

# 10. QUINCY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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Quincy Fire Protection District (QFPD) provides fire suppression, fire prevention, emergency medical, light and heavy rescue, and inspections. This is the first municipal service review (MSR) for the District.

## AGENCY OVERVIEW

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### Background

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On December 19, 1878, the first organized fire department for the Quincy area was established as the Quincy Hose Company No. 1. QFPD became an independent special district June 1, 1917.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>141</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>142</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.<sup>143</sup>

QFPD is located in the central part of Plumas County. Other nearby fire protection districts include Meadow Valley FPD to the west and Greenhorn CSD to the southeast.

### Boundaries

QFPD's boundary is entirely within Plumas County. The present bounds encompass approximately 11.7 square miles and include the communities of Quincy and East Quincy. The town of Quincy is the Plumas County seat.

Since the formation of the District, there have been 13 annexations to QFPD. The most recent annexation occurred in 1991 and involved the territory of Little Keddie. The District's boundary changes are shown in Figure 10-1.

The annexation of the Upper Keddie Territory<sup>144</sup> only appears in LAFCo archives, and has not been recorded by the Board of Equalization (BOE). QFPD and LAFCo should work together to determine whether the annexation was satisfactorily completed, submit the annexation for recording by the State, and ensure that the District's Tax Rate Area is consistent with BOE records.

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<sup>141</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>142</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>143</sup> Government Code §56824.10.

<sup>144</sup> Resolution 84-4 (2-ANNX-84).

**Figure 10-1: Quincy FPD Boundary History**

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Type of Action</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Recording Agency</i>
Quincy FPD	Formation	1917	SBOE
Unknown territory	Annexation	1939	SBOE
Unknown territory	Annexation	1949	SBOE
Nine parcels of contiguous lands	Annexation	1959	SBOE
Annexation #6 (2 parcels)	Annexation	1968	SBOE, LAFCo
Annexation #7 (2 parcels)	Annexation	1968	SBOE, LAFCo
Annexation #3 (21 areas, 20 parcels)	Annexation	1976	SBOE, LAFCo
Leonhardt	Annexation	1980	SBOE, LAFCo
Clear Creek Estates	Annexation	1982	SBOE, LAFCo
Leonhardt et al	Annexation	1983	SBOE, LAFCo
Upper Keddie Territory	Annexation	1984	LAFCo
Essex Lumber Co.	Annexation	1985	SBOE, LAFCo
Bresciani Industrial Park	Annexation	1985	SBOE, LAFCo
Little Keddie Territory	Annexation	1991	SBOE, LAFCo

*Sphere of Influence*

The Sphere of Influence for the District was first adopted on in 1976.<sup>145</sup> The SOI was further revised in 1983.<sup>146</sup> The current SOI is 16.1 square miles compared to about 11.7 square miles of boundary area. Figure 10-2 depicts QFPD’s boundaries and SOI.

*Extra-territorial Services*

QFPD occasionally provides services outside of its bounds through an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD (which is effective Monday through Friday from 8am till 5pm), informal mutual aid agreements with all other fire providers and Plumas County, and formal mutual aid agreements with California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), CAL FIRE, and U.S. Forest Service.

In 2011, the District responded to four requests for mutual aid. One was a request from Cal EMA for an out of region mutual aid campaign fire. Another response was for a mutual aid call to Greenhorn FPD, which had not responded to dispatch for a call in its jurisdiction. The other two were to Meadow Valley FPD.

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 QFPD, the District’s service area extends along Roundhouse Road, Oakland Camp Road, Mt. Hough Crystal Lake, SR 70, Quincy La Porte Road, and Bucks Lake Road. The service area encompasses about 20.1 square miles. QFPD, similar to other fire departments in the County, 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. Although, the District has a fee schedule for responding outside of its boundaries, it has not been successful at collection.

<sup>145</sup> LAFCo Resolution 76-15.

<sup>146</sup> LAFCo Resolution 83-19.

Areas of Interest

Specific areas of interest for the District are areas in the QFPD's SOI, but outside of the District's boundaries. The District is interested in annexing its islands and all other SOI areas except for the northern areas, which lack a nearby fire station.

Additionally, there are four districts with which QFPD is interested in entering a JPA to share resources. These districts include Meadow Valley FPD, Bucks Lake private fire department, Greenhorn Creek CSD, and Long Valley CSD.

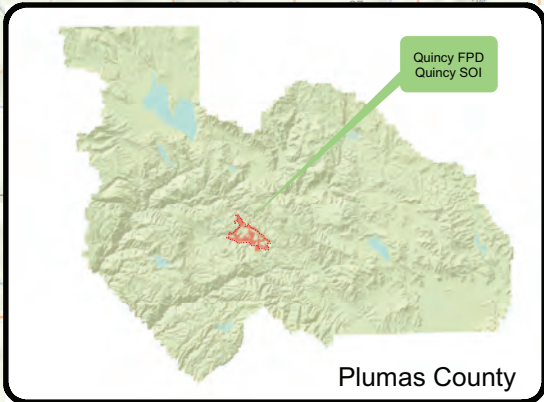
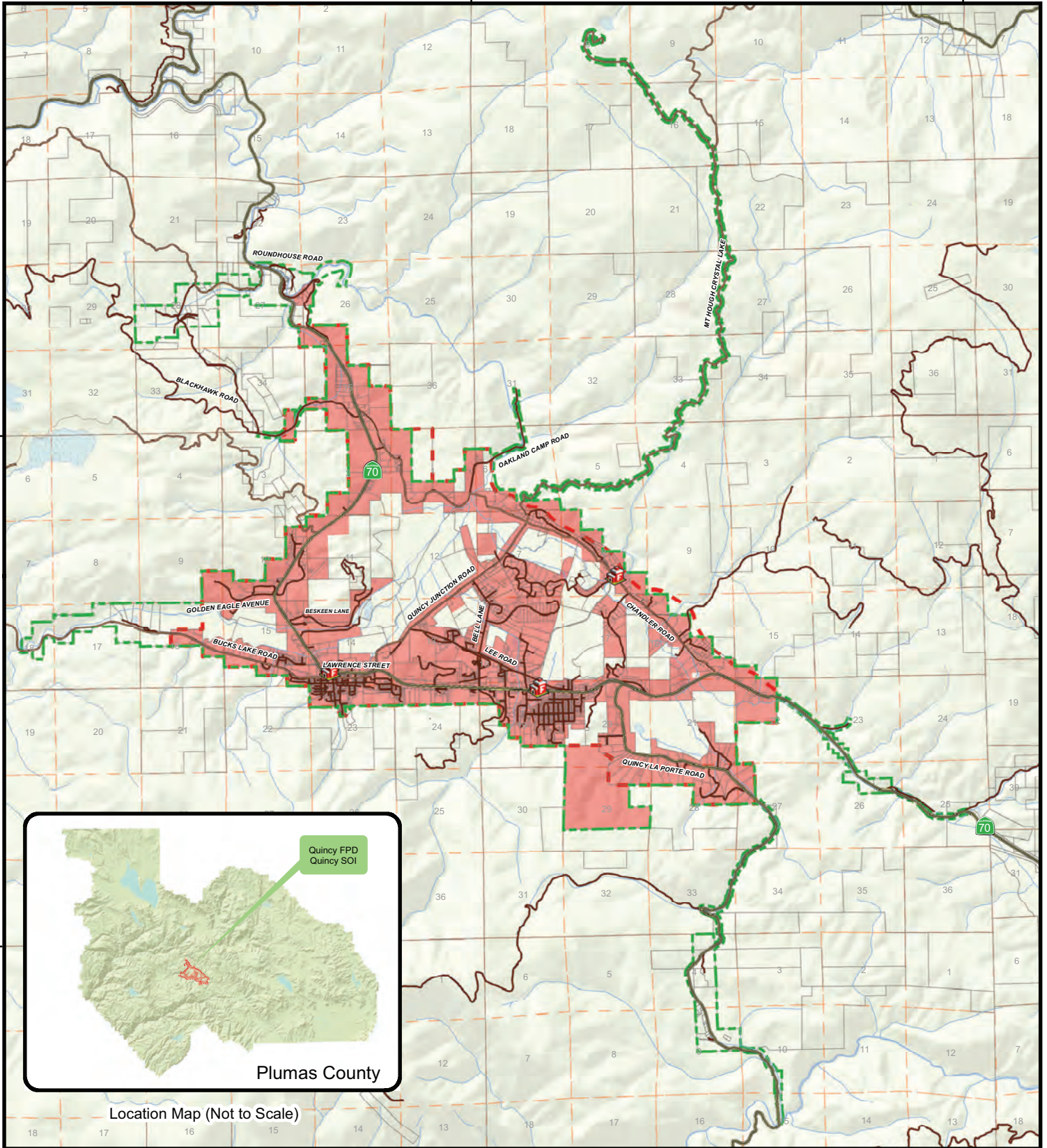
# Quincy Fire Protection District

Range 9 East

Range 10 East

Township 25 North

Township 24 North

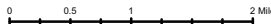


## Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)
- Fire Station

- Quincy FPD
- Quincy FPD Sphere of Influence
- Quincy FPD Service Area



Quincy FPD  
Resolution:  
Formed: June 1, 1971

Quincy FPD (SOI)  
Resolution: 83-19  
Adopted: February 16, 1983

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 9/30/2013

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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>147</sup> QFPD is governed by a three-member board of directors elected at large to staggered four-year terms. All current members were appointed; there are no vacancies. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 10-3.

The Board meets on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 in the evening at 237 Lawrence Street in Quincy. Board meeting agendas are posted on the bulletin board and at the district fire stations, and emailed to the mailing list. Minutes of every board meeting are available upon request and emailed to the board members before every meeting.

**Figure 10-3: Quincy FPD Governing Body**

Quincy FPD				
<b>District Contact Information</b>				
<b>Contact:</b>	Robbie Cassou, Fire Chief			
<b>Address:</b>	505 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA 95971			
<b>Telephone:</b>	530-283-0870			
<b>Email/website:</b>	<a href="mailto:robbie.quincyfire@sbcglobal.net">robbie.quincyfire@sbcglobal.net</a> , <a href="http://quincyfire.com">quincyfire.com</a>			
<b>Board of Directors</b>				
<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Expiration</b>	<b>Manner of Selection</b>	<b>Length of Term</b>
Mike Taborski	Chairman	December 2015	Appointed	4 years
Andy Ryback	Treasurer	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
Chuck Leonhardt	Secretary	December 2013	Appointed	4 years
<b>Meetings</b>				
<b>Date:</b>	Second Thursday of every month at 7:30am.			
<b>Location:</b>	Building at 237 Lawrence St.			
<b>Agenda Distribution:</b>	Posted on on the bulletin board and fire stations, and emailed to the list.			
<b>Minutes Distribution:</b>	Available upon request and emailed to board members prior to the meetings.			

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District tries to reach its constituents by participating in the children’s fair and handing out books that teach fire safety, taking part in college career days and holiday functions, and sending the fire safety trailer to schools for educational purposes. The District encourages voter participation by publishing notices in the local newspaper, posting them at the library and the courthouse, and placing them on bulletin boards and at the district fire stations. Additionally, the District makes information available on its website.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District’s services, complaints may be submitted to the chief. The District does not have a formal policy regarding handling of complaints. The District reported that there was one complaint in 2012.

QFPD 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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<sup>147</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

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## Planning and Management Practices

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The District has 51 personnel, of whom 40 are sworn staff and 11 are support staff. The chief, administrative secretary and the mechanic are full-time paid staff. The rest of the personnel are volunteers. Daily operations are managed by the fire chief with the support of the administrative secretary. The chief is accountable to the Board of Directors and directly oversees the administrative secretary, facilities manager/mechanic, EMS coordinator, and deputy chief. The deputy chief manages the assistant chief who supervises the captains. Firefighters report to the captains.

Paid employees are evaluated annually by the chief; the Board evaluates the chief. Volunteers are not evaluated.

QFPD tracks its employees' workload through training records, credential records, call log, and vehicle mileage log. The District believes that tracking staff workload increases their motivation to succeed. Firefighters are rewarded by being promoted and granted performance awards.

QFPD reported that it performed evaluations of the District as a whole through its strategic plan. In addition, the District reviewed the operations of other similar agencies as QFPD looked into proposing a new tax measure to its voters.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and biennially audited financial statements. The District does not adopt a capital improvement plan (CIP). QFPD conducts capital improvement planning when the District prepares to go to its voters for a new special tax. Thus, in 2012 a committee looked into five-year capital improvement needs; however, a document recording these needs have never been completed. QFPD records its capital improvement needs in its budgets. In addition, QFPD adopts the strategic plan, which was most recently updated in 2012.

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the county auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.<sup>148</sup> The most recent audit for QFPD was completed for FY 10-11. The District should ensure it is meeting the adopted audit requirements as determined by the Board of Supervisors and submitting budgets annually to the County as legally required.

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

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<sup>148</sup> Government Code §26909.

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## Existing Demand and Growth Projections

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The land uses within the District include residential, commercial, industrial, and some general forest and timber preserve. The District's bounds encompass approximately 11.7 square miles.

### Population

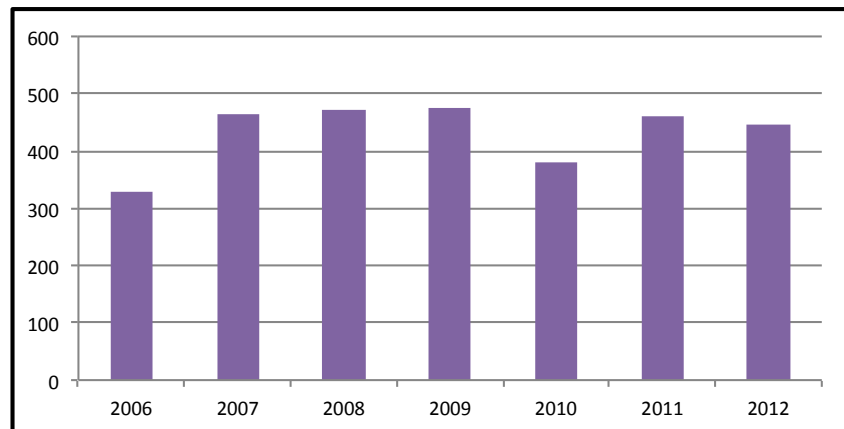
There are approximately 5,444 residents within the District, based on GIS estimate. The District's population density is 465 residents per square mile.

### Existing Demand

The peak demand times for the District were reported to be in the afternoons. Calls for medical emergencies are consistently high in volume throughout the year, similar to other fire districts in the region.

**Figure 10-4: Quincy FPD Number of Calls by Year, 2006-2011**

The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years, due to an increase in tourism, a revival of the timber industry, and aging population. The District did not attribute this growth in demand to a growth in its permanent population, given that QFPD is surrounded by USFS lands, which limits development.



As shown in Figure 10-4, the number of calls went up from 2006 to 2007, stayed steady for three years, then slightly dropped in 2010 and went back up in 2011 and 2012.

### Projected Growth and Development

QFPD anticipates moderate growth in service demand within the District in the next few years, particularly due to some areas being rezoned from industrial into residential, increasing the potential for residential growth. The District also reported that there was one development in northern Quincy, which currently includes about 25 units, but could potentially add 200 more. The District is anticipating providing services to this potential growth. QFPD reported that it had sufficient equipment capacity to serve its anticipated future growth, but the District lacks the necessary personnel. QFPD also cited absence of a sufficient water system as a capacity constraint for the District.

The District does not create population projections, reportedly due to financial limitations.

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by four percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections,

the District's population would increase from 5,444 in 2010 to approximately 5,662 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

### 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 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 on a process to ensure that all appropriate districts are contacted for review of proposed developments.

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

- 1) Turnouts are now required in every new development.<sup>149</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>150</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>151</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>152</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>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.604 (k).

<sup>150</sup> Plumas County, *General Plan*, 1984, pp. 28 & 29.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.



- 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>154</sup>
- 7) Bridges are required to be designed for an 80,000 pound vehicle load.<sup>155</sup>
- 8) All access roads must be marked with an approved sign; and all lots must be identified by an address.<sup>156</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>157</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>158</sup>
- 11) The County encourages biomass thinning programs in high fire risk areas.<sup>159</sup>

The County is in the final stages 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 through 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.
- 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.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 9 Section 9-4.601.

<sup>159</sup> Plumas County Code of Ordinances, Title 4 Section 4-2.101.

18) Fire, law enforcement, EMS, resource management, and public health response partners are encouraged to conduct joint training exercises.<sup>160</sup>

The County has not adopted the new standards for development yet. The revised General Plan may be adopted in 2013. County zoning code will then go through a revision process in order for the zoning code to implement the General Plan.

Not all private property in Plumas County is located within a local structural fire protection district. This issue has been well-documented in Board of Supervisor reports and correspondence, newspaper articles, and former Grand Jury reports. Identifying and reducing the number of such parcels has been the task of local fire districts, county staff, the feasibility study group and volunteer groups who collectively have spent countless hours quantifying the problem, educating the public, and encouraging solutions.

Over the past few years, these efforts have been very successful. A summary of the activities and their impacts are listed to help solve this important problem:

- ❖ Updated General Plan Policies: The updated General Plan will require fire protection for any new development, preventing the number of parcels outside a fire district from increasing and encouraging annexations.
- ❖ Building Permit Review: Applications for new construction are reviewed by County staff to determine if the property is outside a district. Permit applicants are provided a resources and a handout on what it means to be outside a district.
- ❖ GIS Website Update: The Planning Department's GIS data on fire district boundaries is now available on the County's website, making it easy for fire districts and the public to determine whether a parcel is within a district.
- ❖ District Sphere of Influence Updates: The Local Agency Formation Commission continues work on updating fire districts' spheres of influence. These spheres indicate areas of likely district growth and serve as a blue print for possible future district annexations.
- ❖ Fire Protection Communication Plan: Completed in August 2012, the Fire Protection Communication Plan is a comprehensive tool to guide fire districts through the process of educating the public and gaining support for service agreements or annexations.
- ❖ Close-of-Escrow Notification on Fire District Status: As directed at the October 2, 2012 Board of Supervisors meeting, County staff is investigating options for escrow notification of property buyers regarding fire district status.
- ❖ Firewise and Fire Safe Communities Development: The Plumas County Fire Prevention Specialist continues working throughout the County to encourage firewise and fire safe activities to reduce the risk and consequences from wildfire.

With regard to possible governance structure alternatives, the District reported that it had not considered consolidation with other districts. QFPD reported that it would like to annex its islands; however, these annexations would be dependent on negotiating a tax sharing agreement with the County. The District would also like to annex all areas in its

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<sup>160</sup> Plumas County General Plan, Draft Goals, Policies and Implementation Measures, 2010.

SOI with the exception of the northern areas, as it would be challenging to serve due to the absence of a nearby fire station. The District is also in discussions with four other fire departments (Long Valley CSD, Greenhorn Creek CSD, Meadow Valley FPD, and Bucks Lake private fire department) to explore the possibility of establishing a JPA to combine and share resources.

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## Financing

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The District reported that previous financing levels were not adequate to deliver services. QFPD required additional source of funding, as it was using its reserves to continue operations. In June 2013, district voters passed Measure A, a special tax on parcels to ensure continued satisfactory operations of the fire district.

The County keeps accounts for the District's finances and tracks revenues and expenditures. The District's total revenue for FY 12 was \$247,873. Sources of revenue included property tax income (88 percent), special tax (one percent), interest revenue (one percent), and other miscellaneous revenue (10 percent).

The District's principal source of funds is derived from property taxes levied by Plumas County. QFPD currently receives revenue from one special tax, which brings in a minor amount. The District's other special tax expired in 2010 and reduced the District's income by half. Consequently, QFPD once again went to the voters to approve a new special tax.

In 2007, the District started charging fees for providing services outside of its boundaries and first responder fees inside the boundaries; however, it hasn't been successful collecting the funds for a majority of the responses. Charges are based on hourly use of equipment and personnel and vary from \$50 an hour to \$200 an hour for equipment and from \$21 per hour to \$55 per hour for personnel. In addition, QFPD is compensated for workers compensation insurance, unemployment insurance and administrative costs. The District also has fee schedules as parts of agreements with Cal EMA, CAL FIRE and USFS. In FY 12, the District received no income from service fees.

QFPD's expenditures in FY 12 amounted to \$332,202. Of this amount, 55 percent was spent on salaries and benefits, 39 percent on services and supplies, and six percent on fixed assets. The District's expenditures exceeded its revenues by \$84,329 in that year.

The District performs capital improvement planning as needed. According to the District's approved FY 13-14 budget, QFPD is planning to spend \$412,111 on capital improvements this fiscal year.

QFPD has a management practice to maintain a financial reserve. At the end of FY 12, the reserve had a balance of about \$800,000. About \$150,000 will most likely be spent on the District's operations by the end of FY 12-13. The remainder of the balance is earmarked for capital improvement needs such as structures, trucks, and safety equipment.

QFPD does not have any long-term debt.

The District does not participate in any joint financing ventures under joint powers agreements.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### Service Overview

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QFPD provides structural fire suppression, wildland fire suppression, airport rescue firefighting (ARFF), year-round fire prevention, emergency medical services (consisting of basic life support and advanced life support), hazardous material response (technical and operational level), and rescue (operational level).

The District provides contract services to other agencies. QFPD contracts with and gets reimbursed from USFS for wildland fire suppression. The District also houses the Cal EMA engine and staffs it as needed.

### Collaboration

QFPD has an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD to respond in MVFPD as needed Monday through Friday from eight in the morning till five in the afternoon. The District has mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, USFS and CAL FIRE. The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and California State Firefighters Association.

QFPD participated in the Plumas County Hazmat Plan as a part of the Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, the State Master Mutual Aid Plan, and the County Fire Chief's Association Plan.

### 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 the Sheriff's Office; however, some are answered by CHP and redirected to the Sheriff. The Sheriff provides dispatching for most fire providers in the County except for the ones in northern part of the County, which are served by the CHP Susanville Dispatch Center. The Forest Service has its own dispatch. The sheriff dispatch center 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 boundary of the districts and lack an officially designated fire provider.

The District reported that in general it was very satisfied with the dispatch services provided by the Sheriff's Office. However, the District reported that improvements could be made to infrastructure and equipment, such as repeaters, dispatch equipment and software, field radio equipment and GIS mapping. Other desirable improvements include more mountain top repeater sites, better computer aided tracking of individual resources (for example, response times), integration of pre-designated alarm assignments, including automatic and mutual aid agreements, and emergency medical dispatch pre-arrival instructions. While emergency medical dispatch would reportedly be ideal, it would require an additional dispatcher. Sometime in the future the District would also like to see integration and accessibility of National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) report information for each response agency, as well as integration of Environmental Health

Business Plan information, fire hydrant data, and fire district pre-plan information in the dispatch center system.

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## Staffing

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QFPD has 30 sworn personnel—one fire chief, one deputy chief, one assistant chief, five captains, and 22 firefighters. The full-time chief is the only paid sworn staff; the rest of the firefighters are not compensated. The median age of the firefighters is 42, with a range from 20 to 71.

Staffing levels for firefighters have run from 30 to 40 over the last 10 years. Turnover has been an average of 10 firefighters per year over the last three years.

Currently, there are three certifications in the California firefighter series; Volunteer Firefighter, Firefighter I, and Firefighter II. While the Volunteer Firefighter focuses on skills and tasks necessary to assure safety on the fire ground, Firefighter I & II prepares the fire fighter to perform essential and advanced fireground tasks as well as allowing entry into all tracks of the certification system. 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>161</sup> QFPD has three Firefighter I and seven EMT I certified personnel. The District is currently training its firefighters to the NFPA 1001 standard through a 156-hour program, which includes lecture, hands-on training, home study, and online course work.

All new members attend QFPD 40-hour basic fire academy in April of each year. This program is in addition to a 32-hour wildland firefighter course, 16-hour HAZMAT First responder Operations Course, eight-hour Confined Space Rescue Awareness course, 16-hour Auto Extrication class, as well as ICS 100 and 700 (though taught periodically during regular meetings, ICS courses can be completed online).

Quincy Volunteer Firefighters are constantly training for emergencies. Volunteers are expected to participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the District's Tuesday night drills.

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## Facilities and Capacity

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QFPD operates three fire stations. Station 1, which was reported to be in fair condition, is located at 505 Lawrence Street in Quincy and was built in 1939 with additions made through the early 1970s. Station 1 is staffed by the fire chief, administrative secretary and mechanic/facilities manager Monday through Friday from six in the morning till five in the afternoon. Station 2, located at 49 Alta Avenue in Quincy, was built in 1948 with an addition completed in 1978. The station was reported to be in poor condition. Station 3

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<sup>161</sup> State Fire Marshal, Course Information and Required Materials, 2007, p. 44

was built in 1979 and is considered to be in good condition. It is located at 1649 Chandler Road in Quincy. Stations 2 and 3 are unstaffed.

Station 1 is used as a fire station, administrative offices, vehicle maintenance and testing facility, training facility, and meeting rooms. It houses 10 vehicles—two type 1 structure engines, one type 3 wildland engine, one hazmat response vehicle, one support unit, one fire safety trailer, one antique parade vehicle, and two forklifts. Station 2 is used as a fire station and physical fitness center and contains two type 1 structure engines, one type 3 wildland engine and one rescue squad vehicle. Station 3 serves exclusively as a fire station and includes one type 2 structure engine and one 3,500-gallon water tender.

The District's total water storage capacity is 9,000 gallons, which include water stored in engines, rescue squad, water tender, and ladder truck.

Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area; however, the ability to adequately address demand as a result of any future growth will greatly depend on a stable and adequate financing source. Although, there are sufficient facilities and equipment, lack of available water supply and limited staffing may present a problem in the future.

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## Infrastructure Needs

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The District identified multiple infrastructure needs and deficiencies. Station 1, which was built in 1939, requires electrical improvements and sheetrock on the interior walls. The building is also not protected by sprinklers or a fire alarm system. Heating appliances have recently been improved, but insulation, single pane windows and air conditioning still have to be addressed. Replacing or redesigning the roof will improve drainage and snow loading and leakage.

The District's training facility is built on land that was donated by a retired fire chief and comprises three lots north of Station 1. On the western side of the training facility there is a parcel with covered storage, which is owned by the church and shared through a reciprocal agreement according to which QFPD may use the property for training in exchange for access to the once land-locked property for parishioners of the church on Sundays. Future acquisition of this and/or other neighboring properties would greatly improve the District's training capabilities as reported by QFPD.

Station 2 has substandard wiring and interior walls are not sheet rocked. Due to its small size it is unable to house modern fire apparatuses. The District has saved nearly \$400,000 for the station's eventual replacement.

Station 3 is in adequate condition and only needs minor upgrades. However, the ownership of the station is debated, because the donation of the property was not properly recorded in 1978.

The District reported multiple constraints to completing these capital improvement needs, including failure to obtain a tax sharing agreement with the County, lack of access to funding for fire suppression in the State Responsibility Areas (SRA) due to the five party agreement (land swap agreement between CAL FIRE and USFS), lack of success with federal grant opportunities for new fire station construction, and no access to Proposition 172 funds.

In addition to facility needs, the District requires some vehicle upgrades. Currently, QFPD structure engines are on a 40-year replacement cycle. To compare, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends a 20-year replacement cycle. Constraints to vehicle replacement needs include the high cost of vehicles and inadequate storage space at Station 2 to accommodate newer equipment. Despite some replacement needs, the District reports that it has adequate equipment in serviceable condition to meet its current demand.

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## Challenges

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The District reported that within its boundaries there were no notable barriers to response that would delay responses other than individual narrow or steep driveways. QFPD, however, is concerned about some areas with limited access or egress. These areas include the Galleppi Ranch Subdivision and Main Ranch Road. The areas of Chandler Road, La Porte Road, Main Ranch Road, Carol Lane East, and Carol Lane West are also a concern, due to lack of fire hydrants or other accessible year-round water supplies.

The District reported various other challenges to providing adequate services, such as lack of a unified Plumas County presence in structural firefighting, fire prevention and code enforcement. Plumas has recently made a step forward by hiring a fire prevention officer, but there are still concerns on the part of the District regarding a lack of centralized coordination between the County's fire service providers. In addition, fire districts lack a legitimate voice in the planning process for new development. If districts choose to participate, each one is responsible for plan checking and code enforcement within their own district. Most fire districts have not adopted a fire code or local ordinances. These same districts may not have any training or experience in plan checking or code enforcement. Volunteer fire departments find it difficult to function in an enforcement role when they rely heavily on local support for fundraising and recruitment. QFPD also reported that continuously increasing regulation and medical requirements on volunteer firefighters have made the recruitment, training and retention of firefighters difficult. Equipment costs and staying in compliance with NFPA, OSHA and other regulations and standards present a challenge as well.

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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, with classes ranking from 1 to 10. Communities with the best fire department facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms and communications, and equipment and personnel receive a rating of 1. QFPD has an ISO rating of four in urban areas and 8B in rural areas. These results are based on the 1993 evaluation. The District was re-surveyed in August of 2012 and the report reveals ISO rating of 4/8B.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has issued a performance standard for volunteer and combination fire departments (NFPA 1720). This standard, among other

guidelines, identifies target response time performance for structure fires. The response time is measured from the completion of the dispatch notification to the arrival time of the first-responder at the scene. Though not a legal mandate, NFPA 1720 does provide a useful benchmark against which to measure fire department performance. NFPA 1720 recommends that the response times for structure fire be nine minutes in urban demand zones at least 90 percent of the time, 10 minutes in suburban zones at least 80 percent of the time and 14 minutes in rural zones at least 80 percent of the time. Response times in remote zones are directly dependent on travel distances.<sup>162</sup> QFPD falls under the definition of a rural demand zone.

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 include rural and wilderness classifications. The District tracks its response times for each incident. Based on QFPD a response times sample from August 2012, its median response time is three minutes, and 12.4 minutes 90 percent of the time. Median and 90<sup>th</sup> percentile response times include incidents that occurred outside of the District's boundaries, but within its service area.

The service area size<sup>163</sup> for each fire station varies between fire districts. The median fire station in Plumas County serves approximately eight square miles. A station in La Porte FPD services the most expansive area of 151 square miles. Densely populated areas tend to have smaller service areas. For example, the average service area for Quincy FPD's fire station is six 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 Plumas County vary from nine call firefighters per 1,000 residents in Quincy FPD service area to 231 in La Porte FPD.

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<sup>162</sup> Urban demand zone has population density of more than 1,000 people per square mile; suburban zone—between 500 and 1,000 people per square mile, rural zone—less than 500 people per square mile, and remote zone is identified by eight or more miles of travel distance to an incident.

<sup>163</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 10-5: Quincy FPD Fire Service Profile**

Fire Service					
<b>Facilities</b>					
Firestation	Location	Condition	Staff per Shift	Vehicles	
Station 1	505 Lawrence Street, Quincy, CA	Fair	Monday-Friday 6am-5pm	2 type 1 structure engines, 1 type 3 wildland engine, 1 hazmat response vehicle, 1 support unit, 1 class B foam unit, and 1 fire ssafety trailer	
Station 2	49 Alta Avenue, Quincy, CA	Poor	Unstaffed	2 type 1 structure engines, 1 type 3 wildland engine, and 1 rescue squad	
Station 3	1646 Chandler Road, Quincy, CA	Good	Unstaffed	1 type 2 structure engine and 1 3,500-gallon water tender	
<b>Facility Sharing</b>					
<b>Current Practices:</b> The District makes use for training purposes of a parcel which is owned by the church and shared through a reciprocal agreement.					
<b>Future opportunities:</b> QFPD is discussing a possibility of a JPA according to which it will share resources with four other districts.					
<b>Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies</b>					
Station 1 requires multiple upgrades. Station 2 needs to be replaced. Station 3 only needs minor repairs and upgrades. Multiple vehicles need to be replaced.					
District Resource Statistics		Service Configuration		Service Demand	
Staffing Base Year	2012	Configuration Base Year	2012	Statistical Base Year	2011
Fire Stations in District	3	Fire Suppression	Direct	Total Service Calls	460
Stations Serving District	3	EMS	Direct	% EMS	84%
Sq. Miles Served per Station <sup>1</sup>	6.7	Ambulance Transport	PHD	% Fire/Hazardous Materials	13%
Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	30	Hazardous Materials	Direct	% False	1%
Total Full-time Firefighters	1	Air Rescue/Ambulance Helicopter	CHP	% Misc. emergency	1%
Total Call Firefighters	29	Fire Suppression Helicopter	USFS	% Non-emergency	1%
Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	10	Public Safety Answering Point	Sheriff	% Mutual Aid Calls	1%
Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	6	Fire/EMS Dispatch	Sheriff	Calls per 1,000 people	85
Service Adequacy		Service Challenges			
Response Time Base Year	2012 (August)	The District suffers from the lack of funding sources and high cost of equipment. QFPD also identified multiple difficult-to-serve areas in its service area.			
Median Response Time (min)	3 minutes	Training			
90th Percentile Response Time (min)	12.4 mintues	All new members attend QFPD 40-hour basic fire academy in April of each year. Quincy Volunteer Firefighters are constantly training for emergencies.			
ISO Rating	4/8B (2012)	Volunteers are expected to participate in a minimum of 50 percent of the			
Mutual & Automatic Aid Agreements					
The District has automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD Monday through Friday from 8am to 5pm and mutual aid agreements with the rest of the fire service providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, CalFire and USFS.					
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.					

## QUINCY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and Population Projections

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- ❖ Quincy Fire Protection District (QFPD) had population of 5,444 as of 2010.
- ❖ The District reported that it had observed an increase in service demand in the last few years due to an increase in tourism, a revival of the timber industry, and the aging of the local population.
- ❖ QFPD anticipates moderate growth in service demand within the District in the next few years, particularly due to some areas being rezoned from industrial to residential. There is also one development in northern Quincy, which currently includes about 25 units, but could potentially add an additional 200.

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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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- ❖ Currently, the District has sufficient capacity to provide adequate services within its boundary area; however, the ability to adequately address demand as a result of any future growth will greatly depend on a stable and adequate financing source.
- ❖ Current response times meet California EMS Agency and NFPA standards for response to medical emergencies and structural fires, respectively.
- ❖ Infrastructure needs include upgrades to Station 1, replacement of Station 2 and minor repairs at Station 3. The District also needs to replace multiple vehicles.
- ❖ The District does not have a formal capital improvement plan. It is a recommended practice for all districts to adopt a capital improvement plan to allow for more effective infrastructure improvement and related financing planning.
- ❖ QFPD services appear to be adequate. The District has adequate response times. The District's ISO rating is high compared to urban service providers, but similar to rural providers and those in the County.

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### Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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- ❖ The District reported that previous financing levels were not adequate to deliver services. QFPD required additional source of funding, as it was using its reserves to

continue operations. In June 2013, district voters passed Measure A, a special tax on parcels to ensure continued satisfactory operations of the fire district.

- ❖ The District's general operations are funded primarily through property taxes. QFPD charges fees for providing services outside of its boundaries and first responder fees inside the boundaries; however, it has not been successful collecting a majority of the fees.
- ❖ QFPD maintains a financial reserve, which at the end of FY 12, had a balance of about \$800,000. About \$150,000 will most likely be spent on District's operations by the end of FY 12-13. The remainder of the balance is earmarked for capital improvement needs.

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

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- ❖ The District has mutual aid agreements with all fire providers in Plumas County, including Cal EMA, CAL FIRE and USFS, and an automatic aid agreement with Meadow Valley FPD.
- ❖ The District uses a parcel owned by the neighboring church for training purposes through a reciprocal agreement.
- ❖ The District is a member of the Plumas County Fire Chiefs' Association and California State Firefighters Association.
- ❖ QFPD participated in the Plumas County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan, State Master Mutual Aid Plan, and County Fire Chief's Association Plan.
- ❖ The District sees an opportunity to share resources with four other districts through a joint powers agreement.

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

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- ❖ QFPD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Plumas LAFCo. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.
- ❖ QFPD practices outreach efforts and has a website where district information is made available to the public.
- ❖ In regards to governance structure options, it was reported that the District would like to annex its islands and various other areas in its SOI with the exception of the northern areas. These annexations would be contingent upon a tax sharing agreement with the County.