor Region of Plumas County, October 2012, Page 234.

10.3 SOI Determinations on Public Facilities Present and Future Capacity for the West Almanor CSD and the Prattville-Almanor FPD

- 3-1] Some of the West Almanor Community Services District's goals include keeping a full-time fire chief/general manager, increasing part-time summer staffing, maintaining facilities and equipment, replacing the oldest fire engine, replacing the tractor and command/tow vehicles, and continuing proper training.
- 3-2] The majority of WACSD emergency responses are for medical assistance. The District provides emergency medical services through the use of Paramedics, Emergency Medical Technicians and Emergency Medical Responders, trained to the standards set by the Northern California Emergency Service and Federal Department Of Transportation. All volunteers are trained in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and in the use of universal precautions when they are involved in patient care.
- 3-3] WACSD contracts with Chester PUD fire department for ambulance transport service.
- 3-4] According to the California State Fire Marshal, all paid, volunteer and call firefighters must acquire Firefighter I certification; however, there is no time limit as to how long they may work before attaining certification. Firefighter I certification requires completion of the 259-hour Firefighter I course, which includes training on various fireground tasks, rescue operations, fire prevention and investigation techniques, and inspection and maintenance of equipment. In addition to this course, Firefighter I certification also requires that the applicant have a minimum of six months of volunteer or call experience in a California fire department as a firefighter performing suppression duties.⁸³ WACSD has two firefighter II certified personnel, one fire officer, one paramedic, and two EMTs. Most of the District's volunteers have hazardous materials-awareness level, with three at the operations and decontamination level.
- 3-5] Training is conducted through in-house programs on a bi-weekly basis and through additional cross training with other agencies. WACSD conducts training for its own and PAFPD sworn staff at least six times a month. The District currently trains all personnel to Firefighter I standards. WACSD is planning to start conducting medical training for all personnel to at least the Emergency Medical Responder level.

⁸³ State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

10.4 SOI Determinations on Social or Economic Communities of Interest for the West Almanor CSD and the Prattville-Almanor FPD

- 4-1] Neither West Almanor nor Prattville are full-service communities. These are small residential areas. The small size of Prattville has made it difficult to maintain a full board of directors. This is another reason that a consolidated sphere with ability to annex Big Meadows is the preferred alternative.
- 4-2] The lack of roads in and out of the Prattville and West Almanor communities presents a potential problem. During an emergency, evacuating residents would have to share the same roads with fire apparatus, which could cause a life-threatening situation. WACSD collaborated with the Almanor Ranger District to restore a supplementary emergency access road into that development in early summer 2012.
- 4-3] Winter storms can isolate firefighters located at the station. Heavy snow loads can close highways and high winds can topple hundreds of trees in a single storm.

10.5 Present and probable need for public facilities and services of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities within the existing Sphere of Influence

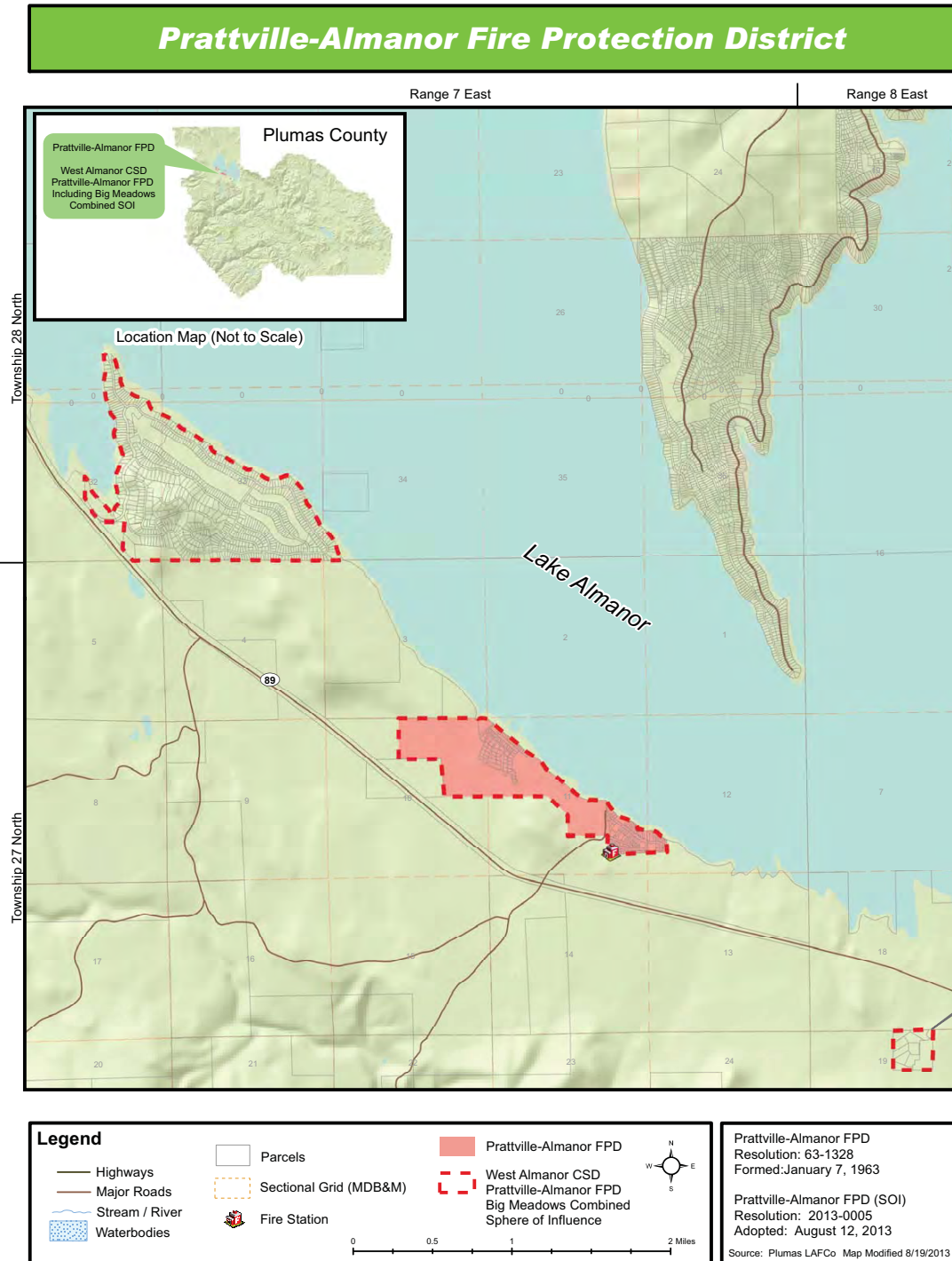
In addition to a consideration of population growth, the State Law requires LAFCO to consider whether or not an area is a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC). A DUC is an area where the Median Household Income is less than 80% of the State of California Median Household Income.

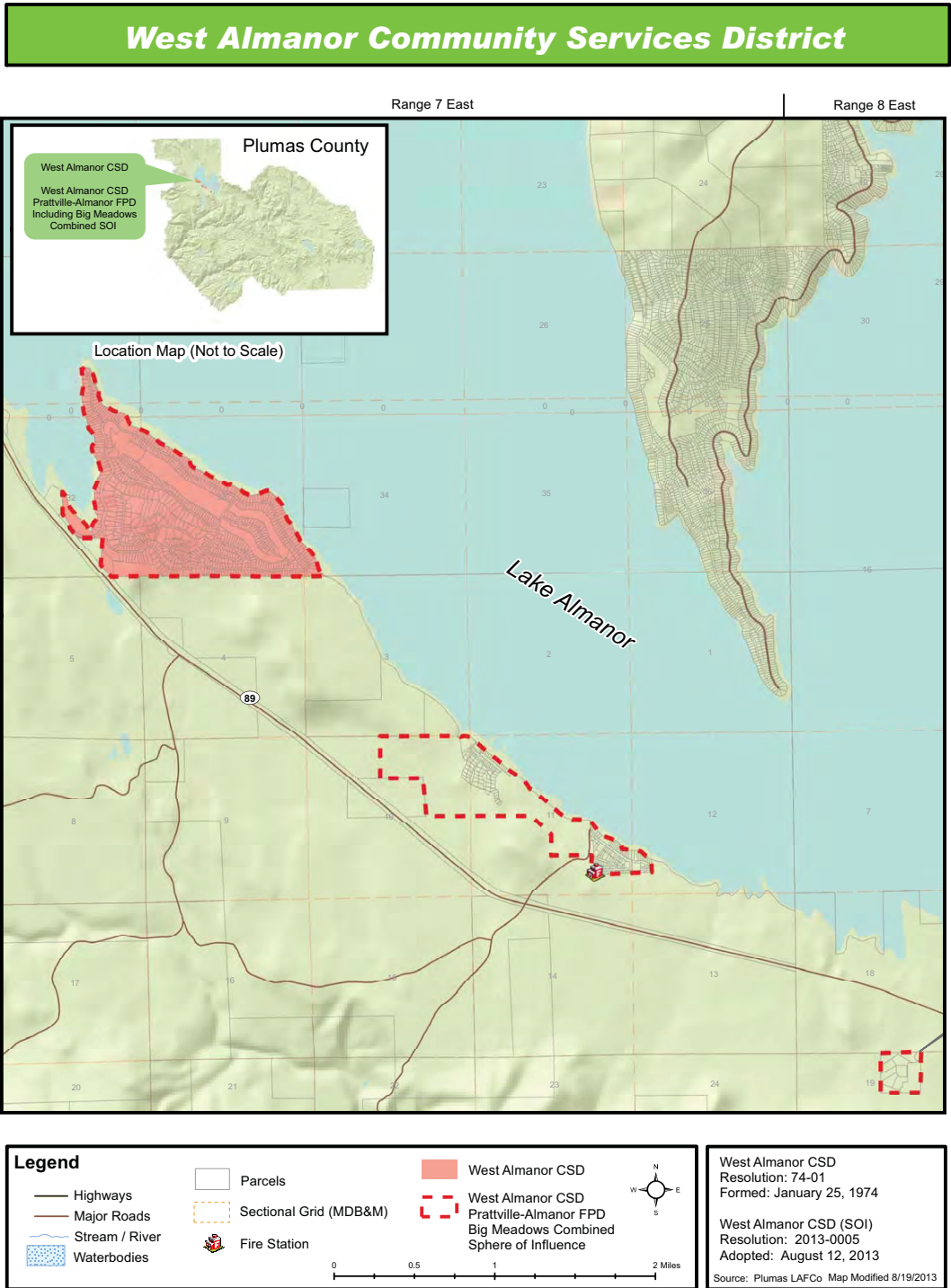
- 5-1] The Median Household Income is not available for the Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District or for the WACSD, only for Plumas County. The Plumas County Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$44,151.⁸⁴ The State of California Median Household Income for 2007-2011 was \$61,632.⁸⁵ Eighty percent of the State Median Household Income was \$49,306. Therefore, Plumas County could be considered to be a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community.
- 5-2] The purpose of this law is to consider whether a DUC could become part of an incorporated city with more services; but there are no incorporated cities near to the Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District or the West Almanor CSD.

⁸⁴ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

⁸⁵ US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

10.6 Prattville-Almanor FPD and West Almanor CSD SOI and District Boundaries





ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Assembly Bill
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ALS	advanced life support
ARFF	Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting vehicle
BOE	Board of Equalization (State of California)
CalEMA	California Emergency Management Agency
CALFIRE	California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
CDP	Census Designated Place
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CPUD	Chester Public Utility District
CSA	County Service Area
CSD	Community Services District
DOF	Department of Finance (State of California)
DUC	Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
FASIS	Fire Agency Self Insurance System
FDAC-FASIS	Fire District Association of California - Fire Agency Self-Insurance System
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FPD	Fire Protection District
FY	Fiscal Year
HBFPD	Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District
HD	Healthcare District

IMT	Incident Management Team
ISO	Insurance Service Office
JPA	Joint Powers Agreement
LAFCO	Local Agency Formation Commission
LPG	liquefied petroleum gas
MSR	Municipal Service Review
OASA	out-of-area service agreement
PAFPD	Prattville-Almanor Fire Protection District
PFPD	Peninsula Fire Protection District
PG&E	Pacific Gas and Electric Company
PUD	Public Utility District
SDRMA	Special District Risk Management Authority
SFT	State Firefighter Training
SOI	Sphere of Influence
SR	State Route
SRA	State Responsibility Area
SUV	Sport Utility Vehicle
WACSD	West Almanor Community Services District

REFERENCES

California Government Code §61000-61226.5

California Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

California Health and Safety Code §13862.

California Health and Safety Code §13842.

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Peninsula Fire Protection District (PFPD), Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 24.

Peninsula Fire Protection District Resolution 93-12B

Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

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Plumas LAFCO, Total agency area calculated in GIS software based on agency boundaries as of July 1, 2012. The data is not considered survey quality.

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State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

US Census Bureau, Census Blocks 3151, 3189, 3192, 3201, 3202, 3193, 3204, 2012, 2010, 2288, 2031, 2025, 2028, 2030 within Tract 5.02 in Plumas County.

US Census Bureau, Census Place Chester in Plumas County.

US Census Bureau Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

US Census Bureau, Census designated place Lake Almanor Peninsula, and Tract 5.02 Blocks 1000, 1014 and 1022 in Plumas County.

US Census Bureau, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06063.html>, April 18, 2013.

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