

Shasta Local Agency Formation Commission



Municipal Services Review & Sphere of Influence Update CSA #1 – Shasta County Fire Department

May 2014

CSA #1 – Shasta County Fire

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local agency formation commissions have been tasked with updating local agency municipal service reviews (MSR) and sphere of influence boundaries (SOI) every five years since 2008 [Government Code Section 56425 *et seq.*]. This study presents a baseline review of the CSA #1 - Shasta County Fire services and SOI needs, satisfying the requirements of this statute.

CSA #1 – Shasta County Fire (hereafter referred to as “Shasta County Fire” or “District”) was last reviewed in 2002, with a Municipal Service Review (MSR) produced in 2003 and adopted by Shasta LAFCO in 2004 as part of the Shasta County and dependent special districts services study. An updated Sphere of Influence boundary was neither reviewed nor updated at the time of that approval.

A Sphere of Influence (SOI) boundary was first adopted for this District in 1983. It was updated in 1985 to make the county boundary coterminous with its SOI boundary, excluding areas served by cities and independent fire districts, and subsequently the entire unincorporated area of Shasta County (excluding independent agencies and cities) was annexed and ultimately came under Shasta County Fire. In 1995, the French Gulch Fire Protection District was dissolved and French Gulch came under the governance of Shasta County Fire.

Shasta County Fire Chief Mike Hebrard provided excellent detail in response to our request for information for this current review of Shasta County Fire. We will use that data throughout our report, and have attached as Exhibits those sections which we feel will provide the reader with a clear picture of the coordinated operations and services provided by this District to the communities and citizens of Shasta County.

1. GENERAL BACKGROUND

The following statements come from the 2004 MSR for Shasta County Fire:

“Up until the 1950’s, fire suppression and protection services in the unincorporated areas of Shasta County were provided by independent fire protection districts (the oldest being the Anderson Fire Protection District which was formed in 1909). In the 1950s the California Health & Safety Code provided for the establishment of localized Volunteer Fire Companies (VFC). The VFC mechanism allowed neighbors to come together in protecting their community against fire without civil liability or jurisdictional standing. In Shasta County, A number of VFCs were organized in the unincorporated towns and communities, and most of them exist today.

“In the early 1960s Shasta County government recognized that it had a responsibility to provide for fire protection for industry in the valley floor (primarily the lumber mills). The Board of Supervisors established a single paid station with a dozen paid staff and a paid Fire Chief operating out of the Shasta College Fire Station. At the same time, the County

officially recognized the importance of the relationship between County fire protection operations and the VFCs operating in the rural communities. The County designated two 'zones' for fire protection. 'Fire Zone 1' included the unincorporated areas in the valley region, less those areas that were provided fire protection by an independent special district. The remainder of the County was designated as 'Fire Zone 2', with the same independent special district exclusion. The County directed the County Fire chief to provide training and assistance to the VFCs, which manifested itself in the form of acquiring equipment for the companies, providing advance training, and the County engine began to respond outside the valley-core area.

"In 1974, 'Fire Zone 1' was officially organized into the dependent County Service Area No. 1 – Fire Protection, with the Board of Supervisors acting as the governing body of the CSA. In 1986, 'Fire Zone 2' was annexed to CSA #1, thus creating a countywide CSA for fire protection."

Officially, Shasta County Fire is responsible for fire protection, fire suppression, and emergency Medical services to a population, as of the 2010 census, of 70,000+ in a service area of 3251 square miles (or 2,080,640 acres).

Shasta County Fire's Mission Statement: To stand ready to protect life, property, and the environment utilizing training and equipped personnel. The mission includes structural and wildland fire control, first response medical care and appropriate assistance to other agencies during emergency incidents.

Shasta County Fire's Vision Statement: To provide emergency service to the communities of Shasta County and provide mutual aid to allied agencies for the common good of the citizens of Shasta County.

2. AGENCY SERVICES

The Shasta County Fire Department is comprised of eighteen volunteer fire companies or departments, and supported by fifteen CAL FIRE stations. In addition, Shasta County Fire has both mutual and automatic response agreements with most of the other twelve independent fire districts throughout the county, and the City of Redding Fire Department (the Cities of Anderson and Shasta Lake are covered by overlapping independent fire districts).

In addition to these agencies, the U.S. Forest Service, Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management based out of the Redding area maintain fire management teams, units, and equipment and participate in local incidents when requested, or when a fire initiates within their jurisdictional area. Fires and emergencies have no respect for

jurisdictional boundaries and as a result teamwork between agencies consistently provides a higher level of response and protection to the citizens and lands within Shasta County.

a. Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

Please refer to the exhibit “Organization & Activities of Volunteer Fire Companies” for details about the numerous operations, staffing, equipment, and specialized services provided by these important fire protection companies throughout Shasta County.

b. Administration, Management and Operations

Management of the wide range of emergency service providers under Shasta County Fire is coordinated through six identified CAL FIRE Battalions responsibility areas. A comprehensive 2013 Annual Report address a multitude of services and issues provided to Shasta County citizens by the funding of Shasta County Fire through the current contract with CAL FIRE.

c. Fiscal

Shasta County Fire is funded from the General Fund by the Shasta County Board of Supervisors. The County Auditor is the ultimate repository of financial data for this District. Actual supervisorial management is provided by CAL FIRE through a contract with the County. A copy of the contract is found in the exhibits and lists the specific benefits provided throughout the county.

d. Governance

County Service Area #1 – Shasta County Fire is a dependent special district, governed by the Shasta County Board of Supervisors who change hats in order to sit as the Board of Directors of this District. The Fire Marshal and Fire Warden report to the Board about management and operational needs on a regular basis.

3. Regional Context/Relevant Services by Other Agencies

Land use and building regulation services are provided by the County of Shasta, as are law enforcement, road services and other general services provided to the unincorporated areas of the county by various county departments. Shasta County Fire maintains mutual and automatic aid agreements with various other fire protection agencies within the county, as does CAL FIRE. Interagency relationships are essentially mutually beneficial and the agencies work well together, especially during emergency situations.

4. Agency Boundary and Proposed Sphere of Influence Update Maps.

The Shasta County Fire service boundary is coterminous with the County boundary. It is proposed that the SOI boundary continue to be coterminous with that boundary.

5. Written Determinations for the Municipal Service Review

a. Growth & Population Projections

Current growth has been severely limited by a recent recession which significantly slowed the housing market and damaged a number of business both large and small. Expectations are that a slow rate of growth will resume as the economic climate begins to expand once more. The next Service Review will be able to reflect the results of this adjustment.

b. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs)

All communities within Shasta County qualify for the designation of “Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities.” California State Parks (www.parks.ca.gov) provides a Community Locator tool which helps with identifying the general income within one or two miles of a town center. For larger service areas a 25-mile measure is used. This is usually sufficient to provide a guideline for this classification. Classification sheets for this District were too numerous to attach to this report, but copies can be made available upon request to Shasta LAFCO staff. The population counts shown on these reports do not reflect the actual population assigned to those communities in census statistics.

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The median for the state is \$46,477, and communities qualify for the designation as a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) if their median income falls below 80% of this figure. If a community income falls below 60% of the state figures, they qualify as a Severely Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (SDUC). These designations do not necessarily identify the quality of life in these outlying areas, but rather identify their eligibility for certain types of funding programs and cycles provided by state and/or federal agencies.

Within the jurisdiction of Shasta County Fire, the following DUC statistics are shown:

Supervising Battalion	VFC	Estimated Population of area	Per Capita Income	Below Poverty Level	% Below PL	DUC	SDUC
1	VFC Communities Served						
Battalion Chief	VFC 10 – Cassel	35	25993	3	8.5		X
Jim Ferguson	VFC 11 – Hat Creek	54	19280	7	13.0		X
	VFC 12 – Old Station	39	23594	5	9.8		X
	VFC 13 – Soldier Mountain	349	20966	7	20.1		X
	VFC 70 – Big Bend	68	20880	13	19.0		X
	CAL FIRE Station 14 – Burney	2029	20319	325	16.0	-	-
	CAL FIRE Station 19 – Big Bend	-	-	-	-	-	-
2							
Battalion Chief	VFC 33 – Bella Vista	2020	26710	153	0.6		X
Ken Lowe	VFC 71 – Montgomery Creek	125	21384	23	18.4		X
	VFC 30 – Oak Run	132	27394	13	18.0		X
	CAL FIRE Station 73 - Shasta College*	6429	29182	409	6.4	X	
	CAL FIRE Station 74 – Diddy Wells	102	26934	10	9.8		
	CAL FIRE Station 75 – Hillcrest	4	20618	1	25.0	-	-
	CAL FIRE Station 34 – Buckhorn	123	26356	13	10.6	-	-
3							
Battalion Chief	VFC 20 – Shingletown	1040	26306	86	8.3		X
Keith White	VFC 31 – Whitmore	112	27027	9	8.0		X
	CAL FIRE Station 22 – Shingletown**	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CAL FIRE Station 35 – Whitmore	-	-	-	-	-	-
4							
Battalion Chief	VFC 32 – Palo Cedro	2505	30117	435	17.4	X	
Mike Weaver	VFC 55 – West Valley	890	23709	23	2.5		X
	SCFD Station 32 – Palo Cedro	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CAL FIRE Station 43 – Redding	-	-	-	-	-	-
5							
Battalion Chief	VFC 50 – Igo/Ono	596	33588	40	10.0	X	
Dave Hotchkiss	VFC 52 – Centerville	607	40178	59	9.7	X	
	VFC 53 – Keswick	614	22928	10	16.4		X
	VFC 59 – French Gulch	50	24860	4	8.0		X
	CAL FIRE Station 57 – Ono	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CAL FIRE Station 58 – Shasta**	-	-	-	-	-	-
18							
Battalion Chief	VFC 54 – Lakehead	46	35554	4	8.7	X	
Jim Ferguson	VFC 72 – Jones Valley	399	27011	40	10.0		X
	<i>Total of Populations/Per Capita Averaged</i>						
		18368	26138	1692	9.2		X

Within Shasta County Fire’s jurisdiction, five communities are identified as Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities, and all the remaining communities qualify for designation as Severely Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities.

Evaluation of general population incomes assists the evaluation of potentials for increased fees to support local services. Viewing these DUC communities it is easy to see at a glance that very little disposable income would be available for such increases. However, even in light of this meagre resource, these communities consistently conduct successful fundraising events, often raising from \$100 to \$10,000 for the service and equipment needs of their Volunteer Fire Companies.

c. Present and Planned of Public Facilities

Both present and planned facilities are consistent with public service needs and available funding. No immediate severe needs have been identified at this time.

d. Adequacy of Public Services

Services are very adequate for responding to the high fire hazard status enjoyed by Shasta County due to its climate, topography, vegetation, and urban fuels levels.

e. Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

Infrastructure again is very adequate for the provision of current levels of service. More is always useful, but Shasta County Fire manages a conservative budget in an economic environment where budget increases are necessarily tied to local growth and development and their associated production of new revenues.

f. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

None have been identified at this time. Shasta County Fire applies for grants to assist the volunteer fire companies it manages. Some are successful, others are not; it is a very competitive field, but the effort continues.

g. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

This District operates on tax dollars and does not utilize rates for services.

h. Status of and Opportunities for Shared Facilities

This is a very large portion of the contract with CAL FIRE, and one which makes fire protection within Shasta County viable. Shasta County Fire utilizes the services of CAL FIRE personnel, equipment, and training services in their operations. The fire protection services provided by independent districts also benefit from collaboration with Shasta County Fire and CAL FIRE activities, facilities and programs.

- i. Accountability for Community Service needs, governmental structure, and operational efficiencies.

The District Board meets regularly, notices meetings in both communities and offers the public an opportunity to participate in their meetings. The Clerk to the Board of Supervisors manages meeting notifications and other related board services.

6. Written Determinations for the Sphere of Influence Update

- a. Present and planned land uses

Shasta County designates much of the area served as rural residential, agricultural, timber, and industrial/commercial. Many communities are from 4 to 10+ miles from each other. This is a very rural area, with community development either clustered around the town center communities identified in Item 6.b. above, or scattered throughout the outlying areas of these small towns.

- b. Present and probable need for public facilities; adequacy of services

Current levels of facilities and services are adequate at this time.

- c. Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of services

Current capacity of Shasta County Fire to provide adequate fire protection and emergency services is very adequate at this time.

- d. Existence of social or economic communities of interest

Shasta County Fire works closely with all fire agencies operating within Shasta County. Federal agencies include Whiskeytown National Recreation Area Fire Management team, Bureau of Land Management Fire Management team, and the U. S. Forest Service Fire Management teams.

Independent local special districts that provide fire and emergency services include:

- Station 15 Fall River Mills Fire Protection District
- Station 16 McArthur Fire Protection District
- Station 17 Burney Fire Protection District
- Station 21 Millville Fire Protection District
- Station 23 Cottonwood Fire Protection District
- Station 41 Mountain Gate Community Services District
- Station 42 Shasta Lake Fire Protection District

- Station 44 Happy Valley Fire Protection District
- Station 46 Anderson Fire Protection District
- Station 56 Shasta Community Services District (Old Shasta)
- Station 73 Shasta College Fire Protection Department (Amador Contract)

- e. Present and probable needs of disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) within the area.

As identified in the MSR section, communities within this district boundary qualify as disadvantaged communities. Shasta County is undertaking a study of these DUCs as part of their General Plan update and additional information should be available for an expanded analysis of this designation during the next MSR/SOI Update is due in 2019.

7. Conclusion

It is recommended that the municipal service review and sphere of influence update for County Service Area #1 – Shasta County Fire be adopted as proposed.

8. References

- a. CSA #1 – Shasta County Staff (interviews, records, district website)
- b. County of Shasta
- c. Shasta LAFCO files for this district.
- d. Internet research on various sites.

9. Exhibits

- a. Map of proposed SOI Boundary
- b. Map proximity of other local fire agencies in Shasta County
- c. Request for Information Response from Shasta County Fire
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