

The California Pines Fire Department (CPFD) is a vital service that provides fire protection to over 15,000 parcels. On average the CPFD responds to over 120 emergency response calls per year. Many of these calls are for medical assistance. However, most residents don't know that CPFD is NOT mandated by law or policy to respond to medical calls. The department responds to medical calls because the staff understands that in our rural area the response time of an ambulance to the lake units is a minimum of 15 minutes in ideal conditions. Response to the hill units could easily be twice this depending on weather conditions and location of the emergency. These emergency calls represent a substantial financial obligation, for which there is no reimbursement.

Along with emergency response calls, CPFD also supplements the Community Service District (CSD) workforce. Servicing water and sewer, trash collection, lot mowing and runway maintenance are some of the tasks that are often performed by CPFD employees. Without CPFD employees the CSD would be unable to operate efficiently or effectively.

In the past, CPFD has supplemented the tax income by contracting with the Modoc National Forest during the busy fire season by committing staff and equipment. Though this has supplemented the income of the department it has also raised operating expenses. The department staffing in the district has never been diminished by participating in contract work, but the hiring of additional staff required to cover both and the more frequent general equipment maintenance that comes with the contract work increases the overall operating costs. This revenue source is how the district has been able to purchase its vehicles, engines, and tractors needed to provide services to the community. However, this business model was never intended to be permanent, and it is not sustainable in current economic conditions. In addition, the contract work is not guaranteed, and may not be available if the fire season is anticipated to be mild.

The current operating budget for CPFD is approximately \$900,000 per year. The current fire tax generates between \$250,000-\$300,000 per year. This number fluctuates depending on how many parcels actually pay the property taxes for the year. Last year CPFD was able to generate \$592,000 through contract work.

The proposed new tax for both fire and CSD would allow both departments to operate within a known and fixed budget. If passed by the community the Fire department would cease participation in the contract fire seasons and would continue to focus on servicing the community, ensuring that residents and parcel owners would have access to the services these two entities provide to our community.