

Myers Flat Fire Protection District

Municipal Service Review



July 2008



HUMBOLDT
Local Agency Formation Commission

Prepared for Development of the District Sphere of Influence Report

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LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION AUTHORITY

Latent Powers, Enabling Legislation and Empowered Services

The fundamental role of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is to implement the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (The Act) consistent with local conditions and circumstances. The Act guides LAFCo's decisions. The major goals of LAFCo as established by The Act are to:

- Encourage orderly growth and development;
- Promote orderly development;
- Discourage urban sprawl;
- Preserve open-space and prime agricultural lands by guiding minimizing resource loss;
- Exercise its authority to ensure that affected populations receive efficient services;
- Promote logical formation and boundary modifications that direct the burdens and benefits of additional growth to those local agencies that are best suited to provide services;
- Make studies and obtain and furnish information which will contribute to the logical and reasonable development of local agencies to provide for present and future needs;
- Establish priorities by assessing and balancing community service needs with financial resources available to secure and provide community services and to encourage government structures that reflect local circumstances, conditions and financial resources;
- Determine whether new or existing agencies can feasibly provide needed services in a more efficient or accountable manner and, where deemed necessary,

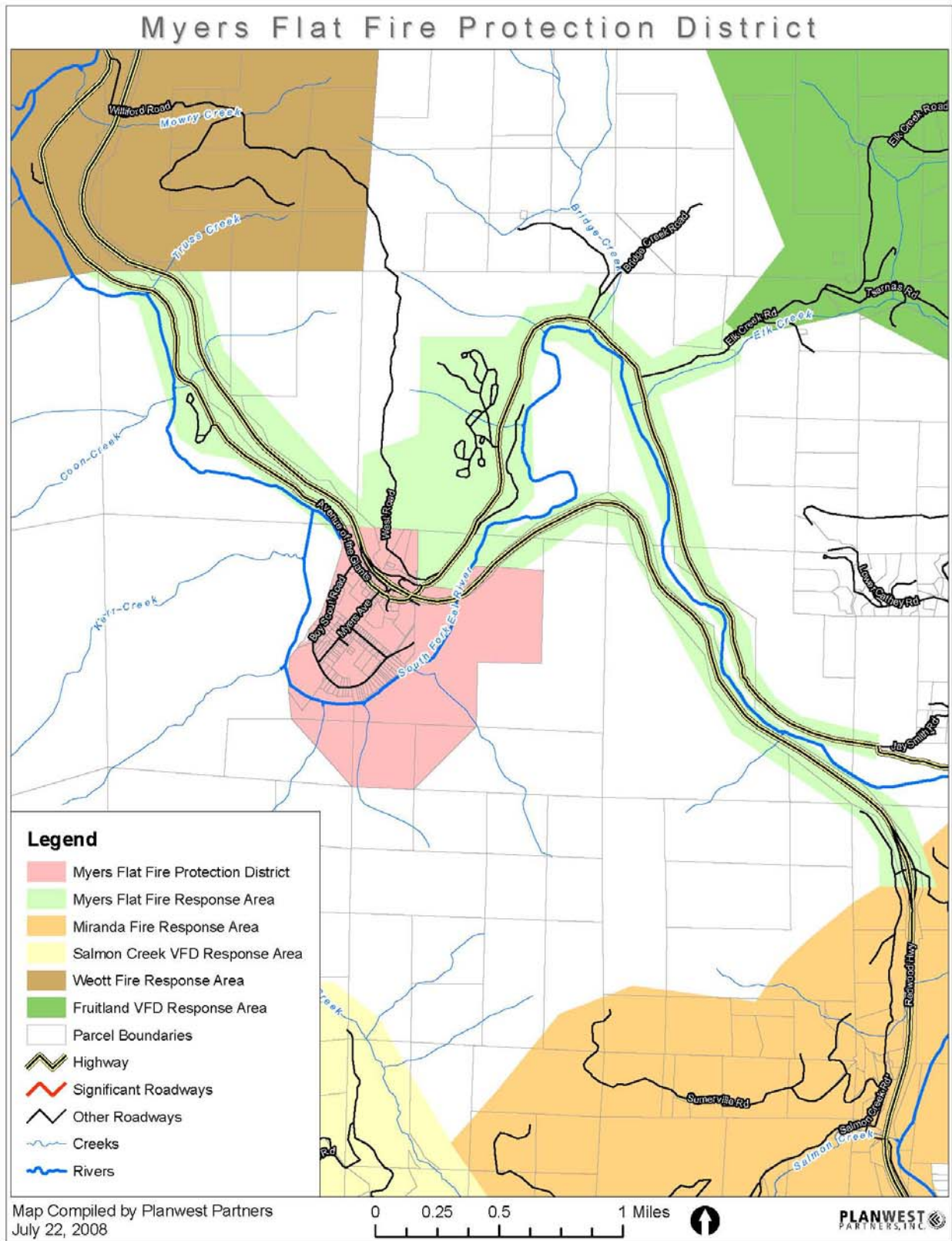
As set fourth in § 56425 (g) of The Act, on or before January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, Humboldt LAFCo shall review and update each Sphere of Influence (SOI).

Additionally, an MSR shall be conducted with, or in conjunction with the action to establish or to update a SOI pursuant to The Act. Together, the SOI and MSR documents analyze the District's ability to serve existing and future residents.

In order to prepare and to update Spheres of Influence in accordance with § 56425, Humboldt LAFCo shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the Myers Flat Fire Protection District (FPD). The commission shall include in the designated for service review area any other geographic area as is appropriate for an analysis of the services to be reviewed, and shall prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to the following:

- (1) Growth and population projections for the affected area;
- (2) Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- (3) Financing ability of agencies to provide services;
- (4) Status of and, opportunities for, shared facilities;
- (5) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies;
- (6) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

Figure 1 Myers Flat FPD Map-District Boundary and Sphere of Influence



AGENCY PROFILE

The Myers Flat Fire Protection District (FPD) is located in South-central Humboldt County, 48 miles southeast of the City of Eureka, and 20 miles north of Garberville, along the Avenue of the Giants on the South Fork of the Eel River. Humboldt Redwoods State Park provides a contiguous boundary around Myers Flat and State Highway 101 creates the northern boundary for the District. (See location map Figure 1)

Myers Flat FPD is responsible for providing fire protection services, through the Myers Flat VFD, to the community of Myers Flat. Although the District extends across to the south side of the Eel River, most of the District is coterminous with the populated area of Myers Flat. Larger facilities within Myers Flat include the Myers Inn, the Shrine Drive-Thru Tree, miscellaneous small commercial establishments, and an RV Park.

The Myers Flat FPD has a district boundary of approximately 450 acres and a total response area of approximately 1,000 acres, of which about two thirds of the land is designated resource management, about 15% is commercial or industrial, and about 5% is residential.

Formation

The Myers Flat FPD was formed on June 14, 1952 after a successful special election was held. The District was established in order to provide fire protection, rescue and emergency medical response services. The five member Board of Directors is elected at large for a term of four years.

GROWTH AND POPULATION

Demographics

According to the 2000 Census, the total population in Humboldt County was 126,518. The Building Communities Report for the Humboldt County General Plan Update includes a complete discussion of County Population Trends. According to that report: "Between 1985 and 1990, the County grew by about 8,000 people (7.3 percent), with an average annual increase of 1.4 percent." The US Census projects population growth in Humboldt County to increase to 135,600 by 2010 and 143,100 by 2025.

A total of 55,912 housing units existed in Humboldt County in 2000, with an average of 2.39 persons per household. The number of households in the county has grown 10.4 percent since 1990, compared to the population increase of 6.2 percent. Consequently, the average number of persons per household has declined 6.3 percent from 2.55 in 1980. Based on population projections, the Building Communities report projects the demand for housing units over the next 25 years to be 5,961 units in all of Humboldt County, with 3,220 units to be located in the unincorporated areas.

District Population

The population within the unincorporated town of Myers Flat was approximately 630 people, according to the 2000 Census.

SERVICES

Current Facilities and Equipment

There is one station and one Type III fire engine within the Myers Flat FPD. The fire station was constructed in 1962 and was renovated in the late 1990's to meet the District's needs. There are approximately 18 fire hydrants in the District.

Fire Protection Services

The Myers Flat FPD provides structural and watershed fire protections as well as medical response services with a volunteer force of three to six people. The District responds to approximately 50 calls per year, of which about two thirds are medical responses. The response time varies from a few minutes to up to 20 minutes. The Garberville Ambulance Service supports the District's emergency medical response services.

The District is served by six volunteer firefighters and no paid personnel. Each of the six firefighters has full fire protective equipment including protective outer gear, helmets, gloves, boots and breathing apparatuses for each crew member.

ISO Rating. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) establishes fire insurance ratings for communities throughout the United States. One of ISO's more well known services is to evaluate the fire suppression delivery systems of fire departments and districts. The result of those reviews is an individual Public Protection Classification (PPC) rating number assigned to the community that the respective fire department protects. The ratings are presented in a rating class structure which ranges from 1 to 10. Class 1 is the highest rating, representing excellent fire protection and Class 10 is the lowest, meaning the community's fire department did not meet the minimum requirements of the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule and is not recognized by ISO. The PPC is commonly used by insurance providers to establish home and business fire insurance rates.

The Fire Suppression Rating Schedule is used by ISO to rate the response capabilities within a community. Fifty percent of the grade is based on the fire department (equipment, staffing, training, and geographic distribution of fire companies), 40 percent is based on the water supply (condition and maintenance of hydrants, and a careful evaluation of the amount of available water compared with the amount needed to suppress fires), and ten percent is based on fire alarm and communications systems (telephone systems, telephone lines, staffing, and dispatching system). Based on the most recent ISO audit, the Myers Flat FPD has an ISO rating of 10 for all areas of the district. Previously, the District had an ISO rating of 8.5, however the last time the district was audited, they had less than 4 volunteers and received an ISO rating of 10. Currently, the district has 4 firefighters, but since the district has not been audited since acquiring additional volunteers, the ISO rating remains at 10.

Infrastructure Deficiencies

According to the District, the fire station needs repairs, improvements, and facility upgrades.

Planned Improvements

The Myers Flat FPD has plans to upgrade the personal protective equipment for the firefighters.

Other Service Providers within Agency

Humboldt County provides general governmental services and law enforcement functions throughout the territory of the District. During fire season from June to September, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CALFIRE) provides fire suppression services for the Public and Natural Resource Lands surrounding Myers Flat. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection has an automatic aid agreement with the Myers Flat FPD.

BUDGET

The primary source of funding is the Districts share of the one percent property tax, which is collected from residents within the District boundary. According to the District, the total annual revenue is approximately \$10,000, including donations; and total annual expenditures are approximately \$10,000.

LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Contact Information

Myers Flat Fire Protection District	
Contact:	George Monroe, Chief
Mailing Address:	P.O. Box 131, Myers Flat, CA 95554
Site Address:	Myers Ave.
Phone Number:	(707) 943-3094 or (707) 223-3175
Email/ Website:	jake@asis.com
Types of Services:	Fire Medical
Population Served:	Approximately 630 people
Size of Service Area:	450 acres (District), 963 acres (Response area)
Date of Formation:	June 14, 1952
Number of Staff	Four volunteers

Board Meetings

The District Board Meetings are held the third week of each month at the Board President's house.

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

Written Determinations

56430. (a) In order to prepare and to update 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 service review the county, the region, the subregion, 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.

According to the 2000 Census, the population within of Myers Flat was approximately 630 people. The Avenue of the Giants Community Plan limits development potential within Myers Flat due to flood hazards and limited service capacities. Limited infrastructure also will restrict potential growth in the future, and the County has not identified the Myers Flat are for growth as part of the general plan update.

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

According to the District, the fire station needs repairs, improvements, and facility upgrades. The Myers Flat FPD has plans to upgrade the personal protective equipment for the firefighters.

(3) Financial ability of agencies to provide services.

The majority of the District's income comes from property taxes and individual donations. These revenue sources are expected to continue. In addition, there have been discussions of Southern Humboldt fire protection agencies considering collective assessments to fund services. This could enhance the financial resources of the district and reduce costs by potentially combining administrative functions, while maintaining responsibility for the district.

4) Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities.

During fire season from June to September, CALFIRE provides fire suppression services for the Public and Natural Resource Lands surrounding Myers Flat. CALFIRE has a station in Weott and maintains an automatic aid agreement with the Myers Flat FPD. The District also has aid agreements with Fruitland Ridge and Weott FPDs.

(5) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.

The District has a board that oversees accountability and services needs. They constitute the governmental structure for the District. They have identified the lack of volunteers who are consistent and reliable as an issue that may affect their ability to provide community services efficiently in the future.

(6) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

In conducting this service review, the commission reviewed capacity and location of the agencies that provide the identified service or services within the designated geographic area. The closest districts are the Weott Volunteer Fire Department to the north and the Fruitland Ridge Volunteer Fire Department to the east. While the response areas for these other service providers are directly adjacent to the response areas of the other service provider, the response times of these providers to Myers Flat could be long due to physical separation and geography.

As stated above, measures that should be considered for greater effectiveness and efficient service delivery would be potential consolidation of administrative functions and collectively pursuing assessments and other revenue sources. The Myers Flat Fire Protection District could still maintain its independent identity as the services provider for the area, but may benefit from an arrangement of shared resources with other southern Humboldt service providers.

The commission has conducted a service review in conjunction with the action to establish a sphere of influence in accordance with Section 56425 or Section 56426.5 or to update a sphere of influence pursuant to Section 56425.

REFERENCES

Myers Flat FPD Sphere of Influence Report, 1999.

Humboldt County General Plan Update. Community Infrastructure and Services Technical Report, October 2007. <http://co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/gp/gpdemo/GPU-TOC-Demo3.htm#ch7>