

# ***SUTTER CREEK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT***

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Sutter Creek Fire Protection District (SCFPD) provides fire and emergency response services.

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

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### **Background**

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SCFPD was officially formed in 1906 and is an independent special district.<sup>1</sup> The District was formed to provide fire and emergency services.

The principal act that governs the District is the Fire Protection District Law of 1987.<sup>2</sup> The principal act empowers fire districts to provide fire protection, rescue, emergency medical, hazardous material response, ambulance, and any other services relating to the protection of lives and property.<sup>3</sup> Sutter Creek Fire provides fire prevention, fire suppression services, emergency medical response, and rescue services. In addition, the District provides public assistance, building inspections, and public education.

Districts must apply and obtain LAFCO approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district since the end of 2000.<sup>4</sup>

### ***Boundary***

The SCFPD boundary area consists of two non-contiguous areas: the first generally encompasses the City of Sutter Creek and environs, and the second area encompasses Amador City and an area of unincorporated territory west of Amador City. The cities are in central-western Amador County, and together total approximately three square miles. The fire district boundaries are somewhat larger than the city boundaries and include additional unincorporated properties adjacent to both cities. The District's automatic aid response area is substantially larger, and could be estimated to be approximately 42 square miles. However, the County-wide mutual aid agreement does not define or quantify areas or service responsibilities outside of any fire agency's legal boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Formation date reported by the District in the 2008 MSR.

<sup>2</sup> Health and Safety Code §13800-13970.

<sup>3</sup> Health and Safety Code §13862.

<sup>4</sup> Government Code §56824.10, re new or different services.

LAFCO records indicate there have historically been numerous annexations to the District since LAFCO was created, but some of the annexations were not completed, others were not recorded. In some cases, annexations to the City of Sutter Creek were approved with reorganization to Sutter Creek FPD, but the Certificate of Completion or other recorded documents only show annexation to the city. County mapping frequently omitted the Amador City portion of the SCFPD boundaries. Many other errors and anomalies have been found, adding to the confusion about the accurate SCFPD district boundaries. LAFCO staff have now carefully reviewed boundary actions and compiled recorded documents to verify the legal boundaries of the district. Staff notes that LAFCO Project #143 included a mass annexation of territory that was previously intended to be annexed into the district. Project #143 corrected or re-annexed most of the earlier incomplete or confusing annexations with proper maps and process to ensure completion. Accurate boundaries for the district have been mapped in GIS format and will be available for the final MSR and on the LAFCO website at the conclusion of the MSR effort.

### *Sphere of Influence*

LAFCO records indicate the original SOI was adopted in December 1976, but the record does not provide a description of its boundaries or a reliable map, and at that time, the boundaries of the district were not accurately known. There is no record of LAFCO amending the SCFPD SOI as a separate action nor concurrently with any annexations. One could imagine that sphere amendments were assumed to be “automatic” when annexations and changes of organization occurred. After completion of this MSR, LAFCO will adopt and update the SOI for the District, based on the verified boundaries and existing service areas. The SOI will identify areas likely to annex into SCFPD.

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## Local Accountability and Governance

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The principal act stipulates that a fire protection district’s board of directors must have an odd number of members, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11.<sup>5</sup> Directors may be appointed or elected to staggered four-year terms. Boards are to internally elect directors to the positions of president and vice-president. Accordingly, SCFPD is governed by a five-member, elected board of directors. The Board has a chair and vice-chair. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 1. There is one vacancy on the board.

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<sup>5</sup> Health and Safety Code §13842.

**Figure 1: Sutter Creek Fire Protection District Governing Body**

<b>Sutter Creek Fire Protection District</b>			
<b><i>Governing Body</i></b>			
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
<i>Members</i>	Harold Gamble	Chair	2023
	Reed Shugart	Vice Chair	2021
	Ron Watson	Commissioner	2021
	Gary Wooten	Commissioner	2023
	vacant	Commissioner	2021
<i>Manner of Selection</i>	Election at large		
<i>Length of Term</i>	Four years		
<i>Meetings</i>	1st and 3rd Tuesdays, Location: 350 Hanford St., Sutter Creek, CA		
<i>Agenda Distribution</i>	Mailed and posted and (01/20 internet planned)		
<i>Minutes Distribution</i>	Mailed and provided upon request and (01/20 internet planned)		
<b><i>Contact</i></b>			
<i>Contact</i>	Chair		
<i>Mailing Address</i>	P.O. Box 365, Sutter Creek, CA 95685		
<i>Phone</i>	(209) 267-0285, Fax: (209) 267-0587		
<i>Email/Website</i>	suttercreekfire@sbcglobal.net	www.suttercreekfire.org	

With regard to customer service, complaints may be submitted to the District via phone or letter. The District is encouraged to provide for a means to submit a complaint or a request via email or through the website. The district received one complaint in 2019. The complaint was concerning the fire district’s burning of property in the city for fuel mitigation. Complainant thought that SCFPD shouldn’t be burning because it may give prospective home buyers an impression that fires are allowed in the city. The complainant was notified that the district will continue to burn and that burning enhances the safety of the citizens.

Sutter Creek Fire district staff tracks information on new laws and regulations that affect the district. These are relayed by the Chief to the board with any suggested action that the board should take to comply. Sources for this information include the California Chamber of Commerce, California Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Districts Association of California, International Association of Fire Fighters, Legislative Analyst’s Office, Department of Finance, Northern California Fire Districts Association, California Special District Association, California State Controller’s Office, California Office of Traffic Safety, Keenan and Associates, Fire Agencies Self Insurance System, Division of Occupational Safety and Health, National Fire Protection Association, and others.

The district is a member of the following associations: California Chamber of Commerce, California Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Districts Association of California, International Association of Fire Fighters, and California Special District Association.

The District staff reported that it has had no known Brown Act violations in recent history. The board is informed of Brown Act requirements by the Administration. The chief notes that most of the board have spent much of their lives in public service at other federal, state or local agencies and understand the Brown Act. Following a meeting with LAFCO staff in June, the board discussed Brown Act issues and training at a board meeting. The chief plans to distribute a new copy of the Brown Act to the board at their January Meeting.

The chief stated that ethics training would be completed in 2020 by all line personnel, with two board members also needing to complete that requirement. These trainings are underway as of February 2021. They currently use the <http://localethics.fppc.ca.gov/>, provided by the state, as the most convenient and cost effective method of completing ethics training requirements.

The District set up a website in 2020, having had only a Facebook page previously. The website provides agendas and past agendas, but does not include minutes of the Board meetings, which are essential for understanding the decisions made by the board.

The delay between issuing the public review draft MSR and this final MSR was certainly inconvenient for the district. The Chief demonstrated accountability and transparency in his disclosure of information and cooperation with LAFCO.

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## Management

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The Chief and the district secretary manage the daily operations of the District. In 2017, when SCFPD took over its paid employee program, SCFPD also implemented employee evaluations.

The chief reports that the following policies have been adopted and are in place: SCBA Policy (updated 2015), Return to Work Policy (2017), "2 In 2 Out" Policy (updated 2016), Fire Ground Strategy Policy (2017), Drug and Alcohol Policy (2003), Code 3 Driving Policy (updated 2017), PPE Inspection Policy (updated 2017), Blood Borne Pathogen Policy (updated 2015), ATD Exposure Control Policy (2017), and Firefighters Bill of Rights (2017).

The adopted District mission statement is "Save lives, protect property, and be safe."

Insurance is provided by Provident Insurance through the District's membership in Northern California Fire District Association. ISU Insurance Services covers commercial, auto and excess liability under the FirePlus Program. Public Officials and Management Liability coverage is also in place, as well as Excess Liability Coverage, renewing annually in November.

District financial planning efforts include annual budgets and audits. The District does not have a capital improvement plan. Every year the board looks at needs and wants and prioritizes them. A priority over the last few years has been to upgrade EMS capability since 80% of calls for service are either medical or public assist in nature.

An informal apparatus replacement plan provides for apparatus to be replaced as needed when a suitable replacement is found on the market. When possible, the district purchases lightly used apparatus that other agencies sell or donate. For example, the chief cites replacing or adding three apparatus in the last two years, including a 2005 HME that replaced a 1991 Westates, purchased for \$49,000 from the City of Woodland. A 1989 LTI quint from the City of Reedley was acquired for \$15,000. These purchases helped improve the ISO rating and the need for a ladder truck. A donation of a 2008 Ford Type VI was accepted from Amador Fire Protection District.

Over the last 30 years the Fire district has been looking for land to replace its downtown station (Station 2). SCFPD has received a donation of a piece of land in the Allen Ranch Road area to build the replacement station. The potential new station is still in the early planning stage within the district.

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## Service Demand and Growth

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Existing land uses in the SCFPD boundary area are diverse, including urban densities in some areas with single-family residential, commercial, industrial, mining, and institutional uses. Commercial and industrial land uses are concentrated in the Sutter Hill area and along Old Highway 49.<sup>6</sup> Large, vacant parcels are located on the outskirts of Amador City and Sutter Creek. Land uses in the District's automatic aid area, which includes about 52 square miles outside the District's boundaries, are predominantly agricultural and vacant, and include some commercial and industrial uses in the Martell area.<sup>7</sup>

Major employers in the District's bounds include the City of Sutter Creek, and hotels in Sutter Creek and Amador City. There are many small restaurants and shops in both cities. The District's automatic aid response area could also include a portion of the unincorporated Martell community with its many retail and commercial uses.

The District estimates its population to be approximately 2,747 based on the combined population of the two cities in 2019 per State of California Department of Finance. The District's population density is estimated to be 866 per square mile, substantially higher than the countywide density of 64. The population that the District serves is greater than the estimated district population due to the fact that the automatic aid response area extends outside district boundaries.

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<sup>6</sup> City of Sutter Creek, *General Plan Land Use Element*, 1994, Map LU-1.

<sup>7</sup> Amador County, *General Plan, Existing General Plan Land Use Classifications*, 2007.

SCFPD has experienced slow growth over the last few years as reported by the district. In a ten-year period from 2010 to 2019 the District's population grew by two percent, compared to lower countywide population growth in the same period. The SCFPD automatic aid dispatch area may include the Martell area, where significant retail growth occurred in recent years.

In 2013-14, the District reported that service demand was increasing due to developments both inside and near its bounds and that it did not have the capacity to serve this growth due to financing constraints. However, since 2010, with the addition of paid personnel, the workload for volunteers to provide initial aid has stabilized, according to the Chief. An increase in EMS, as well as public assist calls, are noted by the District.

The District is currently planning for some development projects which are in the Sutter Creek city planning process. The Pine Woods 2 apartment complex is under construction off Valley View Way at Independence Drive, with 62 units planned (see related LAFCO Annexation #298). Golden Hills Phase 2-3 with up to 43 units are also planned. District staff also notes there have been fill-in parcels throughout the district.

There are a small number of lots available for development within Amador City, but development timing is unknown and growth in and around Amador City is limited. The District is not a land use authority, and does not hold primary responsibility for implementing growth strategies.

#### *Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities*

LAFCO is required to evaluate disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) as part of this service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. A disadvantaged unincorporated community is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters, or as determined by commission policy, where the median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median.<sup>8</sup>

Any MSR conducted by LAFCO for a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection, shall identify any DUCs within and contiguous to the sphere of influence of that city or special district, and describe the present and probable needs and deficiencies for the provision of those public facilities and services within such DUC.<sup>9</sup>

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has developed a mapping tool to assist in determining which communities meet the disadvantaged communities median household income definition. DWR identified disadvantaged

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<sup>8</sup> Government Code §56033.5.

<sup>9</sup> LAFCO Policy 7.3, adopted 2-16-17.

communities within Amador County<sup>10</sup>. Current Median Household Income is \$48,120.

The 2014 MSR identified that the entire City of Sutter Creek is considered a disadvantaged community, although incorporated. No disadvantaged unincorporated communities were found in the City's SOI area. However, the district is adjacent to the community of Martell, which is considered a disadvantaged unincorporated community.

The District, along with other regional providers, does provide services for fire and emergency response on the same basis and at the same levels as those services provided within the city by the District and within the District boundaries. LAFCO Policy 7.6 is applicable in this case, however, providing that "Any area receiving wastewater, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection services which are determined by LAFCO to be adequate and equivalent to those services provided within city boundaries shall not be considered a disadvantaged unincorporated community."

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## Financing

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The District reports that current financing levels are adequate to deliver the services currently provided and have accommodated projected increases in the service demand. As new lots are created and construction occurs, the District's Community Facility District (CFD) revenue will help to pay for added service demand. SCFPD has provided service over the years, due to a strong volunteer firefighter base. Its current volunteer base has decreased and is variable. The district reports that they are working with other agencies in the county to increase its volunteer force and make it more consistent. The District reported that with the adoption of Measure M, SCFPD has transitioned to a combination fire district, including both volunteers and paid staff.

The primary revenue source is Measure M revenue (55 percent). Property taxes comprised 40 percent of total revenue. Service charges composed less than five percent of revenue. The District reported mitigation fee revenue over the last five years has been approximately \$50,000.

Expenditures were composed of employee compensation (approximately 60 percent), services and supplies (approximately 35 percent), and capital expenditures (5 percent). The category of services and supplies includes protective clothing, maintenance expenses, and utilities, among others.

The District had no outstanding long-term debt at the end of FY 2019-20.

The District does not have a formal policy on reserves, although it does aim to keep a 75% balance for contingencies in case of economic downturns and unforeseen emergencies.

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<sup>10</sup> DWR maps and GIS files are derived from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) and are compiled for the five-year period 2006-2010.

SCFPD had for years been on a two-year cycle of audits/financial review per the Amador County Auditor's office. Twelve years ago the County Auditor allowed the District to go to a four-year audit cycle. It has completed two of the cycles and currently is being audited for the 2016-19 period. The state has requested it return to a two-year cycle, which it will, starting with the 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years. As soon as the audit is complete, it will be sent to LAFCO.

## **FIRE AND EMS SERVICES**

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### **Nature and Extent**

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SCFPD provides fire prevention, fire suppression services, emergency medical response, and rescue services. In addition, the District provides public assistance, building inspections, and public education.

Portions of the SCFPD primary response area outside of incorporated cities are in the State Responsibility Area (SRA), which are areas located outside of the Local Responsibility Area (LRA). LRAs are either inside the boundaries of a city or are more urbanized areas surrounded by SRA.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is a seasonal fire agency in Amador County and has primary responsibility for the protection of SRA lands in the State of California. CAL FIRE comments received for this report indicate that CAL FIRE staffs a total of five fire stations in the county; three stations are staffed year-round, 24/7, including Sutter Hill Station 60. CAL FIRE participates in the closest resource response plans.

SCFPD is responsible for structure fires, medical aid, vehicle accidents, public assists and first response on rescues. In the LRA, SCFPD is also responsible for wildfire.

### **Personnel**

The District is staffed by one chief, one battalion chief, three captains, of which two are paid, one paid firefighter, and six volunteer firefighters. All non-probationary firefighters are certified Volunteer Firefighter Level or higher. All firefighters are certified BLS First Responder or EMT-1.

The paid captains work a 72/96 schedule, whereby they work 72 hours in residence at a station and then have 96 hours off. They are assigned two shifts, A and B. The paid firefighter works from 8am to 6pm, Monday through Friday. This schedule is designed to maximize coverage during the usual workday when volunteers are likely working at other, non-firefighter employment. The extra 24-hour shift each week, on Wednesday, is currently covered by the Fire Chief.

Volunteer firefighters are recruited by word of mouth and via presentations at career day at Amador High School. The District reports an average turnover of three volunteer firefighters per year. Non-sworn personnel consist of a district secretary. Due to restrictions related to SARS-COV-2, such as more residents working from home, the chief reports that the number of volunteers has increased in the past year.

The District provides stipends to the volunteer captains and battalion chief to offset costs. The Fire Chief receives \$3500 per month, the battalion chief receives \$1150 per month, volunteer captains receive \$350 per month, and the secretary receives up to \$1200 per month. All volunteer personnel, from captain rank and below, receive-fifteen-dollars per emergency call response. These levels represent an increase from the amounts reported in the 2014 MSR.

The District also has a stipend program to augment the paid staff. The stipend program allows for a volunteer firefighter to spend a 12-hour shift at the station and the District allocates \$50 to cover food, fuel, personal and safety items. The stipend program is available seven days a week, with a day shift and a night shift.

Regular training is held on Wednesday nights and special training is offered on Saturdays and as needed. Ione Fire Department is currently conducting cadet classes from participants throughout the county. The hope is that the cadets will transition to volunteer firefighters when they graduate from the regional program.

### Regional Collaboration

SCFPD collaborates with other fire providers in the County through the Amador Fire Protection Authority (AFPA). AFPA is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that is tasked with allocating Measure M funds to local fire agencies and to look at consolidation of the fire agencies. The AFPA Board is made up of board member representatives of SCFPD, Amador Fire Protection District (AFPD), Lockwood Fire Protection District (LFPD), Jackson Fire Department (JFD), Ione Fire Department (IFD), Jackson Valley Fire Protection District (JVFPD), and the City of Plymouth. AFPA was the subject of an extensive investigation by the 2019-2020 Amador County Grand Jury, with significant findings related to deficiencies in accountability and transparency and in accomplishing the mission and obligations specified in the AFPA formation documents.

Additionally, SCFPD provides automatic aid to adjacent areas through an agreement with other providers.

SCFPD had been in talks with AFPD about consolidation or reorganization of the two districts prior to SCFPD taking over the paid contract in July 2017. In July 2017 SCFPD and AFPD jointly canceled the contract. Both districts mutually agreed to cancel the contract for paid personnel and for fire prevention services. SCFPD states it cooperates with all the departments/districts in many areas to ensure optimal service provision. There are no plans or discussions at this time related to consolidation or functional consolidation of fire service providers in the county.

Sutter Creek FPD stations are numbered under the integrated county-wide numbering system. The main station, 350 Hanford Street in Sutter Creek, is #141, locally referred to by Sutter Creek as Station #1. Participating in the integrated regional system for numbering or identifying fire stations is an opportunity for cooperation and improved communication among emergency response agencies, however SCFPD, like some other fire providers in the county, uses its own internal numbering system.

### Dispatch and Communications

All 911 calls made from landlines in Amador County are automatically routed to the Amador County Sheriff's communication center in Jackson, which is the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Cell phone 911 calls are answered by the California Highway Patrol in Stockton, and then are routed to the Sheriff. Fire and EMS calls are routed from the PSAP to Secondary Public Safety Answering Point (SPSAP), or CAL FIRE's interagency Emergency Command Center (ECC) in El Dorado County. The ECC receives calls from PSAP's as well as direct calls, and is responsible for dispatch for the Amador, Eldorado, Alpine and Sacramento CALFIRE Unit (AEU).

The ECC in Camino is responsible for all fire dispatches in Amador and El Dorado County, as well as medic dispatch in El Dorado County, and uses GIS mapping data along with the location of required resources utilizing Dynamic Resource Status. Amador Fire Protection District comments that Available Vehicle Location (AVL) technology is now used, which allows the ECC to identify a fire engine's specific location rather than just relying on where the engine is assigned or the last location reported.

All agencies dispatched by CAL FIRE are required to participate in the closest resource concept, which means that regardless of jurisdiction, the closest resource will respond to an emergency and the agency having jurisdiction will respond in addition to the closest resource, assuming they are not one and the same (CAL FIRE comment letter of January 15, 2020).

Comments received from CAL FIRE noted that Sutter Creek FPD is actively pursuing alternate dispatch options, however the Chief stated that this is no longer under consideration.

All fire providers in Amador County, including SCFPD, communicate through the same radio systems. Amador County uses AEU Local for dispatching and Amador Command for incident traffic. Because of the shared radio frequencies, SCFPD is able to communicate with all the other providers in Amador County. As with all agencies that use Incident Command System (ICS), the first unit to arrive on scene is usually responsible for incident command (IC). The IC agency notifies Camino dispatch whether and when sufficient personnel have arrived on scene to adequately attend to the incident. For vehicle accidents, law enforcement becomes responsible for incident coordination once it arrives on scene through Unified Command. Prior to law enforcement arriving on scene, the IC agency remains responsible for incident command.

The 2019-20 Grand Jury report identified and described issues associated with dispatch areas for Amador County, which are relevant to allocation of funding for incoming calls for service.

### Location

The District provides emergency response within its boundaries and in its automatic aid area when dispatched. The area may extend as much as three to five miles beyond the SCFPD boundaries, depending on available resources for response.

The area could include lands east of Sutter Creek to Carpenter's Gulch, north to the intersection of New Chicago Road and North Quartz Mountain Road, west to the intersection of Varia Ranch Road and SR 49, south to the intersection of SR 88 and SR 104, and east on Ridge road to Hamricks Grade. The response area may include territory north of the railroad tracks in the unincorporated community of Martell, depending on location of responding units.

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## Infrastructure

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SCFPD operates one fire station for emergency response at this time. Station One, the main station, is located on Hanford Street (Old Highway 49) and houses two Type I fire engines (6433 and 6431), a Type III fire engine (6422), a Type II engine (6420) and a tactical tender (6440). Station One was finished in 1988 and has a kitchen, multiple bathrooms, day room, offices, and living quarters. Station One houses the paid personnel and volunteers.

Station Two (formerly #142) is located in downtown Sutter Creek next to City Hall. It was built in 1936. The station is currently used as a museum and houses the 1920's fire engine.

Station Three (formerly #143) is an historic station located in Amador City. Station Three houses the District's antique fire engine as well as antique hose carts. No emergency calls are dispatched out of Station Three.

All stations are considered by the District to be in pretty good structural condition. Station One has had a third of its asphalt replaced and the District is looking at replacing another third in 2020-21.

The District acquired land through a generous donation from Robert Dalton on the corner of Old Highway 49 and Allen Ranch Road. The district was planning to start on the new station in 2020, but is not actively working on plans and permits for site construction at this time. Station Four would replace Station Two which used to house a Type II engine and a squad. The district outgrew the old location and has converted it into a fire museum. The proposed station would allow SCFPD to have stations on both sides of Sutter Creek and have volunteer firefighters able to access fire equipment in both areas.

With the new station, SCFPD intends to better serve current residents/citizens and future growth inside the district, including areas formerly planned for a large-scale development, Gold Rush Ranch development. Gold Rush Ranch is no longer an active project and there are no development plans for that area. Station Four would house a Type I engine, a Type I Truck and a Type VI engine.

The District reports that its fire apparatuses are 15 years old or older, and therefore, newer fire vehicles are a necessary upgrade. The District does not typically buy new equipment, and prefers to purchase lightly used fire engines from other agencies.

The District reported that all areas within the District are equipped with fire hydrants. The fire district receives water for fighting fires from the Amador Water Agency (AWA) with water from Tanner reservoir located on Ridge Road.

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## Service Adequacy

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There are two general indicators of service adequacy for municipal fire providers: ISO rating and response times. The Insurance Service Office (ISO), an advisory organization, classifies fire service in communities from 1 to 10, indicating the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best systems for water distribution, fire department facilities, equipment and personnel and fire alarms and communications receive a rating of 1. SCFPD has an ISO rating of 4, upgraded from 5 as noted in the 2014 MSR. The most recent ISO evaluation was in 2019.

Emergency response time standards vary by level of urbanization of an area: the more urban an area, the faster the required response. The response time guideline established by the California EMS Agency is five minutes in urban areas, 15 minutes in suburban or rural areas, and as quickly as possible in wilderness areas. SCFPD's bounds are classified as urban in Sutter Creek and rural in Amador City. The average response time in 2018 within District bounds was approximately four minutes and approximately ten minutes outside of district bounds. The District's 90th percentile response time in 2018 was 6.25 minutes, meeting the rural but not the urban guideline. Responses are notably faster than those reported in the 2014 MSR.

The District reports that there is room for improved efficiency in all areas of service. The District constantly strives to provide the highest, fastest, most consistent service it can to its citizens. The District has upgraded many of its engines with newer medical equipment and newer fire equipment, and replaced/upgraded/added three engines or trucks in the last two years.

**Figure 2: Sutter Creek Fire Protection District Equipment**

Equipment						
Apparatus	Number	Type	Pump (GPM)	Tank (gallons)	Ladder (largest)	Year Built
Duty	6411	NA	NA	NA	NA	2007
Duty	6412	NA	NA	NA	NA	2003
Duty	6413	NA	NA	NA	NA	2000
Engine	6420	II	750	500	24	1996
Engine	6422	III	500	500	16	1993
Engine	6426	VI	250	400	16	2008
Engine	6431	I	1500	650	30	2005
Engine	6433	I	1500	500	35	1996
Water Tender	6440	I	1500	3000	10	1989
Utility	6446	NA	NA	NA	NA	1998
Truck	6480	I	1500	500	75	1989

**Figure 3: Sutter Creek Fire Protection District Fire Service**

<b>Fire Service</b>				
<b>Service Configuration</b>			<b>Service Demand</b>	
Fire Suppression	Direct		Statistical Base Year	2018
EMS	Direct		Total Service Calls	1,078
Ambulance Transport	ALA		% EMS	54%
Hazardous Materials	Calaveras		% Fire/Hazardous Materials	7%
Air Rescue & Ambulance Helicopter	Out of Region		% Miscellaneous	2%
Fire Suppression Helicopter	N/A		% Non-emergency	34%
Public Safety Answering Point	Amador County Sheriff		% False Alarms	3%
Fire/EMS Dispatch	CAL FIRE/AC Sheriff		Calls per 1,000 people	359
<b>Service Adequacy</b>			<b>Resources</b>	
ISO Rating		4	Fire Stations in District	1
Average Response Time (min) Code 3		4.08 in District	Fire Stations Serving District	1
90th Percentile Response Time (min)		6.25	Sq. Miles per Station <sup>1</sup>	2.5
Response Time Base Year		2018	Total Staff <sup>2</sup>	11
<b>Training</b>			Total Full-time Firefighters	4
Required training time is 110 to 150 hours, as specified by a training officer. Regular training is held on Wednesday nights and special training is held on Saturdays.			Total Volunteer Firefighters	6
			Total Sworn Staff per Station <sup>3</sup>	10
			Total Sworn Staff per 1,000	3.5
<b>Service Challenges</b>			Staffing Base Year	2018
Service challenges include providing adequate response to service calls, finding training opportunities that are affordable and the cost of replacing equipment.			Fire Flow Water Reserves	AWA
			<b>Facilities</b>	
<b>Station</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Staff per Shift</b>	<b>Apparatus</b>
Station One	350 Hanford St., Sutter Creek, CA	Good	1-3 depending	2 Type I engine, 1 Type II engine, 1 Type III engine, 1 Type VI engine, 1 Type 1 truck, & 1 Tactical Tender
Station Two (Museum)	18 Main St., Sutter Creek, CA	Fair	N/A	
Station Three (Museum)	10791 Water St., Amador City, CA	Fair	N/A	Antique fire engine and hose carts
Station Four (Under Construction)	Allen Ranch Road and Old Highway 49	Under construction	N/A	
The District is building a new station at Allen Ranch Road. The District also requires newer fire engines to replace the current fleet as needed.				
<b>Facility Sharing</b>				
<b>Current Practices:</b> Station 141 is used by different community groups, counties and city governments for various uses.				
<b>Future Opportunities:</b> Consolidation with other county fire providers.				
<b>Mutual &amp; Automatic Aid Agreements</b>				
Mutual aid agreements between AFPD, CAL FIRE, City of Ione, City of Jackson, JVFPD, LFPD and SCFPD.				
Notes:				
(1) Primary service area (square miles) per station.				
(2) Total staff includes sworn and non-sworn personnel.				
(3) Based on ratio of sworn full time and call staff to the number of stations. Actual staffing levels of each station vary.				

# SUTTER CREEK FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

## FINDINGS AND DETERMINATIONS

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### Growth and population projections

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- ❖ The District continues to experience some growth in demand for services, most likely attributable to nearby community growth, general tourism and increased commuting.
- ❖ No significant service demand in the District is expected as large-scale development, such as the now defunct Gold Rush Ranch residential development, is unlikely within the horizon of this MSR. Limited development may occur in the district without significantly impacting Sutter Creek FPD services.
- ❖ Residents and businesses may desire or expect higher levels of service than what is currently available and provided.

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

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- ❖ There is one disadvantaged unincorporated community, based upon mapping information provided by the State of California Department of Water Resources, which may be within the District's first response area. The community of Martell has a population of 153 residents. This area currently receives services consistent with those provided within the district or within the nearby City of Jackson through automatic aid agreements and dispatch protocols.

### Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs and deficiencies

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- ❖ The District's facilities have sufficient capacity to serve demand in the short term. The District does not have the capacity to serve significant future growth with existing fire stations and financial resources, however only limited growth is likely to occur within the planning horizon of this MSR.
- ❖ In the absence of a master plan or capital improvement plan, it cannot be known whether the District will be able to maintain service levels over the long term, or how priorities will be implemented.
- ❖ Although the District has identified that its vehicles will need replacing eventually, it has not developed a master plan or a capital improvement plan to systematically schedule or prioritize replacement. To avoid depreciation and take advantage of cost savings, SCFPD relies on short-term decision-

making, purchasing used equipment as opportunities arise. Long-term planning would identify funding, and outline a replacement schedule for a more reliable assurance of equipment needed to maintain service capability.

- ❖ Short-term planning may become inadequate as standards for adequacy of emergency services increase. The District is urged by LAFCO to develop a 10-year capital improvement plan to address these planning deficiencies.
- ❖ Lack of adequate funding for services, the similarity of challenges faced by each fire protection agency, and the potential cost savings offered by consolidation or reorganization suggest that fire agencies will need to consider opportunities for reorganization of services and boundaries, including functional consolidation where possible.

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### Financial ability of agencies to provide services

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- ❖ The District reports that current financing levels are not adequate to deliver desired services in the district. Revenue and funding for all Amador County fire protection providers is unlikely to be adequate in the long term and would not accommodate projected increases in service demand.
- ❖ In the absence of enhanced financial planning whereby a long-term plan could be developed to address financial constraints, it cannot be known if the District would have the ability to maintain service levels over the long term.
- ❖ The District relies on volunteers for some of the services it provides. While this is currently a helpful arrangement, the long-term availability of able volunteers, which can be unpredictable, may affect the sustainability of service provision.
- ❖ SCFPD supports services provided by other government agencies through contracts, agreements and cooperative efforts. Reorganization and/or consolidation of services with those agencies may further improve the financial ability of SCFPD and other participant fire service providers to offer the highest level of services at the lowest possible cost to citizens.
- ❖ The structure and allocation of Measure M funding does not foster cooperation among fire agencies when an increased desire and demand for service outstrips available financial resources.

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### Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

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- ❖ Cost efficiencies will result with greater cooperation and sharing among existing fire protection agencies. Reorganizations or functional consolidations could allow higher levels of service at lower total cost to citizens/residents within Sutter Creek FPD and throughout Amador county.
- ❖ Station #1, known as station #141 in the integrated county-wide numbering system for dispatch, is available to various community organizations and other public organizations. The district uses its own internal numbering system.

- ❖ Participating in the integrated regional system for numbering or identifying fire stations is an opportunity for cooperation and improved communication. Some fire service providers locally number their stations.
- ❖ SCFPD collaborates with other fire providers in the County, providing and receiving automatic and mutual aid.
- ❖ Opportunities for sharing and cost efficiencies could be enhanced through an enhanced role of Amador Fire Protection Authority (AFPA).
- ❖ Consolidation/reorganization or further functional consolidation with other fire service providers will likely offer increased opportunities for shared resources, including facilities and vehicles, as well as pooled finances to hire full-time staff.

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### Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

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- ❖ SCFPD demonstrated accountability and transparency during the MSR process. The District website has improved public access to District information, however additional information, such as minutes of board meetings and adopted budgets, must be added to provide transparency and accountability.
- ❖ There has been a close working relationship among the fire providers in Amador County. Historically, volunteerism and the close cooperation among the agencies enhanced the level of service provided within SCFPD and throughout the county.
- ❖ Due to restrictions related to SARS-COV-2, such as more residents working from home, the number of volunteers has increased in the past year.
- ❖ The similarity of challenges faced by each agency and potential cost savings offered by consolidation or reorganization suggests that fire agencies will need to review opportunities for reorganization in some form, including functional consolidation.
- ❖ The structure and allocation of Measure M funding as currently administered does not enhance cooperation among fire agencies and may contribute to competition for funding. The failure of AFPA to fulfill its mission as detailed in the Grand Jury Report of 2019-20 further undermines collaboration and operational efficiencies.