

15. QUINCY LIGHTING DISTRICT

Quincy Lighting District (QLD) provides street lighting services in the community of Quincy. This is the first Municipal Service Review (MSR) for the District.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Background

QLD was formed in July 1922, as a dependent special district of the County. The purpose of the formation was to provide lighting service on and around the public streets of Quincy.

The principal act that governs the District is the State of California Highway Lighting District Act¹⁰⁹. The act empowers highway lighting districts to install and maintain a street lighting system on public highways within the district for the better protection of the public traveling thereon. Highway lighting districts have authority to install the lighting system and contract for service.

QLD is located in the southwestern part of Plumas County. The only other lighting district in the County is the Crescent Mills Highway LD situated to the northeast of QLD.

Boundaries

The District's boundaries are entirely within Plumas County and encompass approximately 3.3 square miles. The District's boundaries are depicted in Figure 1-1.

Based on LAFCo records, there appears to have been one detachment and one annexation to the District since its formation. A detachment seems to have occurred in 1977 with the transfer of three parcels of land from QLD to East Quincy Services District (SD); however, there is no resolution to confirm that the transfer was completed and the Board of Equalization does have records of this boundary change. Prior to the consolidation of Quincy CSD and East Quincy SD in 2010, QLD added territory previously served by the East Quincy SD. A resolution approving the transfer of property tax from EQSD to QLD occurred on January 6, 2009¹¹⁰.

Sphere of Influence

QLD's Sphere of Influence (SOI) was first established on January 28, 1976.¹¹¹ At that time, the SOI was made coterminous with the District's boundaries. The SOI was amended on August 15, 1977¹¹² when parcels of QLD were annexed to the Quincy CSD's SOI. Most recently, in July 2008, the District's SOI was updated to include all territory outside of the

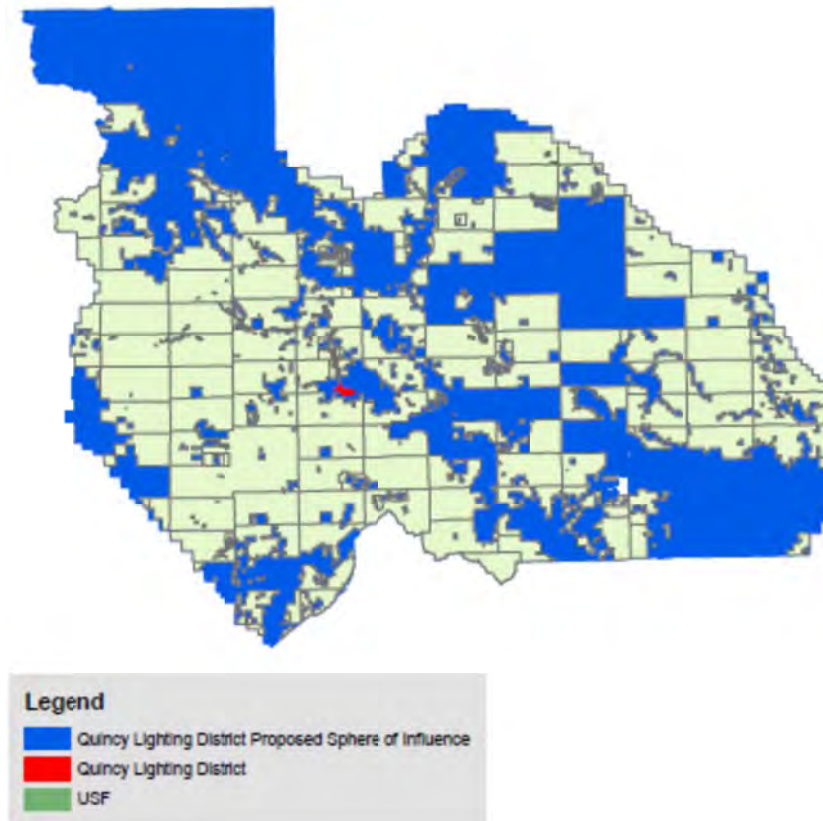
¹⁰⁹ Government Streets & Highways Code §19000-19328.

¹¹⁰ LAFCo Resolution No. 09-01.

¹¹¹ LAFCo Resolution No. 76-06.

¹¹² LAFCo Resolution No. 77-4.

U.S. Forest property in order to allow communities to annex as needed or desired.¹¹³ LAFCo will update the SOI for the District upon completion of this MSR.



Extra-territorial Services

QLD reported that funds from the District are used to finance street lights in the Taylorsville area as well, which is outside of its bounds.

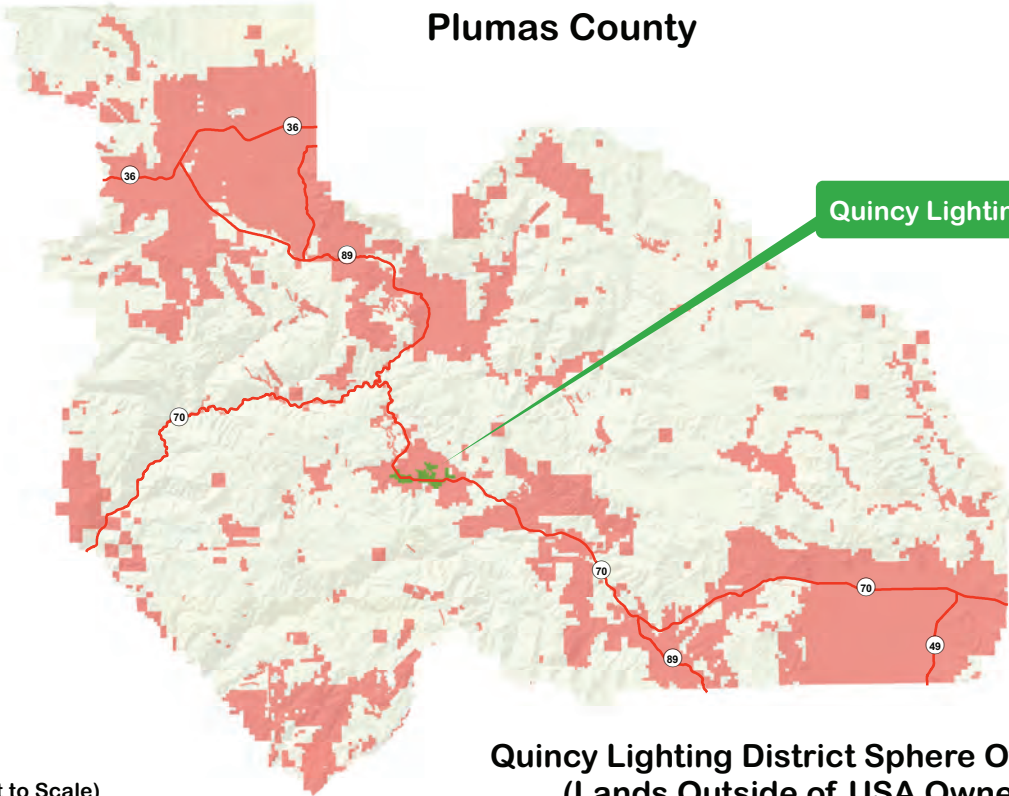
Areas of Interest

The District did not identify any areas of interest.

¹¹³ LAFCo Resolution No. 2008-11.

Quincy Lighting District

Plumas County



Quincy Lighting District

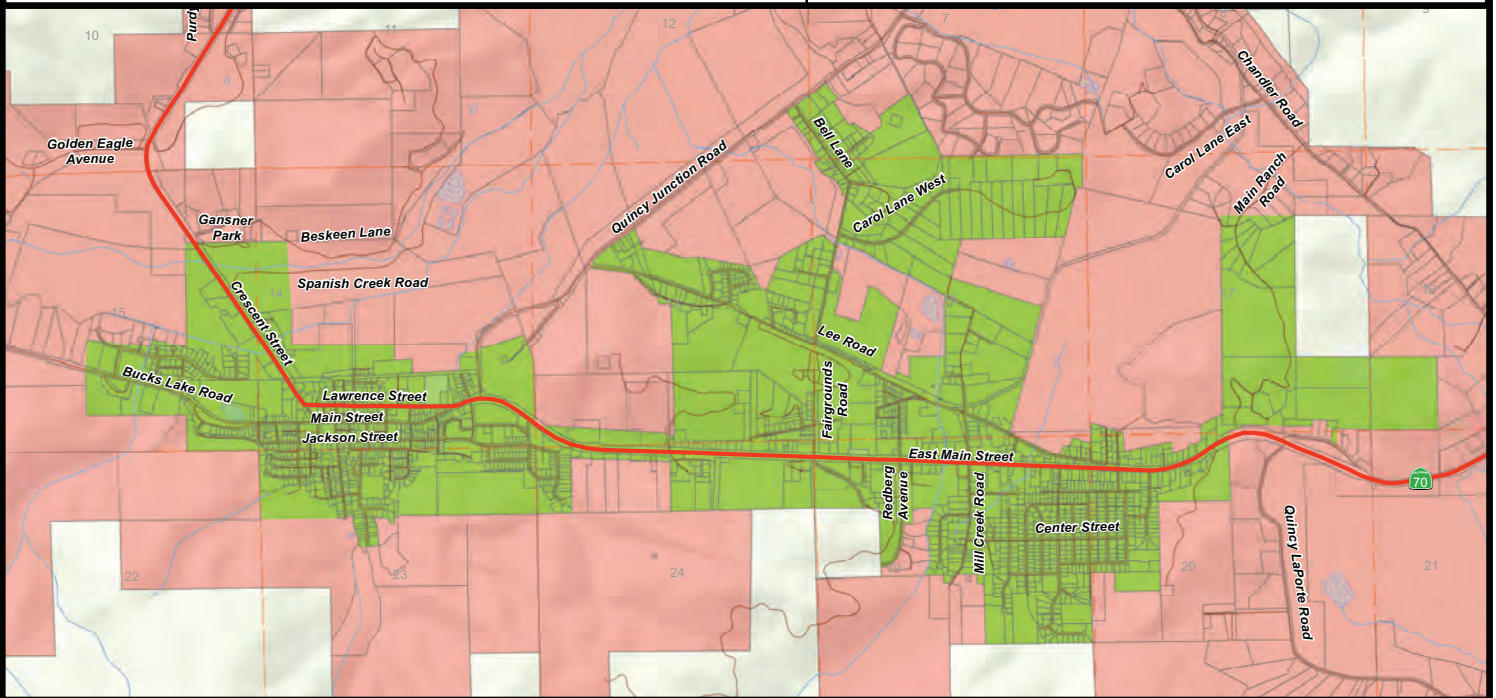
Location Map (Not to Scale)

Quincy Lighting District Sphere Of Influence
(Lands Outside of USA Ownership)

Range 9 East

Range 10 East

Township 24 North

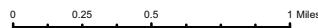


Legend

- Highways
- Major Roads
- Stream / River
- Waterbodies

- Parcels
- Sectional Grid (MDB&M)

- Quincy Lighting District
- Quincy Lighting District Sphere of Influence



Quincy Lighting District
Resolution: 2009-01
Adopted: August 17, 2009
Quincy Lighting District (SOI)
Resolution:
Adopted:

Source: Plumas LAFCo Map Modified 1/28/2015

Accountability and Governance

QLD is governed by a governing body consisting of the five Supervisors of the Plumas County Board of Supervisors. Board members are elected by supervisorial districts and serve staggered four-year terms. Current governing board members are Terry Swofford, Kevin Goss, Sherrie Thrall, Lori Simpson, and Jon Kennedy.¹¹⁴

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

Figure 15-2: Quincy LD Governing Body

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

Plumas County makes available its budget, general plan, emergency operations plan and other documents on its website. No information about QLD is presently available on the County website but the Engineering Department staff has initiated construction of a webpage for QLD. QLD does not make additional outreach efforts to the public regarding street lighting services, besides publishing the legally required agendas and minutes.

¹¹⁴ Jeffery Engel is District 5 County Supervisor Elect and will begin his term January 2015.

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

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

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

Planning and Management Practices

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

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

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

Government Code §53901 states that within 60 days after the beginning of the fiscal year each local agency must submit its budget to the County Auditor. These budgets are to be filed and made available on request by the public at the county auditor's office. Additionally, all special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.¹¹⁵ Because QLD is included as part of the

¹¹⁵ Government Code §26909.

County's annual audit process, it is not required to submit a separate audit to the County Auditor.

Special districts must submit a report to the State Controller of all financial transactions of the district during the preceding fiscal year within 90 days after the close of each fiscal year, in the form required by the State Controller, pursuant to Government Code §53891. If filed in electronic format, the report must be submitted within 110 days after the end of the fiscal year. The District complied with this requirement for FY 12-13.¹¹⁶

Existing Demand and Growth Projections

Land uses within the District are primarily suburban residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial, with some surrounding rural environment zones. The area within the District's boundaries is approximately 3.2 square miles.

Population

Based on GIS analysis of 2010 Census data, there are 4,300 permanent residents within the District.

Existing Demand

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

Projected Growth and Development

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of Plumas County will grow by five percent in the next 10 years. Thus, the average annual population growth in the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.5 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 4,300 in 2010 to approximately 4,515 in 2020. It is anticipated that demand for service within the District will increase minimally based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

There are no significant planned or proposed developments within QLD's boundaries that will impact service demand.

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.

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

¹¹⁶ State Controller's Office website. <http://sco.ca.gov/mobile/News/NewsDetail.aspx?id=67>

engineer's report and voter approval on any proposed additional special tax to fund the new district.¹¹⁷

Financing

It appears that QLD'S existing financing levels from property taxes do not cover all costs associated with the street lighting services. QLD has reportedly not received additional revenue to cover increased costs associated with the annexation of the East Quincy territory. A condition of the transfer of the East Quincy territory to QLD was a one-time payment of \$5,790 and an exchange of tax increment of 0.3 percent or .003 of the property taxes for TRAs 053-010, 053-078, and 053-105.

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

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

Total revenue for FY 13-14 was \$31,673, which was comprised almost entirely of ad valorem property taxes with a minor amount from interest and other restitutions.

Total expenditures for FY 13-14 amounted to \$48,013, of which utilities constituted 96 percent, and overhead, administration fees, and special expenses constituted the remainder. The monthly charges paid to PG&E for utilities have remained constant. Expenditures exceeded revenues by \$16,340 in FY 13-14.

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

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

QLD does not have a policy to maintain a certain level of financial reserves. QLD's rollover balance at the end of FY 13-14 amounted to \$21,305. The District's reserve level has been declining over the last few fiscal years.

The District does not participate in any joint power authorities (JPA's) but does participate in a joint financing mechanism through funding from the County Road Funds.

¹¹⁷ In November 1996, California voters passed Proposition 218, the "Right to Vote on Taxes Act". This constitutional amendment protects taxpayers by limiting the methods by which local governments can create or increase taxes, fees and charges without taxpayer consent. Proposition 218 requires voter approval prior to imposition or increase of general taxes, assessments, and certain user fees.

LIGHTING SERVICES

Service Overview

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

Staffing

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

Facilities and Capacity

The District's infrastructure consists of an unknown number of lights located within QLD boundaries.

Infrastructure Needs

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

Challenges

The main challenge faced by the District is the insufficient funding and increased expenditures, particularly after the annexation of the East Quincy territory.

Service Adequacy

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

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

QUINCY LIGHTING DISTRICT DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ As of 2010, the population within Quincy Lighting District (QLD) was 4,300.
- ❖ The number of streetlights in QLD has remained static for the last several years and there are no proposed developments requiring additional lights.
- ❖ The District does not anticipate growth in population and similarly in service demand in the next several years.

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

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

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

- ❖ QLD has insufficient capacity to provide adequate street lighting services. Existing financing levels from property taxes do not cover all costs associated with the street lighting services. Future capacity expansion would require increased funding.
- ❖ District staff did not identify any particular infrastructure needs in regard to the lighting system.

Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services

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

Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities

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

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

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