

Row River Rural Fire Protection District
Economic Feasibility Statement
August 10, 2023

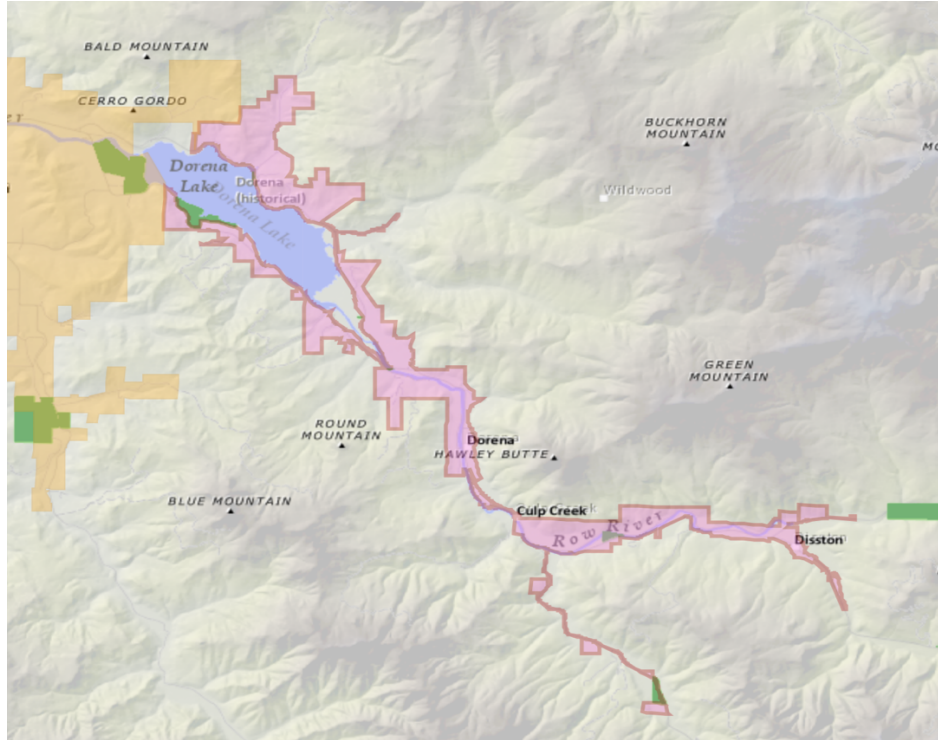


Petitioners:

Walt Bernard, Kathleen Istudor, Reta Cochrane

Row River Fire Response (RRFR) Directors:

Walt Bernard, John Kirk, Reta Cochrane, Katherine Reinecke,
Kathleen Istudor, Scott Byler, Jennifer Ferraez



Map of the Proposed Row River Rural Fire Protection District

Introduction:

The Row River community comprises an approximately 25-mile unincorporated area east of Cottage Grove. The area has approximately 479 improved properties (source: LC Assessment and Taxation), a population of about 1200, and includes the towns of Dorena, Culp Creek, and Disston. Child's Way and South Lane K-8 are two schools in the area, notable for the stunning fact that they are not in a recognized fire district. There are numerous parks, camping, and recreational areas, Dorena Lake, as well as county, state, and federal properties including timber assets. The total assessed value of improved properties is approximately 69 million dollars (source: LC Assessment and Taxation).

The Row River Valley Water Special District provides potable water services to a number of homes in the area. South Lane School District provides K-8 education in the community.

Two hundred thousand visitors enjoy our pristine lands and waters annually.

This area is not part of any Fire Protection District. South Lane Fire and Rescue (SLFR) provides EMS services to the community and offers fire suppression contracts with individual homeowners, however, response times to the scene for both EMS and Fire services **significantly exceeds the National Fire Protection Association Standards of 6-9 minutes 'call out' to arrival on scene. This is simply unacceptable in today's high-risk environment for fire or medical risk.**

Historically, lumber mills operating in the Row River area maintained private fire response equipment for protection of the mills. As a result, the mills would use their personnel and



equipment to fight fires in the community surrounding the mill 'towns' because this protected personnel and community assets, including employee housing, railroads, and other supporting businesses. As the timber industry consolidated and there were fewer mills operating in the area this type of service cease to exist.



1987 proposed District Map for unsuccessful SRFPD Formation

Around 1987, when there were still a few mill fire 'departments' in the area, there was an attempt to form a Special Rural Fire Protection District (SRFPD) in the valley which was unsuccessful. The RRFRR Board and Chief Petitioners believe that the reason for the unsuccessful 1987 petition to form a fire district was three-fold: that during that time logging and timber mill companies had their own fire services which would be deployed at no charge throughout the community, that the general climate, timber, and topographic conditions were less extreme and dry, and that public or governmental concern and awareness of fire safety was less prevalent at that time. Since that time, there has been no local Fire/Emergency Medical Response(EMR) service in the community. As noted, current EMR response is provided from Cottage Grove by South Lane Fire and Rescue which will also provide Fire response in specific limited circumstances, but the travel times for both EMR and Fire from Cottage Grove are greater than 30 minutes; in many cases to long to be effective. Oregon Department of Forestry provides wildland fire services in our community and recently have been key responders in extinguishing several critical fires in the community.

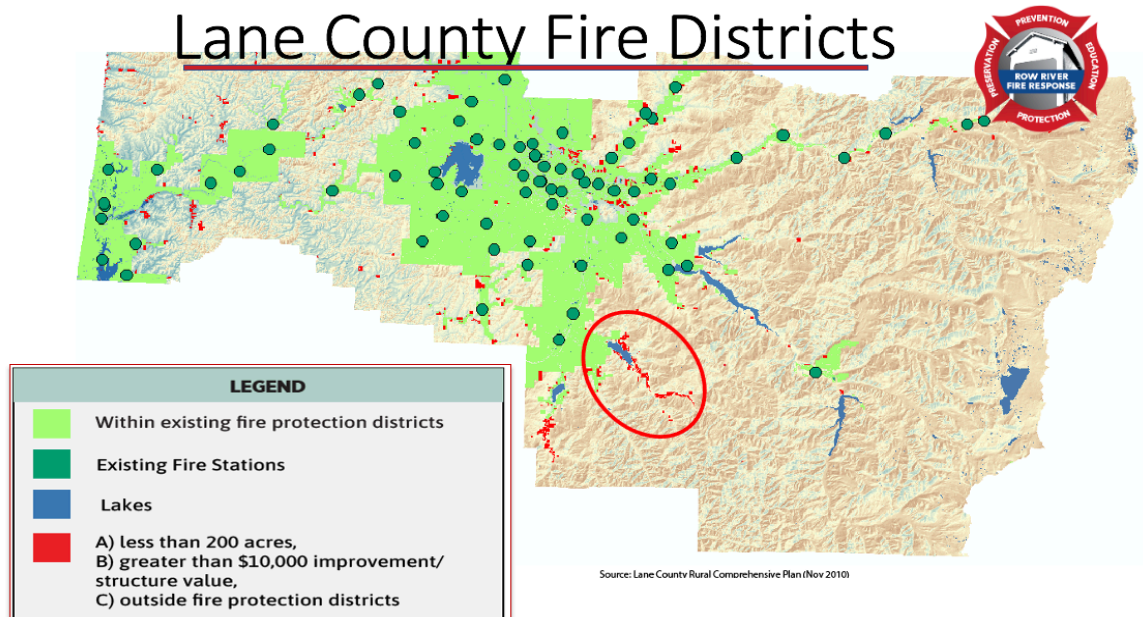


Purpose of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District Economic Feasibility Statement:

This Economic Feasibility Statement provides analysis and evidence that the proposed District operations are financially viable for our unincorporated community east of Cottage Grove and that there is sufficient tax revenue to support the proposed operations at the specifically proposed tax rate. This Economic Feasibility Statement includes:

- The boundaries of the proposed District.
- An analysis of the assessed value of the improved properties within the proposed District which forms the basis for the tax rate to support the District operations.
- A proposed tax rate of \$2.40/1000 for the aforementioned assessed properties.
- A description of the services provided by the proposed District.
- An analysis of the District services and other existing services.
- A proposed Year-1, and projected Year-3 District operating budget as evidence that the District is financially sustainable.

Rationale for Service Needs:



- This Map clearly illustrates that the Row River Valley (circled in red), has **the highest concentration of unprotected homes in Lane County.**
- The Community lacks any organized, local, timely Fire or EMR services.
- Oregon Senate Bill 762 specifically articulates the *'development of safe and effective [Fire] response'* as one of the bill's 3 key comprehensive strategies to reduce the risk of wildfire to communities.
- The Community is designated high and extreme wildfire risk by OSU Wildfire Risk Mapping, created in accordance with Oregon Senate Bill 762, Section 7.



- The Community has steep ‘chimney-like’ topography creating ideal conditions for rapid development of conflagration fire disasters.
- The Community lacks a clearly defined evacuation plan— a ‘one way in--one way out’ narrow valley.
- The Community lacks disaster shelters or evacuation centers within the valley.
- The Community lacks reliable methods of communication within or regionally, particularly when the electrical grid is down. Cell service is unreliable.

Progress:

Because of the lack of timely Fire/EMR services in our community a group of community members formed an exploratory committee to address these critical service deficiencies. Row River Fire Response, incorporated in October 2022, was formed as a result of the committee’s actions.

RRFR Mission:

Row River Fire Response is committed to create a safe community through education, prevention, preparedness, and effective fire, medical, or other emergency response.

**Row River Fire Response
Strategic Goals**

- **Formation a Special Rural Fire Protection District in accordance with Oregon Statutes ORS 198 and 478.**
- Establish immediate and transitional Fire/EMR response operations in the proposed District area, in accordance with Oregon Statutes governing Rural Fire Services, providing response services until the Special Rural Fire Protection District is created.
- Pursue projects, education, and activities for fire prevention, as well as to improve defensible space and fire hardiness for our district members.
- Establish and coordinate Evacuation Routes, Disaster Plans, and establish a Shelter-Space Community Center location for District residents, in coordination with partnering agencies and the Lane County Strategic Plan, the Row River Evacuation Plan, and the Lane County Master Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Nomenclature:

Row River Fire Response, (RRFR). An Oregon 501c3 non-profit corporation.

Row River Rural Fire Protection District. The entity name for the proposed Special Rural Fire Protection District. Also referred to as ‘proposed District’ or ‘District.’

Principal Act:

The Principal Act of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District is ORS Chapter 478



Chief Petitioners:

Walter Bernard
75976 Booth Kelly Camp Rd
Dorena Oregon, 97434
541-510-2359

Kathleen Istudor
38659 Lower Brice Creek Road
Dorena Oregon, 97434
541-946-2068

Reta Cochrane
37029 Row River Road
Cottage Grove Oregon, 97424
541-285-2642

Concurrent Services within the Proposed District:

Lane County	ORS Chapter 201 through ORS 215
Row River Water District	ORS Chapter 553
South Lane School District	ORS Chapter 332
Lane Educational Service District	ORS Chapter 334
Lane Community College	ORS Chapter 341
Upper Willamette Soil and Water	ORS Chapter 568
Lane County 4-H extension	ORS Chapter 451
South Lane Fire and Rescue	ORS Chapter 478
Fire Patrol-Department of Forestry	ORS Chapter 477
Lane Electric Coop	ORS Chapter 62
Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council	ORS Chapter 541

Proposed District Boundaries:

The proposed District boundaries were created utilizing five sources.

- A list of properties with improved values within the proposed District provided by Lane County Assessment and Taxation.
- A Metes and Bounds district boundary description from past 1987 unsuccessful petition for fire district formation.
- The eastern boundaries of the South Lane Fire and Rescue District.
- The legal boundary description of the Row River Water District operating in the area of the proposed Row River Fire District.
- Geographical Information Systems (GIS) mapping.



Description of boundaries of the territory proposed to be included in the District:

The District Boundaries encompass all unprotected properties with residential structures as well as some undeveloped properties, north of Dorena Lake beginning near milepost 6.5 of Row River Road, east to the intersection of Brice Creek Road/Layng Creek Road. Then continuing east to milepost 1.5 of Brice Creek Rd, and to 40400 Layng Creek Road, more or less. And south of Dorena Lake beginning at milepost 2 of Shoreview Drive, east to the intersection of Row River Road, including properties on roads accessed from Shoreview Drive and Row River Road. All maps and descriptions are provided by Lane Council of Government, in agreement with this petition and feasibility statement. (see map of the proposed District above).

Metes and Bounds of the proposed District:

Row River Fire Response has contracted with Lane Council of Government (LCOG) to provide the required Metes and Bounds boundary description for the proposed District. The Metes and Bounds description will be included, as required, for the completed application to Lane County Clerk. See **Appendix 1 (pending LCOG completion)** for the Metes and Bounds legal description of the proposed District.

Potential Operational Challenges/Solutions:

- Challenge of providing effective fire response with volunteer staffing. The number of capable willing volunteers are reported by many volunteer districts to be declining. **Solution:** The proposed District is notable for a high level of personal commitment to volunteerism as evidenced by the 20 plus community members who are currently participating in the South Lane Fire and Rescue/Row River Fire Response, **Battalion 5 Auxiliary Unit**, a volunteer division of South Lane Fire and Rescue. (see advantages, below). In addition, the **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative**, Phase 3, devotes considerable effort towards funding for paid staffing for District volunteer firefighters (see below).
- The requirements of small rural districts to complete the equivalent levels of training, standards, equipment maintenance, equipment life span standards, and other operational requirements compared to career staffed agencies, which increases operational expenses relative to available revenue. **Solution:** RRRF Board is participating in the **Oregon OSHA Non-entry Firefighting Rulemaking Advisory Committee** to voice for fair and appropriately affordable standards for rural volunteer fire departments.
- Funding challenges for fire services in rural communities. Rural communities, such as the Row River Valley, are often economically disadvantaged and may be less likely to support tax assessments for Fire and EMR services. **Solution:** RRRF and the proposed District will recruit and maintain a skilled grant funding committee for the **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative** to secure major funding support for the District (see below).



- Distance and geographic shape of the proposed District. A long and narrow district can add challenges to response times, require duplicate services and equipment, and has the potential to complicate access issues. **Solution:** Strategically placed **satellite stations** combined with local in-area volunteers who can provide initial response and attack while main station crews respond.
- Strategic Plan creation and execution may be difficult due to lack of human resources, knowledge, experience, and skill set. **Solution:** RRFR leaders and our volunteers actively seek training, partnership, and mentorship from knowledgeable sources as well as train to develop programs consistent with Mutual Aid partners; examples include Incident Command System, the National Incident Management System, and training with partnering agencies.
- Fire District Capital Challenges. All Fire and EMR assets are expensive and a challenge to afford for small rural departments, particularly buildings/stations, or major equipment assets, (engines, tenders, rescue vehicles, etc.). In particular, the cost of even one new or 'slightly' used fire engine is beyond the initial budget of most rural Fire/EMS agencies. Most rural Fire/EMS services in Lane County rely heavily on used, donated, and/or grant funded capital assets including buildings and heavy equipment. Used equipment, in particular, may have increased maintenance costs, decreased reliability, and not meet regulatory standards or requirements. These are constant challenges for rural departments. **Solution:** The **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative** provides funding, assets, and operational support for District creation, capital investments, and operational support (see below).
- Inability to consolidate. The ability to consolidate services or reduce duplicity of costs by merging districts is challenging for rural districts due to distance and geographic considerations. **Solution:** RRFR and the proposed District will actively seek Mutual Aid agreements, shared training modules, and forge partnerships thru the many organizations dedicated to community safety including Lane County Sherriff's and Fire Defense Board, Lane County Emergency Management, NGO's, or Businesses who have common interests in the proposed District.
- Lack of reliable communications infrastructure. The proposed district has minimal to limited cell service, radio service limited to 'line of sight' range, and unreliable emergency 'notification' systems. There is fiberoptic internet/phone service to the Dorena School, otherwise Century Link landline phone service and DSL internet is the predominate carrier in the area. There is limited satellite service by Starlink and HughesNet. **Solution:** RRFR and the proposed District will actively pursue all feasibly possible improvements in local community and emergency communication including improved *cell service/cell tower*, radio, satellite, notification, or other critical communication systems (see below).



Operational Advantages Specific to the Proposed District:



Landmark SLFR/RRFR Battalion 5 Auxiliary first meeting 6-2023

- Row River Fire Response Auxiliary Unit. Providing interim fire services until District is formed, Row River Fire Response and South Lane Fire District have partnered to form a unique public/private partnership ensuring fire response service staged locally, staffed with our 20 plus community volunteer firefighters, as an Auxiliary unit of South Lane Fire and Rescue. SLFR/RRFR **Battalion 5**, a well-trained and equipped unit, will be operationally qualified and ready to provide independent services as soon as the proposed District is legally recognized.
- Self-determinism and self-executing nature of the community. Many of our community members are ‘doers’ used to identify problems, creating solutions, and building system response. This is evidenced by the community engagement in District formation—over 100 committed and engaged volunteers ready to contribute.
- Increased awareness and commitment to fire resiliency by local, state and federal agencies including financial support at all levels. Row River Fire Response has received a Lane County District Formation Grant, an Oregon Capital Communications Grant, and an Oregon Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant.
- Several health care professionals who live in the community are ready and willing to contribute: nurses, clinical social workers, counselors, and physicians. Capacities include emergency medical responders, medical directors, and disaster counseling, planning, and/or relief.
- District creation allies with the Lane County Master Hazard Mitigation Plan, the (draft) Row River Evacuation Plan, and the Lane County Strategic Plan, all which define the pillars of community systems and preparedness: a vibrant and safe community, civic engagement, operational readiness, and improved Lane County ‘reach’ wherein the proposed District *becomes a partnering asset* to fire, emergency and disaster services.
- Support from many Fire/EMR agencies throughout Lane County, Oregon Fire Defense Board, Oregon Department of Forestry, Lane Electric Coop, (our electric utility), Weyerhaeuser, and other invested community groups and members.



- Improved ISO (Insurance Services Office) fire ratings as a result of an improved fire adapted community offers objective evidence of success and justifies the logic motivating District creation, while making it more affordable thru significantly lower home insurance and construction costs.
- District has a readily accessible supply of water throughout the proposed District in close proximity to most structures in our district.

Projected Annual call Volume:

South Lane Fire and Rescue responds to an average of 65-70 calls/year in the proposed District, the majority being EMR services with one active fire response in 2022. In addition, our community members extinguished 8 fires in 2022. Thus, the total projected annual responses are projected to be about 75-80 calls/year of which 85% EMR, 10% fire, and the remainder miscellaneous. Given the increased public awareness of a newly organized Fire/EMR service located within the District, the Petitioners anticipate that service response numbers will increase due to perceived availability, and because the service is *for the benefit of our community*. Increased response for ancillary support may increase services by requests from partnering agencies responding in the area (Sheriff, Lane County Emergency Services, etc.), for traffic control, rescue, or other service that falls within the organization’s mission and capacity.

Governance:

Once the Row River Rural Fire Protection District is successfully petitioned and approved by the electors, the organization will be governed by a 5-person Board of Directors, elected and determined concurrent to the approval of the District in the same election. Thereafter, Board members terms and elections will be governed by all applicable Oregon Statues (478).

Relationship to Other Governmental Agencies:

Row River Rural Fire Protection District, will strive to maintain effective partnerships with interested organizations, agencies and districts towards safety, cooperation, and resiliency, in accordance with the Lane County Strategic Plan. These partnerships include Mutual Aid agreements with neighboring districts such as South Lane Fire and Rescue, and any other district support as requested by the Oregon Fire Defense Board. The proposed District will partner with Lane County Emergency Management, Lane County Parks and Receptions, the Lane County Sheriff’s Department, and other agencies invested in public safety and service, where appropriate. The District will actively seek a working relationship with Oregon Department of Forestry-East Lane as fire risk in the District is nearly 100% urban-wildland interface, necessitating coordinated response for effective management. The District will join the Lane County Mutual Aid Fire Defense Board overseen by the Oregon State Fire Marshall.

Description of Services Provided by the Proposed District:

Row River Rural Fire Protection District will respond to fire, medical, other emergencies, as well as non-emergency needs within the defined boundaries, or beyond, and in accordance with ORS 478, District governance, and operational protocols:

- Structural Fire Response: non-entry class.



- EMR response in coordination with SLFR.
- Motor vehicle response for fire, EMR, and support of Police/Sheriff departments.
- Wildland fire response in the urban-wildland interface.
- Initial rescue response and EMR stabilization.
- Community education for prevention, resiliency, shelter, and evacuation.



Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative:

After situational analysis, discussions with community and strategic partners, Row River Fire Response developed the **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative**, a 3-phased Strategic Plan implemented in parallel with special district formation to provide funding, assets, and operational support for District creation and services. Its purpose is for sustainable fire prevention, mitigation, and protection to safeguard human life, property and the surrounding ecosystem. *The Initiative's focus is on capital assets to support fire response operations including 911 repeater and responder radio communication, cell phone tower construction for community readiness, **Fire Station and Emergency Shelter construction**, water access improvements including fire hydrants and river water drafting sources for efficient emergency response, and fire apparatus acquisition appropriate for objectives.*

The initiative seeks partnerships with stakeholder organizations where appropriate to combine resources for effective impact. Examples include partnering with the Row River Water District for improved water supply by improving existing water lines and installing fire hydrants, partnering with Lane County Emergency Management for effective evacuation and shelter resources, and working with stakeholder agencies, (OSFM, Law Enforcement, Lane County Fire Defense Board, and Mutual Aid Fire Districts), for improved **cell service** by District cell tower installation.

The following initiative funding goals are raised from in kind and monetary grants independent and complimentary to the annual tax assessed revenue on District properties.

Phase 1: AUXILIARY DISTRICT | GOAL: \$ 2 M | Funded: 92%

1. Provide fuel reduction and defensible space services to our most vulnerable population, and ensure that our residents have adequate access for fire truck ingress and egress;
2. Train and equip 20 volunteer firefighters under the mentorship of South Lane Fire & Rescue for immediate fire response services as RFR Auxiliary Unit, thus we will be well prepared for the 2023-2024 Fire Season and 'District ready' in July 2024;
3. Establish Critical Communication infrastructure:
 - 911 radio repeater for improved emergency communication



- Initiate interagency project for rural cell tower construction-enables emergency notifications and communications during red flag alert or other emergencies.
4. Transition from Auxiliary Unit to Independent Fire District after successful May election petition and Lane County Board Order, effective July 1, 2024.

Phase 2: FIRE STATION CONSTRUCTION | GOAL: \$ 6.6 M | Funded: 7.5%

1. Planning, permitting and certification of 4 bay Fire Station;
2. Ground preparation, utilities, construction of Fire Station.
3. Human rescue, evacuation, **flex space** shelter to accommodate all types of situations (in planning);
4. Animal rescue, evacuation, **flex space** for domestic animals (in planning);
5. Provides inventory of essential systems and equipment for operational readiness;
6. Pattern process and flex space integration into the building structure for maximum community adoption and firefighting efficiency (in planning).

Phase 3: ONGOING SUSTAINABILITY | GOAL: \$ 300K/ | Funded : 50% (pending district formation)

1. Paid staffing, training, and operations;
2. Maintenance, repair, certification needs;
3. Support for 'keeping the lights on and diesel in the tanks.'

Community Acceptance and Participation:



Al Kennedy school class takes a break from wildfire fuels reduction work in our community

The greatest strength toward the success of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District lies in the community stakeholders: volunteers dedicating their time, finances, and energy to safeguard their 25-mile stretch of Wildland-Urban Interface community, including almost 30 firefighter volunteers, Dorena School staff, Child’s Way school staff, Sunshine Club, a community service group consisting of 35 members, and Row River Fire Response composed of 7 board members.

An important component of the proposed District is for stakeholders and residents to participate in community wildfire risk reduction and prevention, which reduces the risk and



impact of catastrophic wildfires on lives and livelihoods in the Row River Valley. These programs include Firewise, a OSFM Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant, and *Firewise USA*™ adapted certification for lower home insurance rates. The RRRF organization in coordination with the proposed District actively seeks **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative Phase 1** grant funding and partnering agencies to these goals. Our first grant, the Oregon State Fire Marshall’s Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant for \$248,000.00 was awarded in May of 2023.

The first programs of the **Row River FireSafe and Resiliency Initiative** are underway: 1.) partnering with both Dorena and Child’s Way schools in a Fire Safety Camp, and 2.) partnering with Lane County and Firewise to provide Community defensible space measures. These programs will include rural-first content specifically geared to this community’s unique dynamics and stewardship responsibilities within the Wildland-Urban Interface.

The proposed District, in partnership with RRRF and stakeholder agencies will continue these programs as a core mission priority for the foreseeable future.



Financial Feasibility Projections:

The Row River Rural Fire Protection District will be funded through a permanent property tax on all properties within the District, with structurally assessed value. In order to be considered for petition, the Petitioners must provide a proposed Year-1, and a projected Year-3 budget. Because the proposed district is new, there is no financial history, thus financial projections are based on the data and experience from other districts of similar situation, district size, and type of staffing (volunteer verses paid staff). In addition, the petitioners have interviewed agencies, services, and suppliers for specific costs including insurance, communication, 9-1-1 services, responder training, personal protective equipment, as well as hard asset costs such as fire engines, water tenders, and the like.

Based on a total assessed value of improvements for the proposed district at **approximately 69 million, a \$2.40/1000 proposed** tax rate would generate revenue of about \$149,000.00/yr., after assumed 10% tax collection loss. Our projected annual operating expense of \$105,200.00, plus capital asset investment/contingency funds of \$42,500.00 results in a net balance of \$1,340.00 for fiscal Year-1. (See **Appendix 2** for the detailed Year-1 proposed budget.)

For the Year-3 projected budget, the Petitioners factored an annual growth in assessed value of 2.5%, (historically the property value growth is 3% annually). A 2.5% appreciation over 2 years results in a projected total value of \$72,493,125.00, that when assessed at \$2.40/1000, generates \$156,585.00, (less assumed 10% tax collection loss), annual District revenue. See **Appendix 2** for a detailed Year-3 projected budget.

Comparative Tax Assessments of Area Fire Districts:



The following table summarizes regional district taxing rates currently in effect. The tax rate of \$2.40/1000 for the proposed District falls generally within the median range of district taxing rates and therefore consistent with the 'industry' standards. Furthermore, several districts interviewed by the Petitioners, who have permanent tax rates below \$2.00/1000 reported of chronic underfunded to their evolving needs in the face of increasing operating expenses, increased regulatory or certification requirements and costs, and decreasing volunteers necessitating paid career staff.

Fire District Name	Base Tax Rate	Levy/Bond(s)	Total Rate	Notes
1 Lake Creek Rural Fire Protection District	\$3.07		\$3.07	Volunteer Only
2 Willakenzie Rural Fire District *Eugene	\$3.06		\$3.06	Contracts to City of Eugene
3 Hazeldell Rural Fire Protection District	\$2.71		\$2.71	Contracts to Oakridge
4 Lowell Rural Fire Protection District	\$2.69		\$2.69	
5 Eugene Rural Fire Protection District 1 *Eugene	\$2.54		\$2.54	Contracts to Eugene
13 Dexter Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.42	\$1.00	\$2.42	Levy for Operations *Attempting Increase 5/22
6 Bailey Spencer Rural Fire Protection District	\$2.39		\$2.39	Contracts to Eugene
7 Lane Fire Authority	\$2.03	\$0.35	\$2.38	Ops Levy for staff
8 Zumwalt Rural Fire District *Eugene	\$2.34		\$2.34	Contracts to Eugene
9 Lorane Rural Fire Protection District	\$2.30		\$2.30	Volunteer Only
10 Mohawk Valley Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.91	\$0.37	\$2.28	Bond for equipment non 24 hour staff
11 McKenzie Fire and Rescue	\$1.61	\$0.60	\$2.21	Levy for Operations
12 Swishome Deadwood Rural Fire Protection District	\$2.14		\$2.14	Volunteer Only
14 Goshen Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.72		\$1.72	Just completed a 10 year 50/1000 levy
15 Upper McKenzie Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.19	\$0.50	\$1.69	Levy for equipment and operations
16 Monroe Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.69		\$1.69	
17 Junction City Rural Fire District	\$0.98	\$0.60	\$1.58	Levy for staff
18 Coburg Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.32	\$0.22	\$1.54	Levy for equipment
19 Siuslaw Valley Fire & Rescue	\$1.54		\$1.54	Combined with Western Lane Ambulance
20 South Lane County Fire & Rescue	\$1.03	\$0.47	\$1.50	Levy for Operations
21 Santa Clara Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.04	\$0.45	\$1.49	Fully contracts to LFA
22 Mapleton Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.39		\$1.39	Volunteer Only
23 Pleasant Hill Rural Fire Protection District	\$1.10		\$1.10	Contracts to Pleasant Hill Goshen Fire & Rescue

Courtesy of Goshen/Pleasant Hill Rural Fire Protection District

Oregon State Department of Forestry:

Pursuant to ORS 478.150, the petitioners have conferred with the Oregon State Forestry Department in determining the boundaries and lands to be included within the proposed District. See **Appendix 3** for Letter of acknowledgement from Chris Cline, District Forester that the requirements of ORS 478.150 have been fulfilled.

Summary:

The Row River Valley, identified as high and extreme fire risk and almost completely in the wildland-urban interface, is without Fire and EMS services that the *majority* of Lane County residents take for granted, and are provide through government agencies and services. The Petitioners recognize this acute need for essential services in this area and are proposing the formation of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District, a Special Rural Fire Protection District, in accordance with Oregon Statutes 198 and 478. The financial costs to the proposed District constituents are not insignificant, but the costs of inaction are unimaginable. The feasibility budget projections are balanced, the tax assessed revenue supports the budget, and the proposed services fall within the applicable ORS Statutes.

The creation of this Special Rural Fire Protection District meets many of the objectives of the Lane County Strategic Plan: A Safe Healthy County, Vibrant Communities, Robust Infrastructure, and Safe Healthy People within. We hope the creation of the Row River Rural Fire Protection District will enable a legacy of strength, safety, and resiliency in perpetuity.



Respectfully Submitted this 10th day of August 2023.

By:

Walter Bernard, Chief Petitioner

Reta Cochrane, Chief Petitioner

Kathleen Istudor, Chief Petitioner



Appendix 2

Row River Rural Fire Protection District Proposed Yr-1 Budget and projected Yr-3 Budget

All Volunteer Community Responder Organization

Submitted by Row River Fire Response

Board approved 7-22-23

Contact: 541-510-2359

workhorsewalt@gmail.com

	Yr-1 Proposed Budget	Yr-3 Projected Budget	
Taxable assessed value	\$69,000,000	\$72,493,125	source LC Assessment and Taxation
Budget projections based on \$2.40/1000	\$165,600	\$173,984	

Revenue

Tax revenue	\$165,600	\$173,984
Less 10% collection loss LC	\$149,040	\$156,585
Interest Income		
Contract Suppression		
Miscellaneous		
Donations		
Total Income	\$149,040	\$156,585

Personnel

Fire Chief	\$0	\$0	all volunteer district
Assistant Chief	\$0	\$0	
Other	\$0	\$0	
Total personnel	\$0	\$0	

Materials/Services

911 Dispatch EMS/Fire	\$6,000	\$6,840
Accounting and Consultation	\$7,000	\$7,000
Audit/Review	\$4,000	\$4,000
Repairs and Maintenance	\$22,000	\$25,000
Certification	\$10,000	\$12,000
Building maintenance	\$7,000	\$8,000
Insurance		
buildings		
general liability		
workers comp		
AD and D		
Vehicle		
total insurance	\$18,300	\$25,000
communication equipment	\$500	\$500
dues/subscriptions	\$500	\$500

Firefighting Equipment	\$3,000	\$5,000
Fuel	\$4,000	\$5,000
Legal	\$5,000	\$2,500
Legal Notices and Elections	\$250	\$250
Licensing	\$800	\$1,200
Medical Equipment	\$1,000	\$3,000
Miscellaneous	\$2,000	\$2,000
Office Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,500
Phone/Internet/active911	\$2,500	\$2,500
property lease	\$500	\$500
property tax	\$750	\$750
Service Charges	\$100	\$100
Training	\$5,000	\$2,500
Utilities	\$2,000	\$2,000
Volunteer Firefighter exp	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total Materials and Services	\$105,200	\$119,640
Capital Outlay		
EMS Equipment	\$7,500	\$5,000
AED		
PPE		
Firefighting equipment	\$15,000	\$10,000
engine/vehicle		
engine/vehicle		
Buildings		
Land		
Office Equipment		
Radios/Pagers/Communications		
water tanks		
water intakes		
Total Capital Outlay	\$22,500	\$15,000
Total expense	\$127,700	\$134,640
contingency	\$10,000	\$10,000
transfer out to capital reserve fund	\$10,000	\$10,000
total allocated expenses including contingency and capital res	\$147,700	\$154,640
net balance	\$1,340	\$1,945



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry

South Cascade District
3150 Main Street
Springfield, OR 97478-5800
Phone: (541) 726-3588
Fax: (541) 726-2501
<http://www.oregon.gov/odf>

11/28/2022

Dear Mr. Byler,

I wanted to acknowledge the meeting we had on November 17th, 2022, where we discussed the formation of a rural fire protection district in the community of Row River. It was a pleasure to meet with you all and I thank you for your time and detailed presentation.

According to Oregon Revised Statute 478.150, prior to the formation of any rural fire protection district or the annexation of any territory within the exterior boundaries of a forest protection district established pursuant to ORS Chapter 477, the petitioners of the proposed district or annexation shall confer with the State Forestry Department in determining the boundaries and lands to be included within the fire protection district.

As District Forester, representing the State Forestry Department within the proposed rural fire protection district boundaries (Row River), I wanted to lend my voice of support in your process. While the formation process (and final outcome) is outside the control of our agency, we do support your efforts and feel a rural fire protection district could be a great asset to your local community members. I also believe that our meeting on November 17th meets the "conferring" clause of ORS 478.150.

Thank you, again, for your time and dedication to the process. Please feel free to reach out to me with any additional questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Chris Cline
District Forester
South Cascade District
Oregon Department of Forestry
541-726-3588 Ext 225

