



## AGENDA ITEM 7B

**MEETING:** January 18, 2017  
**TO:** Humboldt LAFCo Commissioners  
**FROM:** Colette Metz, Administrator  
**SUBJECT:** **North County Regional Fire Protection Services Municipal Service Review**  
The Commission will consider adopting the North County Regional Fire Protection Services Municipal Service Review (MSR), including sphere of influence recommendations for each agency.

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The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act directs Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCos) to regularly prepare municipal service reviews in conjunction with establishing and updating each local agency's sphere of influence. The legislative intent of the municipal service review is to proactively assess the availability and sufficiency of local governmental services. Municipal service reviews may also lead LAFCos to take other actions under their authority, such as forming, consolidating, or dissolving one or more local agencies in addition to any related sphere changes.

### BACKGROUND

The preparation of this MSR for fire protection service providers in the North County Region serves to determine the best approaches to improve service levels and expand service to areas outside existing fire district boundaries. This report largely incorporate technical information collected and analyzed by staff from agency questionnaires and follow up interviews. The report also draws on recent fire planning efforts, including the 2013 Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the 2015 Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association Annual Fire Report. Agency profiles have been distributed to each agency for their internal review and comment to identify any technical corrections or related edits before final Commission review and approval. The report includes service review determinations and sphere of influence recommendations for each fire-related district.

### DISCUSSION

The draft report and its analysis of current fire protection services largely focuses on the out of district response services and mutual aid agreements provided by County Service Area (CSA) #4 and Orick Community Services District (CSD). The exception to this is the City of Trinidad, whose fire department does not generally respond to calls beyond their city boundary, except for mutual aid calls. Out of district response area boundaries were developed by Humboldt County Planning staff, in close coordination with the Districts as part of regional fire planning efforts.

The report recommends that the spheres of influence for the two districts be expanded to match the out of district response areas in order to facilitate annexation or other

organizational changes in the future. Updated spheres of influence to match out of district response areas will support formalizing fire protection services in unincorporated areas not covered by local fire districts. With respect of the City of Trinidad, the report recommends no change to the City's sphere (which currently extends beyond its city limit) given that the Trinidad VFD does not generally respond beyond city limits and the City has an individual MSR update scheduled for late in 2017.

Recommended SOI changes are summarized as follows:

Organization	Proposed SOI
CSA No. 4	Expanded SOI to include non-district response area
Orick CSD	Expanded SOI to include non-district response area
City of Trinidad	No change to the existing SOI that extends beyond the City's boundary and response area

Staff respectfully seeks Commission input with regards to content, conclusions, and recommendations provided in the North County Regional Fire Protection Services MSR.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

This item has been agendaized for consideration as part of a noticed public hearing. The following procedures are recommended with respect to the Commission's consideration of this item:

- 1) Receive verbal report from staff;
- 2) Open the public hearing and invite testimony (mandatory); and
- 3) Discuss item and – if appropriate – close the hearing and consider action on recommendation:

*"I move to approve North County Regional Fire Protection Services Municipal Service Review and adopt Resolution No. 17-04, updating the spheres of influence for each fire-related district studied in the MSR."*

#### **Attachments**

Attachment A: North County Regional Fire Services MSR

Attachment B: Resolution No. 17-04

# NORTH COUNTY REGIONAL FIRE SERVICES

Municipal Service Review

HEARING DRAFT

Hearing Date- January 18, 2016



## HUMBOLDT LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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Skip Jorgensen, Public Member

### **Staff:**

George Williamson, AICP, Executive Officer  
Colette Metz, Administrator  
Sarah West, Service Specialist  
Jason Barnes GIS Analyst  
Paul Brisso, Legal Council

### **Acknowledgements:**

LAFCo staff would like to thank the contributors to this Municipal Service Review. Input instrumental in completing this report was provided by: Amy Nilsen, Elishia Hayes, Joshua Bennett, James Simmons, Tom Marquette, Roberta Coragliotti, and Matthew Marshal.. Special thanks to John Miller and Cybelle Immitt from Humboldt County Planning and Public Works Departments.

# North County Regional Fire Services *Municipal Service Review*

Hearing Draft  
January 18, 2017

County Service Area No. 4  
Orick Community Services District  
City of Trinidad

Prepared by  
Humboldt LAFCo



**HUMBOLDT**  
*Local Agency Formation Commission*

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## INTRODUCTION

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The mandate for Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCos) to conduct service reviews is part of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act), California Government Code Section 56000 et seq. LAFCos are required to conduct service reviews prior to or in conjunction with sphere of influence updates and are required to review and update the sphere of influence for each city and special district as necessary, but not less than once every five years. The service review must include an analysis of the service issues and written determinations in each of the following categories:

- Growth and population projections for the affected area;
- The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere;
- Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- Financial ability of the agency to provide services;
- Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities;
- Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies; and
- Any other matter affecting or related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by Commission policy.

The preparation of a municipal service review for fire protection service providers in the south county region serves to determine the best approaches for improving service levels and addressing the mismatch between fire-related district boundaries and response areas. The service review provides an overview of fire protection services along with profiles of each agency. The report also includes service review determinations and sphere of influence recommendations for each of the following fire-related agencies:

- **County Service Area No. 4 (CAL FIRE)**
- **Orick Community Services District (Orick VFD)**
- **City of Trinidad (Trinidad VFD)**

Additionally, there are several fire companies not associated with a local government agency that are included in this report. These companies include Orleans VFC, Westhaven VFC, and Yurok VFD.

## 1.1 Uses of the Report

A regional approach for conducting this service review provides the opportunity identify shared trends relating to the adequacy, capacity, and cost of providing fire protection services to northern Humboldt County. Most local fire departments report having insufficient funding to adequately respond to the demands placed on their service. There are large populated areas of the county that do not fall within the boundaries of any fire-related district. These areas receive what is referred to as “goodwill service” from nearby district fire departments or non-district fire companies that do not have an official jurisdictional boundary. This goodwill service is not supported by any sustainable revenue source and requires district resources to respond outside of their jurisdictional boundary which puts additional strain on already overburdened resources.

This service review process serves to identify ways to expand fire district boundaries where appropriate to match their true response areas, to form new districts where non-governmental fire companies currently provide service, evaluate the feasibility of consolidations where appropriate, and identify and implement other measures to address the lack of complete community coverage and sustainable revenue. The potential uses of this report are described below.

### To Update Spheres of Influence

This service review serves as the basis for updating the spheres of influence for the three fire-related agencies included in the report. Specifically, a sphere of influence designates the territory LAFCo believes represents an agency’s appropriate future jurisdiction and service area. All boundary changes, such as annexations, must be consistent with an affected agency’s sphere of influence with limited exceptions.

### To Consider Jurisdictional Boundary Changes

This service review contains a discussion of various alternative government structure options for efficient service provision. LAFCo is *not* required to initiate any boundary changes based on service reviews. However, LAFCo, other local agencies (including cities, special districts or the County) or the public may subsequently use this report together with additional research and analysis, where necessary, to pursue changes in jurisdictional boundaries.

### Resource for Further Studies

Other entities and the public may use this report for further study and analysis of issues relating to fire protection and emergency medical services in southern Humboldt County.

## 1.2 Review Methods

The following information was gathered from the fire-related districts to understand the current status of district operations and services:

1. Governance and Organization
2. Financial
3. Personnel



4. Training
5. Calls for Service
6. Response Standards and Performance
7. Mutual/Automatic Aid
8. Stations and Apparatus

In addition, LAFCo obtained call data from annual reports published by the Fire Chief's Association, response mapping from County Planning staff, and regional fire service information from the Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Other source documents include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan
- Humboldt County General Plan Update
- Humboldt County Community Infrastructure and Services Technical Report
- Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association Annual Reports
- Humboldt County General Plan 2014 Housing Element

Information gathered was analyzed and applied to make the required determinations for each agency and reach conclusion about the focus issues identified in the service review. All information gathered for this report is filed by LAFCo for future reference.

## FIRE PROTECTION OVERVIEW

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This chapter provides a summary of fire protection services in Humboldt County and, more specifically, a comparative overview of the fire protection capabilities of the local agencies covered by this service review.

### 2.1 Humboldt County Fire Services

Fire and emergency services delivery in Humboldt County is complex. There are 45 fire departments providing fire protection to cities and unincorporated communities throughout the county. The majority of local fire service providers are associated with a special district, including one (1) County Service Area (CSA); eight (8) Community Service Districts (CSDs); 19 Fire Protection Districts (FPDs), and one (1) Resort Improvement District (RID), with the remainder consisting of two (2) city fire departments, and 13 fire companies not associated with local government agencies. There are also four (4) state, federal, or tribal fire departments providing seasonal wildland fire protection that also work in cooperation with local fire departments.

The districts were formed to provide fire services within a specific jurisdictional boundary and are supported by revenue from a combination of taxes, fees, and fundraising. Many of these jurisdictional boundaries were created as far back as the 1930's. Since that time, neighborhoods, scattered subdivisions, and rural residential development have emerged outside of district boundaries. This newer development requires year-round fire protection and emergency services, which it receives in a variety of ways.

Some areas outside the boundaries of an established district receive fire protection from district resources responding outside of their jurisdictional areas. This type of out of district service is often referred to as "goodwill service." District fire departments provide service to these areas even though they are under no obligation to do so and receive no compensation for their service, other than donations. This practice can put a strain on already limited resources. Furthermore, property owners within the district may question why the services funded through their taxes are benefiting out of district residents, particularly if they pay a special tax or benefit assessment specifically for fire protection.

Many areas outside the boundaries of an established district receive fire protection from a fire company that is not affiliated with a district. These fire companies receive no tax revenue and depend solely on revenue generated from community donations, fundraisers, and grants. Some communities are more supportive of their local fire companies than others, and support can fluctuate dramatically depending on local economic conditions.

### 2.2 Measure Z Fire Services Planning

In November 2014, Humboldt County voters passed Measure Z, a half-cent sales tax to fund essential public safety services. The sales tax measure was approved for a period of five years and is set to expire on March 31, 2020. A Citizen's Advisory Committee was formed to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors as to the expenditure of funds raised by Measure Z.

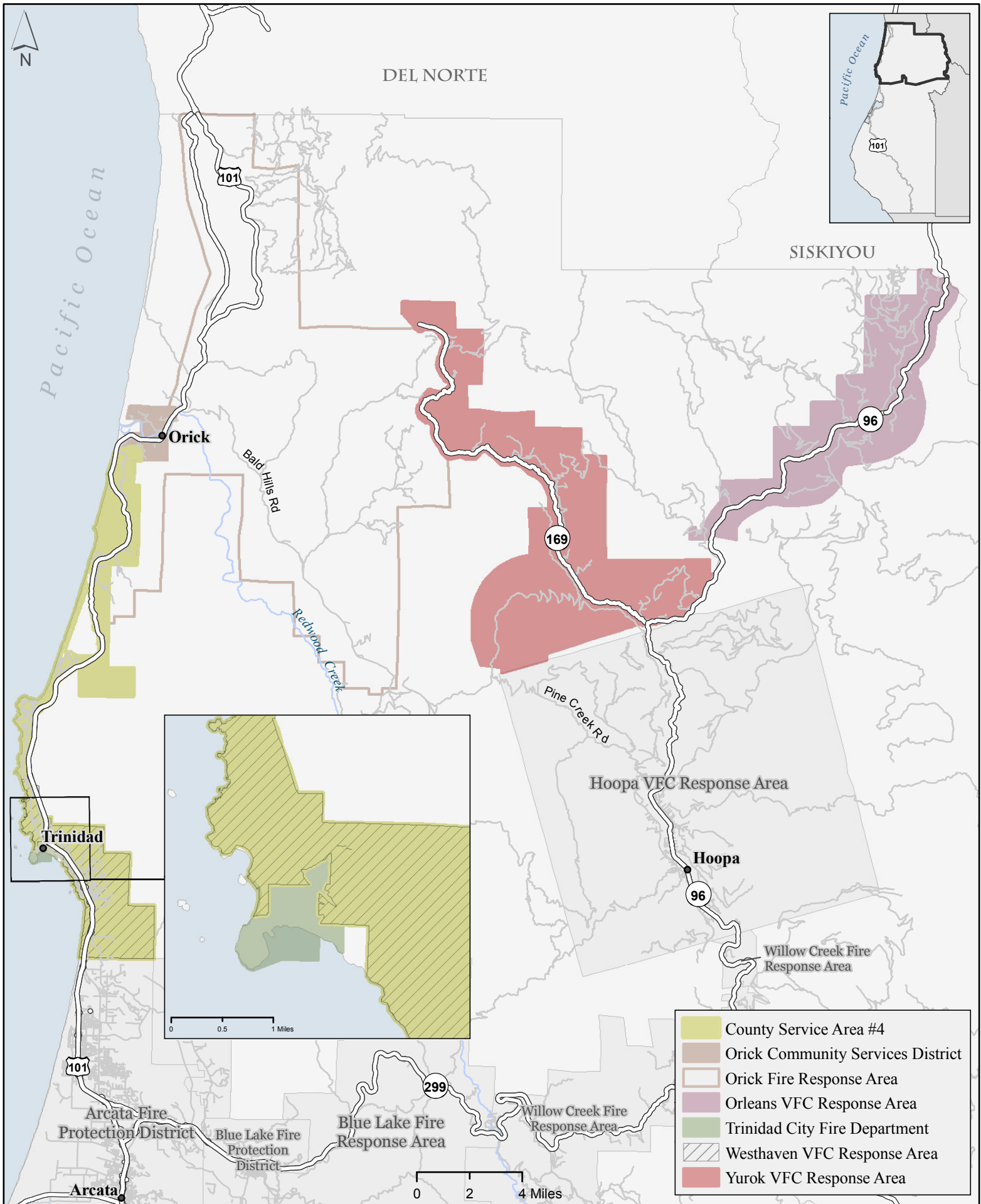
The Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association was granted \$2.2 million in Measure Z funds for fiscal year 2015-16, and \$1.8 million in fiscal year 2016-17. These funds have been used to purchase basic essential safety equipment and communication services to ensure there will not be a reduction or degradation in current fire service responses. In addition, a portion of funds granted to the Chiefs Association have been used to support a formal planning effort led by County staff to address the mismatch between fire-related district boundaries and where goodwill services are provided but not supported by a sustainable revenue source. These funds may also be used to cover costs associated with the LAFCo process related to receiving, reviewing, and approving applications for fire-related district formation and expansion, as well as the election process. These costs, as well as the lack of administrative staff and expertise to start and complete the district formation and expansion process, have previously prohibited local fire-related districts from addressing the challenges identified in this report.

## **2.3 Service Providers and Service Areas**

The study area for this service review is the North County region where a significant portion of the unincorporated area is located outside local fire-related district boundaries. Community fire protection services are provided in this area by one County Service Area, one Community Services District, one City Fire Department, and three volunteer fire companies, all of which are the subject of this report. The following table summarizes the district and out of district response areas, fire stations, equipment available, and number of firefighters for each department. As shown in Table 2-1, the combined out of district response areas for the three districts cover approximately 255 square miles, which represents almost five times the total district areas combined. Areas covered by non-district volunteer fire departments account for another 124 square miles of territory receiving local-fire-related services, yet not within a district boundary. While the district boundaries define the geographical extent of the authority and responsibility of a district, the district response areas have been established over time in areas where no fire-related district exists.

Table. 2-1 North County Fire Service Provider Summary

Service Provider	Total Calls for Service 2015	Area in Square Miles		Stations	Apparatus	Firefighters
		District	Non-District Response Area			
County Service Area #4	381	23.5	9.95	1	4	10 paid 0 volunteer 19 seasonal
Orick CSD (VFD)	124	2.3	121.5	1	4	0 paid 13 volunteer 7 auxiliary
Trinidad VFD	72	.65	0	1	3	0 paid 9 volunteer 0 auxiliary
Orleans VFC	82	N/A	30.7	1	1	0 paid 15 volunteer 9 Support
Westhaven VFC	153	N/A	13	1	4	0 paid 12 volunteer 24 auxiliary
Yurok VFC	41	N/A	80	2	2	6 volunteer 10 auxiliary



## **SERVICE AGENCY PROFILES**

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This chapter provides an in depth review of the fire-related agencies providing fire protection services in the North County region. Included is a description of each agency's organizational development, tables listing key service information, and maps of each agency's jurisdictional and response area boundaries. Brief profiles of the volunteer fire companies are also provided.

### **3.1 COUNTY SERVICE AREA No. 4 (CALFIRE)**

### **3.2 ORICK COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**

### **3.3 CITY OF TRINIDAD (TRINIDAD VFD)**

### **3.4 VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES**

### **3.5 OTHER FIRE AGENCIES**

### 3.1 County Service Area No. One

#### INTRODUCTION

**Table 3-1. Contact Information**

Contact #1:	Amy Nilsen, County Administrative Officer
Phone:	(707) 445-7266
Email:	anilsen@co.humboldt.ca.us
Contact #2:	Joshua Bennett, Battalion Chief
Phone Number:	(707) 677-3638
Email:	josh.bennett@fire.ca.gov
Physical Address:	923 Patrick's Point Drive, Trinidad, CA 95570
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 749, Trinidad, CA 95570
Types of Services:	Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
Population Served:	2,500 residents in District
Size of Service Area:	23.5 square miles (District); 9.95 square miles (out of district)
Number of Staff:	10 Fulltime, 19 Seasonal

#### Background

County Service Area #4 (herein referred to as CSA #4) is responsible for providing fire protection services, through a contract with CAL FIRE or other contracted party, to the community of Westhaven, the unincorporated area surrounding the City of Trinidad, and the unincorporated area adjacent to U.S. Highway 101 stretching approximately ten miles north of Trinidad. While CAL FIRE is primarily responsible for wildland fire protection during the fire season, they provide year-round fire protection and emergency response services through a reimbursement contract with Humboldt County. A municipal service review (MSR) for the District was previously conducted in 2009, which evaluated fire-related services provided by the District. This profile will build upon and update the information in the 2009 document.

#### Formation

CSA#4 is a single-purpose special district formed on April 8, 1986, by Ordinance No. 1750 of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors pursuant to Section 50078 of the California Government Code. Prior to formation, the County was funding off-season fire protection services under an Amador agreement with CAL FIRE (then CDF). The CSA formation was proposed in order to establish a local funding mechanism (special assessment) to support continued services to the area. At the time of its formation, the CSA was given the latent power to provide all services allowable for CSAs by California law, which may be activated by seeking approval of the LAFCo Commission. CSA #4 is a dependent district governed by the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors who serves as its Board of Directors. This is the only CSA in Humboldt County.

#### Amador Agreement

It is common for counties to contract with CAL FIRE for fire protection services to unincorporated areas. "Humboldt County historically used general fund monies to finance

a cooperative agreement with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), under the State Amador Plan.”<sup>1</sup> Records relating to “Amador” agreements in Humboldt County go back to 1947. Reference to CDF (now CAL FIRE) as a structural fire protection service provider in the unincorporated area through contract with the County are found in numerous planning documents in the 1970’s and 1980’s. The County discontinued using property tax funds to support fire protection “due to severe budget constraints” when special assessment proceedings were concluded for CSA #4 (Trinidad) and CSA #5 (Alderpoint), and the property owner funded Amador agreement was executed for Trinidad (CSA #5 was subsequently dissolved). The County has amended this agreement and the special assessment to reflect increases in costs from CAL FIRE since that time. The current assessment, which was last approved by property owners through an election held in 2003, is insufficient to cover the full costs for providing services. Actual costs that exceed the revenue generated by the special assessments are funded by the County General Fund.

### **Dispatch Services**

The County’s agreement with CAL FIRE contains two components. The first component is for fire protection services for CSA #4, based at the Cal FIRE Trinidad station. This portion of the agreement funds three firefighters and operating expenses which are reimbursed primarily through the levy of special assessments. The second component of the proposed agreement includes funding twelve (12) months of a Communications Operator for the Fortuna Emergency Command Center (ECC), which provides dispatch for the majority of fire departments in Humboldt County. The County is responsible for a 75 percent share and the Humboldt County Dispatch Cooperative is responsible for a 25 percent share. This provides a Communications Operator in the ECC, eight (8) hours a day, five (5) days a week, on a year-round basis to support dispatch services for local fire agencies. For the 2015-16 and 2016-17 fiscal years, Measure Z funds awarded to the Fire Chief’s Association have been used to pay the 25 percent share of dispatch fees incurred by thirty-six of the thirty-eight fire agencies within the County.

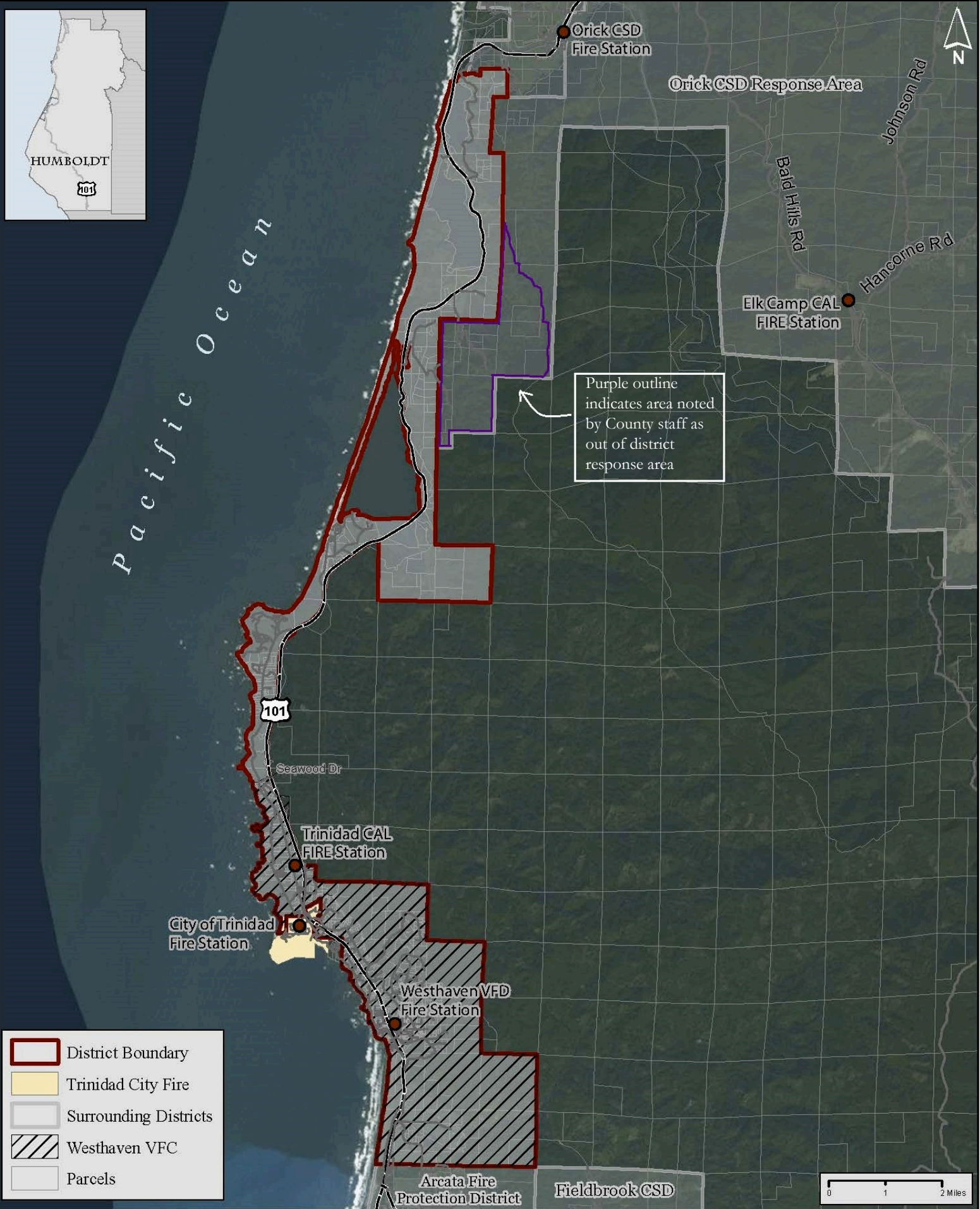
### **Water Service Extension**

In 2010 Humboldt LAFCo considered a proposed waterline extension from the City of Trinidad to the CAL FIRE Trinidad Station due to unsafe onsite water supply conditions at the station. The Commission determined the waterline extension was exempt from LAFCo review and approval pursuant to Government Code Section 56133(e). Subsequently, the one-mile waterline was constructed along Patricks Point Drive but no connection has been made pending Local Coastal Program Amendments with the City and County

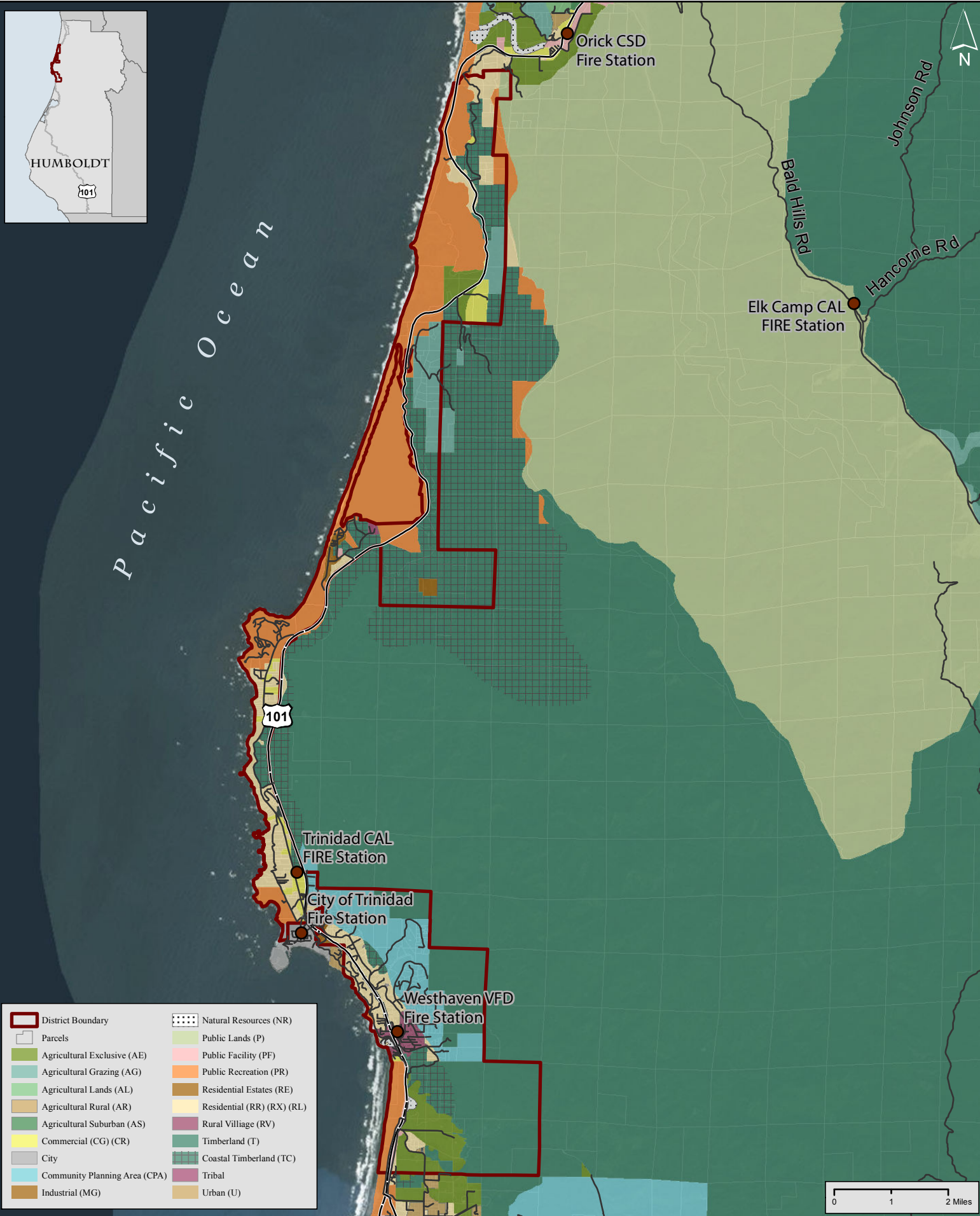
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<sup>1</sup> Proposed Formation of County Service Area 4 (Trinidad) and County Service Area 5 (Alderpoint), February 26, 1986.









### **District Boundary**

CSA #4 consists of approximately 23.5 square miles (15,058 acres) of State Responsibility Area (SRA) land and generally covers the developed areas along Highway 101 extending from Freshwater Lagoon in the north to Clam Beach in the south. See Figure 2. The District boundary encompasses the unincorporated areas surrounding Trinidad, including Westhaven and Patrick's Point Drive but excludes the City of Trinidad and the Trinidad Rancheria. In addition, there are approximately 12 homes in the Kane Road and McDonald Creek areas near Big Lagoon that are outside the boundary of CSA #4.

CAL FIRE has mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments and routinely responds to calls outside the CSA boundary. According to CAL FIRE, over 50 of their responses in 2015 were into the Trinidad City limits and approximately 30 to the Orick response area<sup>2</sup>. They also respond to calls at Cher-Ae Heights Casino and Trinidad Rancheria property which routinely run about 15-20 calls per year. Although out of district responses range all over the North County area, the County specifically noted an area directly west of the current CSA #4 boundary which they consider to be an especially dense area of responses to calls, this area has been formalized as the District's out of district service area and may be seen in Figure 2.

Fire protection services within the CSA #4 boundary are also provided by Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department (VFD). The Westhaven VFD does not have access to traditional revenue sources for fire protection services including property tax, special tax, or special assessment revenue because it is not a special district. The Westhaven VFD currently supports its operations exclusively from fund raising, donations, and fees for providing emergency services by contract to CAL FIRE. The community of Westhaven benefits from reduced insurance premiums as a result of Westhaven VFD's ISO of 5/5X received in 2015. More information about Westhaven VFD can be found in Section 3.4.

### **Growth and Population**

CSA#4 is in a rural area of Humboldt County that does not have specific census data matching the District boundaries. According to the County, there are approximately 2,500 residents and an undetermined number of seasonal vacationers and travelers within CSA #4. Approximately 962 residents or 61 percent of the District's population is located within the Westhaven-Moonstone Census Designated Place. New development within CSA boundaries is expected to occur at existing county-wide unincorporated rates, which range from 0.25 to 1.0 percent per year. Using the higher growth rate of one percent, the CSA could expect to be serving 2,825 residents by 2030.

### **Existing and Planned Uses**

The CSA #4 boundary includes the Trinidad Community Planning Area (defined pursuant to the Humboldt County Framework General Plan) and the surrounding rural residential, timber, and agricultural areas (see Figure 3). Land uses within the CSA #4 boundary are subject to the Humboldt County Framework General Plan (Framework Plan), Volume I, and Zoning Regulations (Humboldt County Code Title III, Division 1). The primary land use designations within the District are Public Recreational (PR), Residential (RR)(RX)(RL),

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<sup>2</sup> As reported by CSA #4, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Timberland (T) (TC), and Agricultural Exclusive (AE). Land uses outside the District are largely public-owned or private timberland.

### **Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities**

LAFCo is required to evaluate disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) as part of this municipal service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. Per California Senate Bill 244, a DUC is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters where the median household income (MHI) is less than 80 percent of the statewide MHI. Within a DUC, three basic services are evaluated: water, sewage, and fire protection. CSA#4 provides one of these services – fire protection – and is responsible for assuring that those services are adequately provided to the community.

As discussed up above, the District covers several small communities with few census boundaries that are able to capture CSA#4's service area. There are however, several sub areas identified with census information. These are analyzed below:

#### Westhaven-Moonstone CDP

The Westhaven-Moonstone CDP is located almost entirely within CSA#4. It's MHI is \$36,000, and qualifies as a DUC<sup>3</sup>. The Westhaven-Moonstone community is also identified as an unincorporated legacy community (ULC) within the Humboldt County Housing Element<sup>4</sup>. A legacy community is defined as a place that meets the following criteria:

- Contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another;
- Is either within a city Sphere of Influence (SOI), is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; and
- Has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income.

Westhaven CSD provides drinking water to approximately 233 connections in the community. There is no community wastewater system in Westhaven.

#### Orick CDP

The Orick CDP is immediately adjacent to the CSA's northern boundary. It's MHI is \$32,656, and qualifies as a DUC<sup>5</sup>. The CDP contains the developed area of the Orick Community Services District (CSD). The Orick Community Services District (Orick CSD) provides water and fire protection services to the Orick community. The community relies on-site septic systems for wastewater disposal. The Orick CSD has the authority to provide wastewater

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<sup>3</sup> California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). Integrated Regional Water Management. Resources-Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Mapping Tool. [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

<sup>4</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. "Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities". Approved May 13, 2014.

<sup>5</sup> California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). Integrated Regional Water Management. Resources-Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Mapping Tool. [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

services and is in the process of determining the feasibility of the development of a wastewater collection and treatment system for the community<sup>6</sup>.

The Orick community is identified as an unincorporated legacy community (ULC) within the Humboldt County Housing Element. See the above definition of a ULC.

#### City of Trinidad

The City of Trinidad is adjacent to the CSA's southern boundary. Its MHI is \$42,917<sup>7</sup>, thereby qualifying the area as disadvantaged. Trinidad is incorporated, and therefore does not qualify as a DUC. However, it stands to reason that portions of unincorporated territory surrounding the City, possibly within the District boundary, may also qualify as disadvantaged.

Should territory in District or surrounding areas be evaluated for annexation, disadvantaged communities in the area may be considered further.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

### **Service Demand and Service Levels**

Fire protection services for the District are provided by CAL FIRE. In 2015, CSA #4 responded to 381 calls for service, which is significantly more than the preceding five-year average of 162 calls per year. In 2015, 98 calls, or 26 percent, were fires of various types, and 225 calls, or 59 percent were medical related. Other calls such as vehicle accidents, which comprise approximately 8 percent of total calls, may also involve the delivery of emergency medical services. Refer to Table 3-2 for an overview of CSA #4's service calls.

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<sup>6</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. "Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities". Approved May 13, 2014.

<sup>7</sup> California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). Integrated Regional Water Management. Resources-Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Mapping Tool. [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

**Table 3-2. Department Numbers (2010-2015)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	0	0	3	1	7	58
Struct. Fires	0	13	4	1	4	9
Other Fires	19	10	22	13	25	31
Medical/Veh Accidents	63	98	122	76	80/80*	225/33*
Haz/Menace	15	8	31	26	12	4
Public Assists	-	4	-	-	1	9
Others	0	63	-	9	0	12
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>381</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Career Hours</b>						
Incident	200	200	250	250	418	700
Training	150	150	1,520	1,710	1,296	1,296
Maintenance	200	200	350	360	1,836	1,836
Fundraising	0	0	0	0	375	0
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>2120</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>3,925</b>	<b>3,832</b>
<b>Personnel</b>						
Fulltime	8	8	8	8	10	10
Volunteer	0	0	0	0	0	0
Auxiliary	0	0	0	0	0	0
Seasonal	14	14	11	11	19	19
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>

**Source:** Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

\*Medical and Vehicle Accident totals were split for years 2014 and 2015.

## Personnel

CAL FIRE is responsible for providing wildland fire protection services and staffs two engines with three firefighters each during the fire season. CSA #4 provides funding through an Amador contract for enhanced staffing (one engine with three firefighters on duty) and operating expenses during the non-fire season (November 1 through May 31). The following table shows the training qualifications for firefighters staffing the CAL FIRE Trinidad Station during a typical fire season.

**Table 3-3. Training Qualifications**

Training Qualification	# of Members Trained
Fire Fighter I or above	20
Wildland (CICCS)	20
First Responder (Medical)	-
EMT	20
Paramedic	1
HazMat First Responder Ops.	20
Rope Rescue	20
Swift Water Rescue	10
Fire Investigation	5

**Current Infrastructure and Facilities**

CSA #4 is based out of the CAL FIRE Trinidad Station located on Patrick's Point Drive. CAL FIRE staffs two engines at the Trinidad station full-time during the fire season (typically June 1st to November 1st), and one full-time engine during the non-fire season. Typically Engine 1264 provides the year-around service. Engine 1274 provides service during the fire season and is kept at the station as a reserve in the off-season. Engine 1284 provides service at another station during the fire season, but is also kept as a reserve at the Trinidad Station in the off-season. The District also utilizes one half ton utility pickup truck.

Each type III engine carries a variety of fire suppression equipment and a compliment of medical gear, including a life-saving defibrillator. The engines are also equipped with auto extrication gear including two sets of the Jaws-of-Life, a full complement of rope rescue equipment, and a thermal imaging camera. CAL FIRE owns and operates other basic fire protection and rescue equipment including radios, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBA), High Pressure Air Bags, protective clothing, and numerous other tools and firefighting equipment. All riding positions on fire apparatus are equipped with radios and SBCAs and all firefighters are equipped with protective clothing.

CAL FIRE owns and maintains a facility and infrastructure for surface water diversion from Martin Creek, located on the east side of U.S. Highway 101, which flows through a pipeline under the highway to the CAL FIRE Station located on the Patrick's Point Drive. CAL FIRE also owns and maintains an existing onsite well for irrigation, fire suppression, and fire truck tank fill-up and truck maintenance.

**Table 3-4. Facilities and Apparatus**

Station Address	Apparatus	Common Name	Year	Type	Pump (GPM)	Tank (Gal)
CAL FIRE Trinidad Station 923 Patrick's Point Dr. Trinidad, CA 95570	1264	Engine	2014	III	500	500
	1274	Engine	1996	III	500	500
	1284	Engine	2002	III	500	500
	1244	Utility Pickup Truck		N/A	N/A	N/A

## ISO Rating

There are several benchmarks by which the level of fire service provided by an agency may be measured, and the Insurance Services Office Public Protection Classification, or ISO PPC, is one such measure. The ISO is a rating commonly used by insurance companies to determine fire insurance rates, with 1 being the best rating which indicates the highest level of fire protection and the lowest is 10.

According to the County, CAL FIRE services are not recognized by ISO and therefore any ISO rating within the CSA #4 boundaries is likely attributed to the services provided by Westhaven VFD whose response area is located entirely within CSA #4. Based on a recent ISO audit, Westhaven VFD has a 2015 ISO rating of "5" that applies to properties within 5 road miles of the responding fire station which are also within 1,000 feet of a hydrant and a "5/X" that applies to properties within 5 road miles of a fire station but beyond 1,000 feet of a fire hydrant. Therefore, areas within the CSA #4 that are beyond 5 road miles of the Westhaven station have an ISO rating of "10". This includes a large portion of the District found north of Seawood Drive (see Figure 1).

## FINANCING

### Current Revenues and Expenditures

CSA #4 is primarily funded through revenue collected from a special assessment, which covers approximately 70% of the Amador Contract for the District. The County covers the remaining 30% through use of General funds to pay the difference between actual costs of the contract and what's collected via the benefit assessment.

In 2003, the County proposed a special assessment increase that received majority voter approval by property owners within the District. The benefit assessment applies a unit of benefit value to each parcel based on the current land use, which ranges from 1 unit for a vacant parcel, 4 units for a single-family residence, 12 units for most commercial properties, and 16 units for light industrial uses. The unit of benefit amount is not to exceed \$29 per benefit unit plus annual adjustments to account for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is an increase from the 1997 Assessment which was at \$8.67 per unit of benefit plus CPI prior to the assessment increase in 2003.

**Table 3-5. Total Unit of Benefit Amount**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Unit of Benefit Amount</b>
2003-04	Not to exceed \$13
2004-05	Not to exceed \$22
2005-06	Not to exceed \$29
Subsequent years	Not to exceed \$29 (+CPI)*
*For FY 2016-17 the unit of benefit amount was charged at \$37.87	



**Table 3-6. Total Assessment Amount**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Amount</b>
2003-04	\$59,371
2004-05	\$100,474
2005-06	\$132,443
Subsequent years	\$132,443 (+CPI)

For fiscal year 2015-16, the unit of benefit amount was charged at \$37.09 and generated approximately \$165,293. The actual costs of the Amador agreement was \$165,447, resulting in only \$154 contributed from the County's General Fund.

The County recently authorized a new three-year contract beginning July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2019. Actual costs that exceed the revenue generated by the special assessments are funded by the County General Fund. The County notes that actual expenditures tend to come in much lower than the budgeted maximum amounts. The following table displays estimated contract amounts for CSA #4 between 2017-2019.

**Table 3-7. Projected Costs for Amador Agreement, 2016-2019**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Unit of Benefit Amount</b>	<b>Benefit Assessment Revenue</b>	<b>Contribution from General Fund</b>	<b>Total Amador Cost</b>
2015-16 ( <i>actual</i> )	\$37.09	\$165,293	\$154	<b>\$165,447</b>
2016-17 ( <i>budgeted</i> )	\$37.87	\$165,185	\$71,252	<b>\$236,437</b>
2017-18 ( <i>budgeted</i> )	+CPI	\$170,000	\$78,258	<b>\$248,258</b>
2018-19 ( <i>budgeted</i> )	+CPI	\$175,000	\$85,671	<b>\$260,671</b>

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

The principal act that governs CSAs is the County Service Area law (Government Code §25210-25217.4). The CSA#4 is a dependent district governed by the County Board of Supervisors who serves as its Board of Directors. The Board of Supervisors holds regular public meetings in accordance with the Brown Act and considers matters related to CSA #4, including service contracts and annual budgets, as needed. There is no advisory body that serves CSA #4. Such a body could provide a vehicle for more local participation and accountability. Affected property owners may provide input directly to the Battalion Chief or to the County Board of Supervisors.

## **MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS**

As set forth in Section 56430(a) of the CKH Act- In order to prepare and to update the SOI in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area designated by the commission. The commission shall include in the area designated for a service review the county, the region, the sub-region, or any other geographic area as is appropriate for an analysis of the service or services to be reviewed, and shall prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

### **(1) Growth and population projections for the affected area**

- a) The estimated population of CSA #4 is roughly 2,500, with approximately 61 percent of those residents concentrated in the Westhaven/Moonstone area.
- b) Using a one percent growth rate, CSA #4 could expect to be serving 2,825 residents by 2030.

### **(2) The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence**

- a) The Westhaven-Moonstone area qualifies as a DUC. Westhaven CSD provides drinking water in this area. There is no wastewater service provider in Westhaven.
- b) The Orick CSD is immediately adjacent to the CSA's northern boundary and qualifies as a DUC. The Orick CSD provides water and fire protection services to the Orick community. There is no wastewater service provider in Orick.
- c) The City of Trinidad is located immediately adjacent to CSA #4 and meets the disadvantaged threshold. However, Trinidad is incorporated and therefore does not qualify as a DUC. However, it stands to reason that portions of unincorporated territory surrounding the City and within the District boundary may also qualify as disadvantaged.
- d) Should territory in District or surrounding areas be evaluated for annexation in the future, disadvantaged communities may be considered further.

### **(3) Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies**

- a) CSA #4, through a contract with CAL FIRE, provides funding for non-fire season staffing at the Trinidad station. The Amador agreement provides funding for one engine and three firefighters during the non-fire season, whereas CAL FIRE staffs two engines during the fire season.
- b) CSA #4/CAL FIRE has a mutual aid agreement with Westhaven VFD, whose response area is located entirely within the boundaries of CSA #4. The Westhaven VFD is not affiliated with a special district and must depend solely on revenue generated from community donations, fundraisers, and grants. Westhaven VFD provides an important role in providing local response and coverage to CSA #4. The location of the Westhaven Fire Station and efforts to improve volunteer response capabilities has resulted in a reduced ISO rating for Westhaven Fire that benefits homeowners within CSA #4 residing within 5 road miles of the Westhaven Fire Station.

- c) CSA #4/CAL FIRE regularly responds outside the District, including to the City of Trinidad and the Trinidad Rancheria. Properties within the existing District boundary largely subsidize the delivery of fire protection services to areas surrounding the District.

**(4) Financing ability of agencies to provide services**

- a) CSA #4 receives funding from a benefit assessment that generates approximately \$165,000 per year and is used exclusively for fire protection purposes. The assessment was last increased in 2003.
- b) The current assessment, which includes annual cost of living adjustments, may be insufficient to adequately cover increasing costs associated with the CAL FIRE Amador agreement. However, the County notes that actual expenditures tend to come in much lower than the budgeted maximum amounts.

**(5) Status of and, opportunities for, shared facilities**

- a) CSA #4 is stationed out of the CAL FIRE Trinidad Station.
- b) CAL FIRE works closely and cooperatively with neighboring fire departments and has mutual aid agreements to provide adequate coverage and response times.

**(6) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies**

- a) CSA#4 is a dependent district governed by the County Board of Supervisors who serves as its Board of Directors. The Board holds regular public meetings and considers matters related to CSA #4, including service contracts and annual budgets, as needed.
- b) There is no advisory body that serves CSA #4. Such a body may provide a vehicle for more local participation and accountability.
- c) The District does not have a website. Establishing a website and posting relevant service information, budgets, financial data, and contact information may provide improved transparency.
- d) Both CAL FIRE and Humboldt County demonstrated accountability in its cooperation with LAFCo's information requests.

**(7) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery.**

- a) Currently there is a mismatch between boundaries (funding) and where services are provided. CAL FIRE often responds outside of CSA #4 into the City of Trinidad and Trinidad Rancheria from the CAL FIRE Trinidad Station. Goodwill services are also provided by Westhaven VFD to CSA #4. Additional research should be conducted to determine whether "assistance by hire" agreements or other formal contracts can be established among each entity to help share in the cost during the non-fire season and provide for more equitable and consistent funding. This could be a way to limit General Fund expenditures on the contract. Such an agreement could provide for annual standby fees as well as minimum response fees for each incident response. Similar agreements have been developed for the Blue Lake Casino (Blue

Lake Fire and Blue Lake Rancheria), the Korbel mill (Blue Lake Fire and the California Redwood Company), and the Brainard facility along Highway 101 (Arcata Fire/Humboldt Bay Fire and the California Redwood Company).

- b) CSA #4's boundary generally matches its primary response area, except for 12 homes in the Kane Road and McDonald Creek areas near Big Lagoon that are outside the CSA#4 boundary. This corresponds with the District's sphere of influence that was reaffirmed in 2009 to be coterminous with the District boundary. It is recommended that the sphere of influence be expanded to match the non-district response area.

## 3.2 Orick Community Services District

### INTRODUCTION

**Table 3-5. Contact Information**

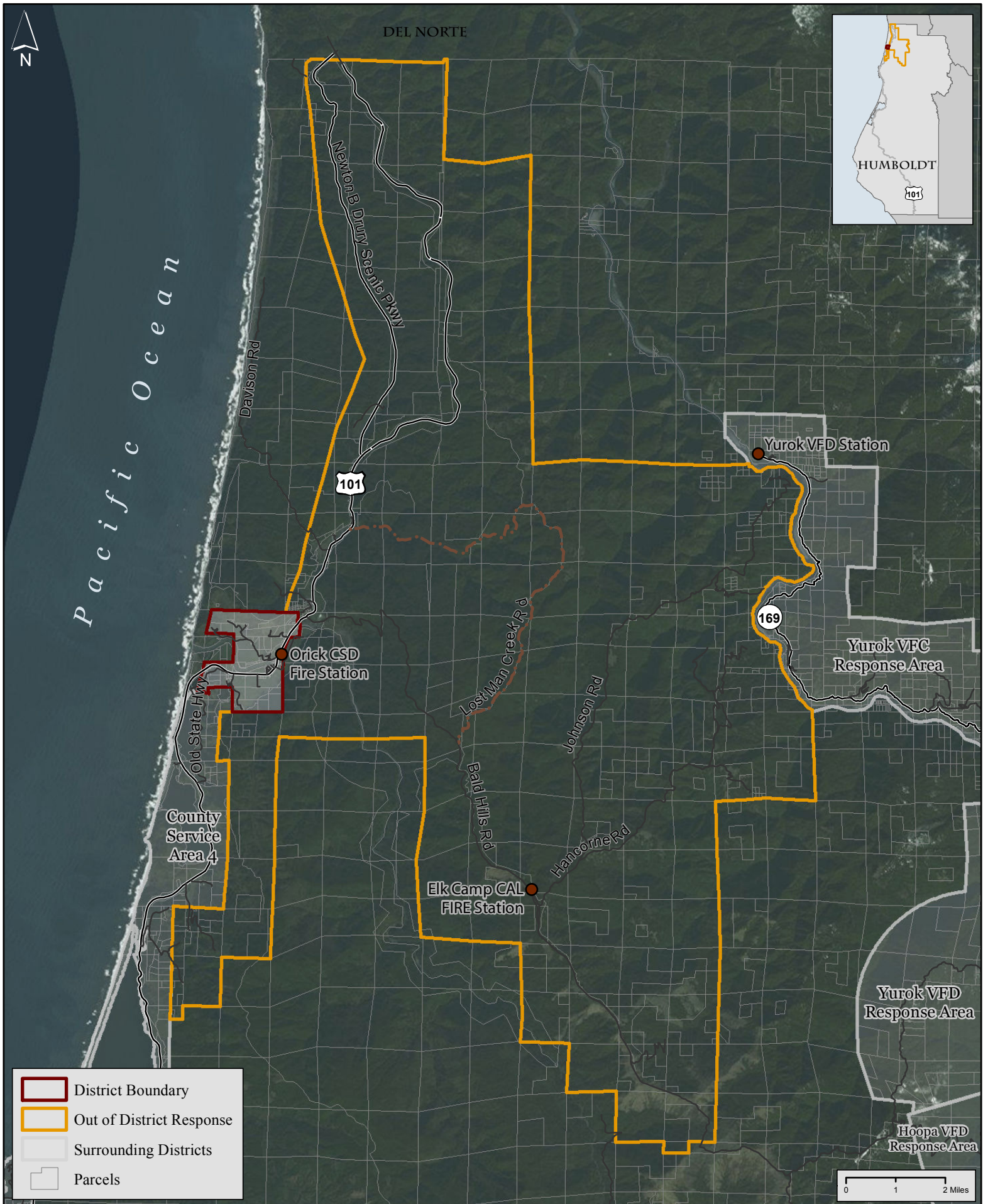
Contact:	James Simmons, Chief
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 224, Orick CA 95555
Physical Address	101 Swan Rd. Orick, CA 95555
Phone Number:	(707)488-3093/ (707)834-6162
Email	Jamesh1168@yahoo.com
Website	orickcsd.com/p/fire-dept.html
Types of Services:	Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
Population Served:	357 residents in CDP
Size of Service Area:	2.3 sq. mi. (District), 121.5 sq. mi (out of district)
Number of Staff	13 Volunteer, 7 Auxiliary

### Background

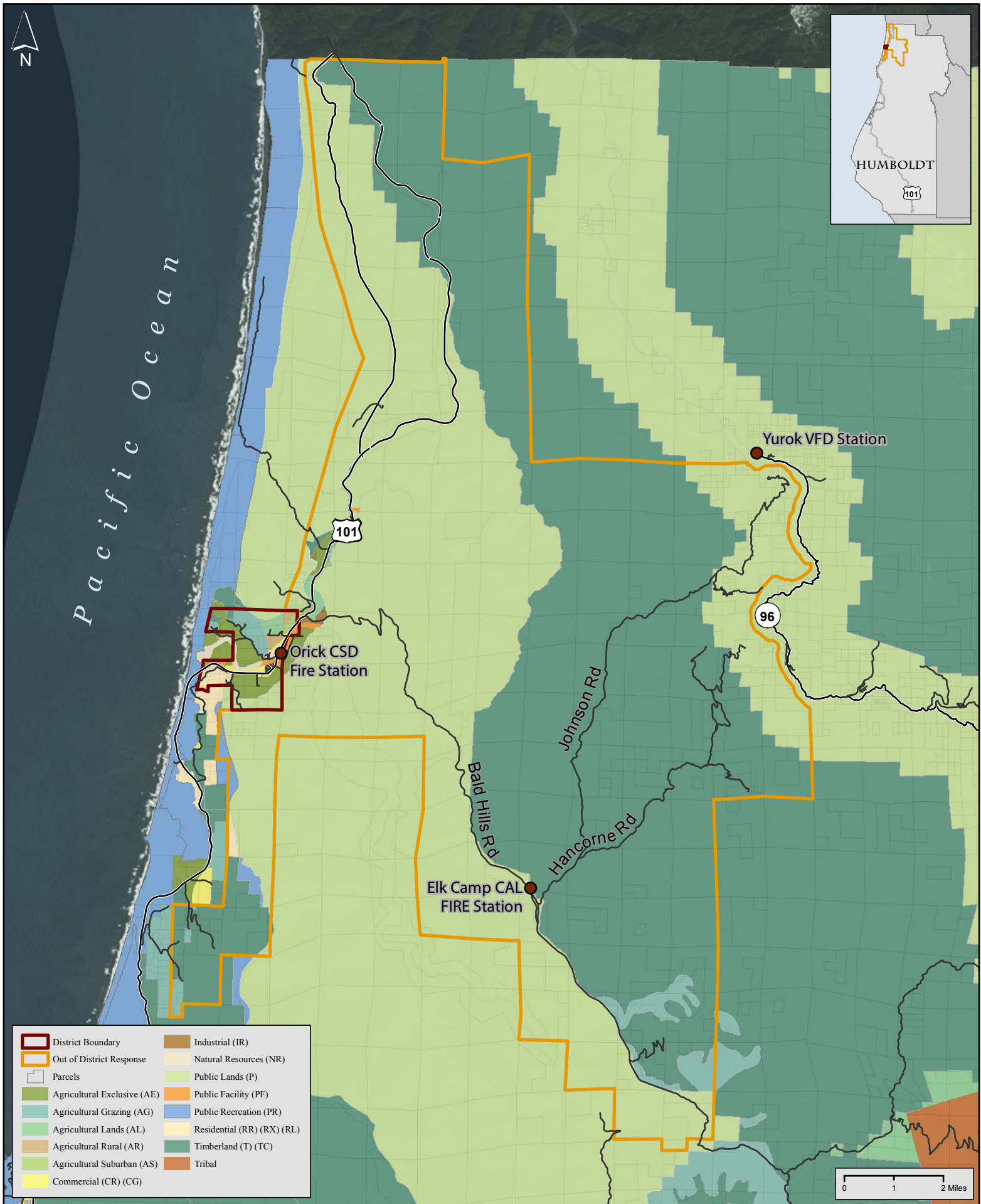
The Orick Community Services District (Orick CSD or District) provides fire protection and water services to the community of Orick. Fire services are provided on behalf of the District by the Orick Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), which responds to an average of 95 calls per year. Orick is the northern most coastal community in Humboldt County and is accessed via Highway 101. A municipal service review for the District was previously conducted in 2011 when wastewater service powers were activated. This document will update the previous MSR and will only discuss the District's power to provide fire protection services. Other services provided by Orick CSD, notably water and wastewater (inactive) services, will be addressed separately in a future regional water and wastewater services MSR.

### Formation

The Orick CSD was formed in 1955, pursuant to the Community Services District Law (California Government Code Section 61000 et seq.) for the purpose of providing fire protection services. In 1974, the District applied to, and received approval from LAFCo for activation of the District's water and wastewater powers. With the passage of Assembly Bill 135 (AB 135) in 2006, any powers that a District was not providing by January 1, 2006, became "latent powers," requiring future LAFCo approval for activation. At such time, the Orick CSD was providing water service, but not wastewater service. In March, 2011 the Orick CSD applied to and received approval from LAFCo to activate its latent power to provide wastewater services. At this time, it is unknown whether or not the Orick CSD will be able to secure the funding and permits necessary to construct a wastewater system. Orick CSD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors who are elected by registered voters within the District.







## District Boundary

The Orick CSD is comprised of approximately 2.3 square miles located between Redwood National and State Parks and the Pacific Ocean, along Redwood Creek (See Figure 4). The Orick VFD reports that they respond to calls well beyond the Orick CSD boundary, to an area of about 121.5 square miles, creating a total response area of 123.8 square miles. This type of out of district service is often referred to as “goodwill service” because the fire department provides service to this area even though they are under no obligation to do so and receive no compensation for their service, other than donations. This practice can put a strain on already limited resources. Furthermore, properties within the existing District boundary largely subsidize the delivery of fire protection services to the out of district response area. Should the Orick CSD annex the response area in the future, the District may propose that the annexation area be a new service zone where only fire protection services would be authorized to be provided, in accordance with Government Code Section 61140-61226.5.

The current Orick CSD service boundary is a reduced version from the original boundary adopted when the District was first established in 1955. Specifically, two small portions along the north-eastern and south-eastern District boundaries appear to have been reduced over time. While there is no specific evidence in LAFCo’s records for this reduction, it appears to correspond to one or a combination of: the 1968 establishment of a 58,000 acres Redwood National Park, combining land currently in the several state redwood parks with newly acquired land in the Redwood Creek area; and later, the signing of the 1978 Redwood National Park Expansion Act, in which 48,000 acres were added to the park, increasing the total size of the park to 106,000 acres.

## Growth and population

Based on the 2010 Census, there was a total of 138 housing units and 357 residents within the Orick CDP<sup>8</sup>. The Orick CDP is approximately four square-miles, which is two square miles larger than District but entirely within the Orick VFD Out of District Response Area. Subsequent to the 2010 Census, the 2014 American Community Survey estimated that Orick’s population decreased to 281 residents. Furthermore, between the 2000 and 2010 Census, Orick lost 34 residents.

Looking at historical growth for the area, the population of the Orick Valley has been declining for many years<sup>9</sup>. The town of Orick reached a population of over two thousand at the peak of commercial logging operations in the 1960’s. Employment in the north coast timber industry began to decline in the mid-1960’s and the Orick area suffered more of a decline than most of Humboldt County. The small sawmills located near the logging operations were gradually replaced by larger, more automated mills concentrated in Eureka and Arcata. The establishment of Redwood National Park in 1968 and its expansion in 1978 removed most of the commercial timberlands in the immediate vicinity of Orick and effectively ended the timber industry’s role as the major source of employment in the

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<sup>8</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. “Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities”. Approved May 13, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Orick Community Plan, 1985.

<http://www.humboldt.gov.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/4366>



Valley. To date, no replacement of those employment opportunities has appeared and people have gradually left the valley seeking better job prospects.

### **Existing and Planned Uses**

Land uses within the District and the Out of District Response Area are subject to the Humboldt County Framework General Plan (Volume I), the Orick Community Plan (Volume II), the North Coast Area Plan of the Humboldt County Local Coastal Program, and County Zoning Regulations (Humboldt County Code Title III, Division 1). See Figure 5.

Orick is a rural community surrounded by parks, private forests, and agricultural lands. It is one of the communities that the County has designated as an Urban Study Area (USA) as part of the General Plan Update<sup>10</sup>. The Orick USA is comprised of Orick's commercial center and surrounding residential areas. A Water Study Area (WSA) was also defined for Orick and contains four separate areas surrounding the Orick USA.

### **Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities**

LAFCo is required to evaluate disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) as part of this municipal service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. Per California Senate Bill 244, a DUC is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters where the median household income (MHI) is less than 80 percent of the statewide MHI. Within a DUC, three basic services are evaluated: water, sewage, and fire protection. Orick CSD provides two of these services – water and fire protection – and is therefore responsible for assuring that these services are adequately provided to the community.

Orick is identified as an unincorporated legacy community (ULC) within the Humboldt County Housing Element<sup>11</sup>. A legacy community is defined as a place that meets the following criteria:

- Contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another;
- Is either within a city Sphere of Influence (SOI), is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; and
- Has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income.

The Orick community is in Disadvantaged Community Place No. 0654218 which has an estimated MHI of \$32,656 and qualifies as a DUC<sup>12</sup>. Should territory in the surrounding area be evaluated for annexation, disadvantaged communities in the area may be considered further.

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<sup>10</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. "Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities". Approved May 13, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. "Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities". Approved May 13, 2014.

<sup>12</sup>California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). Integrated Regional Water Management. Resources-Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Mapping Tool. [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

### **Service Demand and Service Levels**

The Orick VFD on behalf of Orick CSD provides fire protection services to the community. The CSD owns and maintains the fire hall engines and telecommunications equipment. The Orick VFD provides all staffing and response for fire and medical calls.

The Orick VFD is an active member of the fire service in Humboldt County, and is a part of a county-wide mutual aid agreement. They also have an aid agreement with CAL FIRE and are currently working on a mutual aid agreement with Klamath FPD, which will improve the response time for areas on the north end of the bypass. The District reports that they are exclusively dispatched by CAL FIRE, and maintain a close working relationship with the Trinidad CAL FIRE station (CSA #4).

In 2015, the Orick VFD responded to 124 calls for service, of which approximately 24 calls, or 20 percent, were fires of various types and 70 calls, or 56 percent, were medical related. Other calls such as vehicle accidents, which comprise approximately 15 percent of total calls, may also involve the delivery of emergency medical services. Refer to Table 3-6 for an overview of Orick VFD's service calls.

### **Personnel**

The Orick VFD has 13 volunteers and 7 auxiliary members (end of 2016). Volunteers participate in training for two hours each week, with part of that training for equipment maintenance. Orick VFD, like all fire departments that are staffed exclusively by volunteers, needs to regularly recruit and train additional volunteers.

**Table 3-6. Department Numbers (2010-2015)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	2	2	1	3	2	3
Struct. Fires	2	5	0	0	No Report	1
Other Fires	7	5	17	22	14	20
Veh. Acc.	22	9	28	22	19	19
Medicals	48	42	41	40	68	70
Haz/Menace	3	2	1	0	1	4
Public Assists	No Report	No Report	No Report	2	2	5
Others	0	6	4	3	1	2
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>56%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>19%</b>
Incident				184	184	250
Training				52	52	300
Maintenance	No Report	No Report	No Report	52	52	150
Fundraising				0	176	200
<b>Total Hours</b>				<b>288</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>900</b>
Volunteer				10	11	13
Auxiliary	No Report	No Report	No Report	0	0	7
<b>Total Personnel</b>				<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>

**Source:** Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

### Current Infrastructure and Facilities

The District has one fire station, located at 101 Swan Road in Orick. Apparatuses used include one water tender, one engine (1991 Pierce Engine Pumper), a 1998 F450 4x4 pickup truck that carries water and a Jaws-of-Life, and a rescue van that also carries a Jaws-of-Life. See Table 3-8 below for details of District facilities and apparatus. In 2015 the Orick VFD received equipment from Measure Z funding, including 11 sets of structure turnouts, 12 sets of wildland PPE, eight SCBAs, and nine portable radios. The District also noted that it is in negotiations to purchase a 1999 wildland engine (type III) after receiving funding from Measure Z.

**Table 3-8. Facilities and Apparatus**

Station	Address	Common Name	Year	Type	Pump (GPM)	Tank (Gal)
1	101 Swan Rd. Orick, CA 95555	Water Tender	1996	N/A		1800
		Pierce Engine Pumper	1991	II		750
		Rescue Van	1996	N/A	N/A	N/A
		(4x4) Pickup Truck	1998	VI		250

### Challenges and Needs

The Orick CSD has noted that they are in need of a generator to provide emergency backup power for the water system (during power outages the pumps currently do not work), the fire hall, the Orick CSD office, and the community hall which could serve as an emergency evacuation site<sup>13</sup>.

### ISO Rating

There are several benchmarks by which the level of fire service provided by an agency may be measured, and the Insurance Services Office Public Protection Classification, or ISO PPC, is one such measure. The ISO is a rating commonly used by insurance companies to determine fire insurance rates, with 1 being the best rating which indicates the highest level of fire protection and the lowest is 10. The Orick CSD's PPC in all areas of the District that are within 1,000 feet of a hydrant is currently a class 7. The PPC for areas in which the District has to supply water (categorized as more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant) is currently a class 9.

### Other Service Providers

The District is within the CAL FIRE State Responsibility area, and nearby CAL FIRE Stations are located in Trinidad, Klamath, and Crescent City. The boundaries of CSA #4 (CAL FIRE Trinidad Station) are contiguous with the current Orick CSD boundary and response area (Figure 5). In addition, the National Park Service (NPS) and California State Parks (CSP) co-manage the Redwood National and State Park lands surrounding the District. Both agencies maintain seasonal fire crews to handle wildfires within park lands.

## FINANCING

### Current Revenues and Expenditures

The majority of the District's income is from water service charges, but funding also comes from property taxes, interest revenue, connection fees, and other smaller sources. The Orick VFD's budget is almost exclusively funded from the property tax revenue received from the District (see Table 3-9). Other sources of revenue for the VFD include grants, funds from renting out the Community Hall that the District owns, and fundraising. The District noted

<sup>13</sup> Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association (2015). *Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association 2015 Annual Report*. <http://www.humboldt.gov/Archive.aspx?ADID=1124>

that it has recently decreased its fundraising efforts to avoid adding further financial strain to the community.

**Table 3-9. Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16**

<b>Fiscal Year 2015-16 Budget</b>	
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Salaries & Employee Benefits	\$0
Services & Supplies	\$19,064
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	<i>\$19,064</i>
<b>Revenues</b>	
Property Taxes	\$37,063
Revenue from Use of Money or Property	\$6,348
State of California	\$595
Other Revenues	\$1,067
<i>Total Revenue</i>	<i>\$44,173</i>
Total Revenues	<b>\$44,173</b>
Total Expenditures	<b>\$19,064</b>
Revenues/Sources Over (or under)	
Expenditures/Uses	<b>\$25,109</b>

\*Information as reported by the District in response to the LAFCo questionnaire.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

The Orick CSD is governed by a five member Board of Directors who are elected to staggered four year terms by registered voters that live within the District. Board meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at the Orick CSD office located at 101 Swan Road, Orick. Agendas are posted in the office windows at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting and board packets are available for review during normal business hours.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

As set forth in Section 56430(a) of the CKH Act- In order to prepare and to update the SOI in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area designated by the commission. The commission shall include in the area designated for a service review the county, the region, the sub-region, or any other geographic area as is appropriate for an analysis of the service or services to be reviewed, and shall prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

### (1) Growth and population projections for the affected area

- a) Orick VFD serves an estimated population of 357 residents and 138 total housing units.
- b) The population of the Orick Valley has been declining for many years.

**(2) The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence**

- a) The Orick community area qualifies as a disadvantaged unincorporated community.
- b) There are currently no local agency service providers in the Orick area that provide sewer services.
- c) The Orick community is identified as an unincorporated legacy community within the 2014 Humboldt County Housing Element.
- d) Should territory in the surrounding area of the District be evaluated for annexation in the future, disadvantaged communities should be considered further.

**(3) Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies**

- a) Although Orick's population is in decline, demand for services continues to increase. This can be attributed to the District's location along Highway 101, the VFD's expanded role in mutual aid and auto aid responses within Humboldt and Del Norte, and the increasing demands for emergency medical-related services.
- b) The District is in the process of updating equipment and apparatuses with the help of Measure Z funds. The Orick CSD has noted that they are in need of a generator to provide emergency backup power for District facilities.
- c) The Orick VFD has the capacity to adequately serve current demand within the 2.3 square mile District boundary.
- d) Fire protection services are provided by good-will outside of the District boundary to an additional 121.5 square mile Out of District Response Area.

**(4) Financing ability of agencies to provide services**

- a) The Orick CSD receives funding from the 1% ad valorem property tax that generates approximately \$37,063 per year, which is used for fire protection purposes.
- b) Properties within the existing District boundary largely subsidize the delivery of fire protection services to the Out of District Response Area.

**(5) Status of and, opportunities for, shared facilities**

- a) CAL FIRE provides seasonal wildland fire protection services throughout the State Responsibility Area (90 percent of the Orick CSD is State Responsibility Area). CAL FIRE may respond to other types of calls for service if they are available.
- b) The District should continue coordination with CALFIRE, especially for training and shared facilities.

**(6) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies**

- a) The Orick CSD is an independent district governed by a five-member Board of Directors.

b) The Orick CSD maintains a website (orickcsd.com) where it posts information about District activities, documents and updates. At the present time, agenda, minutes and financial data are not posted or are significantly out of date.

c) The Orick CSD supports the mutual social and economic interests of the Orick community by sustaining community-based fire protection services and establishing local governance for such services.

d) The agency demonstrated accountability in its cooperation with LAFCo's information requests.

**(7) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery**

a) It is recommended that Orick CSD's sphere of influence be expanded to match its non-district good-will response area. This would allow the District to pursue annexation in the future.

b) Should the Orick CSD propose annexation of its non-district response area in the future, the District may establish a service zone for the annexation area where only fire protection services would be authorized to be provided in accordance with Government Code Sections 61140-61226.5.

### 3.3 City of Trinidad (Trinidad Volunteer Fire Department)



#### INTRODUCTION

**Table 3-10. Contact Information**

Contact:	Tom Marquette, Chief
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 390 Trinidad, CA 95570
Site Address	409 Trinity St. Trinidad, CA 95570
Phone Number:	(707) 677-0224
Email	tvfdchief@gmail.com
Website	<a href="http://trinidad.ca.gov/departments-a-services/volunteer-fire-department.html">trinidad.ca.gov/departments-a-services/volunteer-fire-department.html</a>
Types of Services:	Fire Protection & Emergency Medical Response
Population Served:	367 in City
Size of Service Area:	0.65 square miles
Number of Staff	9 volunteers (2017)

#### Background

The Trinidad Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) provides fire protection, medical, and rescue services to the City of Trinidad (City). A total of 72 calls were received in 2015 and most of those calls were medically related. The department is currently served by 8 volunteers; there are no paid personnel. A municipal service review (MSR) for the City of Trinidad was prepared in 2008. This document will update the previous MSR but will only discuss the City's power to provide fire protection services. Other services provided by the City of Trinidad will be addressed separately in a future City of Trinidad MSR.

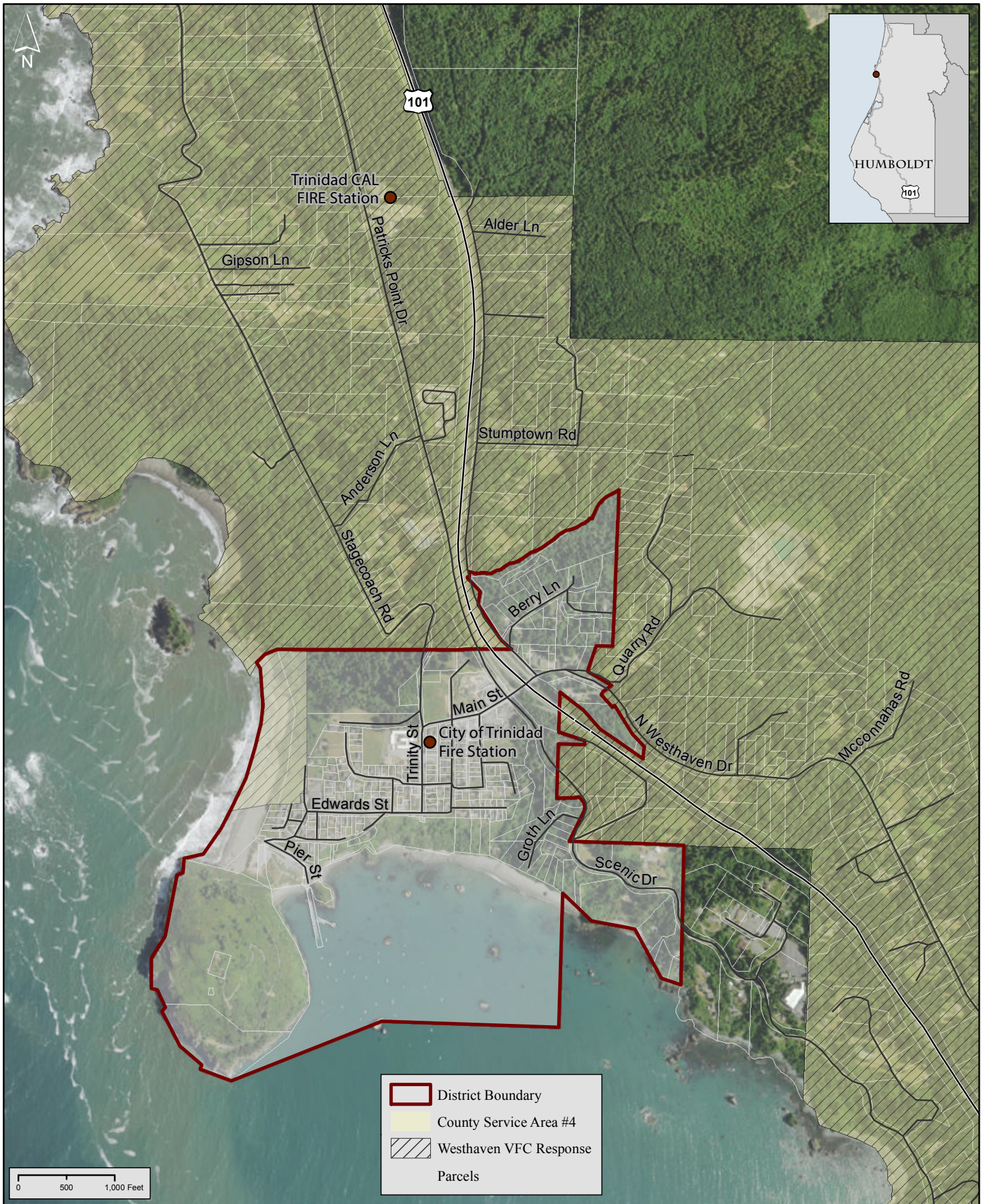
#### Formation

The City of Trinidad incorporated in 1870 and is a general law city with a Council-Manager form of government. The five City Council members are locally elected by Trinidad voting residents. The Trinidad Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) is a City department, governed by the Trinidad City Council.

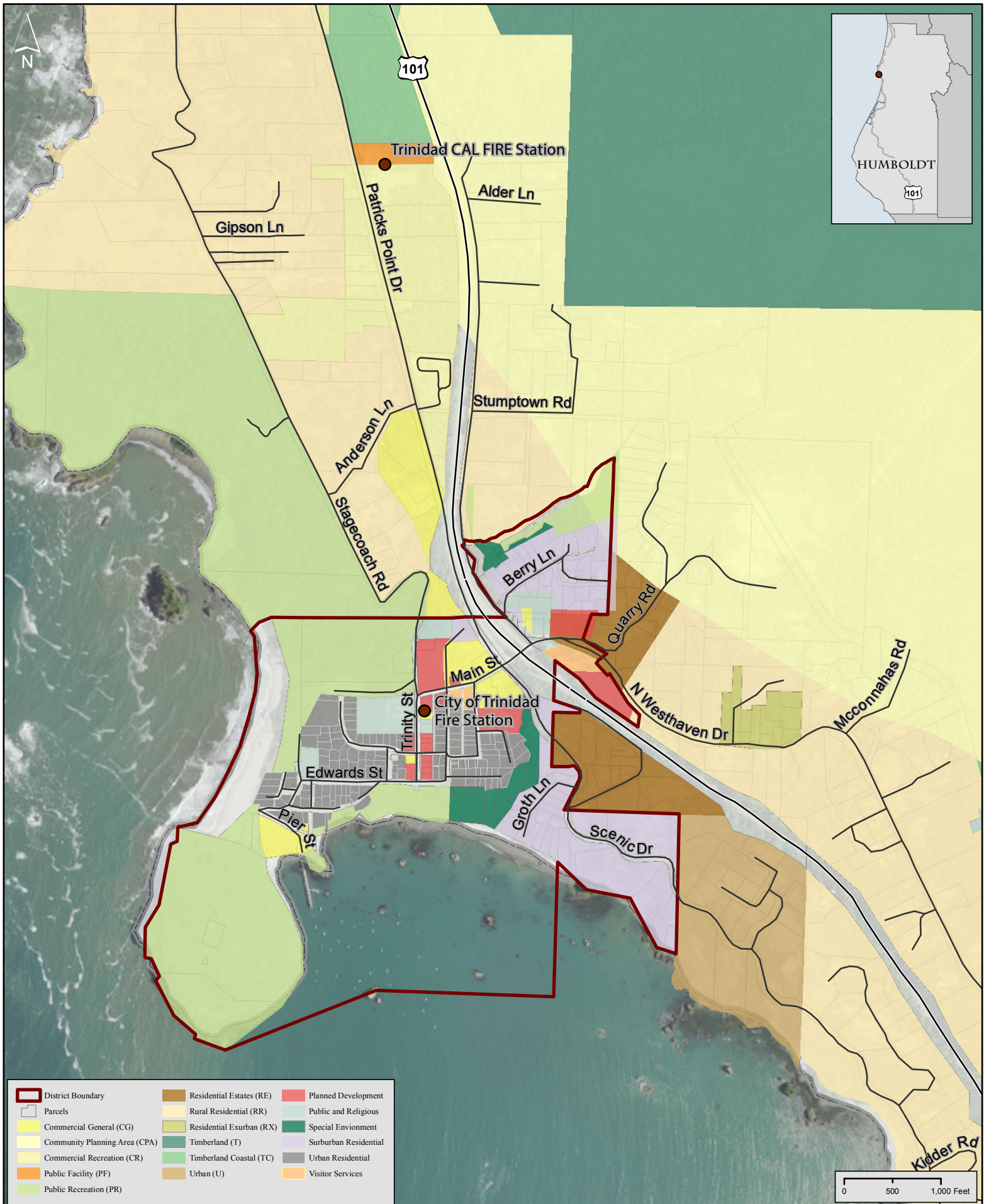
#### District Boundary

The Trinidad VFD's boundary is the same as the City limit, which is 0.65 square miles (414.75 acres) in area. See Figure 6.









## Growth and Population

The City of Trinidad historically supported a commercial fishing industry. As the fishing industry has declined over the years the City has become more of a retirement community, tourist/recreation area, and bedroom community. As this transition occurred the population declined and household sizes became smaller<sup>14</sup>.

Specifically, the City population decreased from 379 in 1980 to 362 in 1990 (4.5% decrease) and then to 311 in 2000 (14% decrease). Recently however, according the 2010 US Census, the population has increased to 367 persons (15.3% increase), reversing the decline in population that occurred over the two previous decades<sup>14</sup>.

The Trinidad Housing Element estimates that as of July 2013, there remained approximately 39 vacant, residentially zoned parcels that were considered developable by the City. These developable lots are considered to be the build out for the City. Using the Humboldt County average family size of 2.47<sup>15</sup>, the development of the 39 remaining developable lots would produce 97 additional residents. Therefore, the population of Trinidad at full buildout is estimated to be approximately 464 residents. The Housing Element also determines that expansion of City boundaries (therefore increasing the City's development potential) is considered unlikely, because most surrounding undeveloped property is within State Park boundaries or is Open Space and unsuitable for development due to geological instability or the existence of sensitive habitat and/or cultural resources.

## Existing and Planned Uses

Land uses within the City of Trinidad are subject to the Trinidad General Plan and Zoning Regulations, as well as the Trinidad Area Local Coastal Plan. Within the City, land-use is primarily residential development at densities of less than one acre<sup>16</sup>. The City of Trinidad provides potable water services to residents both within and outside the City limits. Septic systems exist throughout the City because there is no central sewage collection or treatment system. In late 2008, the City Council adopted an Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems ordinance. This ordinance, while not yet implemented, will establish a septic system maintenance program for property owners in the City.

## Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

LAFCo is required to evaluate disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) as part of this municipal service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. Per California Senate Bill 244, a DUC is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters where the median household income (MHI) is less than 80 percent of the statewide MHI. Within a DUC, three basic services are evaluated: water, sewer, and fire protection. The City of Trinidad (Trinidad VFD) provides one of these services – fire

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<sup>14</sup> City of Trinidad Housing Element (2013).

<http://www.trinidad.ca.gov/phocadownload/PlanningDocs/GP-Elements2014/trinidad%20housing%20element%20jan%202014.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census. 2010. <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/06023>

<sup>16</sup> Trinidad Area Local Coastal Plan (2014).

<http://www.humboldt.gov/DocumentCenter/View/50848>

protection – and is responsible for assuring that those services are adequately provided to the community.

The City of Trinidad is a Census Designated Place with a MHI of \$42,917, which is 70 percent of California’s reported \$61,094 MHI<sup>17</sup> (DWR, 2016), thereby qualifying the area as disadvantaged. Trinidad is incorporated, and therefore does not qualify as a DUC. However, it stands to reason that sections of unincorporated territory surrounding the City may also qualify as disadvantaged. Should the City pursue annexation, DUC communities within the its vicinity may be examined further.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

### **Service Demand and Service Levels**

Fire protection services for the City are provided by the Trinidad VFD. Although the VFD has no formal aid agreements with nearby organizations, they do respond to mutual aid calls from CAL FIRE when possible.

In 2015, the Trinidad VFD responded to 72 calls for service, 8 of which, or 11 percent, were fires of various types, and 46 calls, or 64 percent were medical related. Other calls such as vehicle accidents, which comprise approximately 3 percent of total calls, may also involve the delivery of emergency medical services. Refer to Table 3-11 for an overview of Trinidad VFD’s service calls.

### **Personnel**

As of early-2017, the Department has nine volunteers. Most of the Volunteers are trained as first responders or Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's). Any city residents with medical training who wish to volunteer are encouraged to contact the City Clerk at City Hall for an application.

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<sup>17</sup> California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). Integrated Regional Water Management. Resources-Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) Mapping Tool. [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

**Table 3-11. Department Numbers (2010-2015)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	2	4	0	1	1	3
Struct. Fires	1	4	2	3	-	4
Other Fires	13	39	2	3	1	1
Veh. Acc.	0	7	1	3	3	2
Medicals	42	131	19	33	32	46
Haz/Menace	4	8	1	1	0	0
Public Assists	-	-	-	-	11	8
Others	3	10	2	6	-	8
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>						
Incident	-	-	-	112	150	181
Training	-	-	-	500	550	460
Maintenance	-	-	-	130	144	165
Fundraising	-	-	-	0	0	0
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>844</b>	<b>806</b>
<b>Personnel</b>						
Volunteer	10	10	10	8	9	9
Auxiliary	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>

**Source:** Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

**Table 3-12. Training Qualifications**

Training Qualification	# of Members Trained
Fire Fighter I or above	5
Wildland (CICCS)	2
First Responder (Medical)	2
EMT	3
Paramedic	0
HazMat First Responder Ops.	2
Rope Rescue	2
Swift Water Rescue	1
Fire Investigation	0

## Current Infrastructure and Facilities

The original fire house was constructed in 1917 with volunteer labor and materials. In 1958, the department building received an addition to house a new Type 1 vehicle of that era. The City-owned fire station currently houses two 1000 gallons per minute pumpers and a rescue vehicle. The Department's emergency medical vehicle is stocked with a defibrillator and a large array of life saving rescue equipment.

**Table 3-13. Facilities and Apparatus**

Station Address	Apparatus	Common Name	Year	Type	Pump (GPM)	Tank (Gal)
409 Trinity St. Trinidad, CA 95570	9173	Emergency Medical Vehicle	2001	VII	N/A	N/A
	9112	Pumper Engine	1980	I	750	750
	9141	Pumper Engine, 4 WD, Foam	1994	IV	750	100

Information courtesy of Ferndale FPD website (FVFD, 2016)

## Challenges and Needs

The 2015 Humboldt Fire Chiefs' Association annual report states that funding is needed in order to modify the firehouse to accommodate the larger Type 1 vehicles.

## ISO Rating

There are several benchmarks by which the level of fire service provided by an agency may be measured, and the Insurance Services Office Public Protection Classification, or ISO PPC, is one such measure. The ISO is a rating commonly used by insurance companies to determine fire insurance rates, with 1 being the best rating which indicates the highest level of fire protection and the lowest is 10. Based on a 2003 ISO audit, the City of Trinidad VFD has an ISO PPC rating of 5/5X for all areas within City limits.

## FINANCING

### Current Revenues and Expenditures

The City received \$96,053 in property taxes in fiscal year 2015-15<sup>18</sup>. These property taxes fund a variety of City functions and services, including fire-related services. In the same fiscal year, the City budgeted \$45,545 for the Trinidad VFD, and the final actual amount spent was \$18,025, \$27,520 less than originally budgeted. The City also maintains a reserve fund for the Department, which currently has \$10,000 in it, but was not added to in the aforementioned fiscal year.

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<sup>18</sup> City of Trinidad Annual Financial Report. June 30, 2015. Provided by Humboldt County.

## ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

The Trinidad City Council is comprised of five persons who are chosen by the City's registered voters at general elections in even-numbered years. Council members must reside within the city limits. Each is elected at-large to a four-year term. The Council members select from themselves a Mayor and Mayor Pro-Tem who generally serve a two-year term<sup>19</sup>. The City employs a city manager who is responsible for administering and implementing the policies set by the City Council.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

As set forth in Section 56430(a) of the CKH Act- In order to prepare and to update the SOI in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area designated by the commission. The commission shall include in the area designated for a service review the county, the region, the sub-region, or any other geographic area as is appropriate for an analysis of the service or services to be reviewed, and shall prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

### **(1) Growth and population projections for the affected area**

- a) As the fishing industry has declined over the years the City, so has the City's population.
- b) Recently, the population has increased to 367 persons, reversing the decline in population that occurred over the two previous decades.
- c) The population of Trinidad at full buildout is estimated to be approximately 464 residents.
- d) Expansion of City boundaries (therefore increasing the City's development potential) is considered unlikely, because most surrounding undeveloped property is unsuitable for development.

### **(2) The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence**

- a) The City of Trinidad qualifies as disadvantaged. It stands to reason that sections of unincorporated territory surrounding the City may also qualify as disadvantaged.
- b) Should the City pursue annexation, DUC communities within the its vicinity may be examined further.

### **(3) Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies**

- a) The Trinidad VFD is a department within the City of Trinidad and the City funds Department operations. Such a relationship creates a long-term dependable source

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<sup>19</sup> City of Trinidad. <http://www.trinidad.ca.gov/city-government/city-council.html>

of revenue which helps to stabilize the delivery of fire protection services to the Trinidad area.

- b) The Trinidad VFD has sufficient funding available to provide for quality facilities, infrastructure, and services to its residents.

**(4) Financing ability of agencies to provide services**

- a) The City Council adopts an annual budget and administers its funds consistent with California State Law.
- b) The Trinidad VFD's spending was significantly less than its allotted budget in FY 2015-16. This suggests that the City has sufficient funding to provide the current level of service as well as to increase the level of service to its residents.

**(5) Status of and, opportunities for, shared facilities**

- a) CAL FIRE reports that its agency often responds to calls within the City boundaries. There may be an opportunity for the City to formalize an agreement with CAL FIRE for receipt of services.
- b) The Westhaven VFD and CSA #4 are the closest fire-related providers to Trinidad VFD and are both share a border with the City of Trinidad.

**(6) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies**

- a) The Trinidad VFD is governed by the elected five-person Trinidad City Council.
- b) The Trinidad VFD supports the mutual social and economic interests of the Trinidad community by sustaining community-based fire protection services and establishing local governance for such services.

**(7) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery.**

- a) The Trinidad VFD's response area generally matches the City limits of Trinidad, however, the City's current SOI is larger than the City boundary. It is recommended that this larger SOI be maintained, and further analyzed when the rest of the City's services are reviewed in a separate City MSR, scheduled for later in 2017.



### 3.4 Volunteer Fire Companies

Several volunteer fire companies (VFC) also exist within the North County Region of Humboldt County which have no tax-based support and rely largely on donations and various fundraising efforts from within their communities. Though these organizations are not strictly under the purview of LAFCo, they provide vital services to their communities and merit inclusion in fire-related discussions. These entities provide fire protection, as well as medical and rescue services. They include:



#### 3.4.1 Orleans Volunteer Fire Department

**Table 3-15. Contact Information**

Contact:	Todd Salberg, Chief
Department Headquarters:	P.O. Box 312 38162 St Hwy 96 Orleans, CA 95556
Phone Number:	(530)627-3344/ (530)627-3601
Email	Roberta.ori@gmail.com
Website	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/OrleansVolunteers/">https://www.facebook.com/OrleansVolunteers/</a>
Types of Services:	Fire protection services including prevention, public education, preparedness and emergency medical response
Population Served:	1,600 residents (Department estimate)
Size of Response Area:	30.7 square miles
Number of Staff	20 volunteer, and 6+support (2016)

#### Department Operations

The Orleans Volunteer Fire Department (VFD), established in 1968, provides fire and BLS medical services to the community of Orleans. The community is located State Route 96, approximately seven miles south of the Humboldt County line and approximately 37 miles north of Willow Creek.

#### Community Demographics

There are approximately 250 housing units and 425 residents in Orleans, based on the 2010 Census Blocks<sup>20</sup>. However, the Orleans VFD estimates that it serves upwards of 1,600 residents, with a seasonal increase of an additional 480 people. The Orleans VFD response area is 30.7 square miles (19,643 acres) and extends from two miles north of Weitchpec, north through Orleans and Somes Bar to Ti-Bar in Siskiyou County. See Figure 1 for the Company's response area and Table 3-16 below for details of the Company's responses and volunteers.

Orleans is identified as an unincorporated legacy community (ULC) within the Humboldt County Housing Element. A legacy community is defined as a place that meets the following criteria:

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<sup>20</sup> Humboldt County (2014) Humboldt County Housing Element, Appendix G. "Detail of Infrastructure and Service Needs of Legacy Communities". Approved May 13, 2014.

- Contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another;
- Is either within a city Sphere of Influence (SOI), is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; and
- Has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income.

There is one local agency service provider in Orleans, the Orleans Community Services District (CSD) which provides water service to the community. There are no community wastewater services provided in Orleans.

The Orleans community is in Disadvantaged Community Tract No. 06023010102 which has an estimated MHI of \$35,342 and qualifies as a DUC . Given the area's status as an identified legacy community and DUC, should territory in the surrounding area be evaluated for annexation, this disadvantaged community may be considered further.

#### Infrastructure and Services

The Department maintains a 1985 Kenworth Type Structure Engine (9711), a 1985 Ford F800 Type 3 Wildland Engine (9741), a 1973 Kenworth 3,500 gallon water tender (9751), and a 1988 Ford F250 Rescue Rig (9771). In 2015, Measure Z funding provided 6 new SCBAs and extra air tanks for Orleans VFD firefighters.

The Orleans VFD works in its community to provide hydrant hose boxes and train neighborhoods in their use (hydrants painted by school kids). The Orleans VFD continues to assist with the implementation of the community's Firewise Action Plan, including an annual Firewise day, landowner education, Firewise days at each of the local elementary schools, and other activities that will reduce the community's vulnerability to damage from wildfire.

The Department notes some of its current needs are to replace outdated vehicles, equipment, and personal protective equipment (PPEs). They also noted the need to restore or replace the deteriorating fire hall. Beyond equipment and infrastructure needs, the Department also noted challenges with recruiting and retaining younger members<sup>21</sup>.

#### Finances and Organization

Starting in 1955, the Orleans CSD began supplying water to the Orleans community, pursuant to Community Services District Law (Government Code Sections 61000-61226.5), and does not provide any other services at this time. All other remaining services, facilities, functions or powers (particularly fire-related services) enumerated in the District's principal act are considered to be "latent," meaning that they are authorized by the principal act under which the District is formed but are not being exercised.

The VFD's primary source of revenue comes from donations and fundraising efforts. Presently the Orleans VFD receives payments via Orleans CSD from the Prop 172 funds and the occasional check from Air Quality Control Board. Orleans VFD also has contracts with CAL FIRE and the Forest Service to work on large or long lasting fires for which they receive payment.

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<sup>21</sup> Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association (2015). Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association 2015 Annual Report. <http://www.humboldt.gov/Archive.aspx?ADID=1124>

The Orleans VFD could join the Orleans CSD to provide consistent funding, administration, and increased operations and emergency response services. Formalizing fire protection services under the Orleans CSD would require the activation of Orleans CSD's latent power to provide fire and rescue services in accordance with Government Code Section 56824.10 et seq. An application to LAFCo for the proposed latent powers activation and annexation of the full fire response area would be required. This approval would likely require approval of a special tax or assessment to provide a reliable funding source for continued fire protection services.

An alternate method for formalizing fire protection services provided by the Orleans VFD would be forming a new Fire Protection District with a separate governing board. Petition signature gathering and campaigning for district formation are often necessary to convince voters of the need to support establishing a new funding source (special tax or assessment) in order to ensure that fire protection services will be provided into the future.

**Table 3-16. Department Numbers (2010-2015)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	5	1	5	5	8	11
Struct. Fires	5	2	2	3	3	4
Other Fires	1	6	11	9	5	12
Veh. Acc.	11	10	3	10	4	11
Medicals	52	15	42	21	29	36
Haz/Menace	2	1	1	0	3	2
Public Assists	-	-	-	9	-	2
Others	3	4	7	11	3	4
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>						
Incident	640	-	2,130	2,965	2,970	2,765
Training	1,345	-	2,477	1,560	1,600	222
Maintenance	400	-	300	456	456	500
Fundraising	517	-	1,576	1,125	1,440	1,800
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>2,902</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,483</b>	<b>6,106</b>	<b>6,466</b>	<b>5,287</b>
<b>Personnel</b>						
Volunteer	12	12	12	14	14	15
Support	4	4	6	9	9	9
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>

**Source:** Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

### 3.4.2 Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department

**Table 3-17. Contact Information**

Contact:	Shawn Worth, Chief
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 2143 Trinidad, CA 95570
Site Address	446/460 6 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Westhaven, CA 95570
Phone Number:	(707)677-0388 / (707)832-6575
Email	westhavenfire@gmail.com
Website	facebook.com/Westhaven-Volunteer-Fire-Dept-163005183719165/
Types of Services:	Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services
Population Served:	857 (2010 Census)
Size of Response Area:	13 square miles
Number of Staff	12 Volunteer, 24 Auxiliary

#### Department Operations

Westhaven is located along Highway 101 approximately eight miles north of McKinleyville and approximately 3.5 miles south of Trinidad. Founded in 1950, the Westhaven Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization supported solely by donations, grants, and an annual bake sale. Westhaven VFD has a primary response area of 13 square miles (8,464 acres) that includes 450 homes from Crannell and Clam Beach to the Trinidad city limits. The department has automatic and mutual aid agreements with other departments from Arcata to Orick. See Figure 1 for the Department's response area and Table 3-17 for details of the Company's responses and volunteers.

#### Community Demographics

There are approximately 413 housing units and 857 people in the Westhaven CDP, based on the 2010 Census. The Westhaven CSD provides drinking water to approximately 233 connections. There is no wastewater service provider within the community. The nearest wastewater system is located in McKinleyville approximately seven miles south of Westhaven, well beyond the feasible distance for service extension.

The Westhaven CDP is identified as an unincorporated legacy community (ULC) within the Humboldt County Housing Element . A legacy community is defined as a place that meets the following criteria:

- Contains 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another;
- Is either within a city Sphere of Influence (SOI), is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; and
- Has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income.

The Westhaven-Moonstone CDP has an estimated MHI of \$50,536 and qualifies as a DUC. Given the area's status as an identified legacy community and a DUC, should territory in the surrounding area be evaluated for annexation, this disadvantaged community may be considered further.

#### Infrastructure and Services

In 2015 the Department also received a new ISO rating of 5/5X, greatly improved from the prior 10 rating. Based on an ISO audit, the Westhaven VFD is currently a class 5 in all response areas of the Department that are within 1,000 feet of a hydrant. The PPC for areas in which the Department has to supply water (categorized as more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant) is currently a class 5X.

All Westhaven VFD apparatus and equipment is funded through grants and donations. In 2015, Measure Z funded 12 SCBAs and several sets of turnouts for the Department. Apparatus used include an E8411 1963 Crown Fire Coach (1000 gpm/750gal), an A8444 1986 F350 E One(250 gpm/250 gal), an E8455 1975 Van Pelt (300 gpm/2500 gal) water tender, and a Rescue 8477 2001 Expedition 4x4.

The Westhaven VFD has identified that their fire station is not adequate to meet the needs of the department or modern-sized fire apparatus. The Westhaven VFD has begun an effort to secure funds to construct a 2-bay addition to the station. Such an addition would further improve service to the community.

#### Finances and Organization

Westhaven VFD's response area is located entirely within the boundaries of CSA #4. The Westhaven VFD is not affiliated with a special district and must depend solely on revenue generated from community donations, fundraisers, and grants. Westhaven VFD provides an important role in providing local response and coverage to CSA #4. The location of the Westhaven Fire Station and efforts to improve volunteer response capabilities has resulted in a reduced ISO rating for Westhaven Fire that serves to keep homeowners insurance premiums to a minimum.

The formation of a new Fire Protection District, or adding fire protection as an authorized service to an existing district (such as Westhaven CSD), would need to be accompanied by an adequate funding source, such as a special tax or assessment. Considering property owners within Westhaven are already funding services provided by CSA #4, it may be difficult to get community support for an additional tax or assessment.

Additional research should be conducted to determine whether a formal contract commonly referred to "assistance by hire" can be established between CSA #4 and Westhaven VFD to help reimburse costs and provide for more equitable and consistent funding. Such an agreement could provide for annual standby fees as well as minimum response fees for each incident response.

**Table 3-18. Westhaven Volunteer Fire Company Numbers (2010-2015)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	2	0	4	11	7	6
Struct. Fires	5	0	7	6	2	12
Other Fires	16	17	11	15	19	25
Veh. Acc.	13	1	14	9	4	14
Medicals	49	33	53	57	80	89
Haz/Menace	7	3	10	7	10	6
Public Assists	-	-	-	3	8	-
Others	7	2	3	0	3	1
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>153</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>						
Incident	825	-	1,251	1,301	1,480	1,480
Training	1600	-	1,320	1,122	1,100	1,100
Maintenance	225	-	167	134	95	95
Fundraising	500	-	2,472	2,603	2,500	2,762
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>3,150</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>5,210</b>	<b>5,160</b>	<b>5,175</b>	<b>5,437</b>
<b>Personnel</b>						
Volunteer	15	15	12	11	13	12
Auxiliary	25	25	25	22	20	24
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>

**Source:** Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

### 3.4.3 Yurok Tribe Volunteer Fire Department

**Table 3-19. Contact Information**

Contact:	Richard Myers, Chief
Mailing Address:	HC 67 P.O. Box 194 Hoopa, CA 95546
Phone Number:	(530)625-4130
Email	rmyers@yuroktribe.nsn.us
Website	<a href="http://www.yuroktribe.org/departments/police/">http://www.yuroktribe.org/departments/police/</a>
Population Served:	350
Size of Service Area:	80
Number of Staff	6 Volunteer, 10 auxiliary

#### Background

Formed in 2004, the Yurok Volunteer Fire Company provides fire protection services, including fire prevention, public education, preparedness and emergency response to the unincorporated community and surrounding territory. Current funding, equipment, and facilities are provided by the Yurok Tribe, and operates out of a fire station in Weitchpec. They serve an area of approximately 80 square miles, with approximately 350 residents.

**Table 3-20. Yurok Tribe Volunteer Fire Company Department Numbers (2010-2015)**

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Incident Responses</b>						
Veg. Fires	11	-	13	11	22	25
Struct. Fires	6	-	3	6	2	3
Other Fires	10	-	6	15	4	4
Veh. Acc.	8	-	2	9	2	1
Medicals	21	-	9	57	4	2
Haz/Menace	0	-	0	7	-	-
Public Assists	-	-	-	3	-	-
Others	1	-	1	0	2	6
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>% Medical</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>% Fire Response</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>						
Incident	-	-	60	1,301	-	360
Training	-	-	40	1,122	-	40
Maintenance	-	-	40	134	-	20
Fundraising	-	-	20	2,603	-	40
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>5,160</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>460</b>
<b>Personnel</b>						
Volunteer	-	-	10	11	10	6
Auxiliary	-	-	5	22	5	10
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: Humboldt County Fire Chiefs' Association Annual Reports 2010-2015

## SERVICE CHARACTERISTICS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Fire protection service providers operate with limited resources and demonstrate a strong need for additional funding. Although local fire departments have demonstrated that they are very resourceful—using volunteers, surplus and donated equipment, and by working cooperatively to deliver services—the lack of sustainable funding levels results in disparities in levels of fire protection available. Some of the challenges associated with sustaining emergency fire and rescue services delivered by local fire departments include the following:

- Recruitment and retention of volunteers
- Community education, awareness, and support
- Changing community demographics
- Increased demand for service (including on state and federal lands/jurisdiction)
- Lack of funding
- Increased and demanding training standards/requirements
- Not having high enough levels of training
- Insurance burden (training, medical exams, etc.)
- Lack of administrative support

This chapter provides a summary of critical fire service considerations and recent planning efforts intended to improve fire protection services in Humboldt County. This chapter largely references information included in the Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2013) and other fire planning efforts conducted by Humboldt County Planning and Public Works staff.

### 4.1 Recruitment and Retention of Volunteers

Local fire departments cite recruitment and retention of volunteers as a significant obstacle to sustaining and improving emergency fire and rescue services. These departments face the same recruitment and retention limitations identified in national fire service studies: a more mobile society, more demands on time, both parents working, other involvements, demanding training standards, and an increasing number of alarms.

While the burdens on firefighters continue to grow, some departments are trying different tactics to entice new recruits. The following recruitment and retention strategies were identified as part of meetings held during April/May 2016 with fire service representatives of the Avenues Study Area, which are relevant for departments countywide:

- Offer incentives to new members
  - Voucher program



- Sleeper program
- Provide hands-on training rather than PowerPoint fire-rescue training
- Hold local training
- Encourage membership on a technical rescue team to develop unique skills
- Develop programs and partnerships to engage young adults (possibly teaching Wilderness First Responder Medical as an elective class)
- Develop an Fire Explorer Program for youth
- Conduct advertising and hold community events
  - Recruitment banners
  - Social media
  - Letters to the editor
  - Events to bring out the community (e.g., Barbeques, Bike Safety Fair, Musters, Blood Drive, Heartsaver CPR classes, etc.)
- Build a strong brand identity
- Encourage involvement from the business community
  - Arrangements to allow volunteers to respond from work
  - Give plaques to businesses who provide support to fire-rescue departments or employ volunteers
  - Engage with the Chamber of Commerce
- Develop programs to prepare people for what/who they will see at medical calls/traffic collisions

Additional considerations for recruitment and retention efforts include the following:

#### **Plan Ahead for Response – Think Positive**

- Assume that there will be a number of new recruits
- Time recruitment efforts to match training and orientation opportunities
- Consider the need for coordinated recruit training
- Have “on-boarding” materials to set the new recruits up for success (schedules, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), by laws, rules and regulations, expectations, benefits of membership, etc.)

#### **Demonstrate Benefits of Being a Volunteer (Retention)**

- Discounts or freebies at local stores
- Leave from local employers to respond to calls
- Pay per call
- Events to honor volunteers including awards
- Career development opportunity (steppingstone to paid work)
- Standing in the community/respect and admiration
- Become a part of the fire service family

### **Succession Planning (Retention)**

- Officer development training
- Train members to be effective leaders/instructors
- Specialized training opportunities
  - Driver/Operator 1A/1B
  - Rope/Trench/Water rescue
  - EMT
  - HazMat FRO & Decon

## **4.2 Training**

The lack of essential training and equipment are issues throughout the county. The development of fire and emergency services training facilities is critical to the delivery of emergency services. Humboldt County firefighters have varying and sometimes inadequate levels of training. Recognizing that approximately 92% of Humboldt County firefighters are volunteers—many of whom live in outlying areas—multiple and/or mobile training facilities may be required to support countywide training programs. For instance, fire departments along the Avenue of the Giants have identified the need for a regional training facility to improve volunteer participation in training programs. Providing all firefighters with necessary training will result in a more confident, capable, and reliable fire-fighting force prepared to deliver improved service to the citizens of the county. Addressing these fire protection resource-training issues is essential to local firefighters in meeting an established LOS standard. (Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Part III. Countywide Action Plan)

## **4.3 Response Times**

Response times are largely dependent on two factors, the ability of appropriate fire personnel to reach the equipment at the fire station and the time it takes appropriate fire personnel and equipment to reach the scene of the incident. Fire station locations are a critical factor, but given response requirements (number of staff per apparatus, and number of staff to enter a building) the ability to get the appropriate number of personnel to the scene can be just as important. One trend that has been occurring is that more volunteers are working in areas other than the ones they serve. This means they are not available to respond to calls during working hours (Humboldt County Community Wildfire

Protection Plan, Part III. Countywide Action Plan). Providing sleeper programs has been identified as an opportunity to attract youth and other members of the community to live for free at the fire station in exchange for dedicated volunteer hours.

## 4.4 Level of Service

There is a significant difference between the Level of Service (LOS) available to residents in urban areas of the county and residents living in more remote rural areas. Local fire departments use formal and informal mutual-aid and automatic-aid agreements to augment provided levels of protection, yet LOS differences between communities persist.

LOS standards are important for the following reasons: 1) an established standard will improve the ability of real estate professionals, public safety personnel, and government officials to inform landowners and residents of the available level of fire protection; 2) it will support fire department grant requests to local, state, and federal funding sources for purchase of apparatus, equipment, and training to help meet standards; and 3) it will allow local governments to effectively plan for municipal service delivery and population growth.

The Humboldt County Fire Chief's Association has been working to develop level of service standards or criteria based on National Fire Protection Association 1720, Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Departments. The standards will need to be tiered, acknowledging that there are different expectations and capacities in rural, suburban, and urban environments. It has been determined that training level standards are the most critical focus area to begin this effort. (Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Part III. Countywide Action Plan)

## ADDRESSING BOUNDARIES AND SERVICE AREAS

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The issue of development occurring outside district boundaries has impacted local fire districts that continue to provide services without being reimbursed. This has further been complicated by changes to the State Subdivision Map Act, which now requires that all subdivision of parcels located in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) receive structural fire protection from a public agency or from another entity organized solely to provide fire protection services that is monitored and funded by a county or other public entity (Government Code Section 66474.02).

There are approximately 340,000 acres of privately owned property in Humboldt County within the SRA that are not located within the boundaries of a local fire district or other agency responsible for providing structural fire protection services that meet the standards of this law. Consequently, parcels in these areas cannot be subdivided without the provision of structural fire protection services that meet these requirements. Although fire-related districts, and volunteer fire companies not associated with districts, are commonly dispatched and respond to calls for service within most of these areas, they are not responsible for or obligated to provide such service and do not receive tax funding to do so, and therefore do not meet the definition of the law.

Fire planning efforts to date have generally identified and mapped logical future expansion/annexation areas for each existing district and where it makes sense to establish new districts or service areas for the provision of fire protection. Participants will need to refine and confirm the expansion and formation areas, work to make boundary changes were needed, and identify the most appropriate approach to providing structural fire protection services to areas that will inevitably still remain outside of any service boundary.

In addition, the amount of funding that will be required to ensure sustainable ongoing structural fire protection to the community will need to be determined. Traditional funding sources are limited to existing or increased special assessments and special taxes, new special assessments and special taxes, and property tax revenue exchange from the County to districts. Funding agreements may also be used, such as the agreements between fire districts and lumber companies to protect mill sites located outside district boundaries. Funding is likely the most challenging hurdle to achieving the goal. Funding solutions will vary based on geographic area or service area and could involve more than one funding source.

The following sections provide a range of boundary change options that can be used to address the mismatch between fire-related district boundaries and where the fire service provider delivers emergency response on a regular basis.

### 5.1 Annexation

Annexation, or the expansion of an agency's jurisdictional boundary, is an effective way to address the problem of districts providing services outside their jurisdictional boundaries without a sustainable revenue source. Annexation enables districts to extend its current funding sources (property taxes and special assessments) into the annexation area from

which the fire district can rely upon into the future and improve service delivery. In addition, the new district boundaries would clearly define service responsibilities for the benefit of neighboring fire service providers, land use authorities, the public and other service providers.

Many of the potential fire service annexation areas are very large; in some instances larger than the existing district. This may not be an issue for Fire Protection Districts, which are single-purpose special districts that provide only fire protection services. However, annexation of large areas by a district that provides water or sewer (and that does not currently provide those services to the annexation area) may be considered growth inducing, which will create additional complexity and potentially require additional environmental review. The district may propose, and LAFCo may accept, that the annexation area would be a new service zone where only fire protection services are authorized to be provided.

Annexations can be initiated by a district or a landowner proposing development. LAFCo annexation processing and costs would be made the responsibility of the applicant. The environmental effects of annexation must be analyzed and the analysis should include document compliance with all of the applicable state and local LAFCo statutes and policies. It should be noted that LAFCOs in California have approved fire district annexations of areas that currently receive out of district fire protection service provided by a fire district with the use of CEQA exemptions.

Annexations to fire protection districts that have the consent of all landowners could occur without a LAFCo hearing (Government Code Section 56663). This reduces the cost and time involved in an annexation process. Regardless of hearing, a LAFCo change in organization application must be prepared, including a plan for service and possibly a modified Municipal Service Review. The LAFCo Executive Officer evaluates the application based on the required state statutes and local policy criteria to make the required findings. There are also State Board of Equalization costs associated with changes in tax rate areas that are mapped for districts receiving property taxes.

## 5.2 District Formation

The formation of a new fire protection district is appropriate for formalizing the services of a volunteer fire company (VFC), but must provide for a sustainable revenue source. VFCs are funded through a range of sources including: donations, revenue for covering CAL FIRE stations, grants, and fundraising. Fundraising can require a significant amount of time and energy and revenue can vary significantly from year to year. The formation of fire districts combined with the establishment of a new tax or assessment ensures that small VFCs that previously relied solely on fundraising can become self-sufficient and stable agencies, thereby providing a higher level of fire protection for their communities.

Additionally, fire-related districts are official government agencies which are eligible for grants such as the annual Federal Assistance to Firefighters grant program and pre and post disaster grant programs funded through FEMA. Currently, many VFCs in the County are not official government organizations and therefore are ineligible to receive some grants and other types of funding and assistance. Formalizing the services of a VFC to a Fire Protection District would solve this problem.

District formation would involve approval by LAFCo, and if the area is inhabited, an election would need to be held. Like annexations, district formations that have the consent

of all land owners can occur without a hearing and can result in cost savings. The process would be similar to the process described above for an annexation. A new district would not receive property tax revenue and would therefore not trigger the need and cost for BOE mapping. As described in the annexation discussion above, a new tax or assessment approved by the registered voters or property owners of the subdivision would be required to provide sustainable fire protection services through the new district, which would involve time and expense. In addition, a Mello Roos Community Facilities District could be formed by the County and would simplify the process of establishing a special tax.

Many other California counties use County Service Areas (CSA), dependent special districts governed by the County Board of Supervisors, to provide fire protection services in the unincorporated area. Shasta County, for example, established CSA #1/Shasta County Fire Department (SCFD), which provides fire protection to all areas of the county outside existing fire protections districts and cities providing fire protection. The SCFD contracts with CAL FIRE to provide all department administration and operations functions. In addition, the SCFD supports 17 volunteer fire companies by providing oversight, administrative support, training, maintenance, funding, and dispatching. (Humboldt County Master Fire Protection Plan, Appendix A, Financing).

### 5.3 Contracts for Service

It is very common for counties to contract with CAL FIRE or city or district fire departments for fire protection services for the unincorporated area. For example, CSA 4 in Trinidad utilizes a property owner-funded Amador agreement to contract with CAL FIRE for year-round structural fire protection services to the unincorporated area. However, increases in costs from CAL FIRE make it difficult to fund and support new and existing Amador agreements.

In addition to counties, existing districts can contract with other fire-related districts as part of a functional consolidation or for an assistance-by hire arrangement to improve response times or service levels. However, starting on January 1, 2016, certain fire protection contracts will require LAFCo approval. SB 239 (Hertzberg) adds Government Code section 56134 to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, (Government Code section 56000 et seq.) establishing new procedures for the approval of these contracts entered into by both local and state agencies.

SB 239 applies to contracts for the exercise of new or extended fire protection services outside a public agency's jurisdictional boundaries that meet either of these threshold conditions: (1) transfers responsibility for providing services in more than 25 percent of a receiving agency's jurisdictional area; or (2) changes the employment status of more than 25 percent of the employees of any public agency affected by the contract. LAFCo's oversight also applies to instances where a combination of contracts results in the above threshold conditions. SB 239, however, expressly excludes from its requirements mutual aid agreements, including those entered into under the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code section 8550 et seq.), or Fire Protection District Law of 1987 (Health & Safety Code section 13800 et seq.). By its terms, SB 239 does not appear to apply to an extension of a fire protection contract unless one of the above threshold conditions is triggered. Arguably, modifications to existing contracts merely extending the term of the contract would not likely trigger the SB 239 requirements.

To initiate the process, an agency must adopt a resolution of application after a noticed public hearing, and either obtain the consent of all applicable recognized employee organizations representing firefighters, or provide the recognized employee organizations, and each affected public agency, at least 30 days advanced notice of the public hearing together with a copy of the fire protection contract. For contracts between a state and local agency, the application must also be approved by the Director of the Department of Finance. The application must be submitted with a plan for services, which must include information delineated in Government Code section 56134, and an independent comprehensive fiscal analysis. This analysis must review the plan for services, include a cost analysis with cost comparisons with other like providers with similar service areas, populations and geographic size, a determination of the costs to the agency providing the new or extended fire protection services, and a determination that the affected territory will receive revenues sufficient to provide the services and provide for a reasonable reserve during the first three fiscal years of the contract.

Once an application is complete, LAFCo must consider the contract at a public hearing. LAFCo may not approve the contract unless it either determines, among other things, that the agency providing the services will have sufficient revenue to provide the services and provide for a reasonable reserve for three years following the effective date of the contract, or it conditions approval on the concurrent approval of sufficient revenue sources. (New Contract Procedures, BB&K, Paula C.P. de Sousa Mills, December 2015).

## 5.4 Activation of Latent Powers

There are instances where an existing multi-purpose special district, such as a community services district, can expand its services to include fire protection and rescue delivered by a non-district VFC. For instance, the Orleans VFD could formalize its services under the Orleans Community Services District, which currently provides water services to the community of Orleans.

Government Code sections 56824.10 through 56824.14 govern LAFCo's proceedings and the application process for the activation of latent powers, including the requirement to submit a specialized, comprehensive Plan for Service. Government Code Section 56824.12 requires that the Plan for Service contains the district's financing plan to establish and provide the new service, the estimated cost to provide the service, the estimated cost to the customers, the potential fiscal impacts to customers of existing service providers, and alternatives to activating the latent power, including alternative service providers. LAFCo is statutorily prohibited from approving the activation of a latent power unless the Commission determines that the special district will have sufficient revenues to carry out the new service. Therefore, the activation of latent powers would likely require a new tax or assessment approved by the registered voters or property owners to provide sustainable fire protection services through the CSD on behalf of the VFC. These funding sources are described in more detail below.

## 5.5 Funding Sources for Boundary Changes

Traditional funding sources are limited to special assessments and special taxes, and property tax revenue exchange from the County to districts. A description of these funding sources are described below.

Special tax: A special tax requires that a resolution or ordinance be adopted that finds a reasonable relationship between the tax and the service to be provided and specifying the type of tax, the tax rate to be levied, and the method of collection. Special taxes must be approved by a two-thirds majority of voters casting ballots.

Special Assessment: A special assessment requires the preparation of an engineer's report that identifies the area subject to the assessment, the special benefit that would be received by property, a cost estimate, and a demonstration that the cost of the special benefit is spread to property in proportion to the benefit received. A 45-day notice is given to property owners that includes a protest ballot and information about the hearing scheduled to allow protest ballots to be counted. A special assessment is approved if weighted protest ballots equaling 50 percent or less of total benefit/value of the assessment are received.

Property Tax: Property tax revenue exchange negotiations for annexation areas are limited to those existing districts that currently receive property taxes within their existing district boundaries. Negotiations for the sharing of real property ad valorem taxes is authorized by Section 99(d) and 99.01 of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. Considering the base value of property taxes collected are currently committed, it is likely that annexing districts may only receive a share of property tax revenue attributable to the change in base value (i.e., property tax growth).



## RECOMMENDATIONS

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Defining spheres of influence for special districts is an important planning responsibility of LAFCo. Municipal service reviews must be prepared prior to, or in conjunction with, the establishment or update of spheres of influence. It is therefore recommended that the spheres of influence for the fire-related districts included in this service review be expanded to correspond with the fire response areas that have been mapped for each district, With the exception of the City of Trinidad (and Trinidad VFD). It is recommended that the City of Trinidad SOI remain the same.

The above mentioned response area boundaries have been defined as to reduce overlap and to designate the primary responder to the designated areas. These boundaries to not reflect the important mutual aid responses and reciprocal agreements that departments have established over time.

These sphere changes will help define where out of district services are currently being provided and will support future boundary change or reorganization options. Clearly defining district boundaries and establishing reliable sources of revenue will ensure a higher level of fire protection to the community. LAFCo is eager to work with the County, the districts, and the communities they serve to find the best service options and to develop sustainable, on-going funding sources to support fire protection into the future.

**RESOLUTION NO. 17-04****APPROVING THE NORTH COUNTY REGIONAL FIRE SERVICES MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND UPDATING THE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE FOR COUNTY SERVICE AREA NO. 4, ORICK CSD, AND CITY OF TRINIDAD (TRINIDAD VFD)**

WHEREAS, the Humboldt Local Agency Formation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the "Commission", conducts studies of the provision of municipal services in conjunction with reviewing the spheres of influence of the local governmental agencies whose jurisdictions are within Humboldt County; and

WHEREAS, the Commission prepared a North County Regional Fire Services Municipal Service Review to evaluate the availability and performance of governmental services provided by fire-related districts within the designated study area pursuant to California Government Code Section 56430; and

WHEREAS, the North County Regional Fire Services Municipal Service Review included sphere of influence recommendations for each fire-related district; and

WHEREAS, a staff report was presented to the Commission in the manner provided by law; and

WHEREAS, sufficient hearing notice was published in the form and manner provided by law; and

WHEREAS, the Commission heard and fully considered all the evidence presented at a public hearing held on January 18, 2017; and

WHEREAS, the Commission considered all the factors required under California Government Code Section 56425.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Commission as follows:

1. The Commission hereby accepts the North County Regional Fire Services Municipal Service Review, incorporated herein by reference.
2. The spheres of influence for each fire-related district included within the Municipal Service Review have been appropriately informed by the Commission's evaluation of the level and range of governmental services provided.
3. The spheres of influence for each fire-related district are amended and updated, as described in the report determinations and as depicted in Exhibit A. This includes expanding the spheres of influence to match non-district response areas for County Service Area No. 4 and Orick CSD, and no change to the

existing sphere of influence for the City of Trinidad that currently extends beyond the City's boundary and fire response area.

4. The Commission, as lead agency, finds the sphere of influence updates are exempt from further review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3 CEQA Guidelines, 15061(b)(3). This finding is based on the Commission determining with certainty the update will have no possibility of significantly affecting the environment given it does not involve development or a change in the manner for which an existing service is provided.
5. Each fire-related district provided confirmation of the level and range of services provided. Accordingly, the Commission waives the requirement for a written statement of services prescribed under Government Code Section 56425(i).
6. Pursuant to Government Code Section 56425(e), the Commission makes the written statement of determinations included in the attached Exhibit B.
7. The Executive Officer shall revise the official records of the Commission to reflect the updated spheres of influence for each district.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** at a meeting of the Humboldt Local Agency Formation Commission on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of January 2017, by the following roll call vote:

AYES:	Commissioners:
NOES:	Commissioners:
ABSENT:	Commissioners:
ABSTAIN:	Commissioners:

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Virginia Bass, Chair  
Humboldt LAFCo

Attest:

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George Williamson, Executive Officer  
Humboldt LAFCo

**EXHIBIT B**  
**STATEMENT OF DETERMINATIONS**

**COUNTY SERVICE AREA NO. 4, ORICK CSD, AND**  
**CITY OF TRINIDAD (TRINIDAD VFD)**  
**SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES 2017**

**1. The Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area**

The Humboldt County Framework General Plan designates most of the lands included within the district boundaries and non-district response areas (recommended sphere areas) for agricultural, timber, and rural residential development. In addition, territory included within the Orick Community Plan and the Trinidad Area Local Coastal Program are subject to the land use policies contained in these community plans, in addition to the Framework Plan and Zoning Regulations.

**2. The Present and Probable Need for Public Services in the Area**

There is a present and continued need for fire protection, first responder medical aid, and vehicle accident response services throughout the recommended sphere areas. The Districts currently provide year-round fire protection and emergency services to their non-district response areas even though they are under no obligation to do so and receive no compensation for their service, other than donations.

**3. The Present Capacity and Adequacy of Public Services**

The regional municipal service review indicates the districts' current fire protection services are adequate to meet present community needs while identifying several areas where service needs should to be addressed. The lack of essential training and equipment, the increasing demands and costs of providing services, and the difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteers are issues for all fire service providers throughout the county. In addition, issues relating to sustainable funding levels and the ability to respond to development outside district boundaries needs to be addressed for local fire service providers in a comprehensive manner. Updating the spheres of influence to include the out of district response areas will support the expansion of existing district boundaries or other changes of organization or reorganization, as a means to provide fire protection services to areas outside of fire district boundaries.

**4. The Existence of Relevant Social or Economic Communities of Interest**

The affected territory within the expanded sphere areas has established strong social and economic interdependencies with the districts because they receive services on a goodwill basis. These ties are affirmed and strengthened by these sphere updates.

**5. The Present and Probable Need for the Services for Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community within the Area**

While the affected territory within the expanded sphere areas surrounding the Districts may qualify as "disadvantaged unincorporated communities", the districts have effective mutual and automatic aid agreements with neighboring agencies and are providing goodwill services to these areas. Therefore, there exists no disadvantaged unincorporated communities that are not already receiving some level of fire protection services in the sphere areas. However, should the non-district response areas be evaluated for annexation in the future, disadvantaged communities in the region should be considered further.