

## ***9. PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT***

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Peninsula Fire District (PFD) provides fire suppression, Advanced Life Support, ambulance services, dive and ice rescue, hazardous material emergency response, fire prevention, and fire investigation services.

This is the first municipal service review for PFD. An MSR process was previously initiated in 2008, but never completed.

### **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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#### **Background**

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PFD was formed in 1964 as an independent special district.<sup>92</sup> The District was formed to provide structural fire and emergency medical services to the residents on the peninsula on the north shore of Lake Almanor. Since its formation, the District has added ambulance, dive and ice rescue, and fire investigation services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>93</sup> 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.<sup>94</sup> 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.

PFD is located in the northwestern corner of Plumas County, near the County's border with Lassen County. The District encompasses Lake Almanor Country Club and Walker Ranch Community Services District, and borders Hamilton Branch FPD in the northeast.

#### **Boundaries**

PFD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 6.5 square miles.<sup>95</sup>

Following formation, the District undertook one detachment in 1971, when territory was transferred to Hamilton Branch Fire Protection District. The only annexation

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<sup>92</sup> SBOE and LAFCo records.

<sup>93</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>94</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>95</sup> <http://peninsulafire.net/>

undertaken by the District took place in 1996 and involved 1,230 acres of an area known as Walker Ranch.<sup>96</sup>

**Figure 9-1: PFD List of LAFCo Approved Border Changes**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Peninsula Fire District	Formation	1964	SBOE, LAFCo
Portion to Hamilton Branch FPD	Detachment	1971	SBOE, LAFCo
Walker Ranch	Annexation	1996	SBOE, LAFCo

*Sphere of Influence*

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on August 26, 1976.<sup>97</sup> The SOI was further revised on January 21, 1983,<sup>98</sup> when it was expanded to include the northern peninsula area to County Road A-13 and SR 36. The western SOI border was reduced at County Road A-13 where the sphere and district lines adjoin Hamilton Branch FPD.<sup>99</sup> The current SOI is 6.7 square miles compared to about 6.5 square miles of boundary area.

*Extra-territorial Services*

Through automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, PFD provides services outside of its bounds. PFD has a formal automatic aid agreement with HBFPD. PFD also maintains informal mutual aid agreements with all fire service providers in Plumas County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA and responds to wildfire outside of the County with a CalEMA Fire Engine and a strike team, for which it gets compensated by the state and federal government depending on the location of the fire.

Additionally, each fire provider in Plumas County has informally agreed to a service area that extends outside of their LAFCo-approved boundaries, in order to minimize those areas without a defined first responder. In the case of PFD, the District’s service area extends north of SR 36 and encompasses about 10 square miles. PFD does not receive property tax revenue in the territory that lies outside of its bounds, and in effect is providing free services to these areas without reimbursement.

The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with Hamilton Fire Protection District (HBFPD) according to which PFD provides the time and expertise of its fire chief to manage the day-to-day operations of HBFPD and services of a firefighter EMT-1 who is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The contract took full force in 2006, and is automatically renewed annually. In addition, PFD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid

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<sup>96</sup> 1-ANNX-95.

<sup>97</sup> LAFCo resolution 76-36.

<sup>98</sup> LAFCo resolution 83-11.

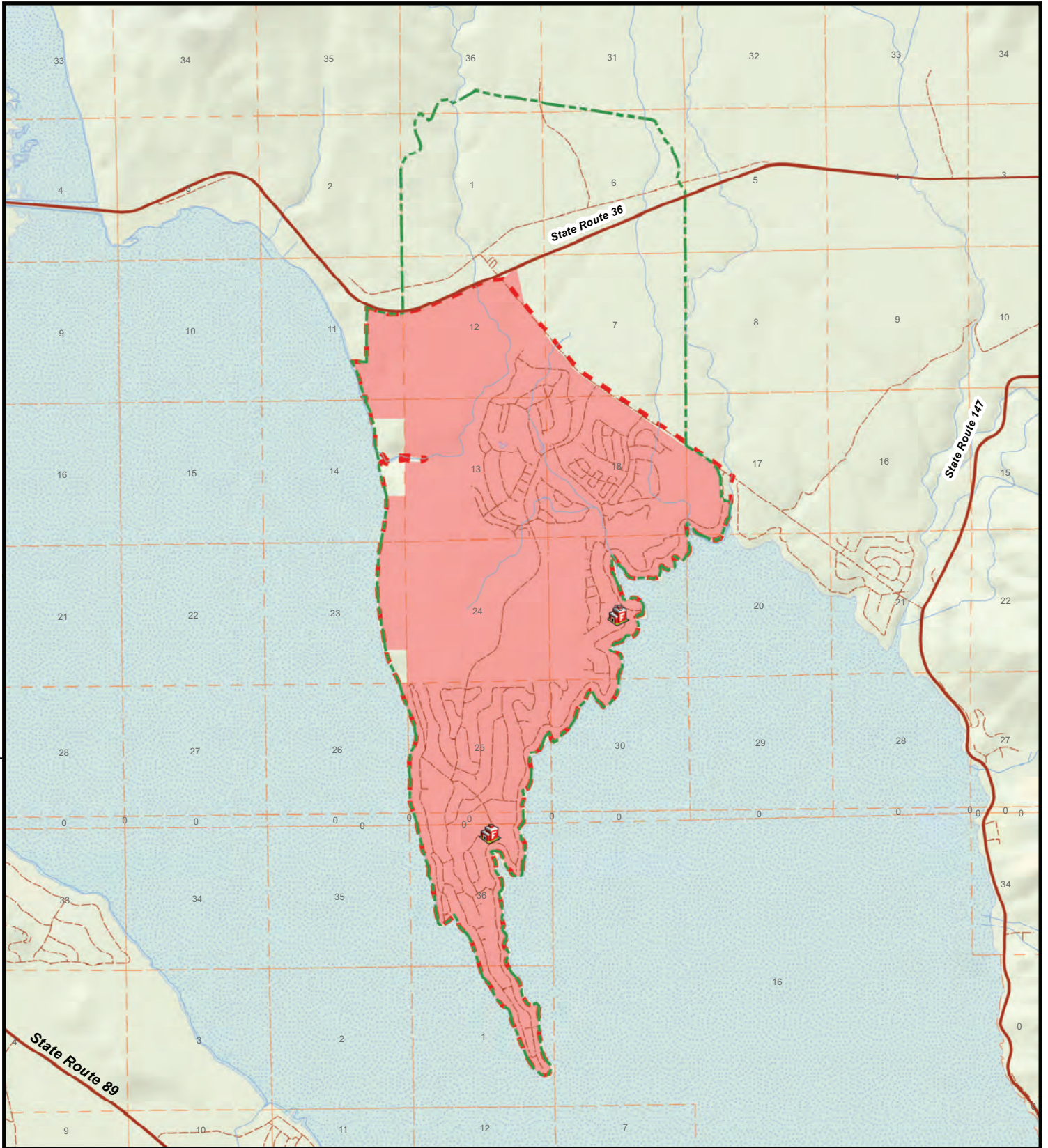
<sup>99</sup> Letter from Plumas County Planning Department to LAFCo, *Sphere of Influence Recommendation Basis, Peninsula Fire Protection District*, January 3, 1983.

agreement according to which they share resources and conduct joint trainings. Peninsula FD provides automatic aid of one advance life support ambulance to all emergency medical aid responses throughout HBFPD. Susanville Interagency Fire Center calls for automatic aid after debriefing by the reporting party.

Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any particular areas of interest.

# Peninsula Fire Protection District



## Legend

— Major Roads

Stream / River  
Waterbodies

Parcels

Fire Department Service Area

State Responsibility Area  
(Federal Responsibility lies  
outside hatched area.)

Peninsula FPD

Peninsula FPD (SOI)

Fire Stations

Sectional Grid (MDB&M)

0 0.2 0.4 0.8 Miles



Peninsula FPD  
Resolution: 64-1459  
Adopted: May 4, 1964

Peninsula FPD (SOI)  
Resolution: 83-11  
Adopted: January 21, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Created 1/12/2012

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## Accountability and Governance

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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.<sup>100</sup> PFD 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 vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 9-3.

Board members receive no compensation; however, they may participate in the health benefits plan provided by the District on a self-pay basis.

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.

**Figure: 9-3: PFD Governing Body**

<b>Peninsula Fire District</b>				
<b><i>District Contact Information</i></b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Fire Chief, Gary Pini			
<b>Address:</b>	801 Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA			
<b>Telephone:</b>	(530)259-2306			
<b>Fax</b>	(530)259-3707			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:penfire@frontiernet.net">penfire@frontiernet.net</a> , <a href="http://peninsulafire.net/">http://peninsulafire.net/</a>			
<b><i>Board of Directors</i></b>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Robert Phillips	Chair	December 2011	Elected	4 years
Russel Greenlaw	Vice Chair	December 2013	Elected	4 years
Susan Muller	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 year
Edwin Butler	Director	December 2011	Elected	4 years
Dennis Mason	Director	December 2013	Elected	4 years
<b><i>Meetings</i></b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Third Wednesday of every month at 5pm.			
<b>Location:</b>	Meetings are held at Station #2.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted at the Stations 1 and 2, on the website, at the country club and in newspaper.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents through its website. PFD also holds a fundraising pancake breakfast,

<sup>100</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

distributes brochures, performs safety demonstrations for children, and posts various informational materials throughout both fire stations. The District encourages voter participation by notifying the public of upcoming elections through its website and in newspapers.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be first discussed with an on-duty supervisor with the objective of resolving the matter informally. If an individual filing a complaint is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint is forwarded to the chief. In this case, the chief is obligated to record the issue and outcome in writing and provide a copy to the individual who filed the complaint. If the individual is further not satisfied, the complaint may be brought to the attention of the Board by filing it in writing within ten days of receiving chief's decision. The Board's final decision must be in writing. The District reported that there were no complaints in 2010.

PFD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with interview and document requests.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District's mission statement declares: This Fire District is organized to provide for life and property safety from the threat of forest and structure fires, natural or man-made disasters, and medical emergencies. This will be accomplished through preplanning, prevention, education, training, incident mitigation and appropriate application of ever changing technology. To maximize the ability to cope with major conflagrations the District will receive and/or provide mutual-aid assistance to other fire/ambulance agencies.<sup>101</sup>

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.

The three captains and the secretary are accountable to the chief. Firefighters report to the captains; and the chief reports to the Board. The captains evaluate the firefighters. The captains and the secretary are evaluated by the chief, who is evaluated by the Board of Directors. New employees are evaluated after three, six and 12 months, and annually thereafter.

The District tracks the workload handled by its staff through log books for both payroll and operations. Workload monitoring helps the District improve its efficiency by identifying whether there is any downtime and changing the schedule accordingly to eliminate wasted manpower.

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<sup>101</sup> <http://peninsulafire.net/>

PFD reported that it does not perform evaluations for the District as a whole, such as benchmarking or annual reports.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget. The District's financial statements are audited every two years. PFD does not adopt any other planning documents. The District provided an adopted budget for FY 11-12, audited financial statements for FY 08-09, and unaudited financial statements for FY 09-10 and FY10-11. The District conducts capital improvement planning through setting short- and long-term goals that are updated annually. Short-term goals include new furniture and appliances for both fire stations. In the long run, the District plans to secure funding for an additional fire station and related equipment, a full-time paid assistant fire chief, and four full-time personnel on each shift.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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A majority of the land within the District is used for residential, commercial, recreational, and open space purposes. The District's bounds encompass approximately 6.5 square miles.

### Population

The District reported that its current estimated population was 1,500. Due to the influx of tourists during the summer months, it may go up to 5,000 people.

According to Census 2000, the District's population was 1,183.<sup>102</sup> Based on census designated place population in the 2010 census, there are approximately 775 permanent residents within the District.<sup>103</sup> The District's residential population has declined by about 34 percent over the last ten years.

### Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District are in the summer months when the area experiences an influx of tourists and seasonal residents. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

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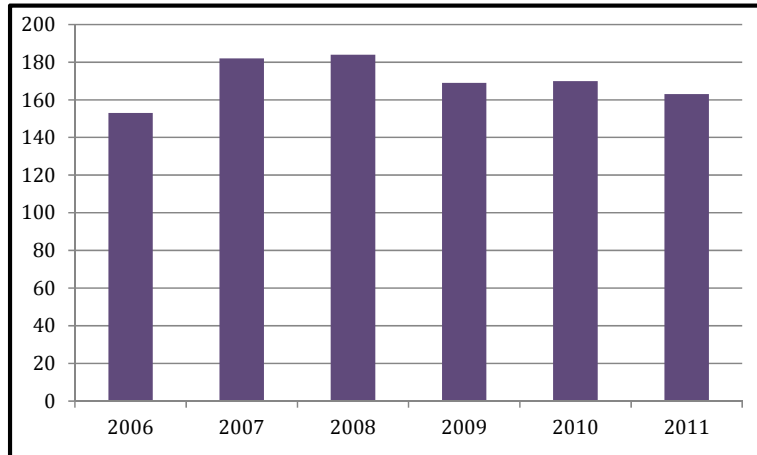
<sup>102</sup> Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

<sup>103</sup> Census designated places Lake Almanor Peninsula and Lake Almanor Country Club in Plumas County.

**Figure 9-4: PFD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2010**

The District reported that it had observed little change in the level of service demand in the last few years.

The number of calls slightly increased from 2006 to 2007 and 2008 and dropped back down in 2009, 2010 and 2011, as shown in Figure 9-4.



### Projected Growth and Development

PFD anticipates minimal 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. 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. PFD plans to hire a consultant to calculate service needs when the economy recovers and construction and growth resumes.

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.

The District identified one undeveloped subdivision within its boundaries. 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. The District reported that it has the capacity to serve anticipated future growth. PFD did not identify any areas within its future growth area to which it would be difficult to provide an adequate level of service.

### 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 County enforces the codes that it has enforcement power over, which does not encompass all State fire codes. The County ensures that new construction meets the requirements of the latest adopted edition of the California Building Standards. The County enforces the County codes that have been adopted in lieu of the California Fire Safe



regulations. The County does not have authority to enforce PRC 4291, which requires defensible space around structures; however, the County does have some enforcement authority over vegetation removal around buildings that was adopted prior to PRC 4291. In addition, the Board of Supervisors, through the adoption of the General Plan and county codes, regulates development standards to be followed in processing subdivisions, including fire protection.

The proposals for new developments are sent for review to the appropriate fire provider, if a development is within a district's boundaries. The County reported that as SOI maps have not been digitized, it has been challenging to ensure that proposals go to the appropriate district, if a proposed development was within that district's SOI but outside its boundaries. The County and Plumas LAFCO are working together on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments. The County Board of Supervisors recently contracted with a fire prevention specialist; however, this position has no responsibility for code enforcement and building inspections.

The County has several policies in the existing general plan, which impact the fire providers of new developments.

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>104</sup>
- 2) The County encourages development to be located adjacent to or within areas where fire services already exist or can be efficiently provided.<sup>105</sup>
- 3) The County requires new developments within areas not currently served by a fire provider to be annexed into an existing fire district or create a funding mechanism, such as a CSD, to cover the costs of fire service provision.<sup>106</sup>
- 4) Sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting as well as intensive forest management practices are encouraged to reduce the danger of catastrophic wildfires.<sup>107</sup>
- 5) There is a minimum requirement of two roadway access points, which are maintained on a year-round basis by the County or the State.<sup>108</sup>
- 6) Minimum public and private road standards: roads providing access to two or more lots have to conform to a two-lane standard of no less than 16-foot traveled way.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>105</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>110</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>111</sup>
- 9) All developments within boundaries of a structural fire service provider may be required to contribute to the maintenance of the structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for fire service resulting from the development.<sup>112</sup>
- 10) As a condition of development it is required to provide long-term maintenance of private roads to the standards of original improvements, including roadside vegetation management.<sup>113</sup>
- 11)The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>114</sup>

The County is in the process of updating its general plan. The suggested new policies in the General Plan update that would impact fire service providers, but had not yet been adopted as of the drafting of this report, include:

- 12)The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space though conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map or building permit stage.
- 13)The County will consult Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects. The County will work with fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans and require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones.
- 14)In order for the new development to be approved, the County must conclude that adequate emergency water flow, fire access and firefighters and equipment are available.
- 15)New developments have to show that they have adequate access for emergency vehicles to access the site and for private vehicles to evacuate the area.

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>114</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

- 16) New developments within high and very high fire hazard areas are required to designate fuel break zones that comply with fire safe requirements.
- 17) The County will work with Forest Service and fire districts in developing fire prevention programs, identifying opportunities for fuel breaks in zones of high and very high fire hazard and educating public.
- 18) Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>115</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted towards the end of 2012. The County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors formed the Emergency Services Feasibility Study Group to “evaluate the funding feasibility of providing uniform and comprehensive emergency services to all of Plumas County.” The Committee attempted to look for opportunities to increase funding for emergency services, but faced a considerable challenge in the difficult economic times. It has been working on mitigating efforts through building and development standards improvements and the General Plan update process, and encouraging local fire service providers to share resources and realize economies of scale in preparing grant applications, conducting training and engaging in other joint programs. Most recently, the Committee has focused on addressing properties that are located outside of a fire district boundaries and are not properly served, and hiring a fire prevention specialist who will develop strategies and plans to help resolve the out-of-district problem by working with the public, local fire districts, Fire Safe Council, Feasibility Group and the Board of Supervisors and by updating community wildfire protection plans and Firewise Community plans.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it may be interested in consolidation with HBFPD. However, presently the Boards of Directors of both districts are content with the current contract; and consolidation is not being formally discussed. The PFD chief also expressed interest in the possibility of regional fire provider consolidation.

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## Financing

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The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services. However, it was also reported that the recent recession had a negative impact on the District’s revenue streams, due to foreclosures, reappraisals, low growth in assessed values for property taxes, and nonpayment of property taxes.

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<sup>115</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 09-10 was \$1,357,498; the revenue for FY 10-11 was \$1,289,349. Revenue sources included property tax revenue (35 percent), special assessment (41 percent), charges for services (seven percent), use of money and properties (one percent), state and federal aid (0.3 percent), and other revenue (11 percent). Currently, the 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 District is an increase in its special tax assessment.

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.

The District charges fees for ambulance services. Fees vary based on mileage, and equipment and personnel used. PFD does not charge for providing other services either within its boundaries or outside. The District also responds with a strike team to wildfires outside of the county and gets compensated by the State or Federal government depending on the location of the fire. The District is reimbursed for the time the engine and the crews are gone.

Every property that is annexed into the District has to pay a fee of \$465.16 for each parcel to be annexed, at the time of annexation. 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.<sup>116</sup> When Walker Ranch was annexed into the District in 1996, it paid \$34,669.64 in capital facilities mitigation fees based on 14 assessed structures on 66,671 square feet, and \$123,141.53 in annexation fees. Mitigation fees can only be used for growth-related capital expenditures.

The District receives comparatively insignificant amounts from its investments. The District maintains all of its cash in the County Treasury, where funds are pooled with those of other agencies and invested.<sup>117</sup>

The District receives State and Federal Aid in the form of state homeowners' property tax money.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> District resolution 93-12B.

<sup>117</sup> PFD, *Audited Financial Statements*, FY 08-09, pp. 17, 21.

PFD's expenditures were \$1,361,134 in FY 09-10 and \$1,412,758 in FY 10-11. Of this amount, 80 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 15 percent on services and supplies, and five percent on fixed assets and capital improvements.

The District performs capital improvement planning as part of the annual budget process. PFD has short-term and long-term planned projects (projected for a five-year planning horizon) that are updated annually. In FY 10-11, the District spent \$67,420 on fixed assets and capital improvements; in FY 11-12, it plans to spend \$93,000. The cost of normal maintenance and repairs that do not add to the value of the asset or materially extend assets' lives are not capitalized. A capitalization threshold of \$5,000 is used.<sup>119</sup>

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.<sup>120</sup> The purpose of this 15-year lease was to purchase two new fire engines in 2008.

The District has an adopted reserve policy for two reserve funds—the Annexation and Mitigation Fund and Vehicle Replacement Fund. The Annexation and Mitigation Fund contains money collected from annexation fees and from builders per square foot of constructed property, as previously described. These funds are set aside for capital improvements for the areas from where they were collected. The Vehicle Replacement Fund currently contains \$37,949, which is available for vehicle replacement. PFD does not have an emergency reserve fund.

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.

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<sup>118</sup> Every year the Auditor's office files a claim to the State which calculates the amount of tax loss resulting from Homeowners Property Tax Exemptions. The State then reimburses the County in four increments throughout the year. The Auditor's office apportions taxes 3 times a year (December, April, and June). Each time it apportions, it distributes the amount received from the State to all the districts. It distributes the amount using the current AB8 factors.

<sup>119</sup> PFD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 18.

<sup>120</sup> PFD, Audited Financial Statements, FY 08-09, p. 24.

## FIRE AND EMS SERVICES

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### Service Overview

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PFD 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.

#### *Collaboration*

The District has an Administrative Services Agreement with HBFPD according to which PFD provides the services of its fire chief to manage HBFPD's operations and a firefighter EMT-1. In addition, PFD and HBFPD have a formal automatic aid agreement according to which PFD provides ambulance services to emergency medical aid responses within the HBFPD service area. The two districts also share resources and conduct joint trainings.

The 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. PFD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.

#### *Dispatch and Communications*

The County Sheriff is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP); consequently, most land line emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are directed to the Sheriff. Most cell phone emergency calls (9-1-1 calls) are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for those in the northern part of the County (including PFD), which are served by the Susanville Interagency Fire Center (SIFC). SIFC is an Emergency Operations Command Center composed of four cooperating agencies: the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The Forest Service also has its own dispatch. SIFC has a first responder map, which it uses to identify what provider to dispatch to an incident. All territory within the County has a determined first responder; although, many areas lie outside the LAFCo-approved boundaries of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

Radio frequencies are shared with other fire agencies; and communications are interoperable. The District did not identify any areas where dispatch and response coordination could be improved.

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### Staffing

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PFD has 24 sworn personnel—one fire chief, three captains, 17 paid firefighters, and three volunteer firefighters. Each paid firefighter is compensated based on his or her

position, either on a per-diem or per hour basis. The median age of the firefighters is 35, with a range from 23 to 52.

The District reports that its staffing levels have not changed significantly in the last few years. Peninsula FD tries to recruit more paid firefighters and volunteers through advertising.

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.<sup>121</sup> PFD has 22 firefighter I, 11 EMT and 11 paramedic certified personnel.

The District conducts daily trainings. All paid firefighters train two hours a day. The District's requirement for the paid sworn employees is to train to the level of Firefighter I. Volunteers train twice a month for a total of four hours per month. Volunteer firefighters provide a support role for the District, which relies primarily on the paid firefighters.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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Peninsula FD 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.

Station 1 is used as a fire station and houses one Type 1 fire engine and one ambulance. Station 2 is also used as a fire station and contains two Type 1 engines, one rescue mini pumper, one utility vehicle, and one hovercraft. PFD is also home to OES 265—the engine owned by the State of California Office of Emergency Services and on loan to the District. Peninsula FD staffs this engine to respond to disasters throughout California.

Besides two fire stations, the 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.

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<sup>121</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

Currently, the District has the capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area. However, once construction resumes in Walker Ranch, PFD will have to assess its capacity to serve newly constructed homes.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The 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.

The District does not have any vehicle needs.

PFD planned the following capital improvements and transfers for future capital purchases for FY 11-12:

- ❖ Office equipment: \$1,000
- ❖ Communications equipment purchases: \$2,000
- ❖ Transfer into Vehicle Replacement Fund: \$77,000
- ❖ Building improvements: \$10,000<sup>122</sup>
- ❖ Paving and curbing: \$3,000

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## Challenges

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The only challenge reported by the District is the present economic condition that has affected assessed property values and residents' personal incomes, and consequently, the District's income from property taxes.

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## Service Adequacy

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While there are several benchmarks that may define the level of fire service provided by an agency, indicators of service adequacy discussed here include ISO ratings, response times, and level of staffing and station resources for the service area.

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

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<sup>122</sup> Due to last year's budget shortfall, building improvements have been put on hold. Only emergency repairs are being completed.



alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. PFD has an ISO rating of 4. The District was last evaluated in 2002.

The guideline established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) for fire response times is six minutes at least 90 percent of the time, with response time measured from the 911-call time to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. The fire response time guideline established by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (formerly the Commission on Fire Accreditation International) is 5 minutes 50 seconds at least 90 percent of the time.<sup>123</sup>

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster a response has to be. The California EMS Agency established the following response time guidelines: five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wildland areas. The District's response zones includes the rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks the response time for each incident. CalFire tracks response times for each incident PFD is dispatched to within its boundaries. It was reported that the District's average response time in 2011 was 4.5 minutes. The percentage of response times under five minutes was 80. An area that FPD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on data exchange, which would enhance efficiency and consistency.

The service area size<sup>124</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Lake Almanor Area serves approximately 37 square miles. WACSD and PAFPD serve the most expansive area, with 99 square miles served per station on average. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Peninsula FD is five square miles.

The number of firefighters serving within a particular jurisdiction is another indicator of level of service; however, it is approximate. The providers' call firefighters may have differing availability and reliability. A district with more firefighters could have fewer resources if scheduling availability is restricted. Staffing levels in Lake Almanor area vary from 31 firefighters per 1,000 residents in PFD service area to 59 in WACSD and PAFPD.

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<sup>123</sup> Commission on Fire Accreditation International, 2000.

<sup>124</sup> Service area refers to the area that the agency will respond to, based on a first responder map used by the Sherriff's office.

**Figure 9-5: Peninsula Fire District Service Profile**

Fire Service				
<b>Facilities</b>				
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles
Station 1	497 Firehouse Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Poor	2 paid firefighters. Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	1 Type 1 engine, 1 Ambulance
Station 2	801 A Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Fair	2 paid firefighters. Staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week	2 Type 1 engines, 1 Rescue mini pumper, 1 utility vehicle, 1 hovercraft.
Administration Building	801 C Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Good	N/A	N/A
Peninsula Fire Sirens Thrift Shop	801 B Golf Club Road, Lake Almanor, CA	Good	N/A	N/A
<b>Facility Sharing</b>				
<b>Current Practices:</b>				
Firehall at Station 2 is available for public use on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Occasionally other fire agencies use PFD facilities for training. The District has an automatic aid agreement with HBFPD. The two agencies share resources and conduct joint trainings. Peninsula FD is also home to OES 265, which is owned by the State of California Office of Emergency Services and on loan to PFD.				
<b>Future opportunities:</b>				
The District does not see any opportunities to share facilities with other agencies.				
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>				
Both stations require upgrades: new roofs, new siding, new windows, new carpet.				
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand
Staffing Base Year	2011	Configuration Base Year	2011	Statistical Base Year
Fire Stations in District	2	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls
Stations Serving District	2	EMS	Direct	% EMS
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	5.0	Ambulance Transport	Direct	% Fire/Hazardous Material
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	25	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False
Total Full-time Firefighters	10	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	Enloe, PHI	% Misc. emergency
Total Call Firefighters	3	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS, CalFire	% Non-emergency
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	12	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	31.2	Fire/EMS Dispatch	SIFC	Calls per 1,000 people
<b>Service Adequacy</b>		<b>Service Challenges</b>		
Response Time Base Year	2010	Tough economic conditions is the only challenge reported by the District.		
Average Response Time (min) <sup>4</sup>	4.5	<b>Training</b>		
Percentage of response times under 5 min	80%	Paid firefighters train 2 hours a day. All paid firefighters are required to train to the level of Firefighter 1. Volunteers train twice a month for a total of four hours per month.		
ISO Rating	4			
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>				
The District has automatic aid agreement with HBFPD and mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in the County. It also provides mutual aid statewide through CalEMA with a CalEMA Fire Engine.				
Notes:				
1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.				
2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.				
3) Based on ratio of sworn full-time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.				
4) Response time are provided for incidents responded to by the District within its boundaries.				

## PENINSULA FIRE DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ The estimated population of Peninsula Fire District (PFD) is 750.
- ❖ Over the last few years the District has experienced little or no growth in population and consequently in service demand.
- ❖ No or slow residential growth is expected within the District, until the construction in the Walker Ranch community resumes. Walker Ranch contains 1,800 undeveloped lots and an 18-hole golf course.

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

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

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

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- ❖ The District's existing facilities have the capacity to adequately serve current demand and short-term growth. However, when construction resumes in Walker Ranch, PFD will need to re-evaluate its capacity.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include new roofs, new siding, new windows, and new carpet for both fire stations. One of the stations was reported to be in poor condition; however, the District is able to keep it up to code.
- ❖ The District identified a long-term need for a new fire station to address future growth.
- ❖ It is recommended that the County Sheriff's Office work with the fire districts to update the ESN map that is used for dispatching, in order to adequately address any communication concerns and recent boundary changes.
- ❖ Currently, capital improvement projects are identified in the annual budget. The District should consider adopting a capital improvement plan to identify long-term financing needs and sources for these needs.

- ❖ An area that PFD could improve upon is collaborating with CalFire on service call data exchange.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver services and accommodate anticipated growth.
- ❖ The current economic conditions were identified as the primary financing constraint for the District.
- ❖ PFD hopes to increase its funding through an increase of its special assessment.
- ❖ The District does capital improvement planning through setting short- and long-term goals that are updated annually.

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### Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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- ❖ PFD collaborates with other fire providers in Plumas County through informal mutual aid agreements and common trainings, and with Hamilton Branch FPD through an automatic aid agreement. PFD is a member of the Almanor Basin Fire Chiefs' Association, Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and Special District Association.
- ❖ The District makes Station 2 available for public use on Tuesdays and Thursdays. PFD lets other fire providers use its facilities for training purposes.
- ❖ The District did not identify any additional opportunities to share its facilities with other agencies in the future.

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

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- ❖ PFD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.
- ❖ A governmental structure option is consolidation with Hamilton Branch FPD. Consolidation with other fire districts offers opportunities for shared resources and finances.