



PLUMAS COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chair and Board of Supervisors

FROM: Tracey Ferguson, Director of Planning

MEETING DATE: April 15, 2025

SUBJECT: Update Board of Supervisors and public on the proposed 2025 Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) Map from the Office of the State Fire Marshall for the unincorporated areas of Plumas County within the Town of Chester, Town of Quincy, Town of East Quincy, and Sierra Valley; discussion and possible action.

Recommendation:

Requesting direction on direct mailing to approximately 2,500 property owners within the LRA, including type of mailing and approval on cost estimate and source of funding.

Background and Discussion:

The Office of the State Fire Marshal (State Fire Marshall) is mandated by Government Code Sec. 51178 to identify levels of fire hazard in the LRA based on consistent statewide criteria and the expected severity of fire hazards, and Government Code Sec. 51179 requires the State Fire Marshal to make recommendations of fire hazard severity zones to local agencies (Sec. 51177(e)), for city and county designation and adoption by ordinance.

On February 10, 2025, the State Fire Marshall provided the 2025 LRA FHSZ maps to the County, which evaluate "hazard," not "risk" to include areas or zones of Very High, High, and Moderate fire hazard based on consistent statewide criteria and the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas (Government Code Sec. 51178).

LRA areas in Plumas County are those where the "local government" is responsible for wildfire protection, which in the case of Plumas, is the responsibility of the local fire protection special districts. Specifically, the areas of LRA in unincorporated Plumas County are within the Town of Chester, Town of Quincy, Town of East Quincy, and Sierra Valley. Local fire protection special districts affected include Peninsula Fire Protection District (Chester), Quincy Fire Protection District (Quincy/East Quincy), and Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District (Sierra Valley).

Pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51178.5, on March 11, 2025, Planning Director Ferguson was before the Board of Supervisors to make available for public review and comment the updated 2025 LRA FHSZ Map, and the Board directed County staff to conduct outreach to the affected communities, including participating in applicable meetings that are regularly scheduled.

Plumas County has established a website at the following address, making the information available for public review and comment:

<https://www.plumascounty.us/3354/LRA-Fire-Hazard-Severity-Zones-FHSZ-Map>

Hard copy maps for viewing and further information can also be obtained from the Planning Department at 555 Main Street, Quincy, or by calling or emailing Tracey Ferguson, Planning Director, at traceyferguson@countyofplumas.com or 530-283-6214.

Pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51179(a), Plumas County must adopt the 2025 LRA Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZs in the unincorporated area of the County by ordinance, with an associated map, within 120 days of receiving the maps on February 10, 2025, or no later than June 10, 2025. Then, Plumas County must transmit a copy of the ordinance/map adopted by the Board of Supervisors to the State Fire Marshall within 30 days of adoption, or no later than July 10, 2025.

Since March 11, 2025, Planning Director Ferguson has participated in the following public meetings to provide 2025 LRA FHSZ information:

1. March 24, 2025, Chester Town Hall Public Meeting
2. March 29, 2025, Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association
3. April 2, 2025, Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District Board Meeting
4. April 10, 2025, Plumas County Fire Safe County Public Meeting

Additionally, Planning Director Ferguson participated in a virtual meeting on April 1, 2025, with CAL FIRE Office of the State Fire Marshall Land Use Planning staff Bryan Carter, Battalion Chief; Shelley Redden, Battalion Chief; Kevin Lindo, Battalion Chief; and Kevin Merkh, Battalion Chief of the Subdivision Review Program.

Lastly, Planning Director Ferguson researched the estimated cost of providing a direct mailing, with pertinent information on the proposed 2025 LRA FHSZ process, where to find more information, and how to comment, to the approximately 2,500 property owners (accounting for property owner duplicates from the approximately 2,695 parcels affected) within the LRA, as follows:

- Standard (5.5"x4.25") Postcard (yellow color) – \$1,439.00
- Envelope/letter – \$2,058.00

Planning Director Ferguson is asking the Board of Supervisors for direction on a possible direct mailing. Potential funding sources include:

- Planning Department (20490) Office Expense (521800) and Postage/Ship, Mail Cost (520210);
- General Services (20020) Copy/Cert Copy/Postage (45083);
- Board of Supervisors (20010) Office Expense (521800) and Postage/Ship, Mail Cost (520210); or
- other source.

Action:

Requesting direction on direct mailing to approximately 2,500 property owners within the LRA, including type of mailing and approval on cost estimate and source of funding.

Fiscal Impact:

Staff time from General Fund County Counsel, Planning, Building, and GIS departments FY24/25 regular wages budget, among other potential departments that may require spending staff time. Direct mailing from Planning Department, General Services, or Board of Supervisors FY24/25 budget or some other source of funding.

Attachments:

1. Presentation_PLUMAS COUNTY LRA_BOS 4.15.25