Elk Creek • Indian Hills • Inter-Canyon • North Fork

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS

Colorado

Fire & Emergency Medical Services

COOPERATIVE SERVICES FEASIBILITY STUDY

November 2021

AP TRITON

VISION • INNOVATION • SOLUTIONS

Contents

Acknowledgments

AP Triton, LLC wishes to extend its sincere appreciation to each of those who contributed to this project—fire chiefs, officers, administrative support staff, elected officials, other fire district representatives, and many other individuals who lent their time and assistance to this project.

Our sincere appreciation is extended to each of you…

Elk Creek FPD

Jacob Ware
Fire Chief

Roger Parker
Fire Marshal

Ben Yellin
Wildland Captain

Indian Hills FPD

Mark Forgy
Fire Chief

Angel Manning
Office Manager

Inter-Canyon FPD

Skip Shirlaw
Fire Chief

Kelley Wood
Administration

North Fork FPD

Curt Rogers
Fire Chief

John Cloutier
Captain/Administration

Jeffcom 911 Communications

Vicki Pickett
Operations Manager

…and to each of the command staff, officers, firefighters, volunteers, and support staff who daily serve the citizens and visitors of their respective.

Executive Summary

The following represents a brief Executive Summary of the report prepared by AP Triton, LLC on behalf of the four fire districts included in this study.

Baseline Evaluations

In Section I, Triton described the demographics and other elements of Jefferson County and other areas serviced by each of the fire districts. This included an overview of each jurisdiction and other components of the emergency services system in Jefferson County.

For each fire district, a detailed financial analysis was conducted along with a review of their management components, staffing and management of personnel, and an inventory and evaluation of capital facilities and each agency's fleet, support programs that including training, life safety and prevention, and special operations.

And finally, this section included comprehensive analyses of each fire district's historical service delivery and performance. This entailed an evaluation of service demand, concentration and reliability studies, a distribution analysis and response performance. As a part of this evaluation, detailed patient transport analyses were conducted. Following this, Triton developed population growth and service demand projects for the service areas of each fire district.

Online Survey Results

At the beginning of this study, Triton developed a web-based survey that was distributed to all of the employees, volunteers, and elected officials of each of the four fire districts. The survey included xx questions. A total of 102 respondents completed the survey, although each did not respond to every question. The following shows the result s of Question #5.

Question #5: Respondents' Opinions of a Potential Fire District Consolidation

Opinion/Position	Responses	% Total[1]
I am in FAVOR so long as it results in improved services.	**34**	**33%**
I am generally in FAVOR of consolidation.	30	29%
I am neither in FAVOR or OPPOSED until I know more details.	30	29%
I am OPPOSED to it no matter what.	6	6%
I have another position	2	2%
Totals:	**102**	

The results found in the preceding figure show that 33% of respondents favored consolidation so long as it results in improved services, while 29% were generally in favor of consolidation. Thus, combined, approximately 62% favored consolidation. Six individuals were opposed to consolidation regardless of the results, while 32 (31%) were neutral or had another position.

Strategies & Opportunities for Cooperative Services

Findings & Observations

This section lists the most significant findings and observations by Triton during the study process. These were presented as opportunities for improvement by the individual districts.

General Partnering & Consolidation Options

Triton identified and described the following potential options:

- Maintain Status Quo
- Contract for Services & Collaboration
- Fire Authority
- Merger

Proposed Recommendations

The next section outlines Triton's recommendations regarding a potential consolidation. Triton recommends that the four fire protection districts consider:

- Create a temporary consolidation in the form of a **Fire Authority.**
- Within 12–24 months or sooner, the fire districts should pursue a permanent merger into the Elk Creek Fire Protection District.
  - In this option, ECFPD would essentially extend its boundaries to incorporate the other three fire districts.
- **Merger Option 1**: Implement an **Inclusion-Exclusion Merger.**
  - In this option, the four fire districts would agree to operate at the lowest mill levy rate of 12.000 (see forecasted revenue and expenditures in "Financial Impact of the Recommendations").
- **Merger Option 2**: Implement a **Legal Merger.**
  - This option would entail a mill levy rate above 12.000 and require voter approval (see forecasted revenue and expenditures in "Financial Impact of the Recommendations").

The recommendations included a proposed organizational structure that incorporated all current employees and volunteers from each fire district into a single jurisdiction. In addition, the recommendations include proposed dispositions and staffing of each of the existing fire stations, a map with the suggested new boundaries of a consolidated fire district, and maps illustrating potential travel times from the newly renumbered (busiest) Fire Stations 1, 3, and 8.

General Recommendations

This section includes an assortment of general recommendations in the following categories:

- Deployment & Operations
- Staffing & Personnel
  - Roles of the Volunteers & Other Staff
- Financial Recommendations
- Miscellaneous Recommendations

Financial Impact of the Recommendations

In this section, Triton estimates the potential costs of the salary and benefits of employees necessary to operate a consolidated fire district. This included a total of 39 full-time equivalents at an estimated cost of $3,877,021 annually.

Triton prepared a forecast of expenditures of a consolidated fire district from FY 2023–FY 2027 as follows:

Projected Expenditures	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Employee Salaries	2,744,774	2,854,565	2,968,748	3,087,498	3,210,998
Employee Benefits	1,235,148	1,284,554	1,335,936	1,389,374	1,444,949
Volunteer Compensation	40,000	41,600	43,264	44,995	46,795
Past Volunteer Retirement Benefits	116,732	116,955	117,182	117,414	117,651
Total Employee & Volunteer Costs:	**4,136,654**	**4,297,674**	**4,465,130**	**4,639,281**	**4,820,393**
Board of Directors	12,700	12,904	13,112	13,324	13,542
Fire Operations	1,727,376	1,761,091	1,795,529	1,830,704	1,866,638
EMS Operations	95,979	97,899	99,857	101,854	103,891
Administrative Costs	566,895	578,573	590,517	602,734	615,232
Miscellaneous Expenses	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Recurring Expenses:	**6,564,604**	**6,773,141**	**6,989,145**	**7,212,897**	**7,444,696**
Debt Service	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Capital Outlay	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Non-Recurring Expenses:	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENDITURES:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase:	**522,996**	**578,595**	**637,221**	**699,010**	**1,011,715**
Beginning Reserves:	5,406,689	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511
Ending Reserves:	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511	8,856,226

Triton projected the potential revenue for a consolidated fire district for both Option 1: Inclusion-Exclusion and Option 2: Legal Consolidation. As mentioned, each of these options represents a different millage rate. The next figures are summaries of the forecasted revenues and expenses of both options for a consolidated fire protection district.

The next figure shows that using the projected budget and a mill levy rate of 12.000, a consolidated fire protection district could be nearly fully funded in the first two fiscal years and completely funded beginning in FY 2025.

Option 1 Summary of Forecasted Revenue & Expenses in a Consolidation

Revenue & Expenses	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Recurring Revenue	6,359,250	6,596,412	6,843,039	7,099,507	7,366,212
Non-Recurring Revenue	340,088	344,532	349,103	353,807	358,649
Total Estimated Revenue:	**6,699,338**	**6,940,944**	**7,192,142**	**7,453,314**	**7,724,861**
Recurring Expenses	6,564,604	6,773,141	6,989,145	7,212,897	7,444,696
Non-Recurring Expenses	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
Total Estimated Expenses:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase (Decrease):	**(40,266)**	**(7,197)**	**27,997**	**65,417**	**105,165**
Beginning Reserves:	5,406,689	5,366,423	5,359,226	5,387,223	5,452,640
Ending Reserves:	5,366,423	5,359,226	5,387,223	5,452,640	5,557,805

In the following figure, it shows that a consolidated fire protection district could be fully funded using the projected budget and a mill levy rate of 13.561.

Option 2 Summary of Forecasted Revenue & Expenses in a Consolidation

Revenue & Expenses	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Recurring Revenue	6,922,512	7,182,204	7,452,263	7,733,100	8,272,762
Non-Recurring Revenue	340,088	344,532	349,103	353,807	358,649
Total Estimated Revenue:	**7,262,600**	**7,526,736**	**7,801,366**	**8,086,907**	**8,631,411**
Recurring Expenses	6,564,604	6,773,141	6,989,145	7,212,897	7,444,696
Non-Recurring Expenses	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
Total Estimated Expenses:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase:	**522,996**	**578,595**	**637,221**	**699,010**	**1,011,715**
Ending Reserves:	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511	8,856,226

Financial Discussion

Option 1 represents an inclusion-exclusion type of consolidation, which is much less complex to implement than Option 2. With a small number of cost reductions, there should be sufficient revenue to operate a new consolidated fire district. Triton believes the advantages of Option 1 outweigh those of Option 2.

It is important to emphasize that both the projected revenue and expenditure figures are based on historical financial and other data and are not intended to be final. Instead, the results should be utilized for discussion and planning purposes.

Planning & Implementation

This section describes various recommended activities for planning and implementing the consolidation process. It includes a list of the minimum implementation working groups that should be established and the composition and responsibilities of each.

Factors to Consider in a Consolidation

This final section includes a number of factors that should be considered in a consolidation process. These include the following topics:

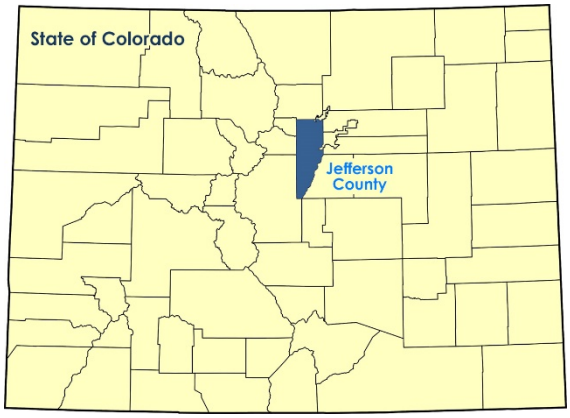
- Motivating Factors
- Success Factors
- Potential Complications
  - Command
  - Communication
  - Control
  - Culture
  - Other Potential Complications

Section I:
BASELINE EVALUATIONS OF THE FIRE DISTRICTS

Community Overview

Most of the service areas of the Elk Creek Fire Protection District (ECFPD), Indian Hills Fire Protection District (IHFPD), Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District (ICFPD), and the North Fork Fire Protection District (NFFPD) lie within Jefferson County to the west and southwest of Denver. Located along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, the County comprises 774 square miles, of which about 1.3% consists of water.[1] Bordering the County's western boundary are Gilpin, Clear Creek, and Park Counties, with Boulder County on the northern boundary.

Figure 1: Jefferson County, Colorado



Golden serves as the county seat. Currently, the most populous city is Lakewood. Other cities include Wheat Ridge and Edgewater, Arvada, Littleton, and Westminster—of which only portions of the latter three are within Jefferson County. There are five small towns, seven unincorporated communities, and 14 census-designated places scattered throughout the County. Fairmount, East Pleasant View, and West Pleasant View are all census-designated places.

Jefferson County has several major highways. Interstate 70 is a transcontinental highway that traverses an east-west route through the County. U.S. Highways 6 and 40 have an east-west route while Highway 285 traverses the County on a north-south route.

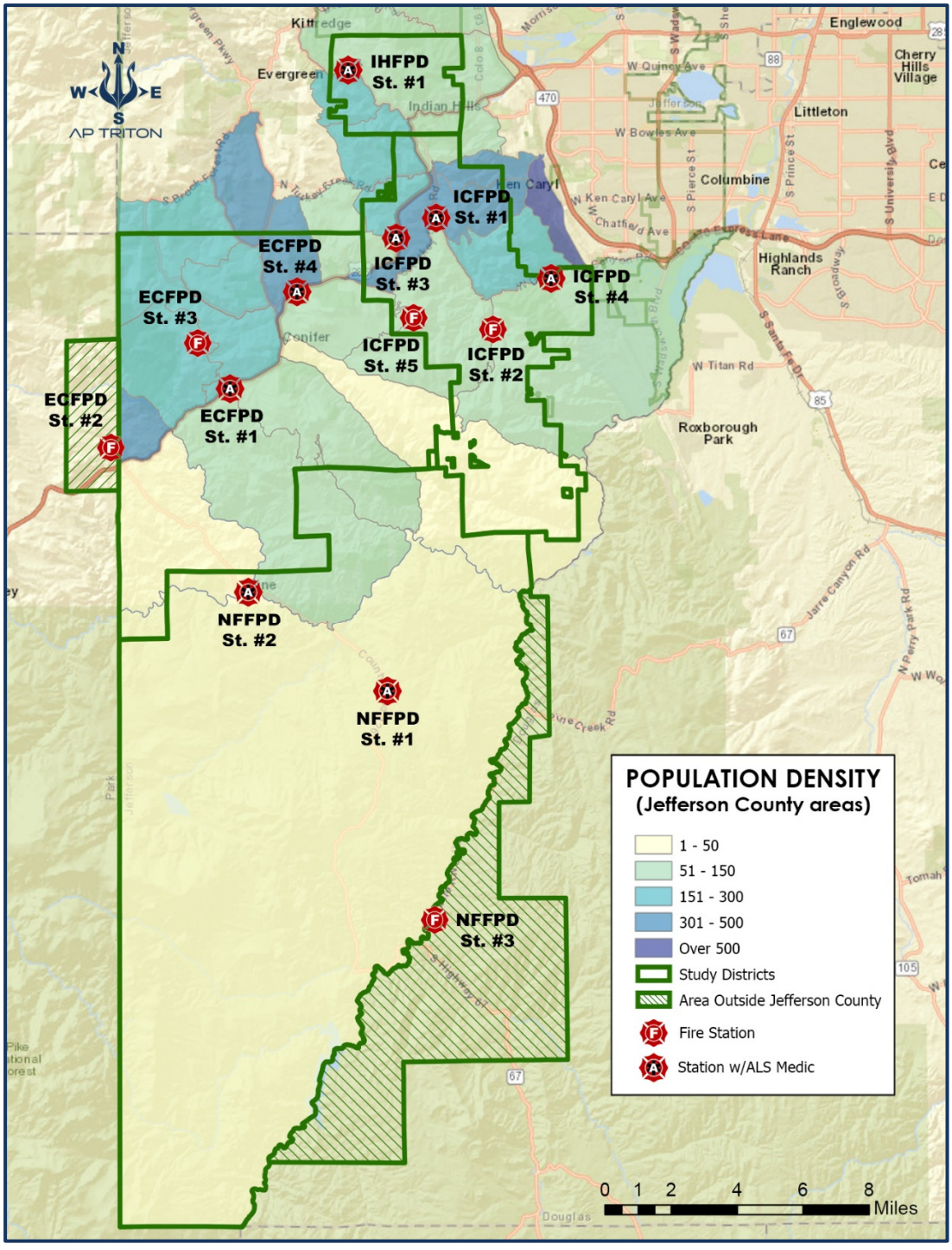
There are a substantial number of recreational areas throughout Jefferson County that ultimately increases the transient population year-round. Three state parks, two national forests and a wilderness, and two national wildlife refuges lie within the County. There are multiple historic and recreational trails and a scenic byway.

Although most of the service areas are within Jefferson County, portions of Elk Creek FPD and North Fork FPD extend beyond the County boundaries. In addition, ECFPD provides service to a small portion of northeastern Park County, while NFFPD includes portions of western Douglas County.

Jefferson County Population

The following figure illustrates the 2019 estimated population densities within the service areas of each fire district participating in this study.[2]

Figure 2: Study Area Population Density (2019 Estimate)



The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the 2019 resident population of Jefferson County was 582,881 persons.[3] The median age was just over 40 years, with just over 5% of the population under the age of five years and 16% age 65 and older.[4]

Combined, the four fire protection districts have an estimated resident population of nearly 44,000 persons. Excluding those coming to the County for recreation, the population may increase by another 10,000 due to individuals coming in for employment purposes.

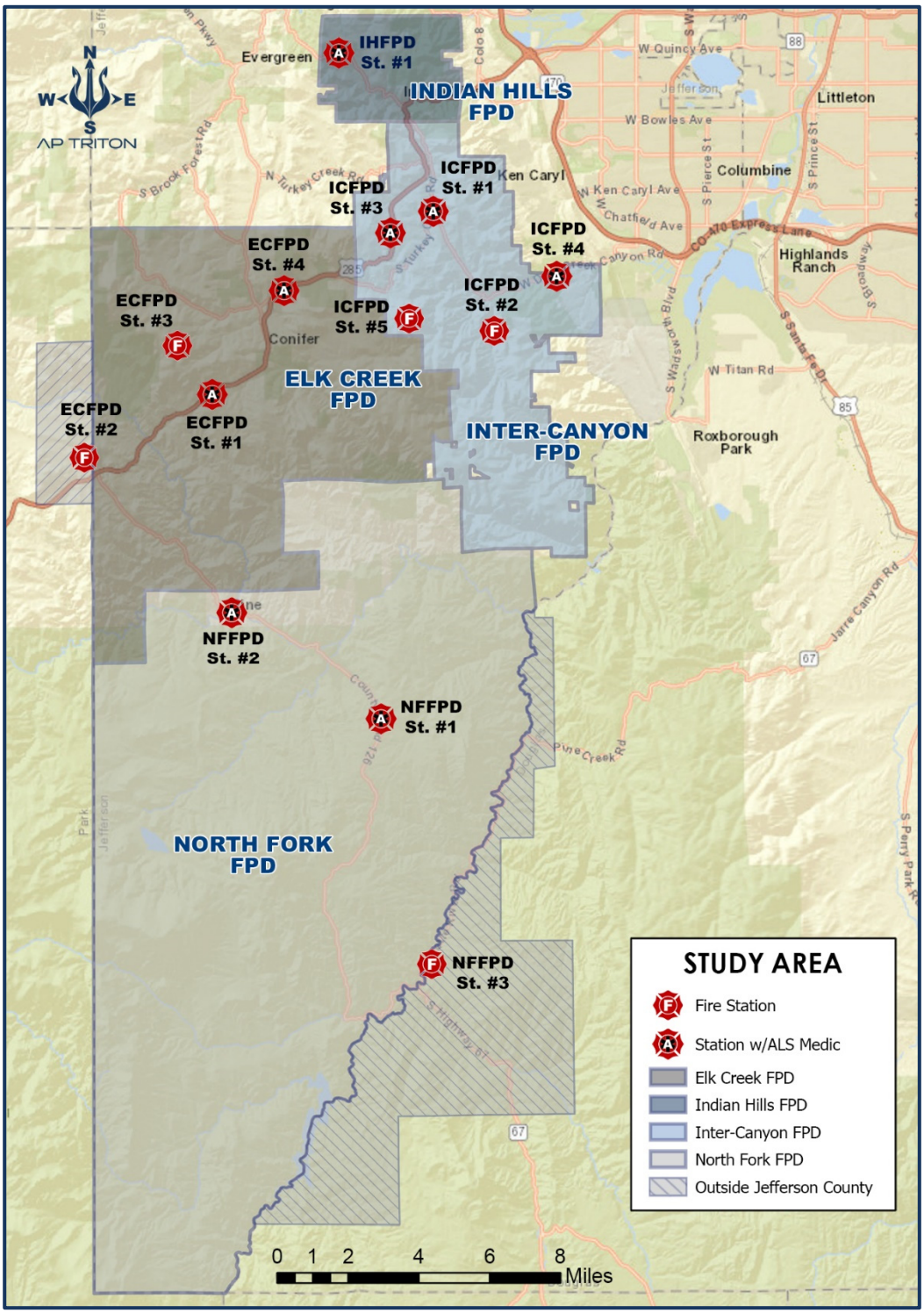
Other County Demographics

In 2019, the median household income was $82,986, with just over 7% of the population in poverty.[5,6] In 2019, it was estimated that nearly 7% of individuals under the age of 65 were without health insurance.[7] Between 2015–2019, the Census Bureau estimated 240,956 housing units in Jefferson County, with a median housing value of $397,700.

Overview of the Fire Districts

The following figure illustrates the overall study area and boundaries of each fire district.

Figure 3: Study Area of the Cooperative Services Project



Elk Creek Fire Protection District

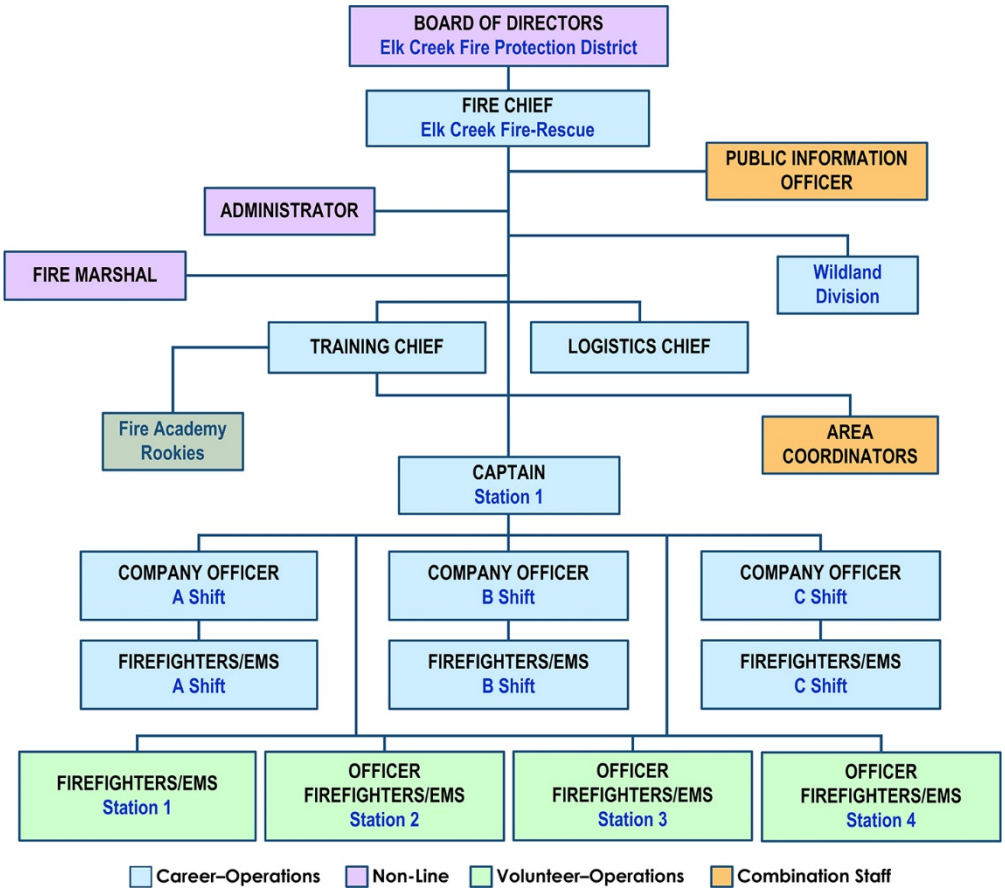
The Elk Creek Fire Department was originally formed in 1948, eventually becoming the Elk Creek Fire Protection District. Headquartered about 30 miles southwest of Denver in the unincorporated community of Conifer, the district is comprised of approximately 98 square miles in western Jefferson County and parts of eastern Park County.[8] ECFPD estimates a resident population of approximately 17,000 persons.

Figure 4: Early Elk Creek FD

District Governance & Organizational Structure

A five-member elected Board of Directors oversees ECFPD. Also known as Elk Creek Fire-Rescue, the district is a combination fire department staffed with 55 career, volunteer, and seasonal personnel. The following figure shows the current organizational structure.

Figure 5: ECFPD Organization Chart (2021)



Fire District Services

ECFPD deploys its apparatus and personnel from four fire stations. The district provides traditional structural and wildland fire suppression, some levels of technical rescue (rope and ice), hazardous materials response, medical first-response, and Advanced Life Support (ALS) emergency medical transport (ambulance service).

The Elk Creek Fire Protection District has a current Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification (PPC®) rating of 5/10.

In addition to emergency operations, ECFPD conducts fire inspections, code enforcement, plan reviews, fire and arson investigations, and public education/prevention programs.

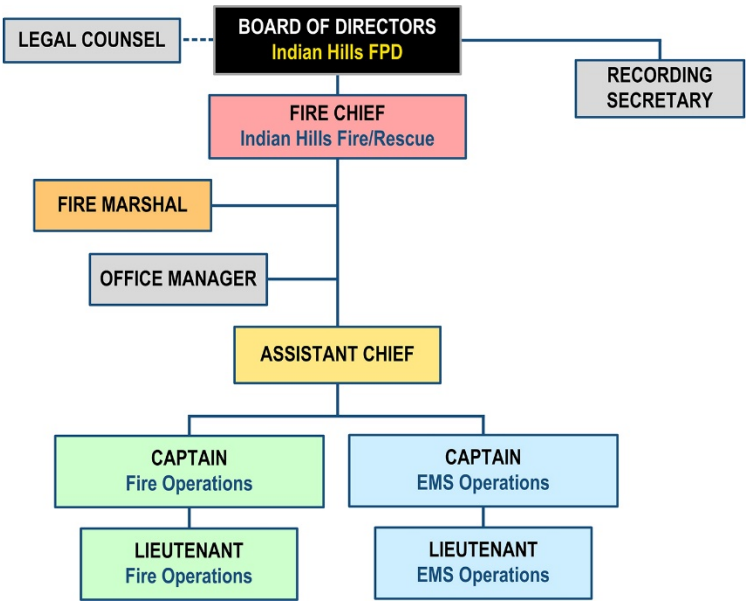
Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The Indian Hills Fire Department—now the Indian Hills Fire Protection District—was loosely established in the 1920s and consisted of a series of wooden sheds stocked with shovels and buckets. The district purchased its first fire apparatus in 1950.[9] The district is comprised of approximately 12 square miles, with an *estimated* population of 1,300 persons.

District Governance & Organizational Structure

A five-member elected Board of Directors oversees IHFPD. The district is also known as Indian Hills Fire Rescue and is a combination fire department staffed with 24 full-time and volunteer personnel. The following shows the IHFPD organizational structure.

Figure 6: IHFPD Organizational Structure (2021)



As shown in the preceding figure, the Fire Chief reports directly to the IHFPD Board of Directors. The Fire Chief directly supervises the Fire Marshal, Office Manager, and Assistant Chief. One Captain and one Lieutenant are assigned to Fire Operations and EMS Operations and are directly overseen by the Assistant Chief.

IHFPD Services

IHFPD deploys its apparatus and personnel from one fire station and provides traditional structural and wildland fire suppression along with medical first-response and ALS-level transport. It also provides low-angle rescue, back country rescue, public education, and hazmat response at the operations level. IHFPD contracts for fire inspections, code enforcement, and other Fire Marshal activities. IHFPD has a current ISO PPC® rating of 5.

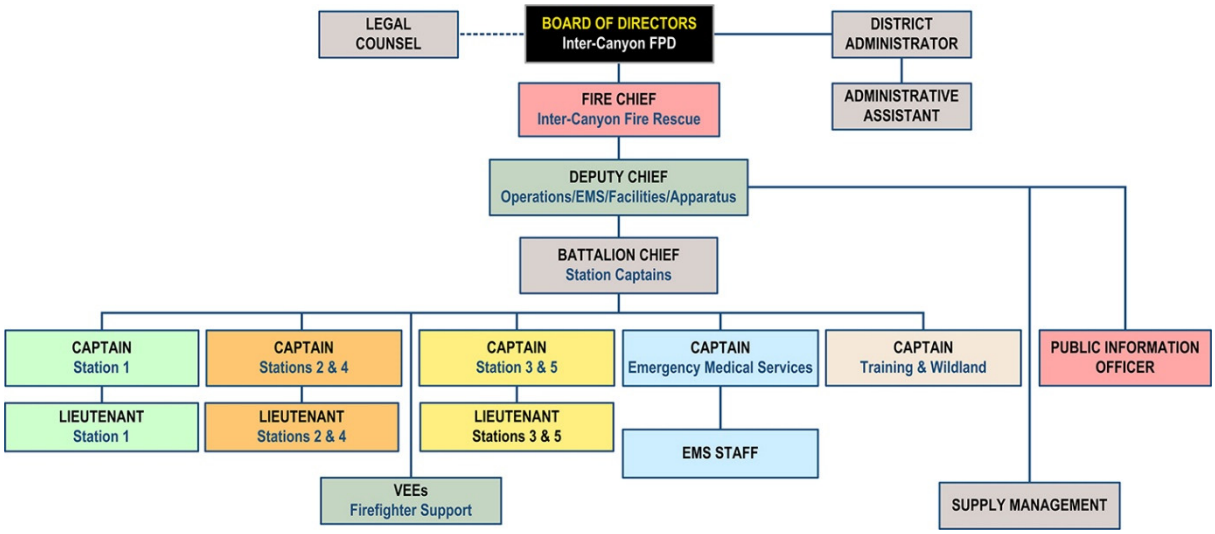
Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

Organized in 1954, the Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District was originally organized in 1954, following a series of significant residential fires that year. The name chosen for the fire department was the "Inter-Canyon Fire Company," which later became a fire protection district. The first fire apparatus was purchased and housed by the Fire Chief. The Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District comprises approximately 52 square miles, with an estimated resident population of between 5,000–5,500 persons.

District Governance & Organizational Structure

A five-member elected Board of Directors oversees the Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District. ICFPD is a combination fire department with a 2021 total of 43 career and volunteer staff.

Figure 7: ICFPD Organizational Chart (2021)



As shown in the preceding figure, the District Administrator reports directly to the Board of Directors and supervises the Administrative Assistant. The Fire Chief reports directly to the ICFPD Board of Directors. A single Deputy Chief is subordinate to the Fire Chief and is responsible for Operations, EMS, facilities, and apparatus. One Battalion Chief supervises the Station Captains, EMS Captain, and Training & Wildland Captain.

Fire District Services

ICFPD is an all-hazards fire department that deploys its apparatus and personnel from five fire stations located throughout the district. ICFPD provides traditional structural and wildland fire suppression, some technical rescue services, hazardous materials response, Basic Life Support (BLS) medical first-response, and ALS ambulance transport.

In addition, the district conducts fire inspections, plan reviews, fire and arson investigations, and public education and prevention programs. In January 2019, ICFPD was given an ISO PPC® rating of 4/4Y (which significantly improved its 2006 PPC® rating of 8/10W).

North Fork Fire Protection District

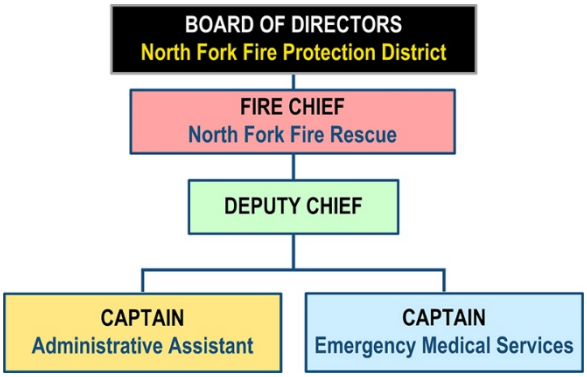
The North Fork Volunteer Fire Department had been operating since 1971 as a non-profit organization, which eventually was formed into the North Fork Fire Protection District. The district comprises approximately 240 square miles in Jefferson County, with an estimated resident population of 1,700 persons.[10] The district also extends into portions of western Douglas County. NFFPD consists of about 80% rural and 20% remote areas. Although the fire district has a relatively small resident population, the Pike National Forest has approximately 1.5 million visitors annually.

District Governance & Organizational Structure

A five-member elected Board of Directors oversees NFFPD. North Fork FPD is a combination fire department comprised of a staff of 29 career and volunteer personnel.

As shown in the next figure, NFFPD comprises a full-time Fire Chief/Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Deputy Chief, a Captain that functions as an Administrative Assistant and functions in operations, and another operational Captain responsible for EMS.

Figure 8: NFFPD Organizational Chart (2021)



Fire District Services

NFFPD is an all-hazards fire department that deploys its apparatus and personnel from three fire stations distributed throughout the district. NFFPD provides traditional structural and wildland fire suppression, special operations (low-angle rope rescue, swift water rescue, ice rescue), hazardous materials response at the operations level, BLS medical first-response, and ALS ambulance transport.

North Fork FPD provides public education and prevention programs, but contracts with Evergreen Fire/Rescue for fire inspections, code enforcement, plan reviews, and fire and arson investigations. The district has a current ISO PPC® rating of 5.

Other Components of the Emergency Services System

The provision of fire protection, EMS, and other functions works best when fire districts operate as an integral part of an emergency services system within their respective communities. The following section describes some of the key components within the region.

Dispatch & Communications

Jefferson County 911—or Jeffcom 911—is a primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for 911 calls originating in eight primary PSAPs in Jefferson County. It is a regional dispatch and communications center providing services to 23 local police, fire departments, and EMS providers—including the four fire protection districts participating in this cooperative services feasibility study.

Along with receiving 911 calls and dispatching emergency services providers, Jeffcom 911 Emergency Communications Specialists (ECS) are trained in Emergency Medical Dispatch and provide pre-arrival instructions to callers in medical emergencies.

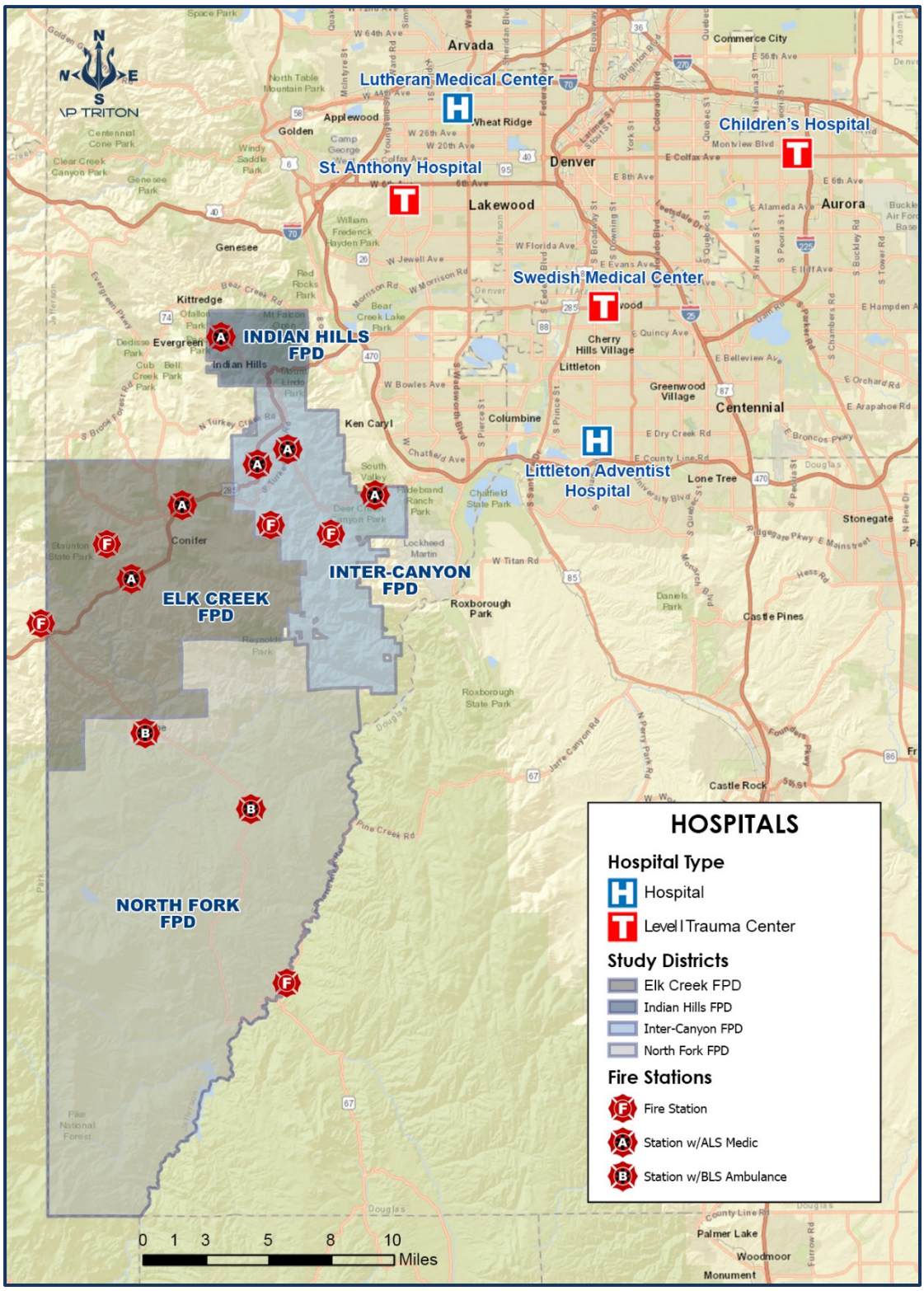
Hospitals & Tertiary Care Facilities

The closest hospitals to all four fire protection districts are St. Anthony Hospital (SAH) in Lakewood, Swedish Medical Center (SMC) in Englewood, and Lutheran Medical Center (LMC) in Wheat Ridge. SAH is a designated Level I Trauma Center, certified Comprehensive Stroke Center, and has percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) capabilities. SMC is a designated Level I Trauma Center, certified Comprehensive Stroke Center, and certified Chest Pain Center.

LMC is a designated Level III Trauma Center, certified Comprehensive Stroke Center, and certified Chest Pain Center. In addition to these three clinical facilities, several other medical centers are available in the Denver metropolitan area (e.g., Denver Health, Swedish Medical Center, Children's Hospital Colorado), Littleton, Woodland Park, Colorado Springs, Aurora, and Highlands Ranch.

The next figure shows several hospital locations where patients are transported by ECFPD, IHFPD, ICFPD, and NFFPD.

Figure 9: Hospitals & Trauma Centers Near the Study Area



Medical Direction & Medical Control

The Medical Director is a board-certified Emergency Physician who utilizes another physician as an advisor. Off-line medical control (standing orders or patient care protocols) is done using the *Denver Metro Protocols*. On-duty Emergency Physicians provide online medical control through Centura or Health One.

Mutual & Automatic Aid Departments

Each of the four fire protection districts in this study provides mutual aid and some degree of automatic aid to the others. The fire districts in this study occasionally utilize mutual aid from other outside fire departments.

Air Medical Transport

Flight for Life® Colorado is owned by Centura Health® and operates out of Denver (and other areas in the state), providing scene response and critical care transport utilizing five helicopters and three fixed-wing aircraft. AirLife Denver is based in Aurora and also provides helicopter scene response.

Figure 10: Flight for Life

Financial Analysis of the Districts

Critical to the success and operation of any public or private business is a consistent and reliable funding stream. In public agencies, this funding is usually provided by the assessment and collection of various forms of taxation such as ad valorem (real estate) taxes, sales taxes, special assessments, or billings for various types of services. Recognizing the limits of public funding, public safety agencies are limited in the level of service they may provide to their communities by the amount of property tax revenue, special assessments, or other sources of revenue that the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) is willing or limited by the legislative process to assess.

Unlike private businesses, public entities cannot easily modify their revenue streams. Most tax assessments and fee schedules are set by ordinance, with many instances requiring voter approval. This typically restricts a public agency from raising operating funds in the event of an unexpected economic downturn and, without sufficient reserves, forces an agency to reduce spending to balance its budget.

Each of the fire districts included in the study is an independent local government units incorporated under the laws of the State of Colorado. Each of the districts uses "funds" to maintain its financial records during the year. A fund is defined as a fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts. Government entities can use numerous funds to conduct operations, but all have, at a minimum, a general fund. The general fund is used to account for all financial resources of the districts except those required to be maintained in a separate fund. General fund reserves are typically available to provide for any purpose unless restricted by charter or the by-laws of the fire district. Other types of funds may include debt service funds and capital replacement funds that, together with the general fund, make up a group of funds known as governmental funds. Proprietary funds are used to account for services the agency charges its "customers" and are also identified as enterprise funds. Finally, fiduciary funds account for resources held by the fire district but are for others outside its programs and may include pension trusts or similar activities.

Triton has obtained considerable information from each of the four participating fire districts. This information has been reviewed in detail in conjunction with the various analyses conducted and the related projections.

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

Elk Creek FPD's recurring revenue sources include property taxes, fees for ambulance services, fire prevention permits, and inspection fees. In addition, ECFPD typically receives reimbursements for responses to wildfire incidents on an annual basis. Non-recurring revenues of ECFPD include grant awards, donations, lease revenues, and the occasional sale of surplus property.

ECFPD has experienced an approximately 5% annual growth in property tax values between 2016 and 2020. Under Colorado law, jurisdictions can adjust their tax rates (mill levy) to pay for budgeted expenditures. Accordingly, the mill levy rates have increased from 7.424 in 2017 to 10.933 in 2020. This increase in the mill levy has resulted in an approximate 25% annual increase in property tax revenues for the same period.

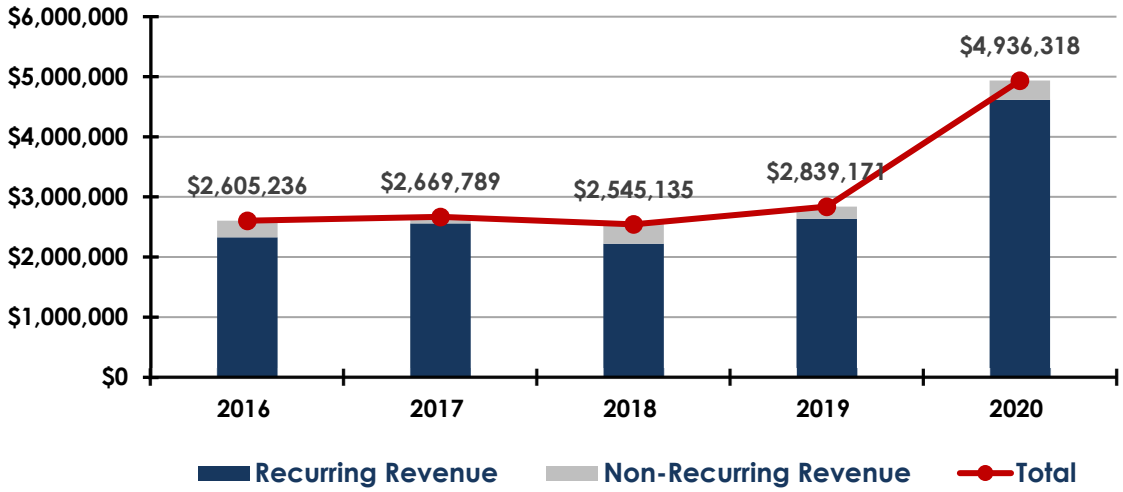
The district's billings for EMS showed steady growth. However, the revenue growth was offset by larger write-offs of uncollectable amounts. Reimbursements to the district for the response of its employees and volunteers to out-of-district wildland incidents are usually offset by the expenses incurred to make those responses. An additional issue in tracking revenue and related expenses to these incidents is the usual lag time in receiving the reimbursement from the date the expenses are incurred. The following figure indicates the historical financial information for ECFPD.

Figure 11: Historic Revenues & Expenses for Elk Creek FPD

Revenue/Expenses	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual
Property Tax	1,595,236	1,577,803	1,724,437	1,753,749	2,799,433
Specific Ownership Tax	114,029	181,376	169,443	138,110	182,559
Total Property Taxes:	**1,709,265**	**1,759,179**	**1,893,880**	**1,891,859**	**2,981,992**
Fire Prevention Income	7,611	5,769	6,399	—	—
Ambulance Fees	327,781	336,087	275,395	505,406	382,850
Interest Income	4,963	22,916	20,279	17,564	6,911
Total Recurring Revenues:	**2,049,620**	**2,123,951**	**2,195,953**	**2,414,829**	**3,371,753**
Fire Reimbursements	278,924	435,809	25,009	222,129	1,242,421
Grant Income	155,548	—	173,351	—	63,194
Lease Revenue	16,000	35,408	49,971	50,755	68,627
Sale of Assets	102,225	—	11,700	—	—
Other	2,919	74,621	89,151	151,458	190,323
Total Non-Recurring Receipts:	**555,616**	**545,838**	**349,182**	**424,342**	**1,564,565**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**2,605,236**	**2,669,789**	**2,545,135**	**2,839,171**	**4,936,318**
Salaries	793,401	852,159	904,384	1,332,341	1,672,544
Benefits	192,241	224,134	53,817	300,780	420,853
General Overhead	99,252	80,463	111,395	57,121	46,747
Office Equipment	11,150	15,242	18,478	—	—
Insurance	36,168	28,976	28,593	—	—
Board of Directors Expenses	6,526	8,993	3,081	24,539	2,455
Professional Services	49,107	58,393	43,996	173,280	198,191
Fire Operations	267,696	464,530	671,567	190,277	425,663
Volunteer Benefits	51,670	26,670	—	42,635	51,923
Vehicle Expenses	20,440	28,770	89,736	36,095	19,425
Communications	33,855	30,405	123,052	88,611	37,758
Fire Prevention	3,100	—	953	—	11,700
Maintenance	137,410	101,023	37,569	153,171	141,263
Grant Matching Funds	136,882	97,626	100,065	—	—
Recurring Expenses:	**1,838,898**	**2,017,384**	**2,186,686**	**2,398,850**	**3,028,522**
Debt Service	384,315	384,315	334,609	334,609	77,425
Capital Outlay	206,123	106,000	226,470	269,627	311,507
Non-Recurring Expenditures:	**590,438**	**490,315**	**561,079**	**604,236**	**388,932**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**2,429,336**	**2,507,699**	**2,747,765**	**3,003,086**	**3,417,454**
Increase (Decrease) to Surplus:	**175,900**	**162,090**	**(202,630)**	**(163,915)**	**1,518,864**
Beginning Surplus	1,028,420	1,204,320	1,460,067	1,257,437	715,860
Prior Year Adjustments	—	93,657	—	(377,662)	—
Ending Surplus:	**1,204,320**	**1,460,067**	**1,257,437**	**715,860**	**2,234,724**

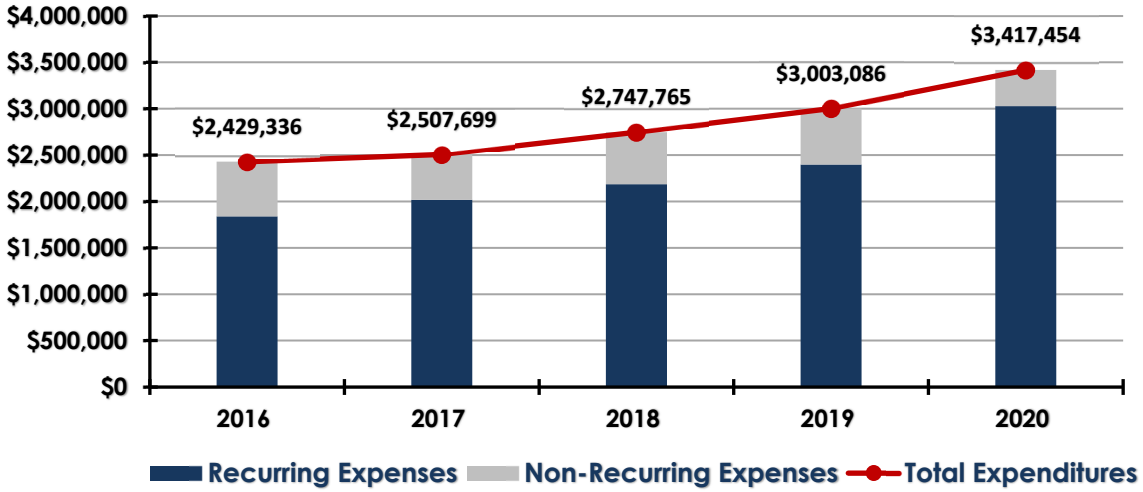
The preceding figure indicates that ECFPD typically maintains a reserve balance equivalent to approximately 50% of its annual budgeted expenditures. With government-funded agencies not having the opportunity to increase revenues readily, such reserve balances are prudent. The following figure presents the recurring, non-recurring, and total revenues from 2016 through 2020, indicating the trend line increase.

Figure 12: ECFPD Historic Revenue Trend (2016–2020)



Operating expenses are included in the recurring expense category. Salaries (28% annual average) and related benefits (30% annual average) have increased significantly between 2016 and 2020 as additional full-time personnel have been added during the period. Debt service in the form of lease payments and capital outlay are included in non-recurring expenditures. The following figure presents a summary of ECFPD recurring and non-recurring expenditures from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 13: ECFPD Historic Expenditures Trend (2016–2020)



Projections

Property tax values are projected to increase at approximately 4% annually, with the mill levy rate remaining at $0.12513, resulting in revenue growth from property taxes of 4% annually. Other recurring revenue sources are conservatively estimated to remain flat from 2022 through 2026.

The 2021 adopted budget includes increased funding for Board of Directors' expenses ($40,000), other overhead expenses ($154,000), increased compensation and benefit costs ($293,000), EMS training costs ($12,500), fire operations ($28,000), apparatus costs ($13,000), dispatching costs ($40,000), and an increase to the volunteer pension contribution ($23,000) which, combined with other less significant increases, results in a total increase to recurring expenses of $664,645.

The capital lease obligation is extinguished in 2021, and minimal capital expenditures are forecast through 2026.

The periods from 2022 through 2026 resulted in average increases to the reserve fund balances of approximately $615,000 annually, allowing for an expansion of services or capital outlay.

The following figure projects revenues and expenses for the ECFPD from the adopted 2021 budget through 2026.

Figure 14: ECFPD Projected Revenues & Expenditures (2021–2026)

Revenue/Expenses	2021 Budget	2022 Projected	2023 Projected	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	2026 Projected
Property Tax	3,247,001	3,376,881	3,511,956	3,652,435	3,798,532	3,950,473
Specific Ownership Tax	118,000	89,000	89,000	89,000	89,000	89,000
Total Property Taxes	3,365,001	3,465,881	3,600,956	3,741,435	3,887,532	4,039,473
Fire Prevention Income	500	500	500	500	500	500
Ambulance Fees, Net	468,000	400,000	416,000	432,640	449,946	467,943
Interest Income	1	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Recurring Revenues:	**3,833,502**	**3,883,881**	**4,034,956**	**4,192,075**	**4,355,478**	**4,525,416**
Fire Reimbursements	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000
Mitigation Contracts	100,000	102,000	104,040	106,121	108,243	110,408
Other	42,002	85,400	85,808	86,224	86,649	87,082
Non-Recurring Receipts:	**267,002**	**312,400**	**314,848**	**317,345**	**319,892**	**322,490**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**4,100,504**	**4,196,281**	**4,349,804**	**4,509,420**	**4,675,370**	**4,847,906**
Salaries	1,837,523	1,911,024	1,987,465	2,066,963	2,149,642	2,235,628
Benefits	549,373	565,651	576,964	588,503	600,273	612,279
County Treasurer Fees	28,600	29,172	29,755	30,351	30,958	31,577
General Overhead	49,660	50,653	51,666	52,700	53,754	54,829
Office Equipment	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Insurance	40,000	40,800	41,616	42,448	43,297	44,163
Directors Expenses	42,000	10,000	10,200	10,404	10,612	10,824
Professional Services	309,199	200,000	204,000	208,080	212,242	216,486
Fire Operations	453,100	462,162	471,405	480,833	490,450	500,259
Volunteer Benefits	74,672	81,600	81,600	81,600	81,600	81,600
Vehicle Expenses	32,000	33,280	34,611	35,996	37,435	38,933
Maintenance Expenses	180,400	184,008	187,688	191,442	195,271	199,176
Communications	77,000	81,089	81,089	81,089	81,089	81,089
Fire Prevention	48,240	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Grant Matching Funds	—	—	—	—	—	—
Recurring Expenses	**3,736,767**	**3,674,439**	**3,783,059**	**3,895,409**	**4,011,623**	**4,131,843**
Debt Service	77,425	—	—	—	—	—
Capital Outlay	320,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Non-Recurring Expend.:	**397,425**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**	**5,000**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**4,134,192**	**3,679,439**	**3,788,060**	**3,900,409**	**4,016,623**	**4,136,843**
Increase (Decrease):	**(33,688)**	**516,842**	**561,744**	**609,010**	**658,747**	**711,063**
Beginning Surplus	2,234,724	2,201,036	2,717,878	3,279,622	3,888,633	4,547,380
Prior Year Adjustments	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ending Surplus:	**2,201,036**	**2,717,878**	**3,279,622**	**3,888,633**	**4,547,380**	**5,258,443**

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

Significant recurring revenue sources for the Indian Hills Fire Protection District include property taxes and EMS billings. Other recurring revenues include fire reimbursements, fire prevention income, and interest on invested funds. The district has minimal non-recurring revenue. Property tax revenues have grown by approximately 4% annually, increasing from $320,579 in 2016 to $361,482 in 2021, with value increasing at a similar rate. The mill levy rate was indicated by fire district staff to be 12.000 throughout the five-year period.

The following two figures provide the historical revenues and expenditures for IHFPD from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 15: IHFPD Historic Revenues (2016–2020)

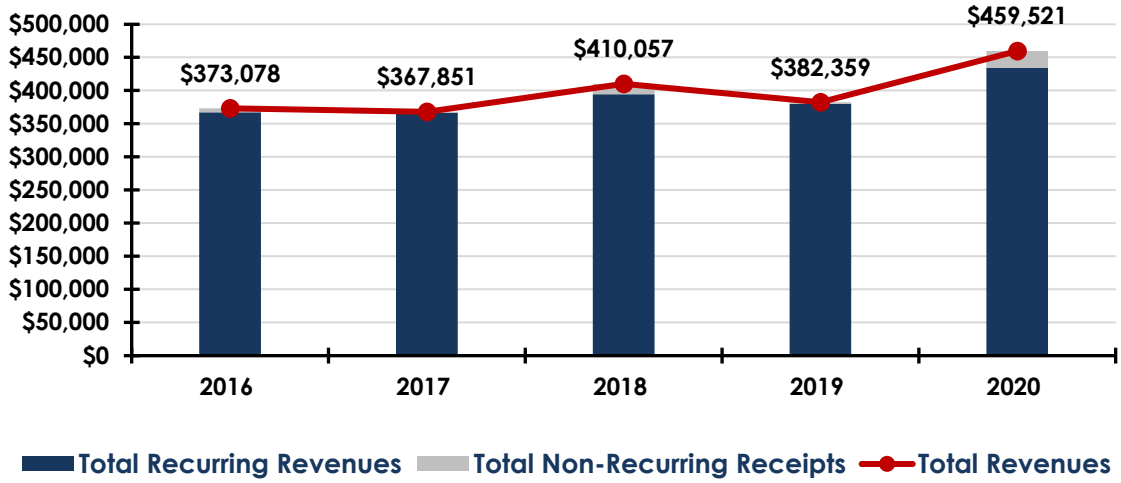
Revenue	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual
Property Tax	298,866	286,704	308,644	309,425	366,210
Specific Ownership Tax	21,713	27,921	28,129	26,901	27,469
Total Property Taxes	320,579	314,625	336,773	336,326	393,679
Fire Prevention Income	600	750	1,300	—	500
Ambulance Fees	44,208	47,706	50,566	29,226	34,967
Interest Income	1,737	3,118	5,590	14,398	5,358
Total Recurring Revenues	**367,124**	**366,199**	**394,229**	**379,950**	**434,504**
Fire Reimbursements	2,564	1,652	—	2,409	23,905
Grant Income	—	—	15,678	109,434	35,500
Refunds	3,390	—	150	—	1,112
Total Non-Recurring Receipts	**5,954**	**1,652**	**15,828**	**2,409**	**25,017**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**$373,078**	**$367,851**	**$410,057**	**$491,793**	**$495,021**

Figure 16: IHFPD Historic Expenditures (2016–2020)

Expense	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual
Salaries	54,953	54,738	54,720	61,603	71,763
Benefits	15,989	15,483	14,566	14,829	15,502
County Treasurer Fees	4,459	4,314	4,640	4,645	5,504
General Overhead	19,940	17,718	24,625	25,726	24,962
Office Equipment	2,259	2,644	2,817	2,576	2,845
Insurance	22,168	18,794	23,213	5,053	19,846
Board of Directors Expenses	1,437	2,002	13,866	2,712	2,805
Professional Services	9,132	8,360	11,280	13,694	8,278
Fire Operations	36,889	33,632	22,901	27,739	36,350
Volunteer Benefits	15,064	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Vehicle Expenses	12,907	27,732	15,403	20,720	11,371
Communications	4,996	8,370	13,921	19,179	15,183
Fire Prevention Income	2,460	1,968	2,603	2,098	562
Grant Matching Funds	—	—	—	—	62,500
Recurring Expenses	**202,653**	**210,755**	**219,555**	**215,574**	**292,471**
Debt Service	66,598	66,598	44,398	—	—
Capital Outlay	2,047	17,821	35,529	115,630	174,969
Total Non-Recurring Expenditures	**68,645**	**84,419**	**79,927**	**115,630**	**174,969**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**$271,298**	**$295,174**	**$299,482**	**$331,204**	**$467,440**
Increase (Decrease) to Surplus	**$101,780**	**$72,677**	**$110,575**	**$51,155**	**($7,919)**
Beginning Surplus	457,678	528,619	601,296	714,552	765,707
Prior Year Adjustments	(30,839)	—	2,681	—	—
Ending Surplus	**$528,619**	**$601,296**	**$714,552**	**$765,707**	**$757,788**

The following figure summarizes the historical revenue streams for IHFPD from 2016 through 2020. The anomaly in non-recurring revenue in 2020 is a result of grant proceeds. The figure presents the recurring, non-recurring, and total revenues from 2016 through 2020, indicating the increasing trend in revenues.

Figure 17: IHFPD Historic Revenues Trend (2016–2020)

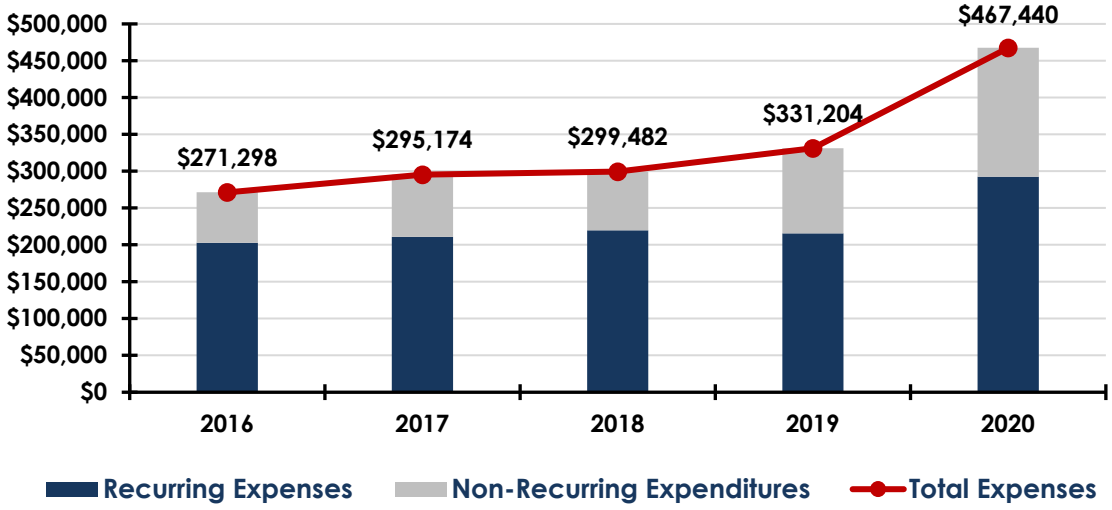


Overhead and operating expenses are represented in the recurring expense category. Payroll and related benefits increased by $16,323 or 23% between 2016 and 2020. Other overhead expenses increased by approximately 4% over the same period. Fire operations expense has increased approximately 8% between 2016 and 2020, with a component of communications expense mainly responsible. An anomaly occurs in 2020, with expenses of $62,500 being paid for the district's required grant match.

Debt service and capital outlay are included in non-recurring expenditures. The district retired its debt between 2016 and 2018. Expenditures for station improvements occurred between 2018 and 2020 when the district expended funds to acquired vehicles and related equipment during the same period. The following figure presents a summary of recurring and non-recurring expenditures from 2016 through 2020.

It should be noted that recurring revenues exceed recurring expenses each year between 2016 and 2020. The following figure graphically shows the recurring and non-recurring expenditures between 2016 and 2020.

Figure 18: IHFPD Historic Expenditures Trend (2016–2020)



Projections

Property tax revenues are projected to increase at approximately 4% annually, with other recurring revenue sources conservatively estimated to remain flat from 2022 through 2026.

The 2021 adopted budget includes funding for a Community Wildfire Protection Plan ($25,000), acquiring a new apparatus ($160,000), EMS training ($16,000), and an increase to the volunteer pension contribution ($9,000) which, combined with other less significant increases, resulting in a decrease to the reserve balance of $105,465. The periods from 2022 through 2026 result in increases to the reserve funds of approximately $120,000 annually, allowing for an expansion of services or capital outlay. General overhead expenses are projected to increase at a 4% annual growth rate, with salaries and benefits increasing at a 2% annual rate. Fire operations are anticipated to grow at 2% annually. It is anticipated that a $20,000 in capital outlay will occur annually.

The following figure projects revenues and expenses for the IHFPD from the adopted 2021 budget through 2026.

Figure 19: IHFPD Projected Revenues & Expenditures (2021–2026)

Revenue/Expenses	2021 Budget	2022 Projected	2023 Projected	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	2026 Projected
Property Tax	361,482	376,629	392,411	408,854	425,985	443,835
Specific Ownership Tax	22,000	22,922	23,882	24,883	25,926	27,012
Total Property Taxes:	**383,482**	**399,551**	**416,293**	**433,737**	**451,911**	**470,847**
Fire Prevention Income	500	500	500	500	500	500
Ambulance Fees	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Interest Income	13,350	14,500	14,500	14,500	14,500	14,500
Recurring Revenues:	**417,332**	**434,551**	**451,293**	**468,737**	**486,911**	**505,847**
Fire Reimbursements	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
Grant Income	—	—	—	—	—	—
Refunds	—	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Non-Recurring Receipts:	**6,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**	**11,000**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**423,332**	**445,551**	**462,293**	**479,737**	**497,911**	**516,847**
Salaries	82,500	84,150	85,833	87,550	89,301	91,087
Benefits	14,425	14,714	15,008	15,308	15,614	15,926
County Treasurer Fees	5,422	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500	5,500
General Overhead	37,450	38,948	40,506	42,126	43,811	45,564
Office Equipment	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Insurance	25,350	25,857	26,374	26,902	27,440	27,988
Directors Expenses	8,400	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Professional Services	13,800	13,923	14,201	14,485	14,775	15,071
Fire Operations	56,300	45,120	46,022	46,943	47,882	48,839
Volunteer Benefits	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
Vehicle Expenses	23,000	23,920	24,877	25,872	26,907	27,983
Communications	15,100	15,402	15,710	16,024	16,345	16,672
Fire Prevention Income	27,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Grant Matching Funds	10,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Recurring Expenses:	**346,247**	**307,034**	**313,532**	**320,210**	**327,074**	**334,130**
Debt Service	—	—	—	—	—	—
Capital Outlay	182,550	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Non-Recurring Expend.:	182,550	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**528,797**	**327,034**	**333,532**	**340,210**	**347,074**	**354,130**
Surplus Increase (Decrease):	**(105,465)**	**118,517**	**128,761**	**139,527**	**150,837**	**162,718**
Beginning Surplus	757,788	652,323	770,840	899,602	1,039,129	1,189,966
Prior Year Adjustments	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ending Surplus:	**652,323**	**770,840**	**899,602**	**1,039,129**	**1,189,966**	**1,352,683**

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

Inter-Canyon FPD's recurring revenue sources include property taxes, EMS billings for service, inspection fees, reimbursements, and interest earnings. Non-recurring revenues include grant awards, donations, loan proceeds, insurance proceeds, and the special revenues from a car trailer.

The district's property value has increased from $84,586,728 in 2016 to $100,812,235 in 2021, an annual growth rate of slightly less than 4%. Colorado law allows special districts to modify the mill levy rate to provide funding for operating expenses necessary to provide service. ICFPD held the mill levy rate at 10.561 between 2016 and 2018, but with the improvement of services with additional full-time positions beginning in 2019, the mill levy rate was increased to 13.561. This adjusted mill levy increased property tax revenue from $945,590 in 2018 to $1,231,273 in 2019, a 28% increase. EMS billings have been steady over the past five years, with an anomaly occurring in 2019 when revenues dropped by almost 40%.

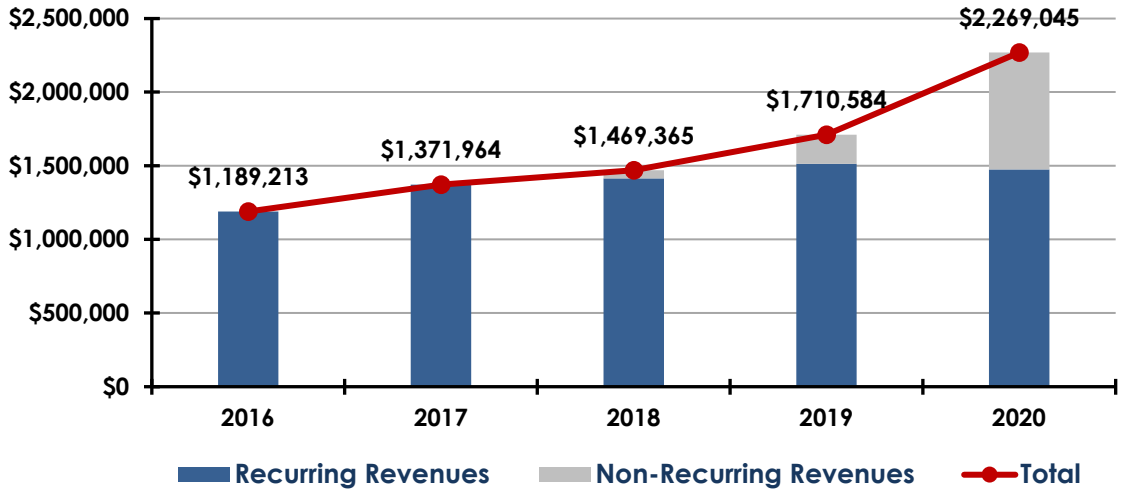
Non-recurring revenues experienced a fluctuation in 2019 due to the receipt of insurance proceeds of $144,487. Between 2016 and 2020, ICFPD accumulated significant cash reserves, anticipating significant capital expenditures in 2021.

Figure 20: ICFPD Historic Revenues & Expenditures (2016–2021)

Revenue/Expenses	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual
Property Tax	884,855	914,462	940,105	1,215,234	1,356,556
Specific Ownership Tax	79,112	69,020	86,113	102,726	78,031
Total Property Taxes	963,967	983,482	1,026,218	1,317,960	1,434,587
Fire Prevention Income	—	—	4,175	1,950	150
Ambulance Fees	67,563	69,391	69,111	42,991	63,700
Interest Income	498	6,433	16,361	30,859	7,351
Total Recurring Revenues:	**1,032,028**	**1,059,306**	**1,115,865**	**1,393,760**	**1,505,788**
Fire Reimbursements	18,500	18,500	254,305	18,500	—
Loan Proceeds	—	—	—	—	760,000
Insurance Proceeds	—	—	—	144,487	8,323
Grant Income	—	—	5,658	3,428	—
Donations	—	—	26,380	45,722	17,508
Other	129,468	111,407	25,077	5,583	15,522
Total Non-Recurring Receipts:	**147,968**	**129,907**	**311,420**	**217,720**	**801,353**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**1,179,996**	**1,189,213**	**1,427,285**	**1,611,480**	**2,307,141**
Salaries & Benefits	—	—	314,438	401,365	496,635
Administration	327,841	485,948	137,259	112,175	121,160
Firefighting	80,339	76,889	52,753	63,902	62,854
EMS Expenses	67,734	27,222	60,863	35,838	30,104
Apparatus/Equip Maintenance	41,784	55,497	48,167	76,698	64,966
General Expenses	—	—	28,224	22,599	13,821
Auxiliary Expenses	—	—	—	5,219	4,832
Station Operations Expense	102,237	92,802	79,674	81,906	69,601
Communications	22,621	31,434	236,781	55,578	85,207
Pension Contribution	—	—	(23,781)	161,627	105,679
Recurring Expenses:	**642,556**	**769,792**	**934,378**	**1,016,907**	**1,054,859**
Debt Service	2,511	—	—	—	—
Capital Outlay	—	25,376	149,204	164,549	314,389
Non-Recurring Expenditures:	**2,511**	**25,376**	**149,204**	**164,549**	**314,389**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**645,067**	**795,168**	**1,083,582**	**1,181,456**	**1,369,248**
Increase (Decrease) to Surplus:	**534,929**	**394,045**	**343,703**	**430,024**	**937,893**
Beginning Surplus	324,122	859,051	1,253,096	1,596,799	2,026,823
Ending Surplus:	**859,051**	**1,253,096**	**1,596,799**	**2,026,823**	**2,964,716**

Recurring revenues have continually shown growth between 2016 and 2020. The anomalies in non-recurring revenue in 2019 and 2020 result from insurance proceeds and loan proceeds, respectively. The following figure presents the recurring, non-recurring, and total revenues from 2016 through 2020, indicating the increasing trend in revenues.

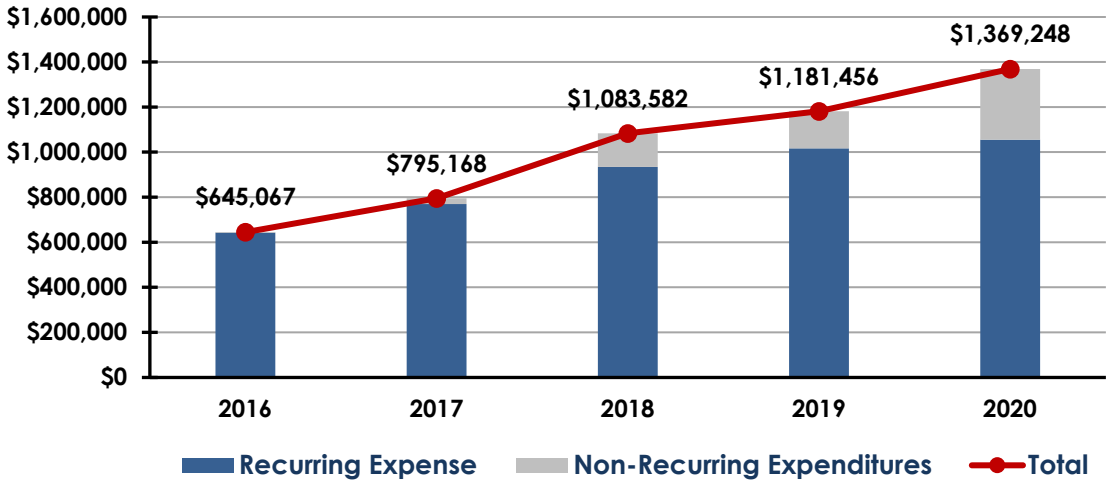
Figure 21: ICFPD Historic Revenue Trend (2016–2020)



Administration and operating expenses are represented in the recurring expense category. Salaries and benefits appear to have been included in Total Administration Costs in 2016 and 2017 but increased from $314,438 in 2018 to $496,635 in 2020, a 29% increase between the years. Total recurring expenses increased $412,303 or 16% annually between 2016–2020.

Debt service and capital outlay are included in non-recurring expenditures. As previously mentioned, ICFPD has expended significant funds in 2019 and 2020 to renovate its Station 1, acquire equipment, and pay for a large communications project. The following figure presents a summary of recurring and non-recurring expenditures from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 22: ICFPD Historic Expenditure Trend (2016–2020)



Projections

Property tax values and revenues are projected to increase at approximately 3% annually, with other recurring revenue sources conservatively estimated to remain flat from 2022 through 2026. EMS revenues are expected to increase to $60,000 annually in 2022 and to grow at a 2% annual rate conservatively.

Salaries and benefits are forecast to increase at a 4% annual rate. Administrative and other operating costs are expected to increase 2% a year throughout the forecast period. Pension costs are expected to increase in concert with salaries and benefits and are forecast at a 4% annual growth rate.

The 2021 adopted budget includes funding for an anticipated consolidation cost study and other related costs ($50,000), Chipper Program ($175,000), Communications Project ($1,000,000), and Station 1 Renovation ($500,040).

The following figure projects revenues and expenses for ICFPD from the adopted 2021 budget through 2026.

Figure 23: ICFPD Revenue & Expenditure Forecast, Budgeted (2021–2026)

Revenue/Expenses	2021 Budget	2022 Forecast	2023 Forecast	2024 Forecast	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast
Property Tax	1,356,548	1,384,036	1,425,557	1,468,324	1,512,373	1,557,745
Specific Ownership Tax	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total Property Taxes	1,406,548	1,434,036	1,475,557	1,518,324	1,562,373	1,607,745
Fire Prevention Income	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Ambulance Fees	42,000	60,000	61,200	62,424	63,672	64,946
Interest Income	4,020	4,020	4,020	4,020	4,020	4,020
Recurring Revenues:	**1,453,768**	**1,499,256**	**1,541,977**	**1,585,968**	**1,631,265**	**1,677,911**
Fire Reimbursements	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500	18,500
Loan Proceeds	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insurance Proceeds	—	—	—	—	—	—
Grant Income	—	—	—	—	—	—
Donations	—	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Other	2,784	2,784	2,784	2,784	2,784	2,784
Non-Recurring Receipts:	**21,284**	**46,284**	**46,284**	**46,284**	**46,284**	**46,284**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**1,475,052**	**1,548,324**	**1,591,045**	**1,635,036**	**1,680,334**	**1,726,979**
Salaries & Benefits	580,848	603,986	628,049	653,075	679,102	706,170
Administration	130,023	132,623	135,276	137,981	140,741	143,556
Firefighting	118,060	120,421	122,830	125,286	127,792	130,348
EMS Expenses	55,586	56,698	57,831	58,988	60,168	61,371
Apparatus/Equip Fuel & Maintenance	111,131	113,353	115,620	117,933	120,292	122,697
General Expenses	10,300	10,506	10,716	10,930	11,149	11,372
Auxiliary Expenses	10,700	10,914	11,132	11,355	11,582	11,814
Station Operations Expense	95,143	97,045	98,986	100,966	102,985	105,045
Communications	62,156	63,399	64,667	65,960	67,280	68,625
Pension Contribution	124,179	129,146	134,312	139,684	145,272	151,083
Recurring Expenses:	**1,298,126**	**1,338,091**	**1,379,419**	**1,422,158**	**1,466,363**	**1,512,081**
Debt Service	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Capital Outlay	1,725,040	—	—	—	—	—
Non-Recurring Expend.:	1,875,040	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**3,173,166**	**1,488,091**	**1,529,419**	**1,572,158**	**1,616,363**	**1,662,081**
Increase (Decrease) Surplus	**(1,698,114)**	**60,233**	**61,626**	**62,878**	**63,971**	**64,898**
Beginning Surplus	2,964,716	1,266,602	1,326,835	1,388,461	1,451,339	1,515,310
Ending Surplus:	**1,266,602**	**1,326,835**	**1,388,461**	**1,451,339**	**1,515,310**	**1,580,208**

North Fork Fire Protection District

The recurring revenues of the North Fork Fire Protection District include general property taxes, specific ownership taxes, payment in lieu of taxes from both counties and the Denver Water Board, and charges for emergency medical services. The "payments in lieu" include a portion of Federal Mining Leases (FML) and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) received by Jefferson County. These amounts are subject to variation based on mineral leases, Congressional Appropriations, and State of Colorado Allotments of FML.[11] Douglas County shares approximately $100,000 annually between the five fire departments that respond on federal lands.

General property tax revenues have increased at an average annual rate of approximately 9.5% between 2016 and 2020. As the district's mill levy has remained stable at 12.083, revenue growth is attributable to an increase in property values during the period. EMS revenues have increased 16% annually between 2016 and 2020; however, there is concern that revised reimbursement rates may diminish future revenues from this source.

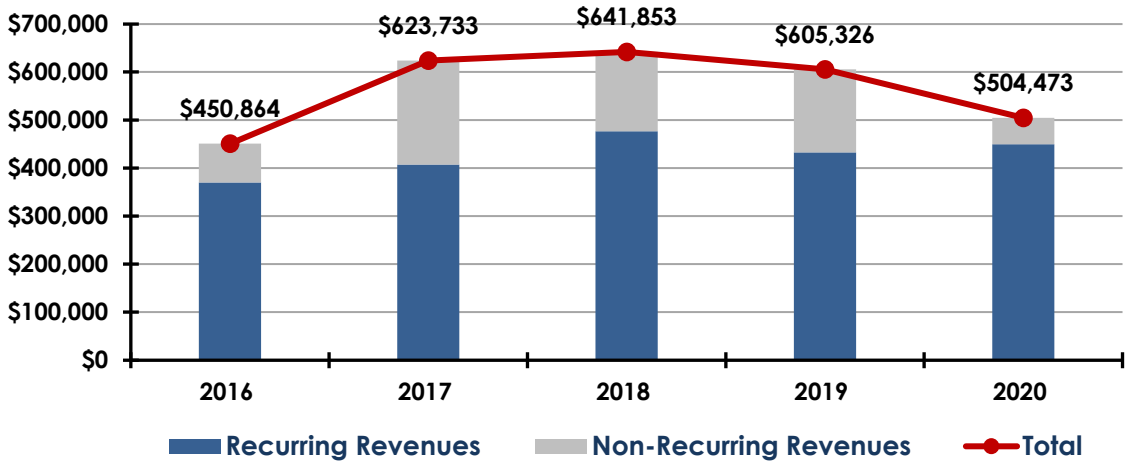
Non-recurring revenues, primarily from donations, grants, and fundraising, have increased and decreased between 2016 and 2020 due to the amount of grant funds awarded.

Figure 24: NFFPD Historic Revenues & Expenditures (2016–2020)

Revenue/Expenses	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Projected
Property Tax	161,307	160,961	176,759	173,609	207,473
Specific Ownership Tax	12,168	14,955	16,829	15,294	12,000
Total Property Taxes	173,475	175,916	193,588	188,903	219,473
Payments in Lieu–Counties	72,479	86,253	95,099	102,131	90,000
Payments in Lieu–Denver Water	30,000	30,000	30,000	3,061	—
Ambulance Fees	94,013	113,190	154,533	135,509	140,000
Interest Income	2,035	3,028	6,067	8,632	—
Total Recurring Revenues	**372,002**	**408,387**	**479,287**	**438,236**	**449,473**
Fire Reimbursements	—	1,731	3,200	—	—
Donations/grants/fundraising	76,292	213,004	157,129	152,990	50,000
Other	2,570	611	2,237	11,100	5,000
Total Non-Recurring Receipts	**78,862**	**215,346**	**162,566**	**164,090**	**55,000**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**450,864**	**623,733**	**641,853**	**605,326**	**504,473**
Administration	244,254	215,220	250,121	229,647	233,000
EMS Write-offs	—	55,733	71,644	60,436	84,000
Firefighting Costs	15,435	22,623	20,389	19,371	30,000
EMS Services	19,621	15,411	16,206	13,723	20,000
Training	2,440	825	1,960	3,881	5,000
Communications	9,252	13,306	21,526	27,081	22,000
Apparatus/Equip Maintenance	20,161	24,821	26,229	20,884	30,000
Stations, Buildings, Grounds R & M	27,963	29,926	28,948	31,041	30,000
Other	10,306	26	2,545	—	—
Recurring Expenses	**349,432**	**377,891**	**439,568**	**406,064**	**454,000**
Debt Service	42,878	—	—	—	—
Capital Outlay	17,383	190,545	—	215,828	93,000
Total Non-Recurring Expenditures	**60,261**	**190,545**	—	**215,828**	**93,000**
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**409,693**	**568,436**	**439,568**	**621,892**	**547,000**
Increase (Decrease) to Surplus	**41,171**	**55,297**	**202,285**	**(16,566)**	**(42,527)**
Beginning Surplus	307,758	348,929	404,226	543,063	528,802
Prior Year Adjustments	—	—	(63,448)	2,305	—
Ending Surplus	**348,929**	**404,226**	**543,063**	**528,802**	**486,275**

Recurring revenues have remained relatively stable between 2016 and 2020, with property tax collections better in some years versus others. Payments instead of the counties and the Denver Water Board experiencing increases and decreases. After experiencing growth between 2016 and 2019, donations, grants, and fundraising is projected to be significantly below the years prior to 2020. Ambulance fees experienced a slight decline in 2019 and 2020 from the 2018 amount. The following figure presents the recurring, non-recurring, and total revenues from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 25: NFFPD Historic Revenue Trends (2016–2020)

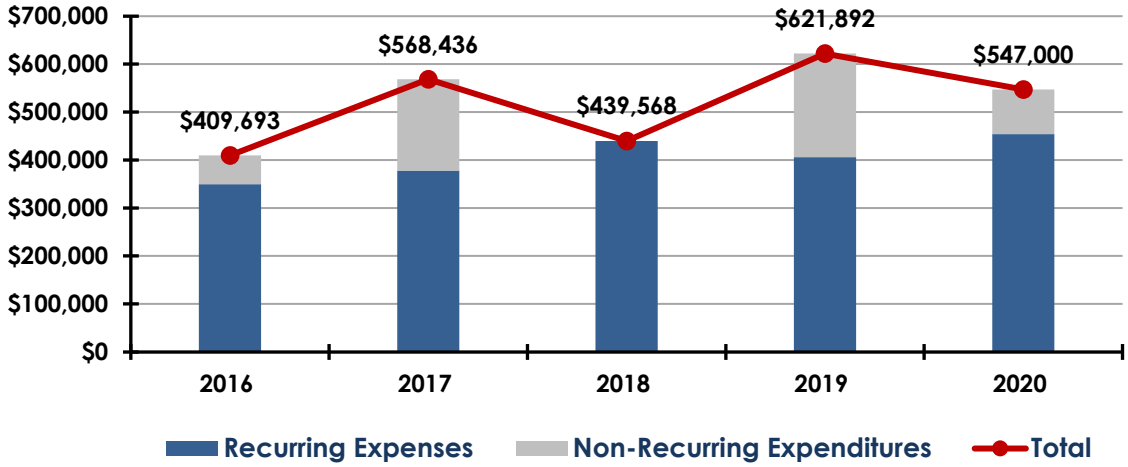


Administration and operating expenses are represented in the recurring expense category. Administration and fundraising are the most significant expense of NFFPD, but this expense has remained consistent between 2016 and 2020. EMS billing write-offs and reductions represent a significant portion of EMS billings for service, averaging approximately 60% of annual billings.

Firefighting expenses have doubled between 2016 and 2020, increasing from $15,000 to $30,000 in the period. Communications costs have more than doubled between 2016 and 2020. Apparatus and equipment costs have seen a 50% increase in costs. Total recurring expenses increased $104,568, or 7% annually, between 2016 and 2020.

Debt service and capital outlay are included in non-recurring expenditures. In addition, the district extinguished its lease obligation in 2016. As a result, NFFPD acquired additional equipment in 2017, 2019, and 2020 using internal reserve funds for the purchases. The following figure summarizes recurring and non-recurring expenditures, indicating trends, from 2016 through 2020.

Figure 26: NFFPD Historic Expenditure Trends (2016–2020)



Projections

Property tax values and revenues are projected to increase at approximately 4% annually, with other recurring revenue sources conservatively estimated to remain flat from 2022 through 2026. EMS revenues are expected to increase and conservatively grow at a 4% annual rate. Donations and other fundraising mechanisms are forecast to grow at a 4% annual rate from the budgeted 2021 amount of $40,000. Payments in lieu are forecast to remain flat from the 2021 budgeted amount.

Operating costs are forecast to increase at a 4% annual rate from their 2021 budgeted amounts. The 2021 adopted budget includes a capital outlay of $30,000.

The following figure projects revenues and expenses for the NFFPD from the adopted 2021 budget through 2026.

Figure 27: NFFPD Forecasted Revenues & Expenditures (2021–2026)

Revenue/Expenses	2021 Budgeted	2022 Forecast	2023 Forecast	2024 Forecast	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast
Property Tax	211,640	220,106	228,910	238,066	247,589	257,492
Specific Ownership Tax	14,000	14,560	15,142	15,748	16,378	17,033
Total Property Taxes	225,640	234,666	244,052	253,814	263,967	274,525
Pymnts. in Lieu-Counties	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Ambulance Fees	140,000	145,000	151,424	157,481	163,780	170,331
Interest Income	—	—	—	—	—	—
Recurring Revenues:	**485,640**	**500,266**	**515,476**	**531,295**	**547,747**	**564,856**
Fire Reimbursements	5,000	5,200	5,408	5,624	5,849	6,083
Donations, grants, & fundraising	40,000	41,600	43,264	44,995	46,794	48,666
Non-Recurring Receipts:	**45,000**	**46,800**	**48,672**	**50,619**	**52,643**	**54,749**
TOTAL REVENUE:	**530,640**	**547,066**	**564,148**	**581,914**	**600,390**	**619,605**
Administration	232,000	236,640	241,373	246,200	251,124	256,147
EMS Write-offs	84,000	85,680	87,394	89,141	90,924	92,743
Firefighting Costs	30,000	30,600	31,212	31,836	32,473	33,122
EMS Services	20,000	20,400	20,808	21,224	21,649	22,082
Training	5,000	5,100	5,202	5,306	5,412	5,520
Communications	22,000	22,440	22,889	23,347	23,814	24,290
Apparatus/Equip Maintenance	30,000	30,600	31,212	31,836	32,473	33,122
Stations, Buildings, Grounds R & M	30,000	30,600	31,212	31,836	32,473	33,122
Other	—	—	—	—	—	—
Recurring Expenses:	**453,000**	**462,060**	**471,301**	**480,727**	**490,342**	**500,149**
Debt Service	—	—	—	—	—	—
Capital Outlay	30,000	—	—	—	—	—
Non-Recurring Expend.:	**30,000**	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL EXPENDITURES:	**483,000**	**462,060**	**471,301**	**480,727**	**490,342**	**500,149**
Increase (Decrease) Surplus:	**47,640**	**85,006**	**92,847**	**101,187**	**110,049**	**119,458**
Beginning Surplus	486,275	533,915	618,921	711,768	812,955	923,004
Ending Surplus:	**533,915**	**618,921**	**711,768**	**812,955**	**923,004**	**1,042,462**

Combined Revenue & Expenditures of the Fire Districts

The following figure lists the forecasted combined revenue and expenditures of the four fire districts participating in this study. The values are based on the current revenues and expenditures and do not include any adjustments to mill rates, salaries, or benefits.

Figure 28: Projected Combined Revenue & Expenditures of the Four Fire Districts

Revenue/Expenses	2022 Forecast	2023 Forecast	2024 Forecast	2025 Forecast	2026 Forecast
Combined Recurring Revenues	6,475,438	6,701,395	6,935,983	7,179,535	7,432,399
Total Recurring Revenue:	**$6,475,438**	**$6,701,395**	**$6,935,983**	**$7,179,535**	**$7,432,399**
Employee Salaries & Benefits[A]	3,179,524	3,293,319	3,411,400	3,533,933	3,661,090
Volunteers & Other Pay[A]	105,600	105,600	105,600	105,600	105,600
Recurring Operating Expenses	2,496,501	2,548,395	2,601,507	2,655,869	2,711,513
Total Combined Expenditures:	**$5,781,025**	**$5,947,314**	**$6,118,507**	**$6,295,402**	**$6,478,203**
Non-Recurring Revenues	234,000	238,112	242,340	246,686	251,156
Total Non-Recurring Revenue:	**234,000**	**238,112**	**242,340**	**246,686**	**251,156**
Debt Service	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Capital Outlay	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Non-Recurring Expenses:	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**
Increase (Decrease) Surplus:	**$753,413**	**$817,193**	**$884,816**	**$955,819**	**$1,030,352**
Beginning Surplus	4,653,876	5,407,289	6,224,482	7,109,298	8,065,117
Ending Surplus:	**$5,407,289**	**$6,224,482**	**$7,109,298**	**$8,065,117**	**$9,095,469**

[A]Based on *current* salaries, benefits, and volunteer/on-call pay.

Comparison of the Fire District Mill Levy Rates

The following is a list of the most current (2021) mill levies of the fire districts in this study.

- Elk Creek FPD: 12.513 (same rate for Park County service area)
- Indian Hills FPD: 12.000
- Inter-Canyon FPD: 13.561
- North Fork FPD: 12.083 (same rate for Douglas County service area)

This information is critical when determining what type of merger, if desired, the fire districts can pursue in the event of an eventual consolidation.

Management Components

Effective management of a fire district is a complex task, often impacted by financial constraints, political pressures, and demanding community expectations. Today's fire department must address these complexities by ensuring an efficient and flexible organizational structure, adequacy of response, maintenance of competencies, a qualified workforce, and financial sustainability.

The development of baseline management components in fire service organizations enables them to move forward in an organized and efficient manner. Organizations can flounder in the absence of foundational management elements—lost in ineffective leadership and divergent views of purpose and vision. The need for baseline management elements is especially true when organizations are attempting to consolidate more formally.

A well-organized and efficiently administered organization has appropriate documentation, policies, procedures, and methods to address internal and external issues effectively. Organizational processes need to manage information and communication flow within each fire agency and their respective constituents. Triton examined each fire district's current organizational planning and management efforts to identify potential opportunities and barriers in a potential consolidation of fire districts.

Mission, Vision, & Values

A fire district's management needs to be grounded in accepting and adopting a strong mission statement and an organizational vision and values. These fundamental foundation blocks are necessary to ensure everyone in the organization and community understands why the organization exists, the level of services provided, the fire district's vision over the next three to five years, and the goals and objectives to get there. In addition, a successful strategic planning process enables organizational improvements related to the creation and maintenance of policies and procedures; enhancement of internal and external communications practices; improved operational deployment; recordkeeping; and sustainable financial practices.

To be most effective, mission, vision, and value statements must be part of a "living" process, consciously evolving as the district changes and grows. The strategic planning process guides the organization through the change and growth processes. The following figure compares the status of strategic planning among the four agencies.

Figure 29: Mission, Vision, & Strategic Planning Efforts of the Fire Districts

Department Mission & Goals	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Mission statement adopted	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vision established & communicated	No	Yes	No	No
Strategic plan adopted	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

Mission Statement

"To encourage and promote fire safety and fire prevention; to provide fire suppression and emergency medical services; and to make our mountain community a safe place to live, work, and play."

Vision & Values Statements

ECFPD has not adopted a vision or values statement.

Strategic Plan

The Elk Creek Fire Protection District has not adopted a strategic plan.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

Mission Statement

"At Indian Hills Fire Rescue, our mission is to protect the Indian Hills community and those who live, work and travel within the borders of the Indian Hills Fire Protection District. IHFPD members are dedicated to providing a safe, secure environment for the community by minimizing the impact of fires, natural or human-caused disasters, hazardous conditions, and personal emergencies. In addition, the district is dedicated to the protection of life, property, and the environment through a commitment to excellence in emergency response, training, public education, fire prevention, and the efficient utilization of resources."

Vision & Values Statements

IHFPD did provide its adopted vision and values statements.

Strategic Plan

IHFPD has a 2020 Strategic Plan in place and reviews the strategic plan periodically. A copy of this was not provided to Triton.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

Mission Statement

"The members of Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District are dedicated to:

- Providing quality, timely, and professional emergency services to those who live in, work in and visit the Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District.
- Respecting each other through trust, pride, diversity, integrity, camaraderie, and training.
- Working together to achieve the highest levels of preparedness, prevention, and community involvement with a dedication to purpose."

Vision & Values Statements

ICFPD has not adopted a vision or values statement.

Strategic Plan

ICFPD has a 2020 strategic plan that is reviewed annually and plans to update it in 2021.

North Fork Fire Protection District

Mission Statement

"The mission of North Fork Volunteer Fire Department is to proactively preserve and protect the lives, property, and watershed of the North Fork Fire Protection District during fires and other emergencies."

Vision & Values Statements

NFFPD has not adopted a vision or values statement.

Strategic Plan

NFFPD has a 2020 Strategic Plan in place, reviews the strategic plan annually, and plans to update it in 2021

Critical Issues

As a part of this study, each department provided a list of the most critical issues facing their organization. Triton evaluated the responses, looking for commonalities that could lead to more cohesive planning in the future. The following figure summarizes the issues facing each organization.

Figure 30: Critical Issues Identified by the Fire District Chiefs

No.	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
1	Lack of updated policy/procedures	Rebuild the primary engine in 2021	Volunteer numbers have decreased	Recruit & retention for volunteers/staff
2	Lack of updated SOGs	Update CWPP and begin to implement	Failing comms. system	Find & maintain general funding
3	Lack of volunteers & career understaffed	Update SOGs	Infrastructure & stations not safe	Ensure adequate call response
4	Limited funding	Create member retention strategy	Wildland fire response/mitigation	Capital needs & improvements
5	Stations need replacement	Improve training for all members	Recruiting & budget sustainability efforts	Health & wellness program needed

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

ECFPD lacks an updated policy and procedures manual and standard operating guidelines (SOG) currently in development. Maintaining current and updated policies, procedures, and SOGs is an integral part of maintaining a fire department to maintain operational and safety standards.

Like many Colorado fire agencies, the ECFPD also has concerns for sustainable funding for continued and growing operational needs in addition to several fire station facilities that require replacement.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The rebuilding of the primary fire engine for IHFPD is scheduled for 2021, which is a priority for the district and will significantly improve its apparatus inventory.

In addition, IHFPD is also working on updating its SOG's and updating and implementing its Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), which will help their department deal with planning and mitigation for its community's wildfire risks.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

Like many volunteer-based fire agencies across the country, there is a continuous need to recruit and retain people to serve the community as ICFPD has seen decreased volunteer numbers.

ICFPD also has some extensive safety-related capital needs, including a failing communications system. It was reported that a fire station infrastructure may be unsafe. Finding solutions for these will be critical as priorities for the safety of its personnel.

North Fork Fire Protection District

Like the other agencies, NFFPD is also struggling in volunteer recruitment and retention and the inability to maintain rosters of personnel to ensure adequate call responses.

NFFPD also is experiencing diminished funding and the ability to find and maintain revenue for ongoing and future needs. The district is operating on a limited budget and protecting a very large geographic area.

Internal & External Communications

In today's "hyper-speed" world of organizational communications, the public expects strategic, frequent, responsive, and transparent communication from government agencies. Likewise, employees and volunteers expect the same when disseminating internal messages. Poor, or the lack of, practical organizational communication impact the confidence of both the public and the employees. The lack of confidence in an organization can spread false and misleading information throughout the community and the employees. Each fire agency in this study uses the essential tools to communicate internally and externally.

The following figure compares the various internal and external communication tools used by each of the four organizations.

Figure 31: Communications Methods Used by the Fire Agencies

Communication Method	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Regular staff meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Agency Intranet	No	Yes	Yes	No
Written memos	Yes	No	No	Yes
Internal newsletters	No	No	No	No
All-hands meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Community newsletter	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
District website	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Social media accounts	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Community surveys	Yes	No	Yes	No

Elk Creek Fire Protection District
ECFPD does provide internal communications with employees through regular staff meetings and written communications. The district also uses social media venues, newsletters, and a district website to communicate with the community.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District
IHFPD effectively communicates internal and external information to the department personnel via an agency intranet and to the community via social media, a community newsletter, and the district website.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District
ICFPD communicates to internal personnel by having regular staff meetings. However, it does not communicate internally via written memos, newsletters, or all-hands meetings. External information is communicated via social media, a community newsletter, district website, and community surveys.

North Fork Fire Protection District
NFFPD uses only staff meetings and written memos for internal personnel communications and is the only agency of the four that does not actively produce a community newsletter to communicate to its citizens.

Regulatory Documents & Recordkeeping

Government agencies depend on written policies, standard operating guidelines, and reports as effective management and legal compliance components. Each of the departments in this study uses these methods in different ways toward achieving its mission. The following figure summarizes the various policies of the four agencies.

Figure 32: Regulatory Documents

Regulatory Documents	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
SOGs available for review	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SOGs regularly updated	Under Review	No	Yes	Yes
SOGs used in training evolutions	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
District policies available for review	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internally reviewed for consistency	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internally reviewed for legal mandates	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Training on policies provided	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

ECFPD lacks an updated policy and procedures manual in addition to standard operating guidelines, which are currently under review at this time. Therefore, maintaining current and updated policies, procedures, and SOGs is critical, and providing regular training on all policies and procedures, which also lacks at ECFPD.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

IHFPD provides written SOGs. However, there are reports that they are not regularly updated and not used in ongoing training sessions. These issues can be problematic. The district does provide and update district policies that are available for review.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

The ICFPD has processes for reviewing, updating, and training on its SOGs, policies, and procedures.

North Fork Fire Protection District

The NFFPD also has processes for reviewing, updating, and training on its SOGs, policies, and procedures.

Documentation & Compliance Testing

Proper recordkeeping and secure archiving are essential to meet government agencies' legal, regulatory, and business best practices. Secure document archiving can also help address legal and other administrative actions confronting a fire district. Each of the fire protection district's recordkeeping systems is listed in the following figure.

Figure 33: Reporting & Recordkeeping by the Fire Districts

Report Type	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Electronic reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Software used–Fire	ERS	ITE	ERS	ERS
Software used–EMS	ITE	ITE	ESO	ERS
Periodic Reports to Elected Officials				
Financial reports	Monthly	Monthly	Yes	Yes
Management reports	Monthly	Monthly	No	Chief's report
Operational reports	Monthly	Monthly	Monthly	Chief's report
Annual report produced	No	No	Yes	Yes
Required Records Maintained				
Incident reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patient care reports	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exposure records	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SCBA testing	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted
Hose testing	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted	Internal
Ladder testing	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted	No
Pump testing	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted	Contracted
Atmospheric monitors	Contracted	Internal	Internal	Contracted
Vehicle maintenance	Contracted	Contracted	Internal	Internal

ITE=Image Trend Elite. ESO=ESO Software. FHS=Firehouse Software. ERS=Emergency Reporting System

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

ECFPD provides monthly reporting to the policy board for financial, management, and operational items. The district does not produce annual reports.

The district utilizes Emergency Reporting® software for the records management system for the noted functions. The ECFPD uses third-party vendors to provide annual testing and records maintenance for SCBA, hose, ladder, and pump testing.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

IHFPD provides monthly reporting to the policy board for financial, management, and operational items. The district does not produce annual reports.

The district utilizes ITE software for the records management system for the noted functions. The IHFPD uses third-party vendors to provide annual testing and records maintenance for SCBA, hose, ladder, and pump testing.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

ICFPD provides monthly reporting to the policy board for financial and operational items. The district does produce annual reports.

The district utilizes ESO software for the records management system for the noted functions. The ICFPD uses third-party vendors to provide annual testing and records maintenance for SCBA, hose, ladder, and pump testing.

North Fork Fire Protection District

NFFPD provides monthly reporting to the policy board for financial, management, and operational items via the Chief's report. The district does produce annual reports.

The district utilizes Emergency Reporting® software for the records management system for the noted functions. In addition, the NFFPD uses third-party vendors to provide annual testing, records maintenance for SCBA and pump testing and conducts hose testing internally.

Staffing & Personnel

Several major organizations recommend standards for addressing staffing issues. The *Respiratory Protection Standard* of the Occupational Health & Safety Administration (OSHA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1710 (or 1720) are widely referenced as authoritative texts. For various emergency events, the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) releases benchmarks on the number of personnel recommended.

If the four fire districts elect to pursue consolidation, they must commit to consistency, safety, and expansion prospects. These ideals will serve as the cornerstone for the organization's entire culture. When multiple organizations merge, there are always problems. Leadership and personnel will have to deal with ambiguity, a changing climate, and the need to collaborate. Developing a positive culture is an opportunity to create a long-term, sustainable organization.

Balancing administration, support personnel, and operational resources is an important component of a strong organization. This section of the report will analyze each fire district's current ratio and make recommendations accordingly. Through the sharing of resources, annexation could result in increased efficiency. This procedure will review the fire districts' organizational charts and provide a foundation for creating a consolidated fire district.

Administrative & Support Staffing

Because of the differences in size, each fire district has a different number of administrative support staff. The requirement for individuals to serve in various capacities is an issue that smaller districts frequently encounter. A potential consolidation would provide additional administrative support to all four of the fire districts. Shared services could include information technology, human resources, and finance.

The next figure depicts the various positions of uniformed and non-uniformed management and administrative support staff. A functioning fire district requires effective leadership and command staff, and non-uniformed staff to support its daily administrative activities. The following figure lists these positions for each fire district.

Figure 34: Uniformed & Non-Uniformed Staff Command & Administrative Staff

Position	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Fire Chiefs	1	1	1	1
Assistant Chiefs	1	0	0	0
District Administrators	1	0	1	0
Administrative Assistants	1	0	1	1
Office Managers	0	1	0	0
Fire Marshals	1	0	0	0

As shown in the preceding figure, except for the position of Fire Chief, there does not appear to be substantial duplication of support staff. The following figure shows a comparison of administrative support staff to operational staff.

Figure 35: Administrative Support Staff Compared to Operational Staff

Position	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD	Totals
Administrative/Support Staff	4	1.4	3	2	**11**
Operations Staff	53	23	34	30	**137**
% of Administration to Operations:	**8%**	**6%**	**9%**	**7%**	**8%**

The preceding figure shows that administrative support staff represents 10% or less of each fire district's total personnel. Combined, these positions represent 8% of the total staff.

Operational Staffing

Triton assessed the type and number of staff positions assigned to the fire district's operations. A consolidated organization would confront various obstacles, including the need for an Effective Response Force (ERF), maintaining an acceptable operational span of control, and serving a vast geographic area. This section provides an overview of the current operating workforce. Recommendations for improvement are discussed later in the report. IHFPD, ICFPD, and NFFPD do not maintain full-time career (paid) operational staff.

The next figure shows the career positions at ECFPD.

Figure 36: ECFPD Emergency Response Staffing by Position

Position	Qty.
Deputy Chiefs (operations only)	1
Captains	2
Lieutenants	2
Firefighter/Paramedics	4
Firefighters/EMTs	3
Wildland Fire Suppression Module	10
Wildland Fire Fuel Module	4
Wildland Fire Prevention	1

The volunteer members of each district are essential for the provision of an effective ERF to major events. The following figure lists the total number of volunteers and their EMS levels of certification.

Figure 37: Volunteer Operational Staffing by Position (2020)

Position	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Assistant Fire Chief	0	1	0	0
Deputy Fire Chief	0	0	1	1
Captain	0	2	2	2
Lieutenant	0	2	3	0
Firefighter	0	0	1	10
Firefighter/EMR	8	2	5	0
Firefighter/EMT	16	3	14	8
Firefighter/Paramedic	3	0	4	9
EMS Single-Role EMR	0	2	0	0
EMS Single-Role EMT	0	3	4	0
EMS Single-Role Paramedic	0	1	0	0
Probationary Members	12	7	0	0
Totals:	**39**	**23**	**34**	**30**

Comparison of Regional & National Operational Staffing

The following figures illustrate a comparison of the number of firefighters on staff per 1,000 population of each service region compared to national averages from the 2018 United States Fire Department Profile issued by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

Figure 38: ECFPD Firefighters per 1,000 Population

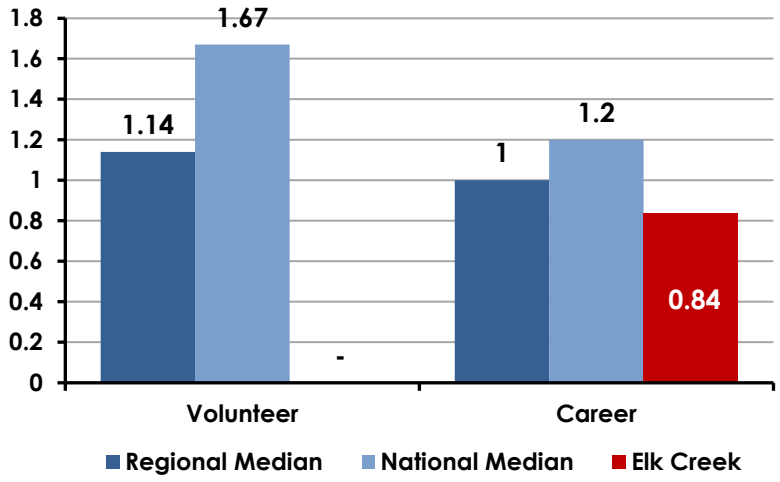


Figure 39: IHFPD Firefighters per 1,000 Population

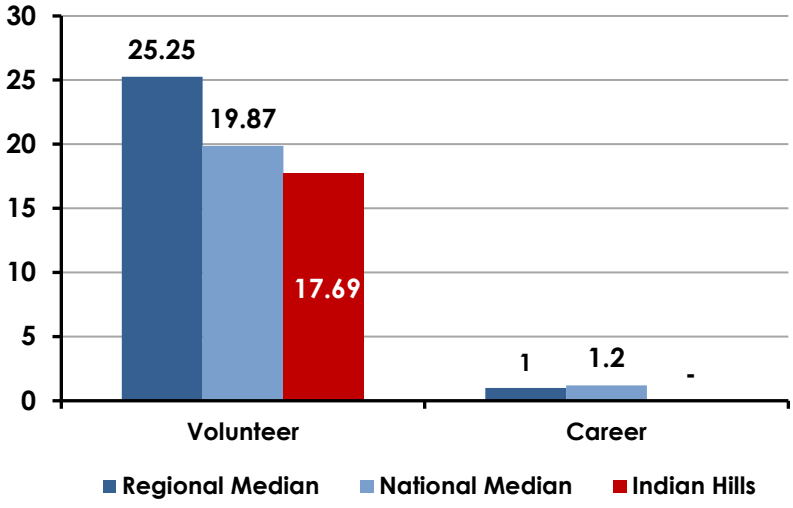


Figure 40: ICFPD Firefighters per 1,000 Population

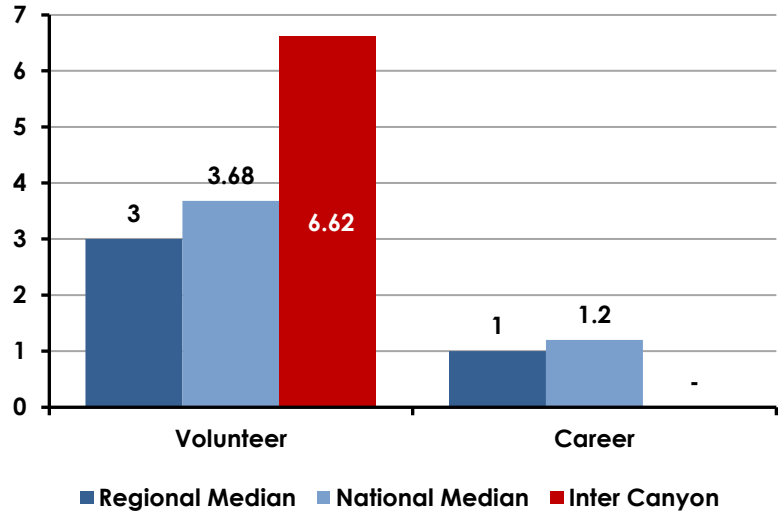
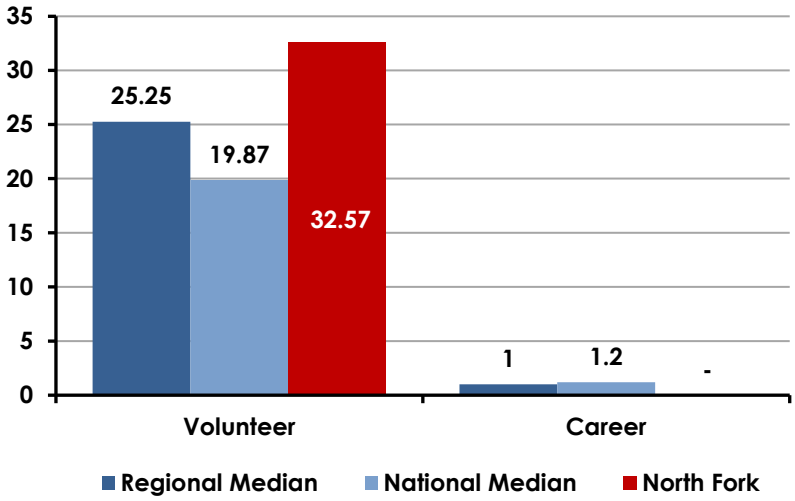


Figure 41: NFFPD Firefighters per 1,000 Population



The previous four figures provide an overview of the staffing capacity of each organization compared to regional and national fire departments. ECFPD is a combination fire district that demonstrates fiscal responsibility with 0.16 fewer full-time equivalents (FTE) than regional organizations. IHFPD showed challenges consistent with national trends, with the need for additional volunteers. This analysis showed that IHFPD has approximately 43% fewer volunteers compared to similar departments in Colorado.

ICFPD and NFFPD have a higher number of volunteers per 1,000 population compared to similar regional organizations. Reserve firefighters in a combined organization would be the foundation of emergency response staffing. The reserve core is essential to the deployment of an effective response force.

The analyses shown in the preceding figures indicate the potential challenges faced by all four fire districts and support the necessity to increase efforts in the recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Should the fire districts elect to pursue a consolidated organization, increasing the recruiting and hiring processes would be important. The hiring, testing, and safety components will be evaluated in the following section. In recent years, recruiting and retaining firefighters has been a challenge for many municipal fire departments and fire protection districts. Fewer applicants are available due to an aging workforce and a shift to career fire districts across the country.

The next figure shows the national trend for the decrease in volunteer firefighters and the increased need for career firefighters.[12]

Figure 42:Number of U.S. Firefighters (1983–2017)

Year	Total	Career	Volunteer
1983	1,111,200	226,600	884,600
1990	1,025,650	253,000	772,650
2000	1,064,150	286,800	777,350
2010	1,103,300	335,150	768,150
2015	1,149,300	345,600	814,850
2016	1,090,100	361,100	729,000
2017	1,056,200	373,600	682,600

Hiring & Recruitment of Personnel

All four organizations have demonstrated success in the recruitment and hiring of personnel. As previously discussed, based on national trends, recruitment and retention will become an increased challenge in the future. During the site visit, members from all four organizations expressed concern that increasing career staff may compromise the recruitment of volunteers.

A system design that emphasizes using career staff to support the volunteer program can be very successful. Additionally, a combined organization can have more opportunities for training and increased incident volume. The increased opportunities can translate to a higher number of volunteers. AP Triton recommends the development of career positions with an emphasis on activities that support the volunteer core.

The following figure lists each organization's hiring or recruitment process components.

Figure 43: Hiring Process Components

Hiring Process Components	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Recruitment program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Check on qualifications	Yes	No	No	Yes
Reference check	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Background check	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Physical standards established	Yes	No	No	WCT Test
Knowledge testing	Yes	No	No	No
Interview	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Medical exam required	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Psychological exam required	No	No	No	No

A consolidated organization would need to establish uniform practices for the hiring and recruitment of firefighters. All four districts have different requirements and processes.

Over the last 20 years, numerous studies have been conducted on firefighter fatalities. Cardiac arrest caused by coronary artery disease is the main cause of death among on-duty firefighters. There is no direct link between employment in the fire district and coronary artery disease. However, the condition is aggravated by the dangerous environmental conditions that are frequently encountered when performing the various tasks of a firefighter.

Compared to other emergency responders, firefighters are nearly three times more likely to have a heart attack while on the job:

- 45%—duty-related firefighter deaths
- 15%—duty-related law enforcement deaths
- 11%—duty-related EMS deaths

Based on the survey documents provided to Triton, ECFPD and NFFPD subscribe to a physical ability test. IHFPD and ICFPD require medical screening supporting cardiovascular health. A new consolidated organization should consider focusing on the necessity of pre-employment physical fitness ability.

The capacity of an organization to improve staffing diversity is essential to success. Jefferson County has a diverse population; the four organizations have supported diversity. Based on staff interviews, the fire districts have diversity consistent with the service population. AP Triton recommends emphasizing the recruitment process to support participation by potential female firefighters. In addition, the process should include ensuring appropriate facilities and personal protective equipment. The following figure shows an overall population breakdown for Jefferson County, Colorado.[13]

Figure 44: Jefferson County Race & Ethnicity Percentage

Race & Ethnicity	% of Population
White Non-Hispanic	78%
Black/African American	1%
Asian	3%
Hispanic	14%
Multi-racial	4%

Based on the above findings, future hiring processes should continue to recruit women and minorities to be commensurate with the community's demographics.

Safety Compliance

The fire service functions in an inherently hazardous environment. Fire districts need to take all reasonable precautions to limit exposure and provide consistent medical monitoring. Wellness programs include education on healthy lifestyles, mental health support, illness, and injury prevention, and, most recently, an emphasis on cancer prevention.

Over the past 15 years, evidence has accumulated that cancer deaths occur at a rate 14% higher in firefighters than in the general public.[14] Combined, the fire districts have approximately 30% of local industries that most likely produce environments with cancer-causing chemicals. According to information from DataUSA, employment in Jefferson County includes:

- 3%—Transportation and Warehouse
- 8%—Construction
- 7%—Manufacturing
- 12% —Professional Scientific and Technical Services

The four fire districts have excelled in their efforts to develop cancer prevention programs. They all include:

- Gross decontamination in all stations
- Extractors for cleaning turnout (aka "bunker") gear

There are limitations in all four fire districts when providing a second complete set of turnout gear for each firefighter.

The following figure summarizes the survey results relating to health and fitness programs following the initial hiring or selection of the volunteer core.

Figure 45: Health, Safety, & Counseling Services by Fire District (2021)

Survey Components	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Medical standards	No	No	Yes	No
Medical exam frequency	No	Yes	Yes	No
Safety Committee	No	No	No	No
Critical Incident Debriefing	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Employee assistance program	No	No	Yes	No

Hiring Process Discussion

As previously discussed, all four districts have different requirements for hiring and recruitment. One area of specific emphasis relates to the support of firefighters' mental health. None of the fire districts require a pre-screening psychological analysis. It is critical to place a strong emphasis on psychological pre-employment screening as a condition of employment. Based on the stigma of "getting help," firefighters tend not to seek help when faced with mental health issues. The results have been a notable increase in post-traumatic disorders and suicide.[15] Pre-employment mental health evaluations can help identify if an individual is particularly susceptible to such conditions and may not have the temperament necessary to function well in the fire service.

The purpose of any fire service agency is to deliver appropriate resources in a reasonable amount of time to mitigate an emergency. However, emergencies often have their own sets of circumstances that necessitate variable staffing amounts depending on the elements of the incident.

Properties with a high fire risk require additional workers and equipment to deal with the event. Therefore, a consolidated fire district should make staffing and deployment decisions considering the level of risk involved. To provide an overview of current staffing, the following figure shows specific staffing in each station.

Figure 46: Fire District Staffing by Station & Apparatus (2021)

Station	Assigned Apparatus[1]	Minimum Staffing
Elk Creek Fire Protection District		
Station 1	Engine 431, Tender 461, Medics 481 & 485 Brush 451, Rescue 480	4 (career)
Station 2	Engine 432, Tender 462	Volunteer[2]
Station 3	Engine 433, Tender 463	Volunteer
Station 4	Engine 434, Tender 464, Medic 484	Volunteer
Indian Hills Fire Protection District		
Station 1	Engine 341, Medics 383 & 386	Volunteer
Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District		
Station 1	Engines 631 & 651, Medic 681, Tender 671	Volunteer
Station 2	Engine 632, Rescue 682, Tender 672, Brush 652	Volunteer
Station 3	Engine 633, Rescue 680, Tender 673, Medic 683	Volunteer
Station 4	Engine 634, Medic 684	Volunteer
Station 5	Engine 635	Volunteer
North Fork Fire Protection District		
Station 1	Engine 1231, Tender 1271, Brush 1251, Medics 1287 & 1289, Rescue 1281	Volunteer
Station 2	Engine 1232, Tender 1272, Brush 1252, Medic 1288	Volunteer
Station 3	Engine 1233, Tender 1273, Brush 1253	Volunteer

[1]Does not include all apparatus and ambulances assigned to the station.

[2]Additional personnel of 10–15 firefighters are here during wildland season.

The distribution of staffing across the study area is depicted in the preceding figure. All four organizations have shown a remarkable ability to provide an effective response force utilizing a volunteer contingent. The prior discussion about the national decline of volunteers, on the other hand, emphasizes the need to evaluate future staffing strategies. The previous figure also shows the necessity for mutual aid and supports the benefits associated with a combined organization.

Staffing Summary of the Fire Districts

The following figure lists the number of full-time and part-time paid positions in addition to the volunteers and paid on-call staff by position.

Figure 47: Combined Fire District Positions by Paid vs. Volunteer (2021)

Current Positions	Full-Time Paid Staff	Part-Time Paid Staff	Volunteer or Paid On-Call	TOTAL POSITIONS
Fire Chiefs	4	0	0	**4**
Assistant Fire Chiefs	0	0	1	**1**
Deputy Fire Chiefs	1	1	2	**4**
District Administrators	2	0	0	**2**
Office Managers	0	1	0	**1**
Administrative Assistants	0	2	0	**2**
Fire Marshals	0	2	0	**2**
Captains	4	0	7	**11**
Lieutenants	2	0	2	**4**
Firefighters	3	0	32	**35**
Firefighter/EMRs	0	0	16	**16**
Firefighter/EMTs	4	0	29	**33**
Firefighter/Paramedics	6	0	15	**21**
EMS Single-Role EMR	0	0	5	**5**
EMS Single-Role EMT	0	0	8	**8**
EMS Single-Role Paramedic	0	1	1	**2**
Wildland Captains	2	0	0	**2**
Wildland Fire Suppression	0	8	0	**8**
Wildland Fire Fuel Module	1	2	0	**3**
Wildland Fire Prevention	1	0	0	**1**
Probationary Members	0	0	12	**12**
Totals:	**30**	**17**	**130**	**177**

It must be noted that some officers fulfill multiple roles. For example, a Deputy Chief may also be a certified Paramedic and function as a firefighter.

Staffing & Mutual Aid Responses

The next section highlights how each fire district relies on outside agencies to respond adequately to most emergencies. Later in this report, mutual aid data is also analyzed in the "Historical Service Delivery & Performance" section.

Mutual and automatic aid account for the majority of each fire district's ERF on major incidents. An increase in call volumes will likely translate to the need for the four fire districts to consider increased staffing capacity. Based on this analysis, the combined staffing resources of the fire districts would improve the overall emergency response provided to the communities.

Data for the following figure was acquired from the CAD records. The data points represent all responses logged into the system for each incident. Some of the responses represent a single resource, while others represent apparatus. The analysis shows the dependency on each organization for mutual aid on concurrent and major events.

Figure 48: Mutual Aid Responses Compared to Total Call Volumes (2018–2020)

Fire District	Total Mutual Aid Received	Total Calls	Mutual Aid % of Total Calls
ECFPD	136	3,945	**3%**
ICFPD	259	651	**40%**
IHFPD	47	1,303	**4%**
NFFPD	55	616	**9%**

ICFPD demonstrated the highest requirement for mutual aid resources during the preceding three years. As previously mentioned, a consolidated organization would have the capacity to balance resources and limit dependence on outside mutual aid.

Staffing Discussion

How a new organization is staffed and human resources managed can be used as a metric for determining the effectiveness of any proposed consolidation. For example, Triton determined that the fire districts have highly trained, motivated, and dedicated personnel devoted to providing their constituents the best possible emergency response. One of the keys to success will be to bring various cultures together in a single organization and ensure that the appropriate people are in the right positions.

Assembling an Effective Response Force

The district fire chiefs expressed concern that, in many incidents, they were unable to assemble a sufficient number of staff to maintain an ERF without the necessity of requesting mutual aid assistance. Historical incident data was limited, although Triton was able to analyze the average number of responding personnel for the two busiest fire districts—ECFPD and ICFPD—during 2020. Data from IHFPD and NFFPD was not analyzed because of the small datasets or lack of available data.

Figure 49: ICFPD & ECFPD Average Number of Staff that Responded by Type (2020)

Incident Type & NFIRS Code	ICFPD Average No. of Staff[A]	ECFPD Average No. of Staff[A]	Combined Average[A]
All Fires (NFIRS 100)	7	5	**6**
Structure Fires (NFIRS 111 only)	10	6	**7**
Hazardous Conditions (NFIRS 400)	7	3	**4**
All Others Combined[B]	7	3	**4**
Total of All Incident Types:	**8**	**4**	**5**

[A]Rounded to the nearest integer. [B]Excluding EMS incidents.

The preceding figure shows that the combined average number of staff assembled for all incident types (excluding EMS) was five personnel. As desired, structure fires tended to have the most personnel responses, followed by all fire-types combined. Combined, EMS incidents average 5.5 personnel. ICFPD tended to have a substantially higher number of personnel responding to all incident types.

NFPA 1720 recommends that fire departments consider using the minimum number of personnel necessary to manage a low-hazard occupancy (2,000 square foot, two-story, single-family residence without a basement or exposures) by local demand zones (demographics) as follows:

- Suburban Areas (500–1,000 persons per square mile): 10 staff minimum
- Rural Areas (less than 500 persons per square mile): 6 staff minimum
- Remote Areas (travel distance ≥ 8 miles): 4 staff minimum

Ultimately, a new consolidated fire district will need to determine the acceptable number of personnel necessary for an ERF and response time performance standards for each demand zone.

Online Survey Results

At the beginning of this study, Triton developed a web-based survey that was distributed to all of the employees, volunteers, and elected officials of each of the four fire districts. The survey was designed to be confidential, and neither Triton nor anyone from the fire districts was aware of the respondents' names. Instead, the primary intent was to gauge the opinions and attitudes of those respondents affiliated with each of the fire districts.

A total of 102 respondents completed the survey, although each did not respond to every question. The next figures show the results of the survey. The percentages listed in the responses were rounded to the nearest integer. Appendix A lists the comments from each of the questions.

The following figure lists the responses to Question #1, "I am a member or affiliated with:" One individual skipped this question.

Figure 50: Question 1—Fire District Affiliations of the Respondents

Fire District	Responses	% Total[1]
Inter-Canyon FPD	**31**	**31%**
Elk Creek FPD	28	28%
Indian Hills FPD	22	22%
North Fork FPD	20	20%
Totals:	**101**	

[1]Rounded to the nearest integer.

The next figure lists responses to Question #2, "My current position with one of the fire districts is…" One individual skipped this question.

Figure 51: Question 2—Positions of the Respondents at each Fire District

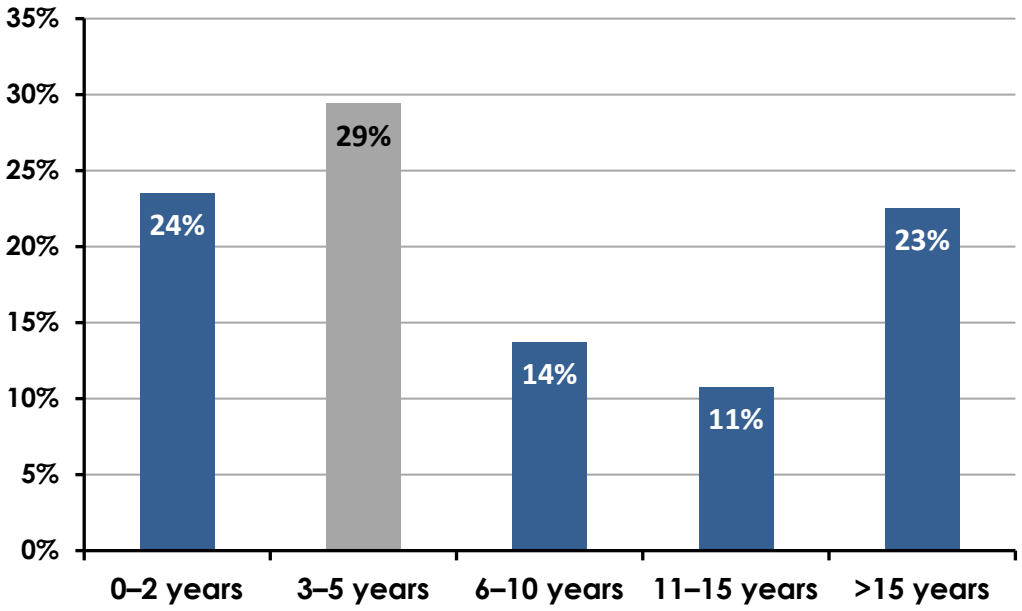
Position	Responses	% Total[1]
Volunteer firefighter or officer	**69**	**68%**
Career firefighter or officer	15	15%
Elected official	10	10%
Administrative support staff	5	5%
Other position	2	2%
Totals:	**101**	

[1]Rounded to the nearest integer.

As expected, the preceding figure shows that most of the respondents were volunteer firefighters and officers, followed by career firefighters and officers.

The next figure lists responses to Question #3, "If you are directly affiliated with one of the fire districts in this study, how long have you been with the organization (volunteer, career, or both)?"

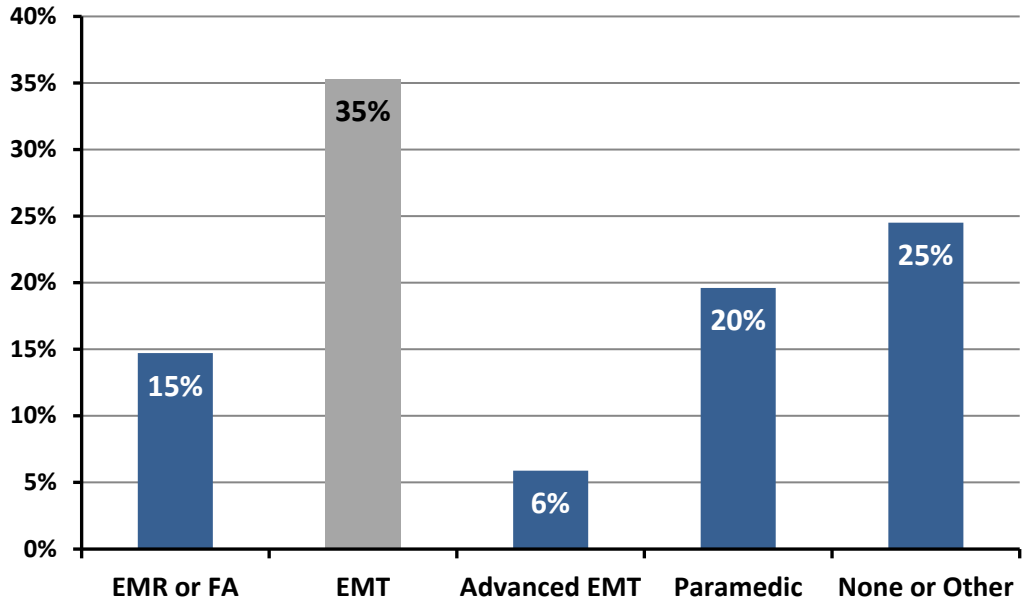
Figure 52: Question 3—Respondent's Years of Affiliation with Fire District



The preceding figure shows that the majority of individuals responding to the survey had between 3–5 years of experience. Combined with the next highest group, 52% of individuals affiliated with one of the fire districts had five or less years of experience.

Since the delivery of EMS is a major element of service provided by each fire district, the next question was included in the survey. "My EMS certification level is…"

Figure 53: Question 4—Respondent's Level of EMS Certification



Not unexpectedly, the results shown in the preceding figure show that by far the majority of respondents were certified at the EMT-Basic level. Interestingly, the next highest included 25% of the respondents who listed themselves as either "None of the Above" or "Other."

The next figure lists responses to Question #5, "My opinion of a potential consolidation of two or more of the fire districts in this study is…"

Figure 54: Question #5—Respondents' Opinions of a Potential Fire District Consolidation

Opinion/Position	Responses	% Total[1]
I am in FAVOR so long as it results in improved services.	**34**	**33%**
I am generally in FAVOR of consolidation.	30	29%
I am neither in FAVOR or OPPOSED until I know more details.	30	29%
I am OPPOSED to it no matter what.	6	6%
I have another position	2	2%
Totals:	**102**	

[1]Rounded to the nearest integer.

The results found in the preceding figure show that 33% of respondents favored consolidation so long as it results in improved services, while 29% were generally in favor of consolidation. Thus, combined, approximately 62% favored consolidation. Six individuals were opposed to consolidation regardless of the results, while 32 (31%) were neutral or had another position.

The following figure shows responses to Question #6, "In my opinion, the top priorities in both my district and a potential consolidated fire district should be rated as follows (1 being the highest priority and 5 the lowest priority)." One person skipped this question.

Figure 55: Question #6—Areas of Fire Protection & EMS Warranting the Highest Priority

	— Priority —		
Area/Topic Description	**1**	**2**	**3**
EMS & Patient Transport	**72%**	**10%**	**3%**
Wildland Fire Protection	49%	23%	10%
Personnel & Staffing Issues	35%	22%	18%
Fire Prevention & Wildland Mitigation	32%	21%	19%
Structural Fire Protection	32%	34%	11%
Special Operations	13%	14%	38%

[1]Rounded to the nearest integer.

The results shown in the preceding figure indicated that the respondents felt that EMS and patient transport, wildland fire protection, and personnel and staffing are the three areas that warranted the highest priority. Although Special Operations (hazmat, technical rescue, water/ice rescue) came last among the first priorities, 38% of the respondents listed it as the third-highest priority.

The next figure lists responses to the question, "Please list, in order of priority, what you think are the top three most critical issues concerning your fire district (feel free to add more than three)."

On this question, about 88% of the respondents listed their opinion of Critical Issue #1, about 86% answered Critical Issue #2, and 26% or less listed their opinion as Critical Issue #3. Each of these was a free text field, and it was clear from the responses that the following were considered the most critical issues:

- An assortment of staffing and personnel issues.
  - Recruitment and retention of volunteers and a lack of incentives to attract new volunteers.
  - Poor relations between some volunteers and career staff.
  - A need for more Paramedics and EMTs.
  - Insufficient training.
  - Opportunities for employee advancement and need for succession planning.
- Wildland fire response.
  - Wildland fire prevention and mitigation.
- Various issues related to EMS, patient care, and transport.
- General ability to respond to all incidents and long response times.
- Lack of funding and resources (apparatus, equipment, etc.).
- Inadequate facilities and facilities maintenance.

It was clear from the comments in this question that staffing and personnel issues, wildland, and EMS were the most critical issues facing the fire districts.

Capital Facilities & Apparatus

Trained personnel, apparatus and vehicles, firefighting and emergency medical equipment, and fire stations are the essential capital resources necessary for a fire district to carry out its mission. No matter how competent or numerous the firefighters are, if appropriate capital equipment is not available for use by operations personnel, it would be impossible for any of the fire districts in this study to deliver services effectively. The essential capital assets for emergency operations are facilities, apparatus, and other emergency response vehicles. This section of the report assesses the respective capital facilities, vehicles, and apparatus of the Elk Creek Fire Protection District, Indian Hills Fire Protection District, Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District, and North Fork Fire Protection District.

Fire Station Features

Fire stations play an integral role in the delivery of emergency services for several reasons. To a large degree, a station's location will dictate response times to emergencies. A poorly located station can mean the difference between confining a fire to a single room and losing the structure or survival from sudden cardiopulmonary arrest. Fire stations also need to be designed to adequately house equipment and apparatus and meet the needs of the organization and its personnel.

Fire station activities should be closely examined to ensure the structure is adequate in both size and function. Examples of these functions can include the following:

- Kitchen facilities, appliances, and storage
- Residential living space and sleeping quarters for on-duty personnel (all genders)
- Bathrooms and showers (all genders)
- Training, classroom, and library areas
- Firefighter fitness area
- The housing and cleaning of apparatus and equipment; including decontamination and disposal of biohazards
- Administrative and management offices, computer stations, and office facilities
- Public meeting space

In gathering information from the four fire districts, Triton asked the organizations to rate the condition of their fire stations using the criteria from the next figure.

Figure 56: Criteria Utilized to Determine Fire Station Condition

Excellent	Like new condition. No visible structural defects. The facility is clean and well maintained. The Interior layout is conducive to function with no unnecessary impediments to the apparatus bays or offices. No significant defect history. Building design and construction match the building's purposes. Age is typically less than ten years.
Good	The exterior has a good appearance with minor or no defects. Clean lines, good workflow design, and only minor wear of the building interior. Roof and apparatus apron are in good working order, absent any significant full-thickness cracks or crumbling of apron surface or visible roof patches or leaks. Building design and construction match the building's purposes. Age is typically less than 20 years.
Fair	The building appears to be structurally sound with a weathered appearance and minor to moderate non-structural defects. The interior condition shows normal wear and tear but flows effectively to the apparatus bay or offices. Mechanical systems are in working order. Building design and construction may not match the building's purposes well. Showing increasing age-related maintenance, but with no critical defects. Age is typically 30 years or more.
Poor	The building appears to be cosmetically weathered and worn with potentially structural defects, although not imminently dangerous or unsafe. Large, multiple full-thickness cracks and crumbling of concrete on the apron may exist. The roof has evidence of leaking or multiple repairs. The interior is poorly maintained or showing signs of advanced deterioration with moderate to significant non-structural defects. Problematic age-related maintenance or major defects are evident. It may not be well suited to its intended purpose. Age is typically greater than 40 years.

Fire Stations & Capital Facilities

The following section provides a general overview of the facilities and fire stations at each fire district. The figures list specific details of each fire station based on information provided by each district and Triton's walk-through at each station.

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

The following figures describe Elk Creek FPD's current fire stations.

Figure 57: ECFPD Station 1

Address/Physical Location:	11993 Blackfoot Road, Conifer, CO 80433

General Description:

This station serves as the headquarters for ECFPD, with several offices on the first floor. Crew quarters are on the second floor, with stairway access to the apparatus bays on either end of the facility. There is no elevator or "fire pole." The kitchen is large with commercial appliances.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1962					
Seismic Protection	None					
Auxiliary Power	Natural gas back-up generator					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	8		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	5,768					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	4	Bedrooms	6	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	6 (lockers located in each of the four bedrooms)					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	Yes					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Large classroom facility					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	In living quarters					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	Yes					

Figure 58: ECFPD Station 2

Address/Physical Location:	650 Mt. Evans Blvd., Pine, CO 80470

General Description:
Station 2 is a small facility with two back-in bays that house wildland apparatus and the equipment for the "chipper program." This is the primary location of the wildland program, and no structural engines or medic units are located at this station. There are no showers or sleeping quarters, and the office space is very small.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1979					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	No					
General Condition	Poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	2		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	2,000					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	Volunteer (also houses Wildland Division)					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Bathroom					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	Ye					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	Yes					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 59: ECFPD Station 3

Address/Physical Location:	10956 Timothys Drive, Conifer, CO 80433

General Description:
Fire Station 3 is in a relatively remote location and does not appear to have any operational value. The station serves primarily as a storage facility for apparatus but is also utilized by several agencies to house critical communications equipment and radio towers.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1982					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	Yes					
General Condition	Poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	8		
ADA Compliant	No					
Total Square Footage	1,600					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	Volunteers					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	No					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	Yes					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 60: ECFPD Station 4

Address/Physical Location:	9737 S Rhodus Street, Conifer, CO 80433

General Description:
ECFPD Station 4 is a basic facility with four back-in bays and a small office. There is some storage space in a mezzanine above the office. The station has a bathroom but no shower facilities. Its location in the Aspen Park area allows for easy access to Highway 285.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1985					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	No					
General Condition	Poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	4		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	2,573					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	Volunteer					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Bathroom					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	No					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The following figure describes Indian Hills FPD's current fire station.

Figure 61: IHFPD Fire Station

Address/Physical Location:	4476 Parmalee Gulch Rd., Indian Hills, CO 80454

General Description:
Station 1 is the sole fire station operated by Indian Hills FPD and is in good condition with numerous renovations in the past. There is a potential for future expansion with limited capacity for 24-hour crews.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1948					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	Natural gas generator					
General Condition	Fair to poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	7		
ADA Compliant	No					
Total Square Footage	6,800					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	0					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	Yes					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Bathrooms, but no showers					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Yes					
Washer/Dryer	yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

The following figures describe Inter-Canyon FPD's current fire stations.

Figure 62: ICFPD Station 1

Address/Physical Location:	7939 South Turkey Creek Road, Morrison, CO 80465

General Description:

Inter-Canyon Station 1 has limited capacity and is considered to be in poor condition. It has structural issues, lacks sleeping quarters, no facilities for showers, and no decontamination facilities or extractor. In addition, the station's water supply is non-potable. However, the location has the potential for future expansion.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1958 (circa)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	Back-up generator					
General Condition	Poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0		Back-in Bays	4	
ADA Compliant	No					
Total Square Footage	6,000					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	40 (approximately)					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes (3)					
Training/Meeting Rooms	1					
Washer/Dryer	No					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 63: ICFPD Station 2

Address/Physical Location:	10591 South Deer Creek Road, Littleton, CO 80127

General Description:
ICFPD Fire Station 2 is in good condition with the potential for expansion in the future. It does not currently have potable water, and there is limited Internet and no cell coverage in the area.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1974 (circa)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	None					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	4		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	3,000					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	20 (approximately)					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	No					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 64: ICFPD Station 3

Address/Physical Location:	8445 South US 285, Morrison, CO 80465

General Description:
ICFPD Station 3 is scheduled to be demolished at the beginning of April 2022. A completion new station is anticipated to be completed sometime in 2023.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1970s (circa)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	No					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	4		
ADA Compliant	No					
Total Square Footage	4,200					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	1	Bedrooms	4	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	4					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	Yes					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Yes					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 65: ICFPD Station 4

Address/Physical Location:	13877 Grizzly Drive, Littleton, CO 80127

General Description:
ICFPD Station 4 is in good condition with the potential for future expansion. It is also intended as the location for a new communications tower installation in 2022.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1980 (circa)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	None					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	3		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	3,200					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	1	Bedrooms	2	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	2					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	Yes					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Yes					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 66: ICFPD Station 5

Address/Physical Location:	10304 Georgia Circle, Morrison, CO 80465

General Description:
ICFPD Station 5 is primarily a storage facility for a Type 3 engine. The station is very small and does not have capacity for any future expansion.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1990 (circa)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	None					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	1		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	800					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	0					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	No					
Individual Lockers Assigned	No					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	No					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	No					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	No					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

North Fork Fire Protection District

The following figures describe North Fork FPD's current fire stations.

Figure 67: NFFPD Station 1

Address/Physical Location:	19384 Hwy. 126, Buffalo Creek CO 80425

General Description:
This station serves as the headquarters for NFFPD. It is a metal-framed industrial-style building. It contains a meeting room and staff offices, but lacks any sleeping quarters for on-duty crews. It does not have an apparatus exhaust system, sprinkler system, or smoke detection system. The facility is located in a remote location.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1997					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	Yes					
General Condition	Good					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	3	Back-in Bays	1		
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	7,526					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	0					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	Yes					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Yes					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	No					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No alarm system; 2 CCV cameras					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 68: NFFPD Station 2

Address/Physical Location:	16675 Co Rd 126, Pine, CO 80470

General Description:
Station 2 has the potential for future expansion. It lacks on-duty crew facilities and sleeping quarters, office space. It is not sprinklered, or does it contain a smoke detection system. This is a small substation capable of accommodating four apparatus.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1981 (remodeled in 1999)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	No					
General Condition	Fair					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0		Back-in Bays	3	
ADA Compliant	Yes					
Total Square Footage	2925					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	0	Bedrooms	0	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	0					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	Ye					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	No					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	No					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Figure 69: NFFPD Station 3

Address/Physical Location:	7883 S. Hwy. 67, Trumbull, CO 80135

General Description:
Station 3 has limited capacity and is considered in poor condition. It is located in an extremely remote portion of the district. It is the only NFFPD station that contains sleeping quarters for an on-duty crew of two personnel. In addition, it contains a smoke detection system and has very limited crew facilities.

Structure						
Date of Original Construction	1954 (some remodeling in 2005)					
Seismic Protection	No					
Auxiliary Power	No					
General Condition	Poor					
Number of Apparatus Bays	Drive-through Bays	0	Back-in Bays	2		
ADA Compliant	No					
Total Square Footage	1,936					
Facilities Available						
Sleeping Quarters	2	Bedrooms	2	Beds	0	Dorm Beds
Maximum Staffing Capability	2					
Exercise/Workout Facilities	No					
Kitchen Facilities	Yes					
Individual Lockers Assigned	Yes					
Bathroom/Shower Facilities	Yes					
Training/Meeting Rooms	Yes					
Washer/Dryer	Yes					
Safety & Security						
Station Sprinklered	No					
Smoke Detection	Yes					
Decontamination/Bio. Disposal	No					
Security System	No					
Apparatus Exhaust System	No					

Collective Fire Station & Facilities Inventory

The following figure lists the inventories and features of the four fire districts combined.

Figure 70: Combined Fire Station Inventories (2021)

Fire District	No. of Stations	Maximum Staffing[1]	Apparatus Bays	Average Age[2]	Total Square Footage
ECFPD	4	6	22	44 years	11,941
IHFPD	1	0	7	73 years	6,800
ICFPD	5	7	16	46 years	17,000
NFFPD	3	2	9	44 years[3]	12,387
Totals:	**13**	**15**	**54**	**52 years**	**48,128**

[1]Represents maximum staffing capacity, not actual staffing.

[2]Combined average age of the fire stations from each fire district.

[3]Some stations have been remodeled since their original construction.

Fire Stations Discussion

The combined fire station inventory includes 13 fire stations with 15 apparatus bays and a maximum staffing capacity of 15 personnel (potentially more). On average, ICFPD has the oldest fire stations. However, Indian Hills FPD's single fire station is 73 years old as of 2021.

Elk Creek Fire Stations

As the headquarters station for ECFPD, the station houses the office of the Fire Chief and other support staff on the first floor. Adjacent to the offices is a large classroom with the necessary furniture and other equipment to conduct training and continuing medical education classes.

The apparatus bays in the main facility are too small for some of the apparatus and medic units. The first-out engine and medic unit are currently located in a building across the parking lot from the main station. When responding to an incident, personnel must walk down the stairs from the second story of the main station and walk across the parking lot to access the engine or medic unit in the other building.

ECFD Station 3 is located in a relatively remote area some distance from its headquarters station. Concerning the fire district, it seems to have little value other than to store apparatus. However, it houses a substantial amount of radio equipment, antennas, and repeaters utilized by multiple emergency services agencies.

Fire District Fleet Inventories

A thorough review of each of the four fire district's fleet inventories is especially important if some type of consolidation is implemented. Consolidation of one or more of the study participants will likely result in a merger of apparatus inventories and other equipment. Firefighters may not be familiar with the operation, features, and equipment carried on an apparatus, which originally came from one of the other fire districts.

Apparatus must be sufficiently reliable to transport firefighters and equipment rapidly and safely to an incident scene. In addition, such vehicles must be properly equipped and function appropriately to ensure that the delivery of emergency services is not compromised. For this reason, they are expensive and offer minimal flexibility in use and reassignment to other emergency services missions.

As a part of this study, Triton requested that each fire district provide a complete fleet inventory (apparatus, command and support vehicles, specialty units, etc.). For each vehicle listed, the fire districts were asked to rate their condition utilizing the next figure's criteria.

Figure 71: Criteria Used to Determine Apparatus & Vehicle Condition

Evaluation Components	Points Assignment Criteria
Age:	One point for every year of chronological age, based on the in-service date.
Miles/Hours:	One point for every 10,000 miles or 1,000 hours
Service:	1, 3, or 5 points are assigned based on service-type received (e.g., a pumper would be given a 5 since it is classified as severe duty service).
Condition:	This category considers body condition, rust interior condition, accident history, anticipated repairs, etc. The better the condition, the lower the assignment of points.
Reliability:	Points are assigned as 1, 3, or 5, depending on the frequency a vehicle is in for repair (e.g., a 5 would be assigned to a vehicle in the shop two or more times per month on average; while a 1 would be assigned to a vehicle in the shop on average of once every three months or less.

Point Ranges	Condition Rating	Condition Description
Under 18 points	Condition I	Excellent
18–22 points	Condition II	Good
23–27 points	Condition III	Fair (consider replacement)
28 points or higher	Condition IV	Poor (immediate replacement)

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

The following figure lists the current inventory of Elk Creek FPD's frontline fleet.

Figure 72: ECFPD Frontline Fleet Inventory (2021)

Unit	Type	Manufacturer	Year	Condition	Features
Engines (Types 1 & 3)					
Engine 431	Type 1	E-One	2015	Good	1000 gpm/750 gal.
Engine 432	Type 1	HME/Smeal	2004	Good	1200 gpm/750 gal.
Engine 434	Type 1	HME	1998	Fair	1500 gpm/1000 gal.
Engine 433	Type 3	HME	2013	Excellent	500 gpm/500 gal.
Engine 435	Type 3	HME	2013	Excellent	500 gpm/500 gal.
Tenders & Wildland Apparatus					
Tender 461	Tender	HME Tanker	2015	Excellent	500 gpm/2000 gal
Tender 462	Tender	HME Tanker	2015	Excellent	500 gpm/2000 gal
Tender 463	Tender	International	2010	Good	500 gpm/3000 gal
Tender 464	Tender	E-One	2002	Fair	500 gpm/3000 gal
Engine 451	Type 6	Ford F-550	2002	Fair	125 gpm/305 gal
Engine 459B	Type 6	Ram 3500	2018	Excellent	125 gpm/305 gal
Ambulances & Other Vehicles					
Medic 481	Type I	Wheel Coach	2018	Excellent	—
Medic 485	Type I	Wheel Coach	2021	Excellent	—
Medic 484	Type I	Wheel Coach	2009	Fair	—
Rescue 480	Rescue	Dodge Ram	2015	Good	Assorted rescue tools
None	UTV	Polaris	2013	Excellent	Has a trailer
None	ATV	Rokon	2018	Excellent	Has a trailer

As shown in the preceding figure, two ECFPD Type 1 engines were considered in "Good" condition, while one was rated as "Fair." Both Type 3 engines were in "Excellent" condition despite each being about eight years old. The four Tenders ranged from "Fair" to two in "Excellent" condition. Of the three ambulances, two were considered in "Excellent" condition, with one rated as "Fair."

The next figure is an inventory of Elk Creek FPD's frontline command and staff vehicles.

Figure 73: ECFPD Frontline Command & Staff Vehicles (2021)

Unit	Manufacturer	Year	Condition	Assigned To
401	Chevy Colorado	2020	Excellent	Chief
402	Dodge Ram 2500	2020	Excellent	Deputy Chief
459	Ford F550	2003	Fair	WL Module Leader
459A	Ram 2500	2014	Good	WL Module Crew
491	Chevy Suburban	2011	Good	Utility
494	Jeep	2013	Good	Utility
495	Dodge Ram 2500	2018	Excellent	Utility
496	Dodge Ram 2500	2020	Excellent	Utility

Most of the command units, staff cars, and utility vehicles were found to be in "Good" to "Excellent" condition.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The following figure lists the current inventory of Indian Hills FPD's frontline fleet.

Figure 74: IHFPD Frontline Fleet Inventory (2021)

Unit	Type	Manufacturer	Year	Condition	Features
Engines/Wildland					
Engine 341	Type 1	HME/Rosenbauer	2000	Good	1000 gpm/750 gal.
Engine 342	Type 3	International	2000	Good	500 gpm/500 gal.
Brush 357	Type 6	Dodge/Spring	2007	Good	150 gpm/300 gal.
Other Apparatus & Vehicles					
Tender 376	Tender	Mack/Rosenbauer	2014	Excellent	600 gpm/3000 gal.
Medic 386	Type I	Ford/Braun NW	2020	Excellent	—
Medic 383	Type I	Ford	2003	Fair	—
Utility 358	Pickup	Ford 350	2008	Poor	—
U364	ATV	Can-Am	2018	Excellent	All-terrain vehicle

In April 2021, Engine 341 will be sent out for a major rebuild (engine, transmission, pump, etc.). Engine 342 is new to IHFPD and will replace the district's two reserve engines.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

The following figure lists the current inventory of Inter-Canyon FPD's frontline fleet.

Figure 75: ICFPD Frontline Fleet Inventory (2021)

Unit	Type	Manufacturer	Year	Condition	Features
Engines					
Engine 631	Type 1	Spartan	2010	Good	1500 gpm/550 gal.
Engine 632	Type 3	IHC	1997	Poor	1250 gpm/600 gal.
Engine 633	Type 1	Spartan	2004	Good	1500 gpm/550 gal.
Engine 634	Type 1	Spartan	2010	Good	1500 gpm/550 gal.
Engine 635	Type 3	IHC	1997	Poor	1250 gpm/600 gal.
Tenders & Wildland Units					
Tender 671	Tender	Spartan	2008	Good	500 gpm/2200 gal.
Tender 672	Tender	Spartan	2009	Good	500 gpm/2200 gal.
Tender 673	Tender	Kenworth	2004	Good	2500-gallon tank
Brush 651	Wildland	Dodge	2020	New	400-gallon tank
Brush 6522	Wildland	Ford	2001	Fair	400-gallon tank
Medic Units & Rescues					
Ambu. 681	Type I	W. Coach	2008	Good	—
Ambu. 683	Type I	Dodge	2012	Good	—
Ambu. 684	Type I	Dodge	2015	Good	—
Rescue (680)	Rescue	Spartan	2005	Good	—
Rescue (682)	Rescue	Ford	2001	Good	—
Command Cars					
686	Command	Ram	2019	Excellent	Fire Chief
687	Command	Chevrolet	2004	Poor	Wildland Captain
685	Command	Chevrolet	2006	Poor	Battalion Chief

North Fork Fire Protection District

The following figure lists the current inventory of North Fork FPD's frontline fleet.

Figure 76: NFFPD Frontline Fleet Inventory (2021)

Unit	Type	Manufacturer	Year	Condition	Features
Engines					
Engine 1231	Type 1	Pierce	2001	Good	1250 gpm/1000 gal.
Engine 1232	Type 1	Pierce	2001	Good	1250 gpm/1000 gal.
Engine 1233	Type 1	Saber	2007	Excellent	1250 gpm/750 gal.
Engine/Tenders					
Tender 1271	Type 3	International	2002	Good	750 gpm/2000 gal.
Tender 1272	Type 3	International	2001	Good	750 gpm/2000 gal.
Tender 1273	Type 3	Mack	1988	Poor	750 gpm/1500 gal.
Wildland					
Brush 1251	Type 6	Dodge Ram	2020	Excellent	80 gpm/250 gal.
Brush 1252	Type 6	Ford F-250	2004	Good	80 gpm/250 gal.
Brush 1253	Type 6	Dodge Ram	2001	Fair	80 gpm/250 gal.
Medic Units & Other Vehicles					
Ambu. 1288	Type I	Chevrolet	2013	Excellent	—
Ambu. 1289	Type I	Dodge	2018	Excellent	—
Rescue 1281	Med. Duty	Dodge Ram	2012	Excellent	—
Utility 1255	Utility	Ford F-350	2004	Poor	—
Utility 1200	utility	Dodge Ram	2017	Excellent	—

NFFPD's engines range from 14–20 years of age, but were rated by the district as in either "Good" or "Excellent" condition. The Type 3 apparatus are relatively old vehicles, with at least two of the three in "Good" condition. In addition, the two frontline ambulances were considered to be in "Excellent" condition.

NFFPD also operates Command 1200, which is a four-wheel-drive Dodge Ram 1500. In addition, the district maintains Ambulance 1287 in reserve, which is a 2004 Type I ambulance in "Fair" condition.

Collective Fleet Inventory

The following two figures list the combined frontline fleet inventories of the four fire districts.

Figure 77: Collective Inventory of the Frontline Fire District Fleets (2021)

Fire District	Engines[A]	Medics	Tenders	Wildland	Others[B]	Command[C]
ECFPD	5	3	4	2	3	8
IHFPD	2	2	1	1	1	1
ICFPD	5	3	2	2	2	3
NFFPD	4	3	3	2	6	0
Totals:	**16**	**11**	**10**	**7**	**12**	**12**

[A]Includes Types 1 & 3 only. [B]Specialty vehicles, trailers, & apparatus. [C]Command & staff units.

Figure 78: Collective Apparatus & Daily Staffing by Fire Station (2021)

Fire Station	Engines	Medic	Tenders	Wildland	Daily Staffing[A]
Elk Creek FPD					
Station 1	1	2	1	1	4[B]
Station 2	1	—	1	1	Volunteers
Station 3	1	—	1	—	Volunteers
Station 4	2	1	1	—	Volunteers
Indian Hills FPD					
Station 1	2	2	1	1	Volunteers
Inter-Canyon FPD					
Station 1	1	1	1	1	2 (varies daily)[C]
Station 2	1	0	1	1	Volunteers
Station 3	1	1	1	0	Volunteers
Station 4	1	1	0	0	Volunteers
Station 5	1	0	0	0	Volunteers
North Fork FPD					
Station 1	1	2	1	1	Volunteers
Station 2	1	1	1	1	Volunteers
Station 3	1	—	1	1	Volunteers

[A]Minimum daily staffing. [B]15 more seasonal wildland staff during summer. [C]Monday–Friday, 8 am–5 pm.

It must be noted that additional specialty apparatus and other vehicles may be located at the fire stations but may be cross-staffed or in reserve.

Capital Medical & Other Equipment

EMS calls represent the highest demand for emergency services for each of the four fire districts. For fire departments and fire districts providing ALS, the highest medical expense usually includes the cost of purchasing cardiac monitor/defibrillators.

In the event of a consolidation, it will be important to ensure cardiac equipment standardization that would enable interoperability between the cardiac monitor/defibrillators and Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). This can help to ensure efficiency in cardiac arrest cases.

The next figure is an inventory of cardiac monitor/defibrillators and AEDs currently maintained by each fire district participating in this study.

Figure 79: Combined Inventories of Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillators & AEDs (2021)

Device Brand & Model	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD	TOTALS BY MODEL
Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillators					
Physio-Control Lifepak® 15	4	—	4	2	**10**
Physio-Control Lifepak® 12	—	—	—	1	**1**
Philips Tempus System (monitor/AED)	—	2	—	—	**2**
Automated External Defibrillators					
Philips HeartStart® FR2/FR2+	9	—	—	—	**9**
Physio-Control Lifepak® CR Plus	—	—	7	—	**7**
Physio-Control Lifepak® (model unknown)	—	4	—	—	**4**

Other Equipment

Typically, powered ambulance cots and their respective systems are a substantial capital expense. Except for North Fork FPD, all fire districts utilize Stryker powered ambulance cots of various ages. ICFPD has three Power-PRO XT® cots, IHFPD maintains two (along with two Stryker Stair Chairs), and ECFPD maintains three powered cots (along with three Stair Chairs). NFFPD also owns three non-powered Stryker ambulance cots of various models.

Elk Creek FPD owns two Stryker LUCAS® Chest Compression Systems. This device automatically delivers high-performance continuous chest compressions. IHFPD also owns a ROSC-U™ Mini Chest Compressor, which is a compact CPR device.

Historical Service Delivery & Performance

An indicator of success is the balance of resources to the utilization of services. Therefore, the potential combined organization must balance fiscal responsibility with performance expectations for delivering emergency services. The following section is a statistical analysis evaluating the fire and EMS service delivery provided by ECFPD, IHFPD, ICFPD, and NFFPD.

Incident Data Issues

The service demand figures were acquired primarily from three sources. Fire district internal records management systems (RMS), CAD records, and call volumes as reported on the AP Triton survey tables were used for this analysis. There was limited data due to the four organizations' participation with the new regional dispatch for Jefferson County. Therefore, most of the data analysis is based on 2019–2020. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 resulted in outliers—however, sufficient data was available for analysis.

Service Demand

The following section shows the workload for each organization over the past four years. Like most fire departments, emergency medical response constitutes most of the call volume. The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic resulted in inconsistent incident volume compared to previous years. As previously mentioned, the following analysis will include the past four years, but 2020 may be considered an outlier.

Combined Service Demand

From a combined perspective, fire responses increased 6% over the past four years. In comparison, EMS call volume went up 4%. As a result, the total incident volume in 2020 was 2,185, a 3% increase over the past four years. The National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) breaks responses into nine categories. For this analysis, these categories were evaluated.

The following figure shows the percentage of the combined fire district's incident types throughout the study area. As expected, EMS calls represented the highest percentage of service demand throughout the study area. This was followed by "Good Intent" calls and "False Alarms."

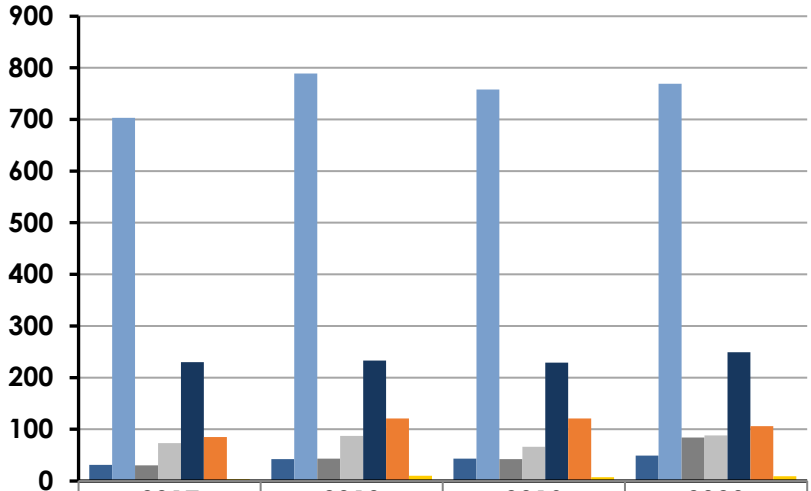
Figure 80: Combined Incident Types of the Fire Districts (2017–2020)

NFIRS Code	Description	% of Total
100	Fire	5%
200	Rupture or Explosion	< 1%
300	**Emergency Medical Services**	**59%**
400	Hazardous Conditions	5%
500	Service Calls	6%
600	**Good Intent**	**18%**
700	**False Alarm**	**7%**
800	Severe Weather	< 1%
900	Special Incident	< 1%

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

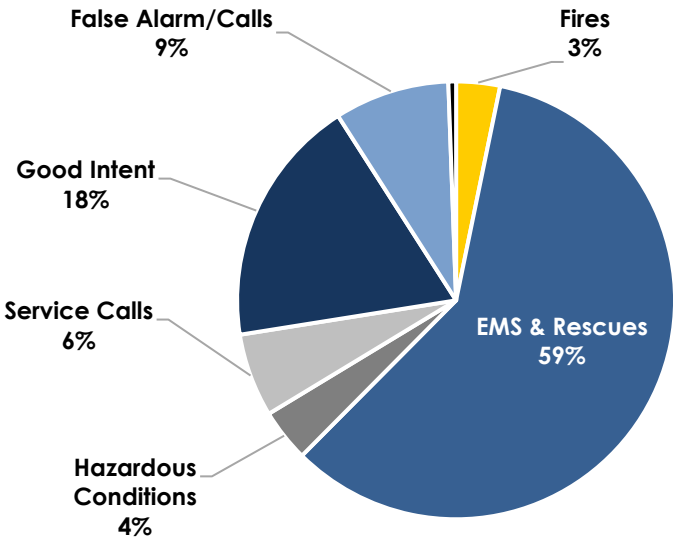
Unlike the national trend, ECFPD had an increase in service demand in 2020. The following two figures show the incident breakdown and trend from 2017 to 2020.

Figure 81: ECFPD Incident Breakdown (2017–2020)



	2017	2018	2019	2020
100	31	42	43	49
300	703	789	758	769
400	30	43	42	84
500	73	87	66	88
600	230	233	229	249
700	85	121	121	106
Other	3	10	7	9

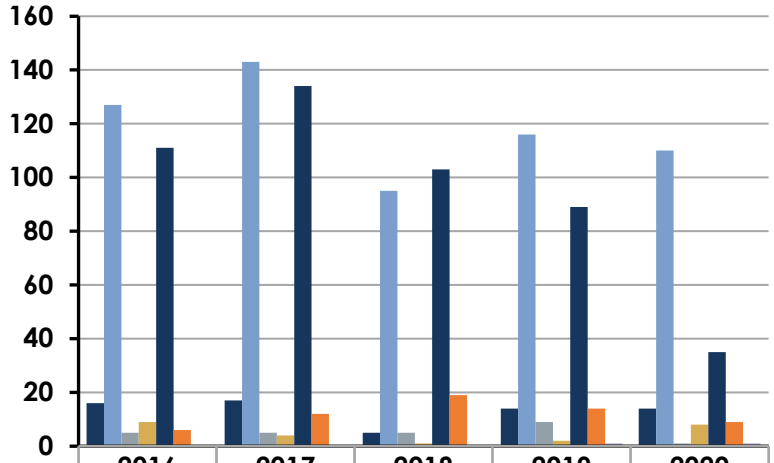
Figure 82: ECFPD Incident Types by Percentage (2017–2020)



Indian Hills Fire Protection District

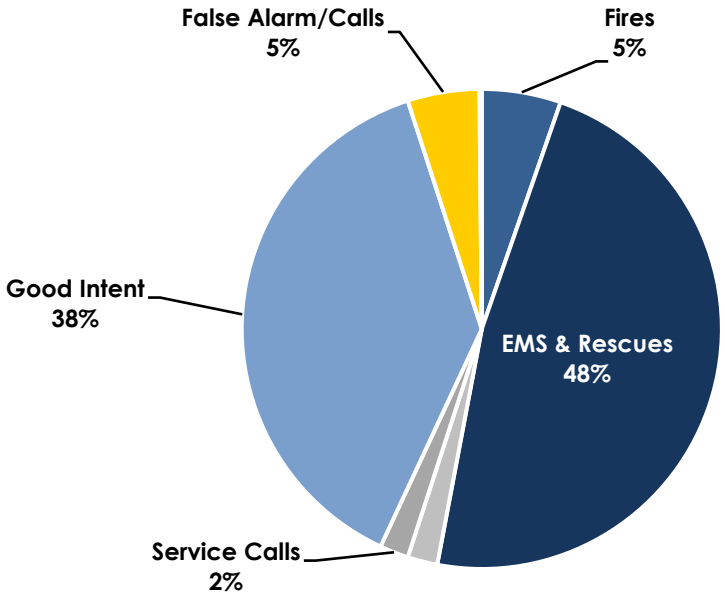
IHFPD has experienced a slight decline in service demand over the past four years. A contributing factor for the decline in 2020 may have been the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 83: IHFPD Incident Breakdown (2016–2020)



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
100	16	17	5	14	14
300	127	143	95	116	110
400	5	5	5	9	1
500	9	4	1	2	8
600	111	134	103	89	35
700	6	12	19	14	9
Other	0	0	0	1	1

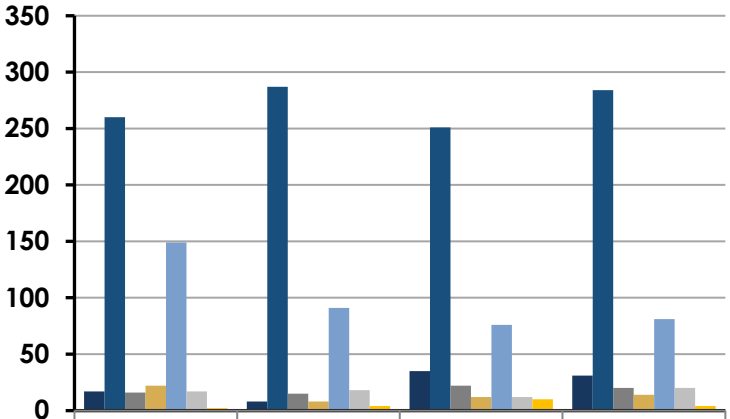
Figure 84: IHFPD Incident Breakdown by Percentage (2017–2020)



Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

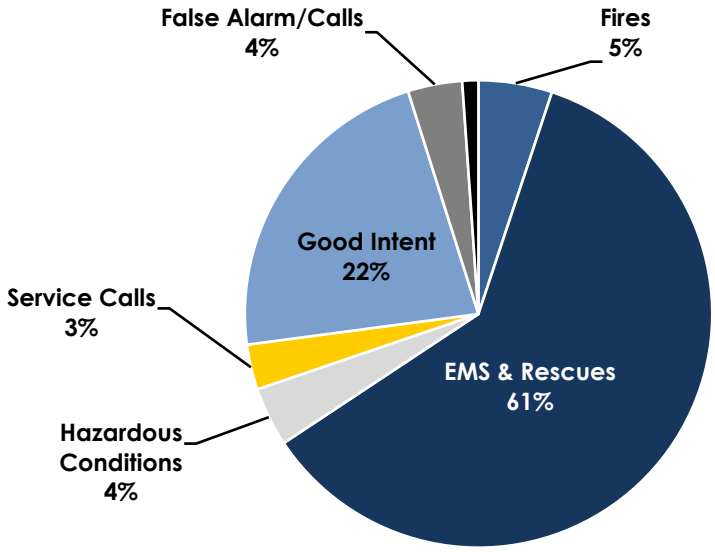
As shown, ICFPD experienced an overall decline in service demand from 2017 to 2019.

Figure 85: ICFPD Incident Breakdown (2017–2020)



	2017	2018	2019	2020
100	17	8	35	31
300	260	287	251	284
400	16	15	22	20
500	22	8	12	14
600	149	91	76	81
700	17	18	12	20
Other	2	4	10	4

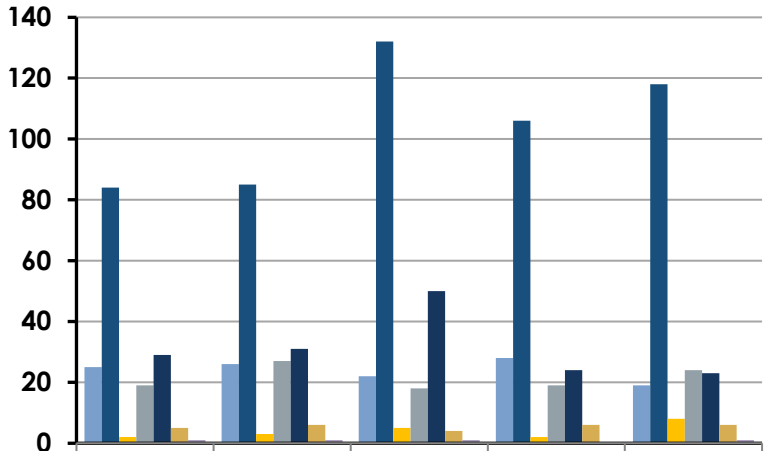
Figure 86: ICFPD Incident Breakdown by Percentage (2017–2020)



North Fork Fire Protection District

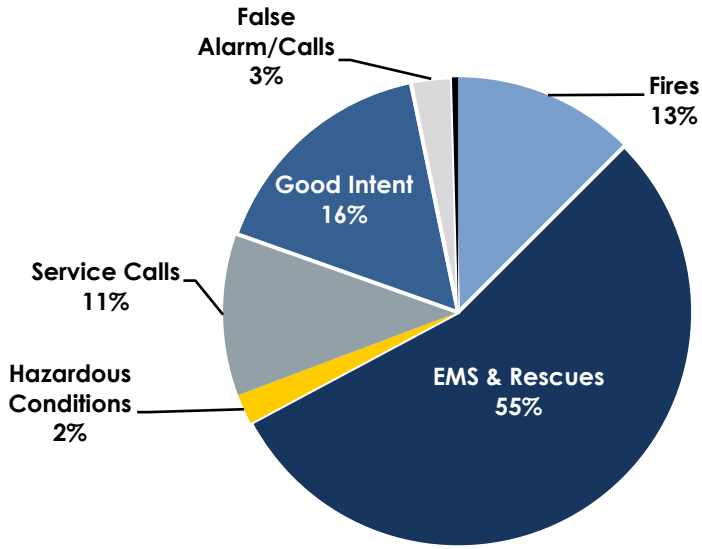
NFFPD has seen consistent growth in service demand over the past four years.

Figure 87: NFFPD Incident Breakdown (2016–2020)



	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
100	25	26	22	28	19
300	84	85	132	106	118
400	2	3	5	2	8
500	19	27	18	19	24
600	29	31	50	24	23
700	5	6	4	6	6
Other	1	1	1	0	1

Figure 88: NFFPD Incident Breakdown by Percentage (2017–2020)



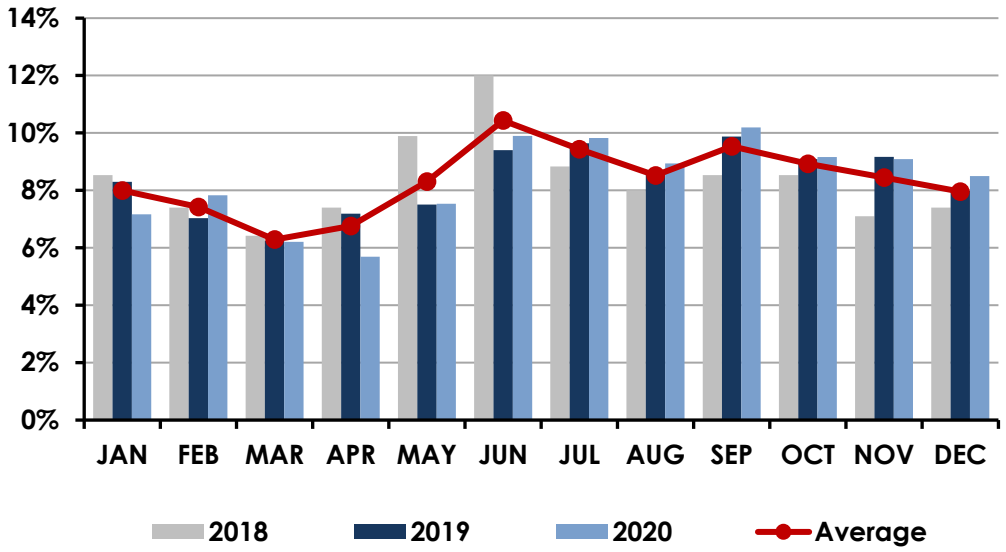
Temporal Variation

A temporal analysis of incidents reveals when the most significant service demand occurs. The following figures show how activity and demand changes based on various time measurements. The analyses were calculated on data from 2018–2020.

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

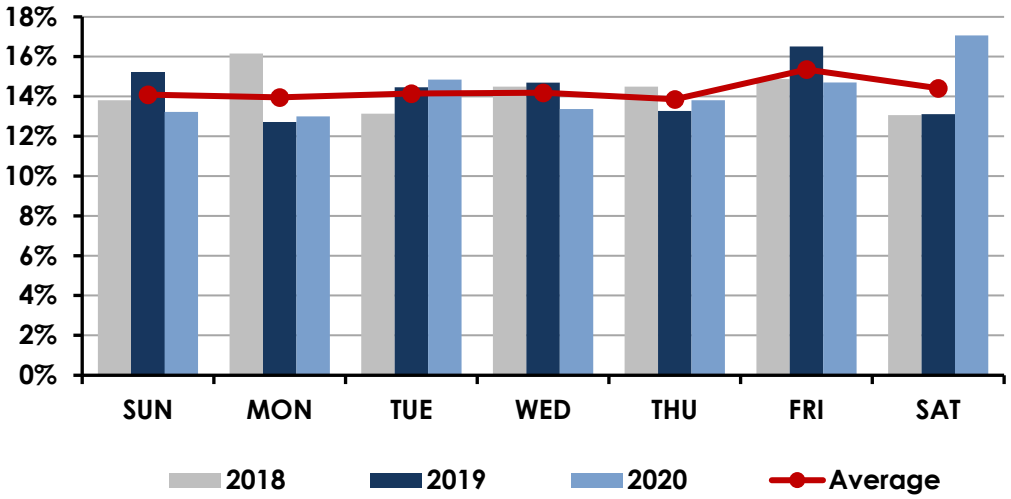
ECFPD had a slight increase in service demand during the summer months.

Figure 89: ECFPD Service Demand by Month (2018–2020)



For ECFPD, service demand by day-of-the-week was consistent on a daily basis.

Figure 90: ECFPD Service Demand by Day-of-the-Week (2018–2020)



As seen in many communities, the next figure shows that service demand tended to be the highest between 0900–1900 hours (9 am–7 pm).

Figure 91: ECFPD Service Demand by Hour-of-the-Day (2018–2020)

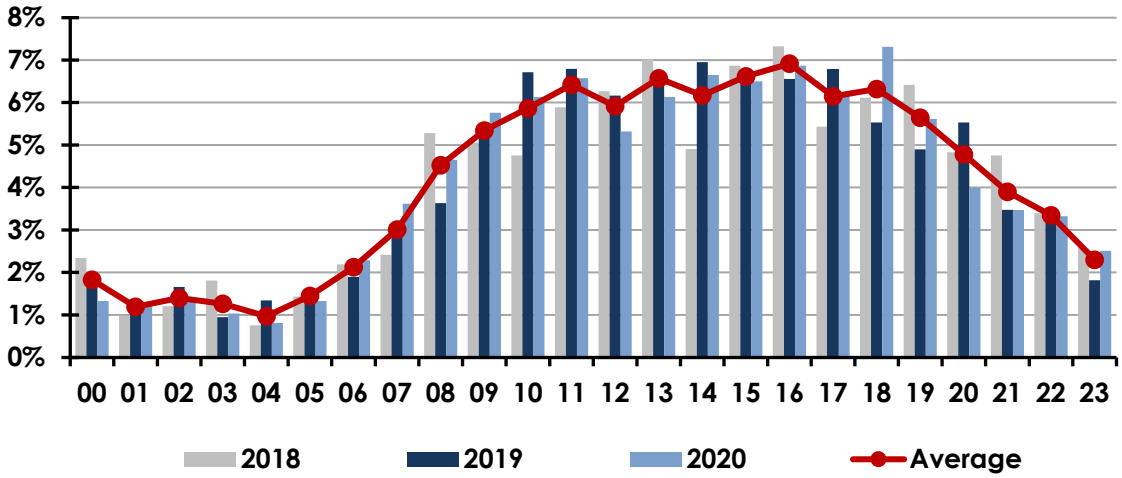


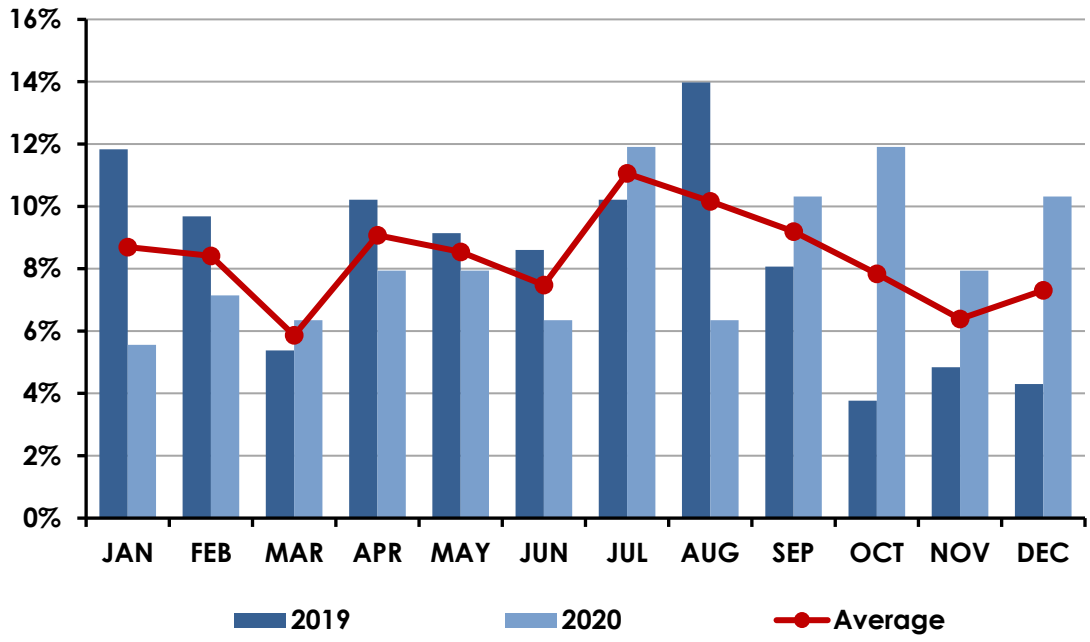
Figure 92: ECFPD Busiest Consecutive Service-Delivery Periods

Description	8-Hour	10-Hour	12-Hour
Hours	11:00–18:59	09:00–18:59	08:00–19:59
Percent of Total:	**51.0%**	**62.2%**	**72.2%**

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

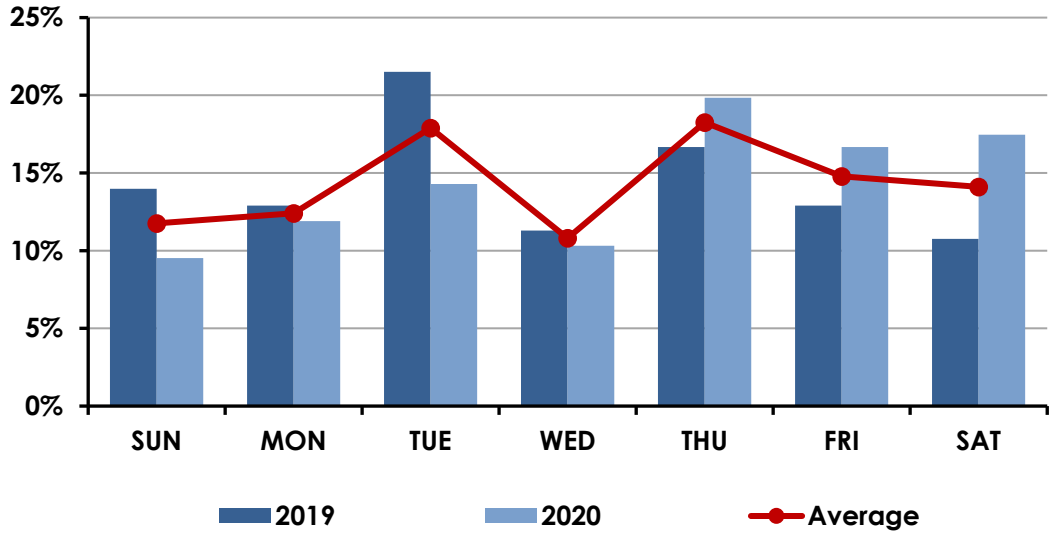
IHFPD demonstrated inconsistent service demand throughout the year. However, there tended to be a slight increase in demand during the summer months.

Figure 93: IHFPD Service Demand by Month (2019–2020)



Data showed a slight increase in service demand on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which would support limiting training sessions during those two days.

Figure 94: IHFPD Service Demand by Day-of-the-Week (2019–2020)



Increased demand in the morning and evening hours appeared to be consistent with increased commuter traffic.

Figure 95: IHFPD Service Demand by Hour-of-the-Day (2019–2020)

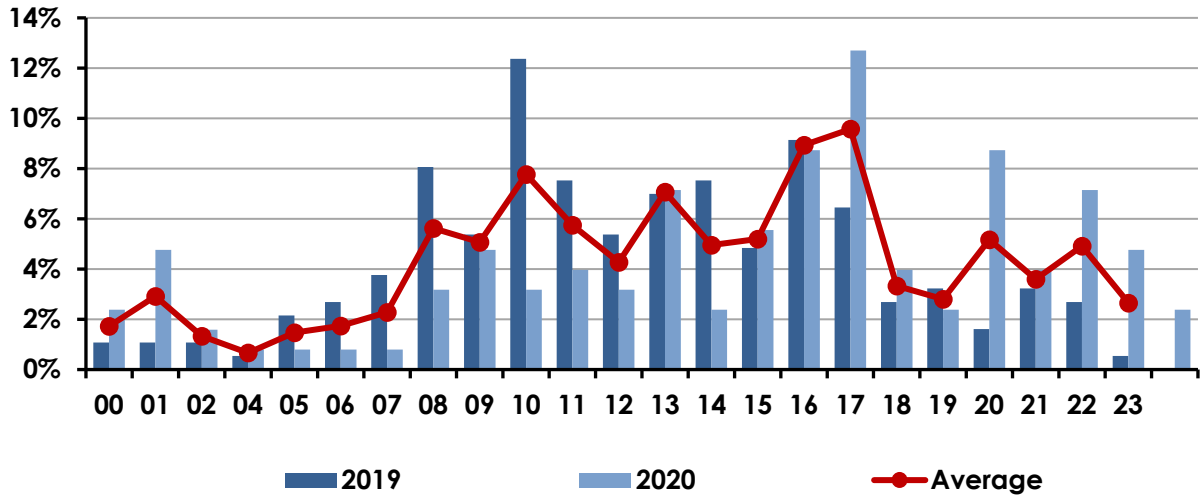


Figure 96: IHFPD Busiest Consecutive Service-Delivery Periods

Description	8-Hour	10-Hour	12-Hour
Hours	11:00–18:59	09:00–18:59	08:00–19:59
Percent of Total:	**53.5%**	**64.2%**	**70.3%**

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

ICFPD demonstrated an increase in service demand during the fall months, with a peak during September.

Figure 97: ICFPD Service Demand by Month (2020)

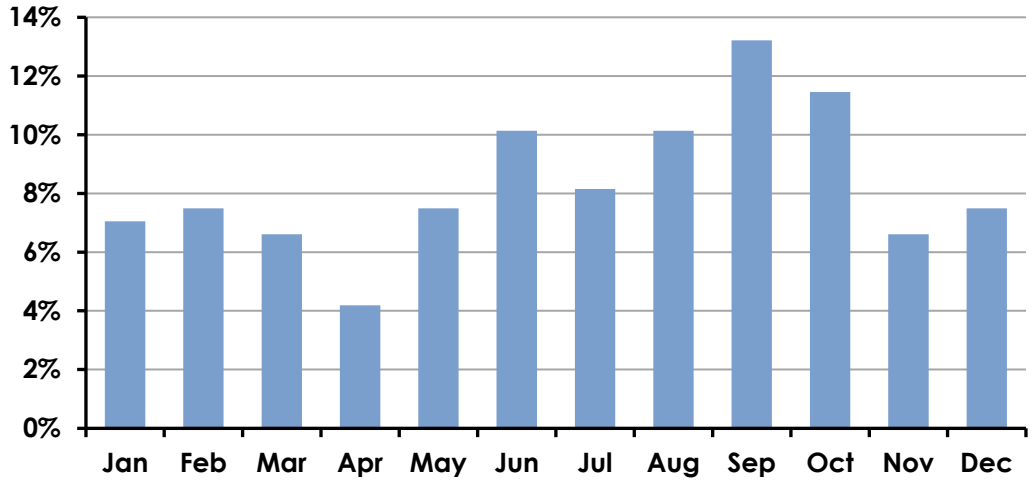
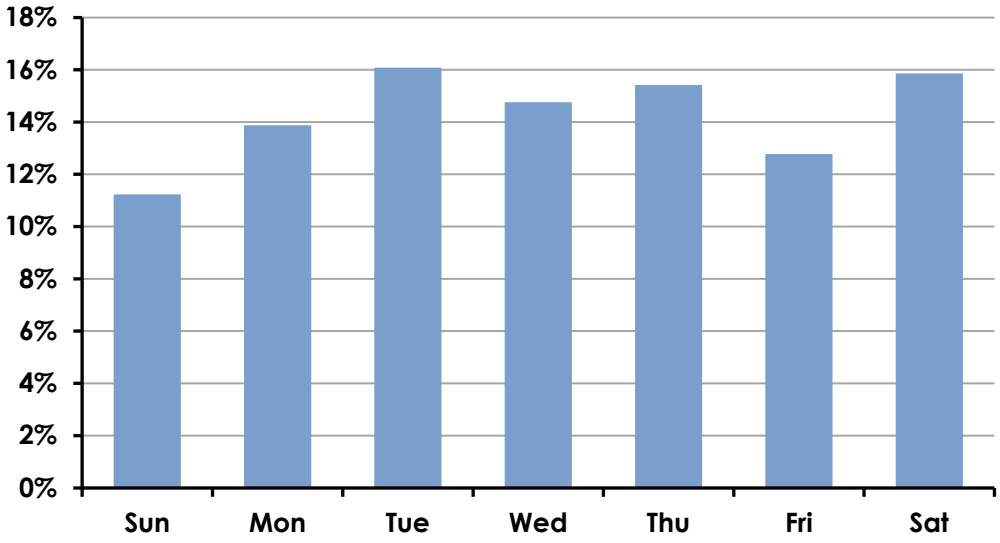


Figure 98 ICFPD Service Demand by Day-of-the-Week (2020)



ICFPD showed a statistical increase in incident volume in the late afternoon. Commuter traffic may be a contributing factor, but it is unclear as to the limited service demand during the morning.

Figure 99: ICFPD Service Demand by Hour-of-the-Day (2020)

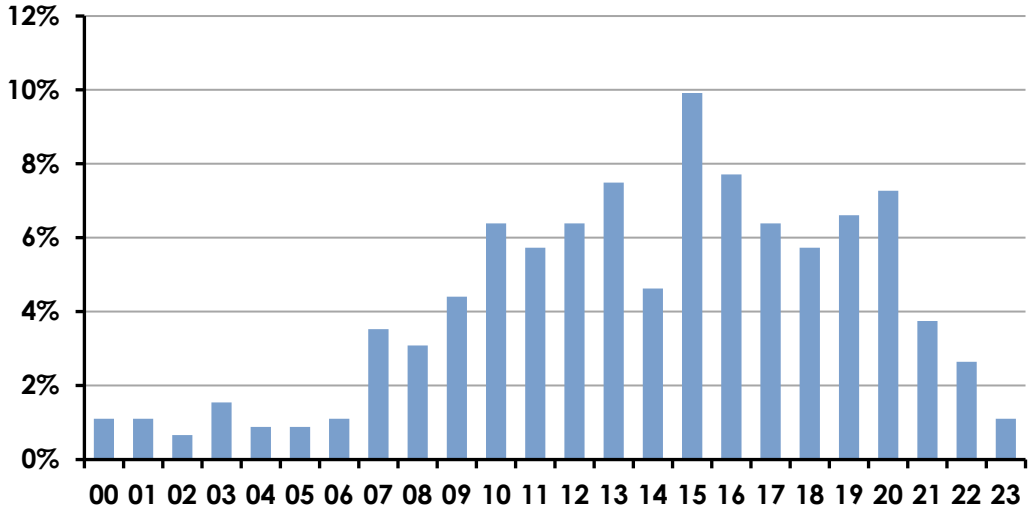


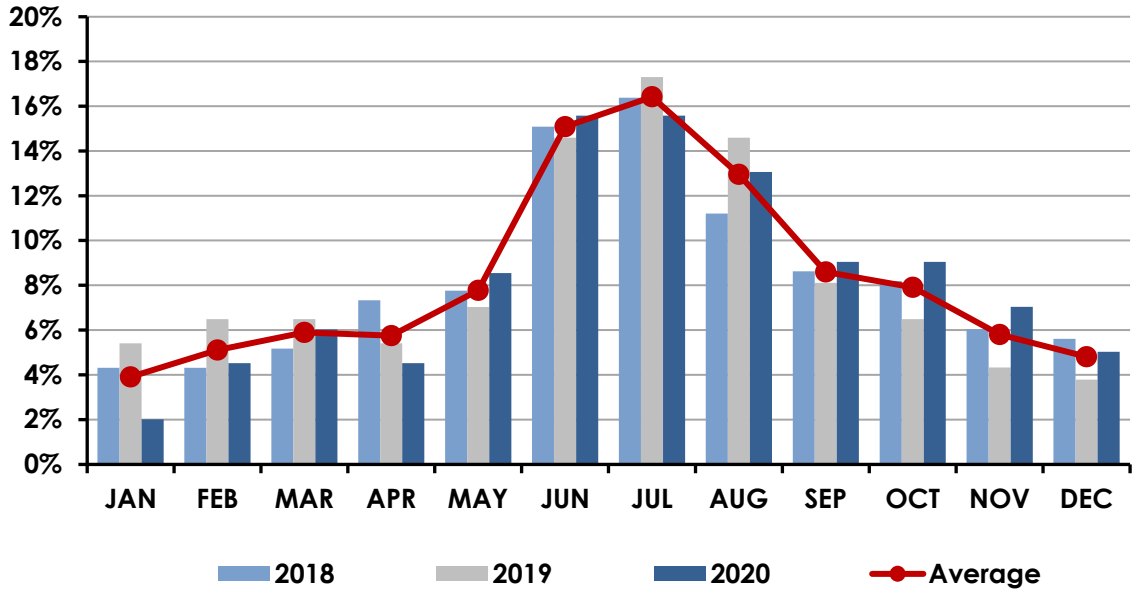
Figure 100: ICFPD Busiest Consecutive Service Delivery Periods

Description	8-Hour	10-Hour	12-Hour
Hours	9:00–16:59	10:00–19:59	10:00–21:59
Percent of Total:	**54.6%**	**62.2%**	**72.2%**

North Fork Fire Protection District

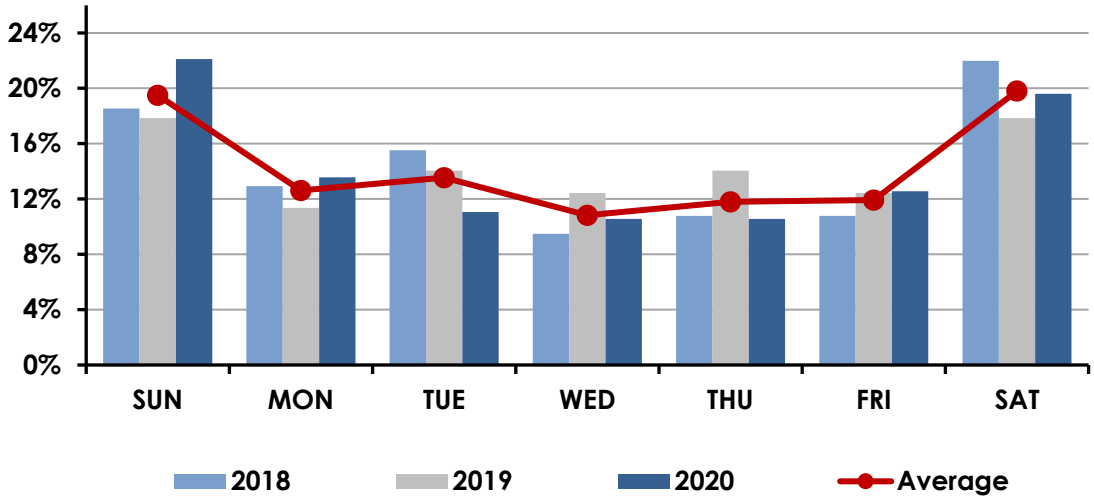
NFFPD demonstrated a significant increase in service demand during the summer months. Like the other organizations in the study, tourism is a major contributing factor.

Figure 101: NFFPD Service Demand by Month (2018–2020)



Over 40% of the district's incident volume occurred on Saturdays and Sundays.

Figure 102: NFFPD Service Demand by Day-of-the-Week (2018–2020)



The majority of NFFPD service demand occurs in the afternoon and early evening. Therefore, training and administrative functions should be scheduled during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Figure 103: NFFPD Service Demand by Hour-of-the-Day (2018–2020)

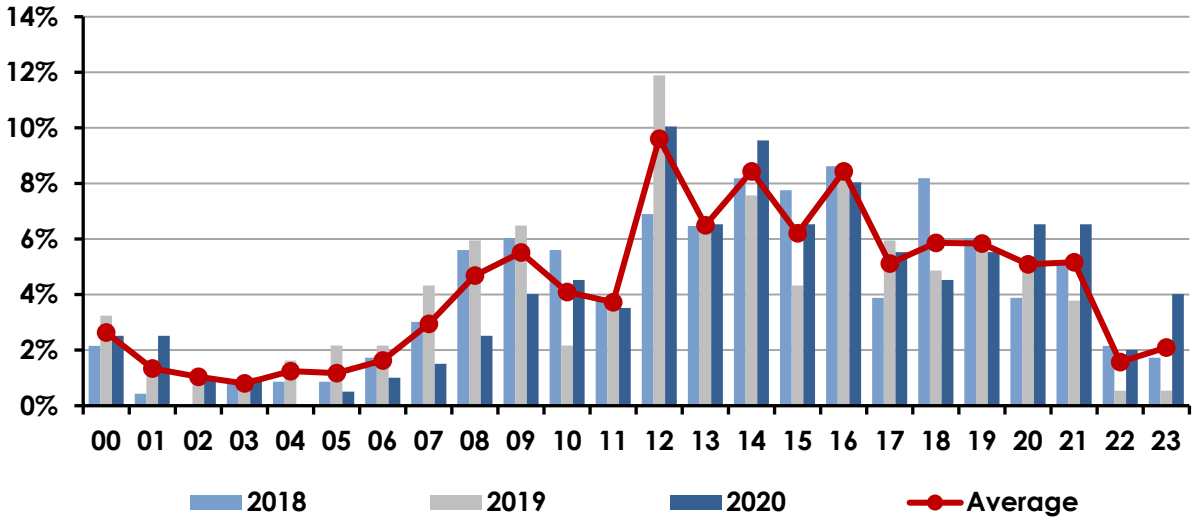


Figure 104: NFFPD Busiest Consecutive Service-Delivery Periods

Description	8-Hour	10-Hour	12-Hour
Hours	12:00–19:59	12:00–21:59	9:00–19:59
Percent of Total:	**56.0%**	**66.2%**	**74.0%**

Each of the four organizations demonstrated different temporal service demand periods. As a result, a consolidated organization would have the opportunity to balance response capabilities and staffing.

Service Demand by Fire Station

The following figure represents the service demand for each fire station in the study area during 2019–2020. The results represent individual apparatus responses—not single incidents. In addition, the figure includes the percentage of each station's share of the total calls within the fire protection district and each station's share of apparatus responses compared to all four districts combined. This represents responses for engines, brush trucks, water tenders, and medic units.

Figure 105: Combined Service Demand by Apparatus & Fire Station (2018–2020)

Fire Station	2018 Calls	2019 Calls	2020 Calls	TOTAL CALLS	% OF FPD TOTAL	% OF ALL STATIONS
Elk Creek FPD						
Station 1	1,009	1,347	1,468	**3,824**	**84%**	**46%**
Station 2	75	66	48	**189**	**4%**	**2%**
Station 3	44	33	41	**118**	**3%**	**1%**
Station 4	143	95	183	**421**	**9%**	**5%**
Indian Hills FPD						
Station 1	374	429	248	**1,051**	**100%**	**13%**
Inter-Canyon FPD						
Station 1	182	167	109	**458**	**24%**	**5%**
Station 2	29	34	36	**99**	**5%**	**1%**
Station 3	273	297	322	**892**	**48%**	**11%**
Station 4	126	140	134	**400**	**21%**	**5%**
Station 5	2	7	12	**21**	**1%**	**< 1%**
North Fork FPD						
Station 1	120	70	88	**278**	**32%**	**3%**
Station 2	112	102	124	**338**	**39%**	**4%**
Station 3	14	110	134	**258**	**30%**	**3%**

Except for IHFPD, the "% of FPD Total" column in the preceding figure represents the percentage of total calls by apparatus and station compared to the other stations with each fire protection district.

The figure clearly illustrates that Elk Creek FPD Station 1 had the most apparatus responses of the 13 fire stations within the study area. This was followed by Indian Hills FPD's single fire station and Inter-Canyon FPD's Station 3.

Concentration Studies

In addition to the temporal analysis, AP Triton examined the geographic distribution of service demand, evaluation of resource distribution, measurement of ISO response capabilities, and population distribution throughout each jurisdiction.

The density of incidents for the whole study area is depicted in the following figure. The various colors correspond to the differing number of incidents per square mile. The relationship between station locations and the higher intensity of service demand is visible on this map. Both fire and EMS incidents are included in the "hot spot" analysis.

Service demand is distributed widely throughout the combined service area with a higher incident density located in the incorporated cities, decreasing incident density to outer regions. The main area of the highest density is geographically located along the 285 corridors. As can be expected, the areas with the highest incident density were linked to the locations of the highest population density. In addition, the analyses indicated that most incidents occurred near a fire station. This suggests an effective use of resources to enable shorter response times.

The following three figures illustrate the combined geographic service demand of the fire districts during 2020, categorized by all incident types, EMS calls, and fires.

Figure 106: Geographic Incident Density—All Call Types (2020)

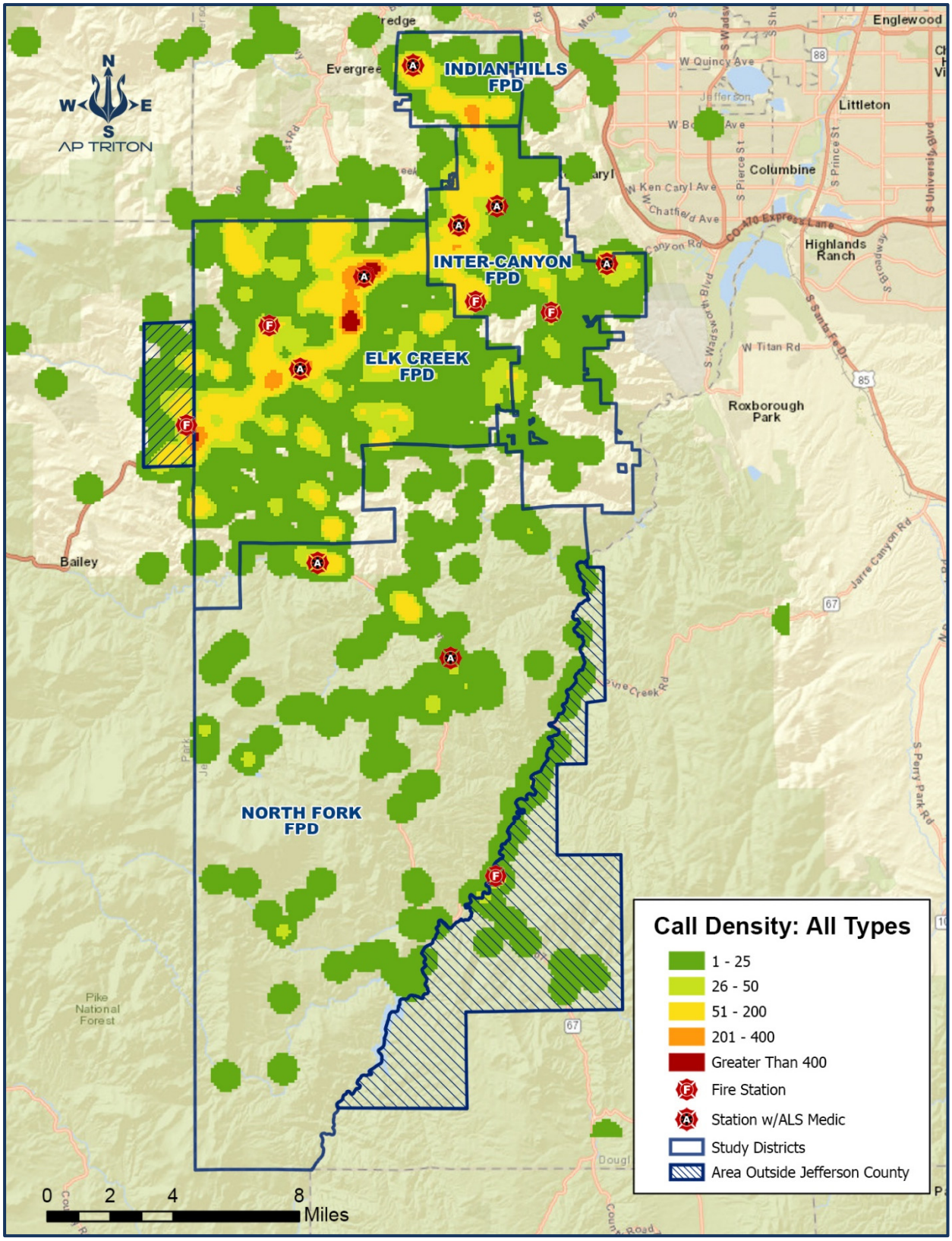


Figure 107: Geographic Incident Density—Emergency Medical Services (2020)

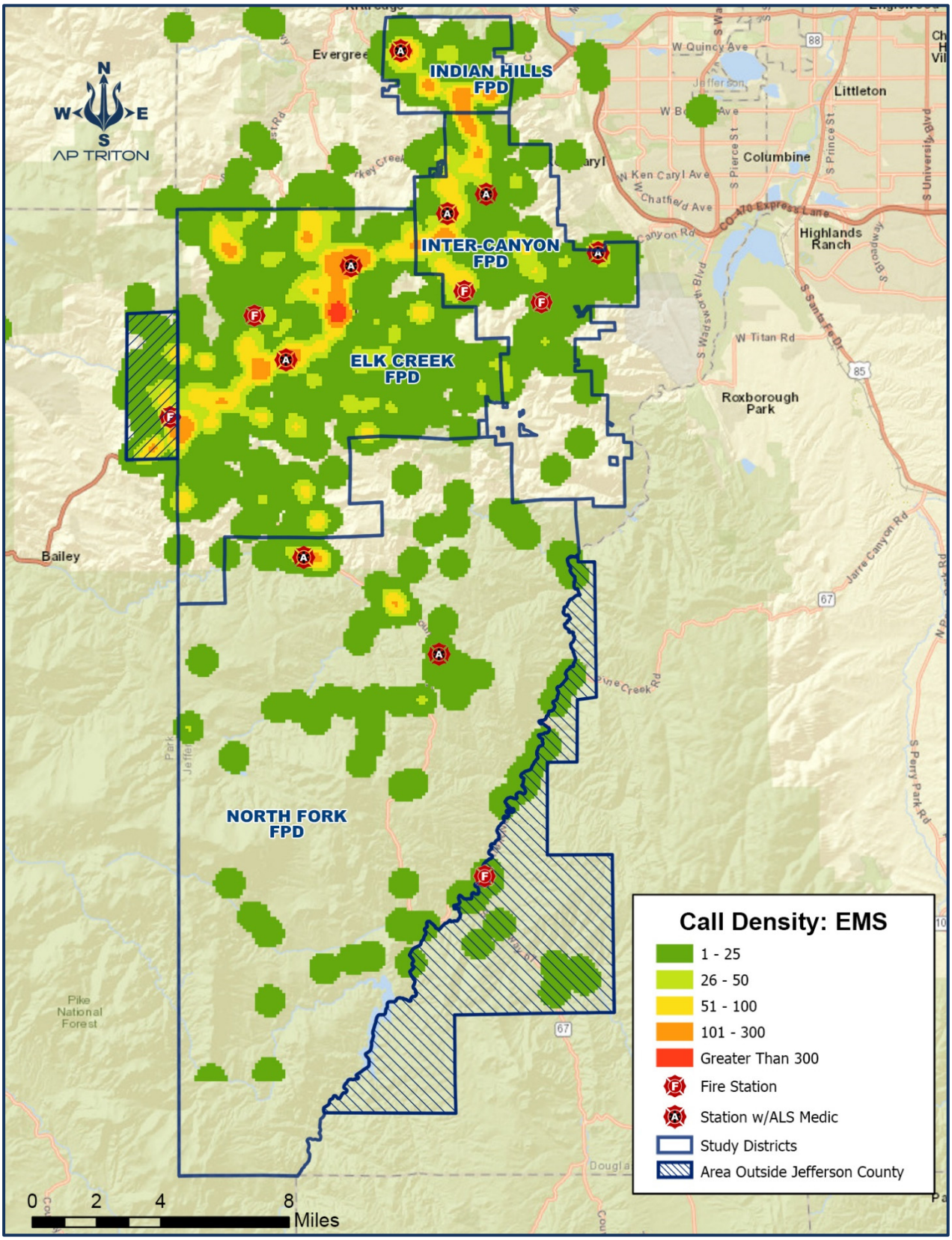
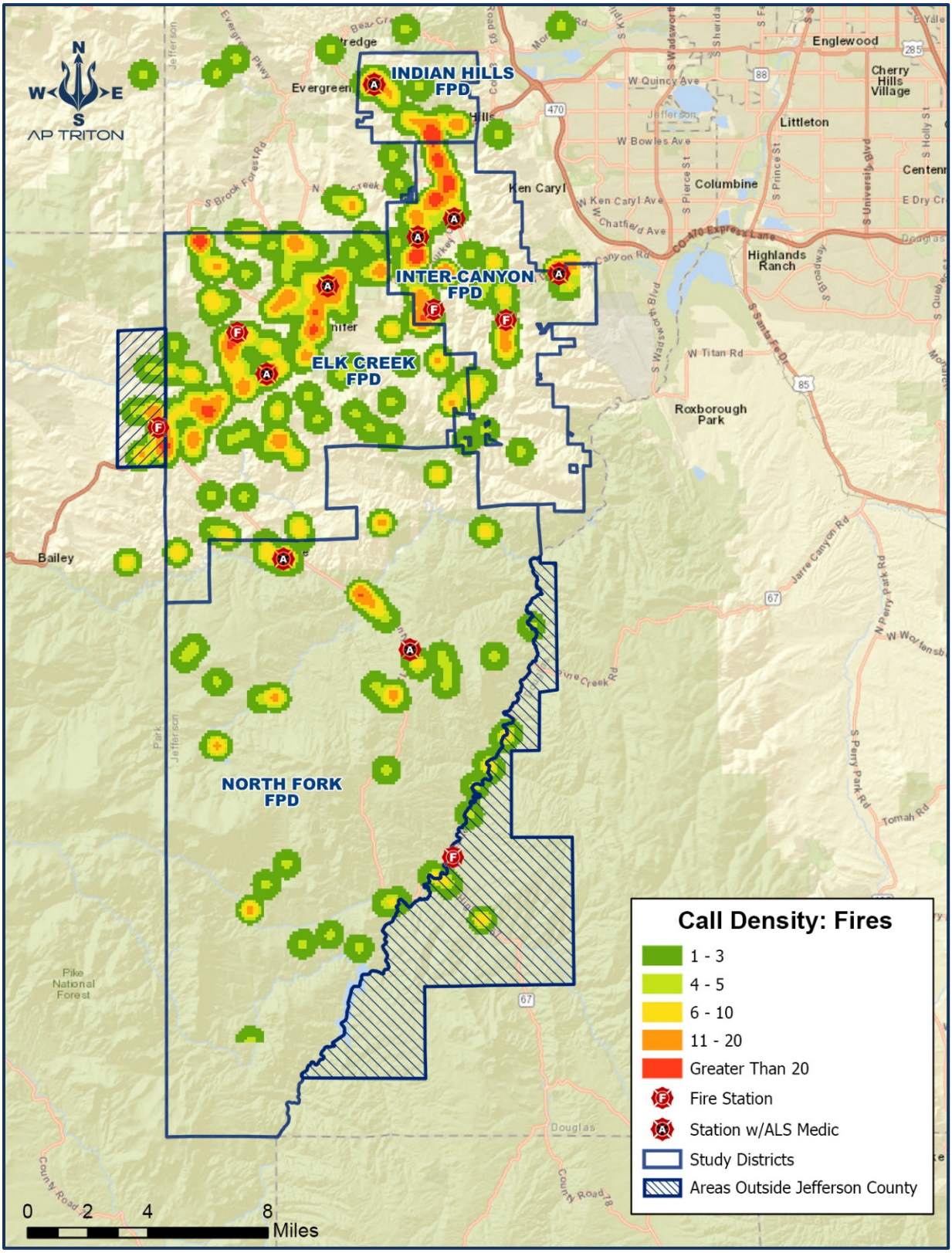


Figure 108: Geographic Incident Density—Fires (2020)



Distribution Analysis

Analyzing the distribution of fire district resources within a jurisdiction can be done in two ways. The Insurance Services Office criteria are the first technique. This is based on the Fire Suppression Rating Schedule's standards (FSRS). The second technique is used by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) in its standards, as well as the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) in its accreditation *Fire & Emergency Services Self-Assessment Manual* (FESSAM) and Community Risk Assessment: Standards of Cover (CRA-SOC). It establishes the expected reaction time performance and then compares it to that standard. GIS analysis can determine the efficiency of station sites for the travel time component of the response time requirement.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) is a non-profit organization that assesses fire protection in cities across the country. All aspects of fire protection are evaluated by ISO and are divided into four primary categories: emergency communications, fire department, water supply, and community risk reduction. Following an on-site examination, the community is issued an ISO rating, or more particularly, a Public Protection Classification (PPC®) number ranging from 1 (best protection) to 10 (worst or no protection). The Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS), which describes sub-categories of each of the critical four and details the requirements for each examination area, is used to calculate the PPC® score. The following graph depicts each organization's current ISO rating.

Figure 109: Organization ISO Rating

Department	ISO Rating
Elk Creek Fire Protection District	5/10x
Indian Hills Fire Protection District	5
Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District	4/4y
North Fork Fire Protection District	5 (within 5 Miles)

In addition, ISO also evaluates a community's availability of sufficient water supply, critical for extinguishing fires. One of the areas assessed regarding the water supply is the geographical locations and distribution of fire hydrants. Based on ISO scoring, structures that sit outside a 1,000-foot radius of a fire hydrant are subject to separate ratings. That rating is dependent on the fire district demonstrating alternate water sources and the ability to use them.

Suppose a fire department can demonstrate that sufficient fire flow can be maintained at a minimum rate of 250 gallons per minute for two hours at a given location. In that case, this can be accomplished in several ways, such as a dry hydrant, a storage tank, tender shuttle operations, capability for long large diameter hose lays, or drafting operations. Regardless of the system or systems utilized, sufficient fire flow must be demonstrated.

The following four figures illustrate the ISO 5-mile travel capability of each fire protection district participating in this study, along with ISO engine capability and ISO aerial capabilities.

Figure 110: ISO 5-mile Travel Capabilities from All Stations

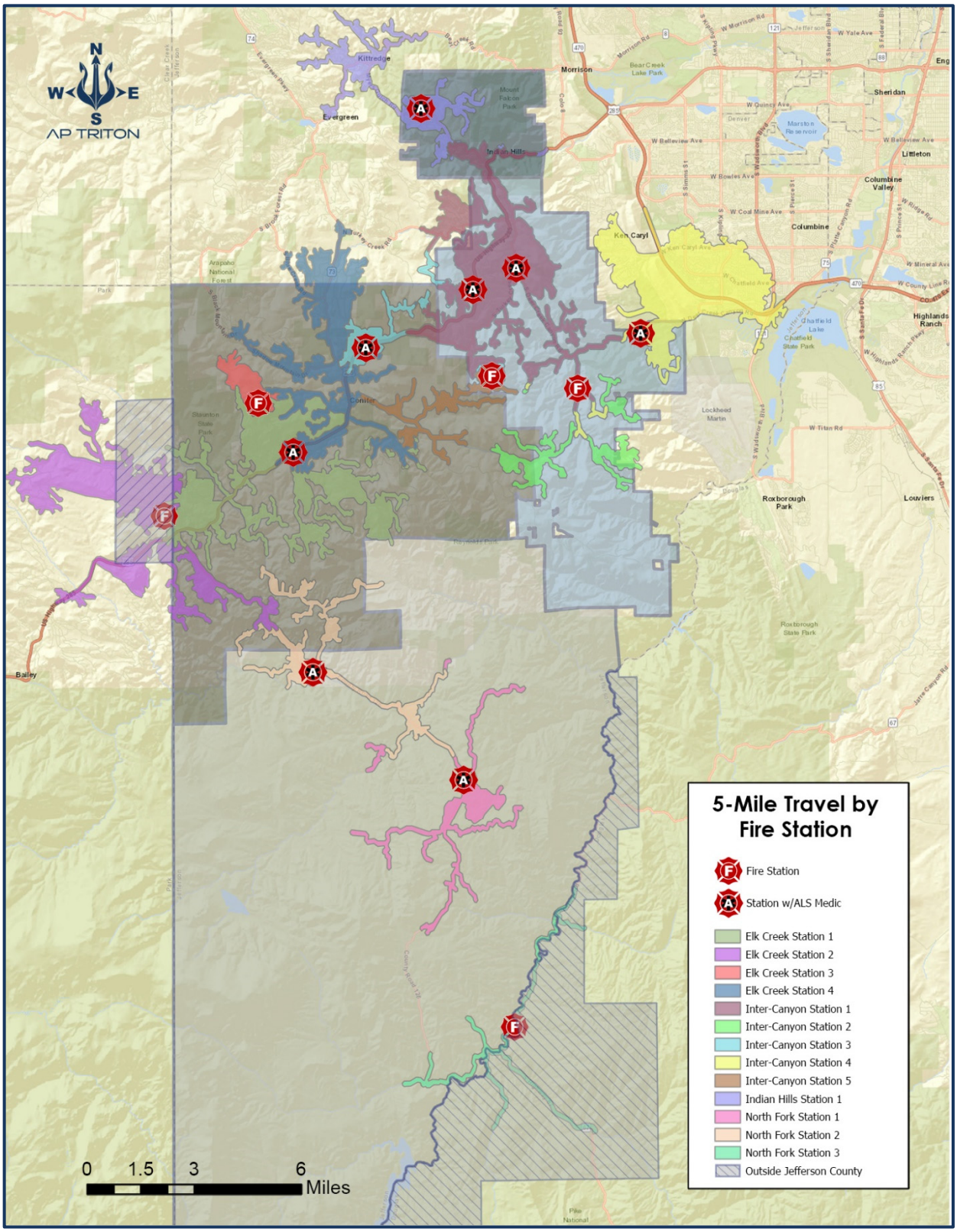
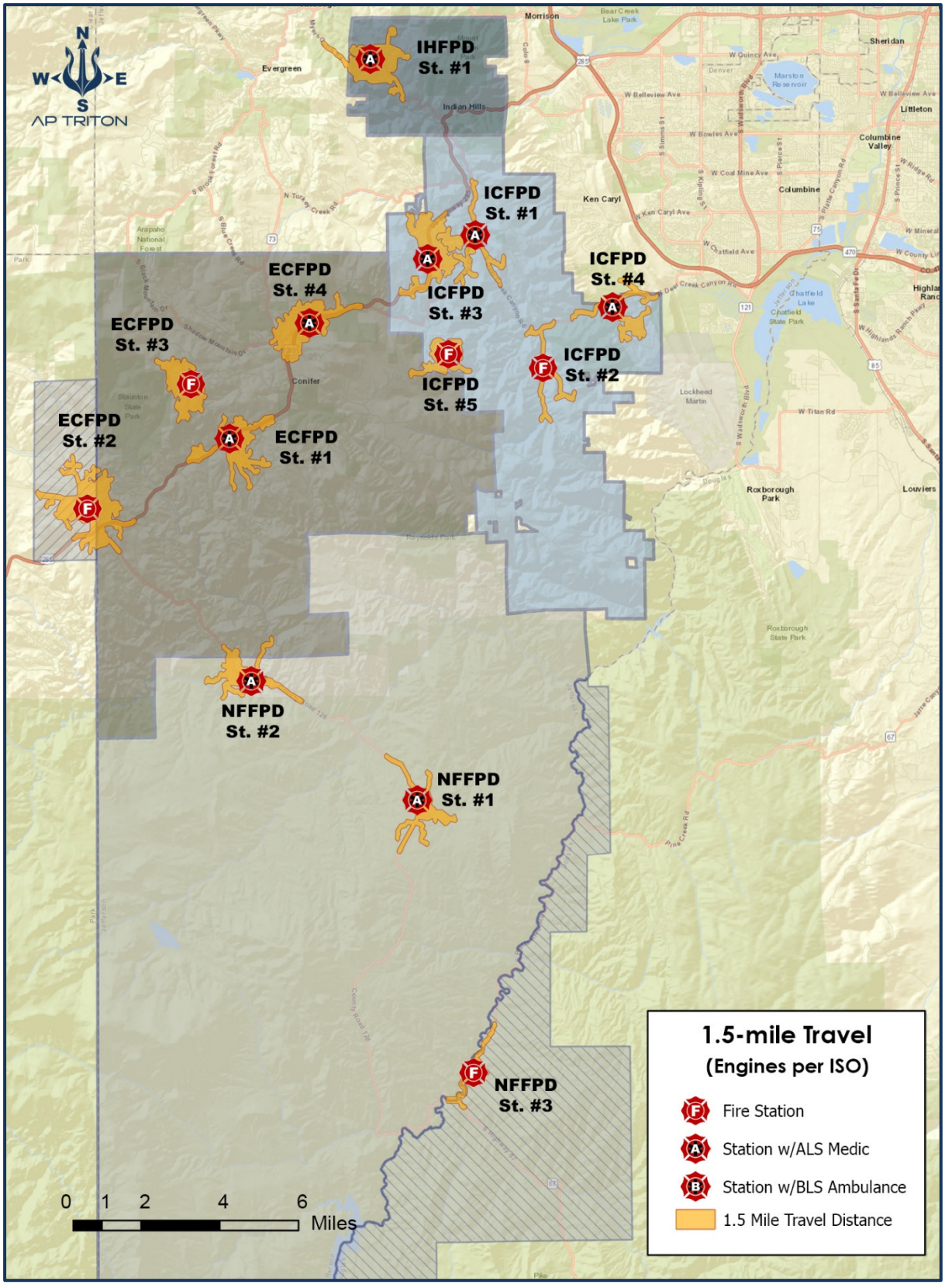


Figure 111: Service Area ISO Engine Capabilities 1.5 Miles from All Stations



ISO only requires an aerial apparatus for areas with more than five structures over three stories or a needed fire flow of over 3,500 gallons per minute.[16] Therefore, aerial apparatus should be located to best cover those areas with such structures within a 2.5-mile travel distance.

Travel Time Analysis

The second standard for resource distribution is using travel time criteria. The following figure presents a travel time model from the current station locations over the existing road network. Travel time is calculated using the posted speed limit and adjusted for negotiating turns, intersections, and one-way streets.

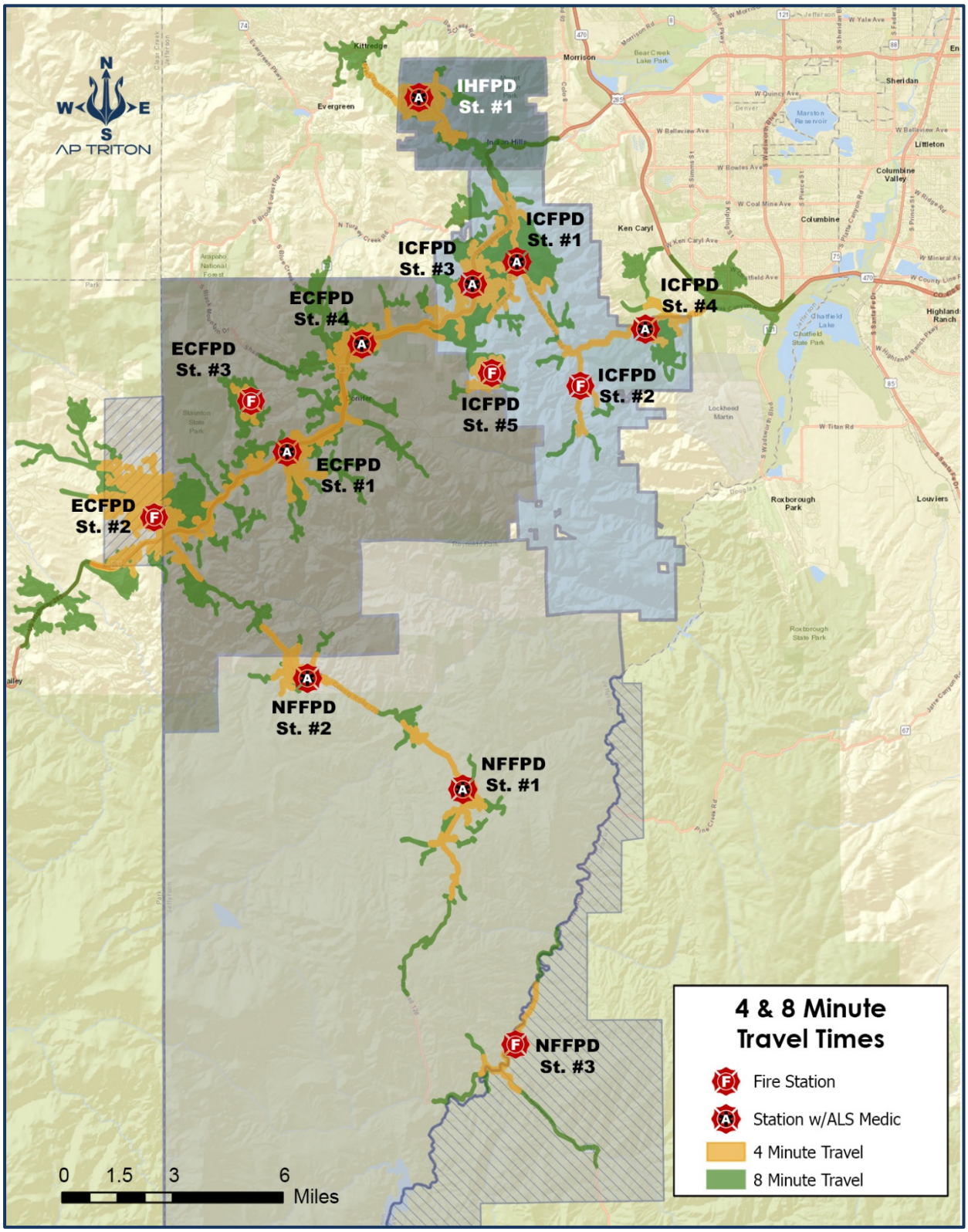
NFPA Standards 1710 and 1720 recommend the travel times for different response zones based on population density. For example, NFPA 1710 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments assumes an entirely urban environment and specifies the travel time of 240 seconds or 4 minutes.

Under NFPA 1720 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments, there are different response time criteria for the diverse population densities. This standard defines the response time of which travel time is a part.

Most departments, even fully career departments that serve rural areas, find it unreasonable to adopt the 1710 travel time throughout their jurisdiction. So instead, many will adopt the 4-minute travel time in response zones with urban and suburban population densities and the 1720 response time for rural areas.

Both standards recommend call processing time as one minute and turnout time for staffed stations as one minute for EMS calls and 80 seconds for fire or special operations calls. Call processing time is not reflected in the 1720 response time so deducting only the turnout time (1:20) from a 14-minute response time is 12 minutes, 40 seconds (12:40). AP Triton has used a 12-minute travel time in the GIS analysis of the rural areas and a four-minute travel time to urban areas. An eight-minute response is also shown with the four-minute travel time for comparison.

Figure 112: Travel Time Analysis—4 & 8 minutes from All Stations



Reliability Study

This section provides an overview of unit utilization for each organization. Three types of analyses are shown in this section. The first is unit utilization based on call volume, the second analyzes concurrent requests for services, and the third examines unit hour utilization (UHU).

Unit Workload Analysis

Units that are very busy or are already out when a second call occurs can result in increased response times from distant units. Although there is no national consensus standard regarding UHU, many departments consider a UHU target of 10% for engines and trucks the most efficient.

Specific to ambulance utilization, there are limited formal performance measures to use as a target measure. In May 2016, Henrico County (Virginia) Division of Fire published an article after studying its department's EMS workload.[17] As a result of the study, Henrico County Division of Fire developed a broad commitment factor scale for its department. The following figure is a summary of the findings as it relates to commitment factors.

Figure 113: Commitment Factors Developed by Henrico County Division of Fire (2016)

Factor	Indication	Description
16%–24%	Ideal Range	Personnel can maintain training requirements and physical fitness and can consistently achieve response time benchmarks. Units are available to the community more than 75% of the day.
25%	System Stress	Community availability and unit sustainability are not questioned. First-due units respond to their assigned community 75% of the time, and response benchmarks are rarely missed.
26%–29%	Evaluation Range	The community served will experience delayed incident responses. Just under 30% of the day, first-due ambulances are unavailable; thus, neighboring responders will likely exceed goals.
30%	"Line in the Sand"	Not Sustainable: Commitment Threshold—the community has less than a 70% chance of timely emergency service, and immediate relief is vital. Personnel assigned to units at or exceeding 0.3 may show signs of fatigue and burnout and may be at increased risk of errors. In addition, required training and physical fitness sessions are not consistently completed.

The following images show the number of calls and unit hour utilization for each district's fire apparatus in 2020. Each figure lists the fire district's apparatus in descending order, beginning with the busiest unit. The next figure lists the results of the Elk Creek FPD analysis.

Figure 114: ECFPD Apparatus Utilization Details (2020)

Unit	Count	Total	Average	UHU
Medic 481	873	861:14:47	0:59:12	9.80%
Engine 431	295	206:54:19	0:42:05	2.36%
Brush 451	171	190:26:53	1:06:49	2.17%
Rescue 480	143	74:24:59	0:31:13	0.85%
Utility 495	107	46:28:32	0:26:04	0.53%
Utility 496	95	65:37:12	0:41:27	0.75%
Medic 485	90	73:29:48	0:49:00	0.84%
B404	48	30:25:44	0:38:02	0.35%
Medic 484	46	37:58:15	0:49:32	0.43%
Engine 434	20	18:02:39	0:54:08	0.21%
Module 459	19	21:01:09	1:06:23	0.24%
Tactical Tender 462	19	23:07:25	1:13:01	0.26%
Utility 494	14	7:56:40	0:34:03	0.09%
Engine 435	11	15:43:17	1:25:45	0.18%
Engine 432	9	2:04:25	0:13:49	0.02%
Tactical Tender 463	9	24:27:14	2:43:02	0.28%
Engine 433	4	2:29:29	0:37:22	0.03%
Deputy Chief 402	3	1:10:06	0:23:22	0.01%
Utility 491	2	3:31:07	1:45:33	0.04%
Tactical Tender 463	1	0:08:13	0:08:13	0.00%

Medic 481 had the highest utilization of all ECFPD apparatus. Therefore, based on the information provided in the previous section, the unit has the capacity for increased service demand.

The next figure lists the results of the Indian Hills FPD analysis.

Figure 115: IHFPD Apparatus Utilization Details (2020)

Unit	Count	Total	Average	UHU
Engine 341	69	57:01:37	0:49:35	0.65%
Medic 383	54	58:02:52	1:04:30	0.66%
Utility 358	40	20:27:54	0:30:42	0.23%
Medic 386	37	42:21:17	1:08:41	0.48%
Brush 357	23	76:04:33	3:18:28	0.87%
Tender 376	20	43:03:36	2:09:11	0.49%
Brush 359	7	22:38:14	3:14:02	0.26%
Engine 349	4	11:11:56	2:47:59	0.13%

The analysis from the preceding figure shows that all IHFPD apparatus have the capacity for increased service demand and demonstrates balanced utilization. The next figure lists the results of the Inter-Canyon FPD analysis.

Figure 116: ICFPD Apparatus Utilization Details (2020)

Unit	Count	Total	Average	UHU
Medic 681	208	133:20:22	0:38:28	1.52%
Medic 683	168	126:16:29	0:45:06	1.44%
Engine 633	130	241:20:38	1:51:23	2.75%
Medic 684	90	88:22:23	0:58:55	1.01%
Engine 631	80	53:58:23	0:40:29	0.61%
Rescue 682	72	29:26:09	0:24:32	0.34%
Rescue 680	62	42:07:29	0:40:46	0.48%
Engine 634	36	104:52:46	2:54:48	1.19%
Chief 601	32	29:01:09	0:54:25	0.33%
Tender 671	31	203:49:21	6:34:30	2.32%
Tender 672	27	47:04:06	1:44:36	0.54%
Brush 651	25	32:54:18	1:18:58	0.37%
Tender 673	22	24:38:07	1:07:11	0.28%
Brush 652	19	7:28:06	0:23:35	0.09%
Engine 632	16	28:13:16	1:45:50	0.32%
Engine 635	12	23:27:40	1:57:18	0.27%

The following figure lists the results of the North Fork FPD analysis.

Figure 117: NFFPD Apparatus Utilization Details (2020)

Unit	Count	Total	Average	UHU
Medic 1289	99	137:42:25	1:23:28	1.57%
Utility 1200	60	51:30:54	0:51:31	0.59%
Brush 1251	50	117:26:21	2:20:56	1.34%
Medic1288	50	43:32:02	0:52:14	0.50%
Engine 1232	29	34:01:48	1:10:24	0.39%
Tactical Tender 1272	22	70:45:52	3:13:00	0.81%
Brush1252	21	82:51:13	3:56:43	0.94%
Brush1253	21	17:38:49	0:50:25	0.20%
Rescye1281	20	37:14:11	1:51:43	0.42%
Tactical Tender 1271	20	33:38:53	1:40:57	0.38%
Engine 1231	13	10:33:29	0:48:44	0.12%
Utility1255	7	13:00:34	1:51:31	0.15%
Medic 1287	4	17:40:36	4:25:09	0.20%
Engine 1233	3	2:02:50	0:40:57	0.02%

Concurrent Incidents

Another way to examine resource reliability is to explore the number of times multiple incidents happen within the same time frame. The following figure shows the number of times that one or more units are assigned to incidents. The data supports that in 2020 there were minimal occurrences where more than two incidents were occurring concurrently. However, the potential increase in service delivery demand specific to EMS may increase the number of concurrent incidents.

Figure 118: Response Unit Concurrency Percentages (2020)

Incidents in Progress	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD	Cumulative Average
One Incident	88%	98%	93%	96%	**93%**
Two Incidents	11%	2%	7%	4%	**6%**
Three or more Incidents	1%	0%	0%	0%	**1%**

Response Performance

Perhaps the most publicly visible component of an emergency services delivery system is that of response performance. Policymakers and citizens want to know how quickly they can expect to receive emergency services. AP Triton recommends that the potential combined district adopt the following national standards or develop specific response performance benchmarks based on local environments. Setting response standards based on averages is generally a poor indicator of performance. Most organizations measure performance on the 90th percentile for comparison with the NFPA standards. For policymakers and citizens to make informed decisions concerning response performance, jurisdictions must record and report the various components of the jurisdiction's current performance.

In analyzing response performance, AP Triton generates percentile measurements of response time performance. The use of percentile measurements using the components of response time follows the recommendations of industry best practices. The best practices are derived by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE), Standard of Cover document, and NFPA 1720 Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments.

The "average" measure is a commonly used descriptive statistic called the mean of a data set. The most important reason for not using the average for performance standards is that it may not accurately reflect the performance for the entire data set and may be skewed by outliers, especially in small data sets. One extremely good or bad value can skew the average for the whole data set.

The "median" measure is another acceptable method of analyzing performance. This method identifies the value in the middle of a data set and thus tends not to be as strongly influenced by data outliers.

Percentile measurements are a better measure of performance because they show that most of the data set has achieved a particular level of performance. The 90th percentile means that 10% of the values are more significant than the value stated, and all other data are at or below this level. This can be compared to the desired performance objective to determine the degree of success in achieving the goal.

As this report progresses through the performance analysis, it is essential to remember that each response performance component is not cumulative. Each is analyzed as an individual component, and the point at which the fractile percentile is calculated exists in a set of data unto itself.

The *response time continuum*—the time between when the caller dials 911 and when assistance arrives—is comprised of several components:

- **Alarm Processing Time:** The time interval from receiving the alarm at the primary PSAP until the beginning of the transmittal of the response information via voice or electronic means to emergency response facilities or the emergency response units in the field.
- **Turnout Time:** The time interval that begins when the emergency response facilities and emergency response units' notification process starts by either an audible alarm or visual annunciation or both and ends at the beginning point of travel time.
- **Travel Time:** The time interval begins when a unit is en route to the emergency incident and ends when the unit arrives at the scene.
- **Response Time:** A combination of turnout time and travel time. This is the most commonly utilized measure of fire department response performance.
- **Total Response Time:** The NFPA 1710 definition of Total Response Time is the time interval from receiving the alarm at the dispatch center to when the first emergency response unit initiates or intervenes to control the incident. For this report, Total Response Time will be defined as receipt of the alarm at the dispatch center until the arrival of the first fire department unit.

The following figure lists the various response performance standards described in NFPA 1720: *Standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Volunteer Fire Departments.*

Figure 119: NFPA 1720 Response Standards

Zone	Demographics	Minimum Staff to Respond	Response Time (minutes)	Meets Objective
Urban	> 1,000 people/sq. mile	15	9	90%
Suburban	500–1,000 ppl./sq. mile	10	10	80%
Rural	< 500 people/sq. mile	6	14	80%
Remote	Travel distance ≥ 8 mi	4	Dependent on travel distance	90%
Special	Determined by AHJ	Determined by AHJ	Determined by AHJ	90%

The following figures show historical response time performance for each category of service demand and each fire district.

Figure 120: ECFPD Response Time Performance (2019–2020)

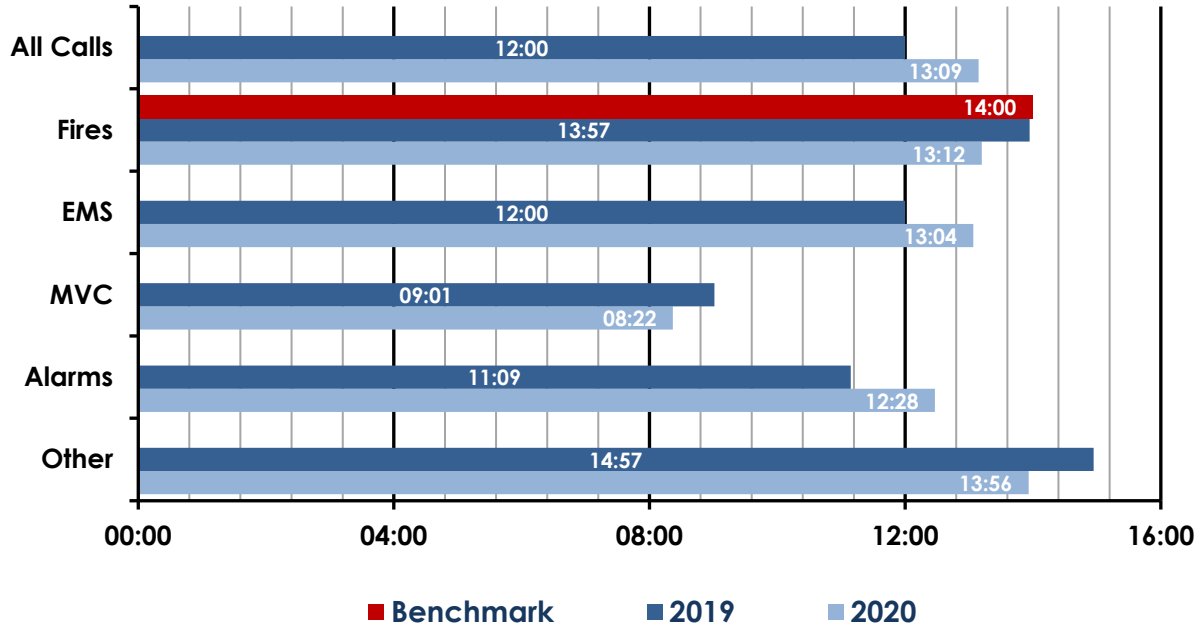


Figure 121: IHFPD Response Time Performance (2019–2020)

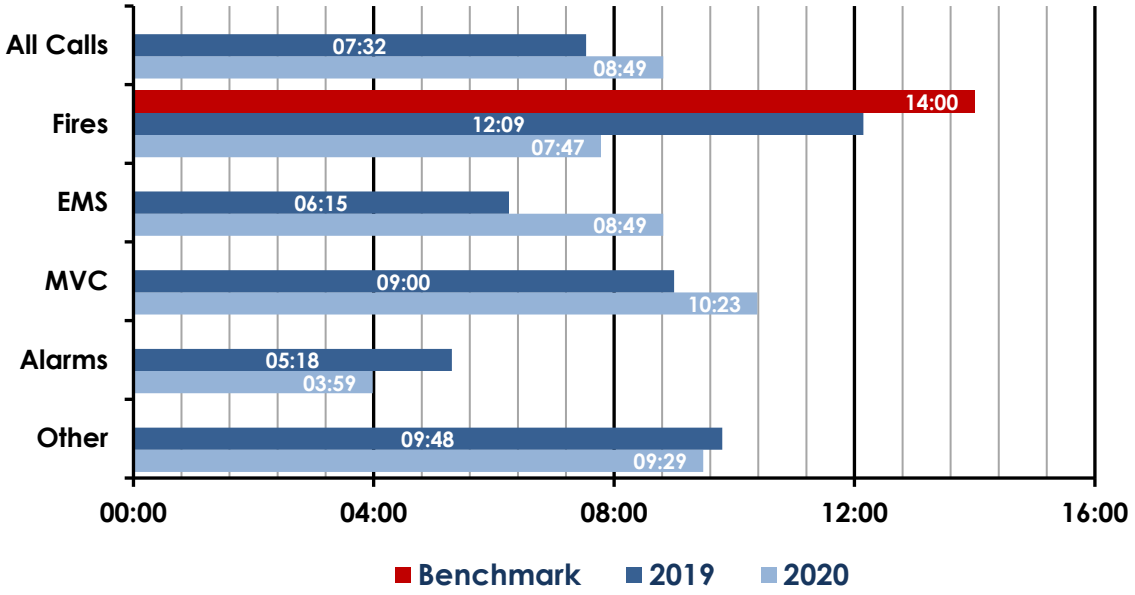


Figure 122: ICFPD Response Time Performance (2019–2020)

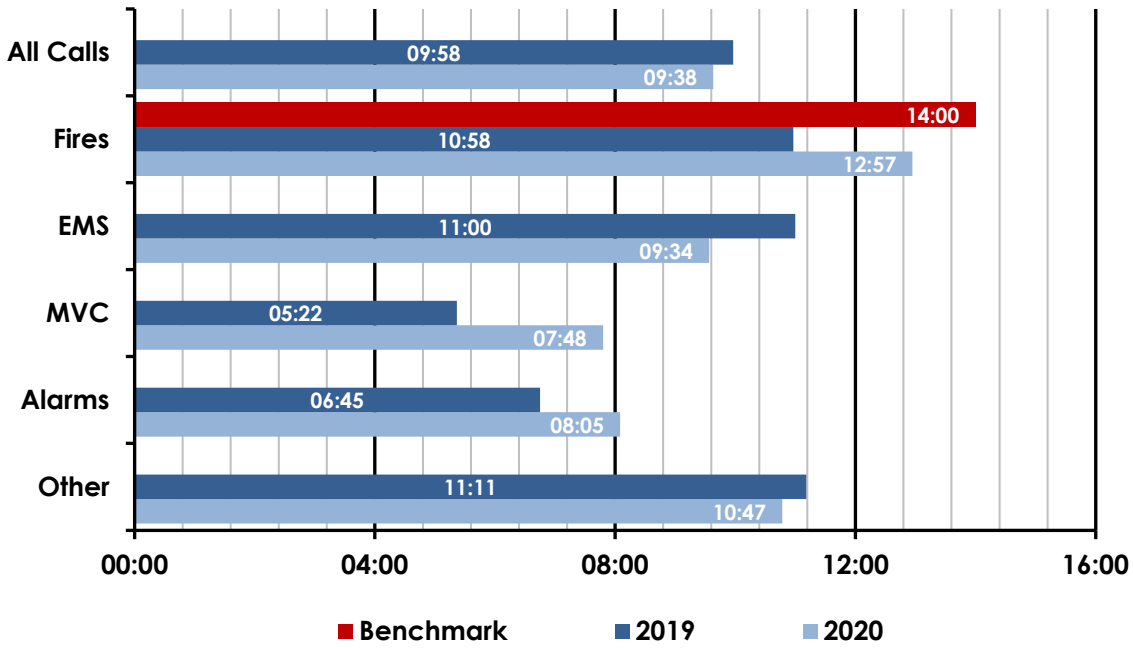
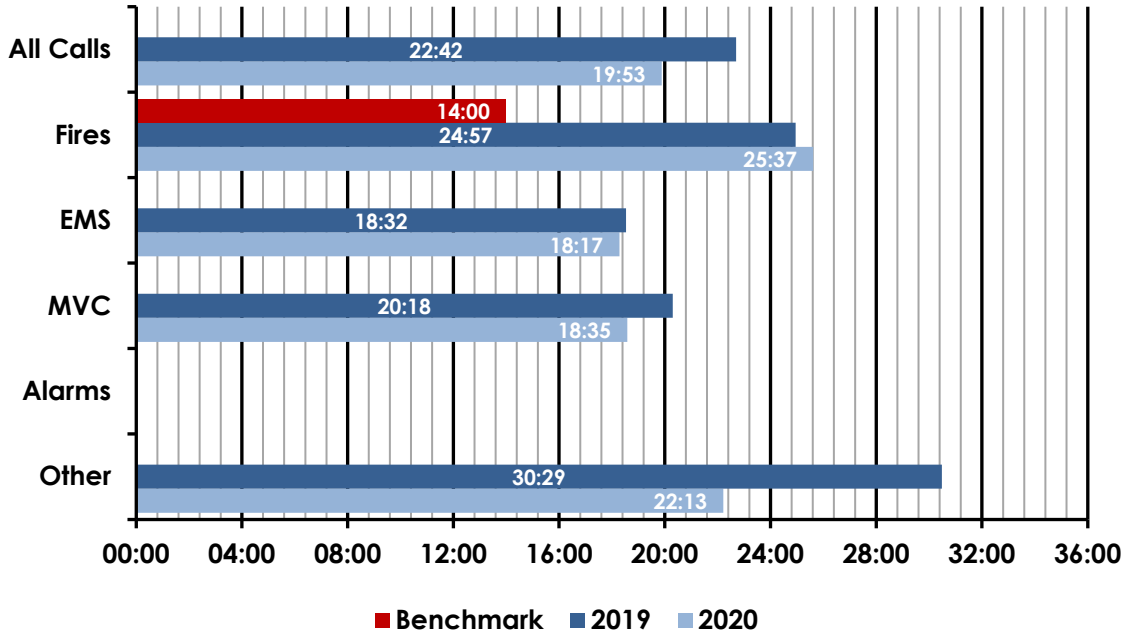


Figure 123: NFFPD Response Time Performance (2019–2020)



Elk Creek FPD, Indian Hills FPD, and Inter-Canyon FPD meet or exceed the national standards for response performance. North Fork FPD is, however, challenged with a sizeable geographic area with limited access. A combined organization may be able to balance resources and support shorter response times. Overall, all four organizations have excellent response performance.

Mutual & Automatic Aid

The following section shows the mutual aid response provided by each organization by the number of apparatus responses and the response area for each incident.

Figure 124: Mutual Aid Provided by Apparatus Responses (2018–2020 & 2021 YTD)

District	ECFPD	ICFPD	IHFPD	NFFPD	EVFPD	FHFPD	GFD	WMFD	AFD	Other
ECFPD		109	20	59	43	4	1	2	0	8
ICFPD	92		184	13	21	1	1	6	0	—
IHFPD	21	408		12	22	12	—	8	1	—
NFFPD	101	4	—		4	—	—	4	1	—

EVFPD=Evergreen FPD, FHFPD=Foothills FPD, GFD=Golden Fire Department, WMFD=West Metro FPD, AFD=Arvada Fire Department

It is important to emphasize that results shown in the preceding figure do not represent single incidents but instead show individual responses by apparatus. For example, a single wildland incident might involve a mutual aid response of two or three apparatus from one fire district. Note that the IHFPD data shows 408 mutual aid responses to ICFPD during this period. This does not represent 408 individual calls but 408 individual responses.

The data analyses indicate that the majority of mutual aid provided by each fire district was for the other fire districts participating in this study.

The next figure shows the frequency of mutual aid received by each fire protection district during the 36-month study period of 2018–2020.

Figure 125: Mutual Aid Received by Individual Apparatus Responses (2018–2020)

District	2018	2019	2020
ECFPD	25	60	51
ICFPD	36	119	104
IHFPD	12	21	14
NFFPD	4	3	48

As with the preceding figure that showed mutual aid calls given, the results in the figure above represent individual apparatus responses.

Patient Transport Analyses

Since each of the fire districts in this study provides ALS-level emergency medical transport, it was important to evaluate patient transport data to determine the impact on each and the fire districts combined.

Utilizing CAD data from Jeffcom 911, the following figure lists the volume of EMS calls to which each fire district was dispatched and the quantity and percentage of patients transported during 2019–2020.

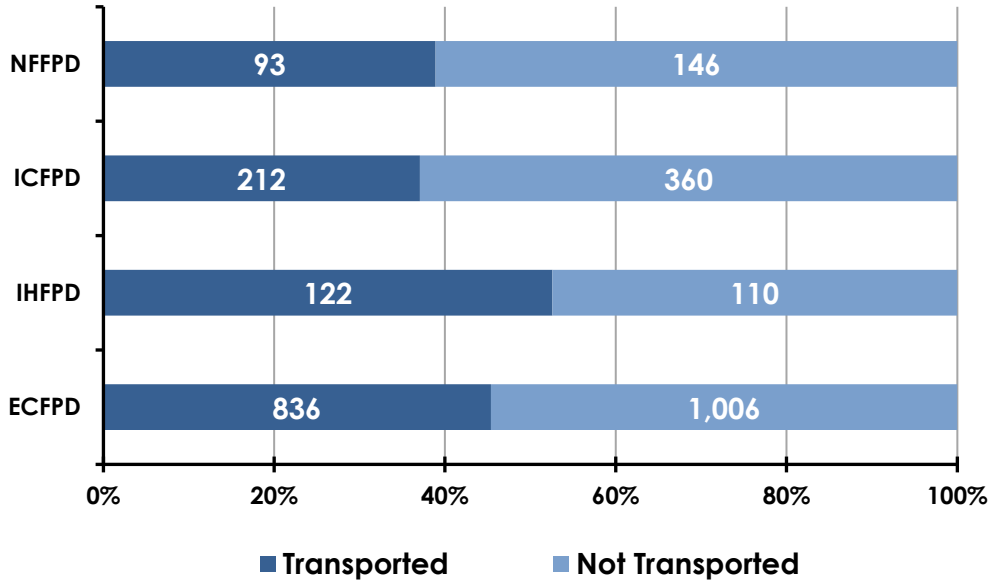
Figure 126: Medic Unit Calls Dispatched vs. Patients Transported (2019–2020)

Description	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Calls Dispatched	1,842	232	572	239
Patients Transported	836	122	212	93
Percent Transported	**45%**	**53%**	**37%**	**39%**

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

The preceding figure shows—except for IHFPD—that during the 24-month study period, the rates of transports among the other fire districts were well below 50%. The next figure represents the same data analysis in a graphic format.

Figure 127: EMS Calls Dispatched vs. Patients Transported (2019–2020)



Transport Mode

Transport mode refers to the manner in which the patient is transported—emergent (lights and siren) versus non-emergent (no lights and siren). The mode in which patients are transported is typically an indicator of the patient's acuity. Patients with a higher level of acuity are typically transported emergently.

The following figure combines data from all four fire districts and the percentage of patients transported emergently versus non-emergently.

Figure 128: Patient Transport Mode (2019–2020)

Transport Mode	2019	2020	Cumulative
Emergent	12%	9%	**11%**
Non-Emergent	88%	91%	**89%**

Note: Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

As expected, most patients were transported non-emergently. But, again, this can be one indicator that the majority of patients seen by the fire districts are likely found in a lower acuity condition.

Medic Unit Transport Times

Transport time is the interval between the time the medic unit left the scene to begin transport and the time of arrival at the hospital or other destination. The next figure lists the combined transport times at the 90th percentile for each fire district during 2019–2020.

Figure 129: Medic Unit Transport Times at the 90th Percentile (2019–2020)

Fire District	Transport Time at the 90th Percentile
Elk Creek Fire Protection District	0:47:52
Indian Hills Fire Protection District	0:36:59
Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District	0:42:10
North Fork Fire Protection District	1:16:58

Note: Times: h:mm:ss. Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

Excluding several anomalies of transports greater than three hours between 2019–2020, the combined average transport time among all four fire districts was 35 minutes, 40 seconds.

Hospital Turnaround Times

Hospital turnaround time is defined as the interval between the time the medic unit arrives at the hospital or other clinical facility and the time the unit is back in service and available for another call.

Figure 130: Medic Unit Hospital Turnaround Times at the 90th Percentile (2019–2020)

Fire District	2019	2020	Cumulative
Elk Creek FPD	0:49:13	0:49:55	**0:49:35**
Indian Hills FPD	1:13:02	1:07:45	**1:13:02**
Inter-Canyon FPD	0:42:10	0:43:29	**0:43:21**
North Fork FPD	1:25:49	1:17:40	**1:23:15**

Note: Times: h:mm:ss. Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

The combined average hospital turnaround time for all four fire districts during 2019–2020 was 31 minutes, 31 seconds (0:31:31), while transport time at the 90th percentile was 53 minutes, 16 seconds (0:53:16).

Time Commitments on Transports

The next figure lists the total time commitment for transports for each fire district during the 24-month study period at the average and 90th percentile.

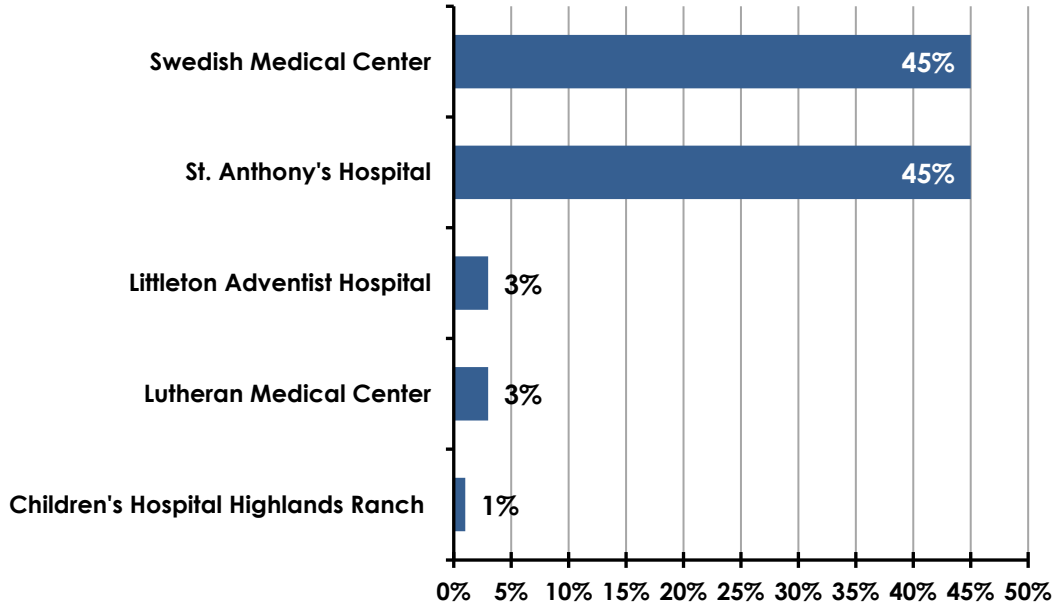
Figure 131: Medic Unit Total Time Commitment for Transports (2019–2020)

Fire District	Average Time	90th Percentile
Elk Creek Fire Protection District	1:43:48	2:17:14
Indian Hills Fire Protection District	1:45:56	2:19:45
Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District	1:33:17	2:01:33
North Fork Fire Protection District	2:26:36	3:36:01

Note: Times: h:mm:ss. Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

During the 24-month study period, the four fire districts documented 31 separate facilities to which patients were transported—not all of them being hospitals. The next figure illustrates the top five transportation destinations by the four fire districts combined during 2019–2020.

Figure 132: Top Five Transport Destinations (2019–2020)



As shown, Swedish Medical Center and St. Anthony's Hospital were the two most frequent destinations with an equal share of transports—followed by Littleton Adventist Hospital (LAH), Lutheran Medical Center (LMC), and Children's Hospital Highlands Ranch (CHHR), respectively.

The next figure shows the combined transport and hospital turnaround times at the 90th percentile and by each of the top five facilities to which most patients are transported. The data was acquired from 24 months of CAD data during 2019–2020.

Figure 133: Transport & Hospital Turnaround Times at the 90th Percentile (2019–2020)

Facility	Transport Time	Hospital Turnaround Time
Swedish Medical Center	0:50:47	0:53:21
St. Anthony's Hospital	0:51:43	0:50:53
Lutheran Medical Center	0:47:42	0:52:31
Littleton Adventist Hospital	1:07:16	1:23:44
Children's Hospital Highlands Ranch	0:49:16	0:24:55

Note: Times: h:mm:ss. Percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

As shown, transport times to these facilities require nearly one hour to arrive at each facility and nearly an hour or more at the hospital. It is important to note that the volume of transports for LMC, LAH, and CHHR are small and may not be statistically significant.

Transport Times Discussion

Historically, most patients were transported to either Swedish Medical Center or St. Anthony's Hospital. Typical transport times to either facility exceed 50 minutes, with time at the hospitals also exceeding 50 minutes.

Some may consider 50 minutes or more of time spent at the hospital as excessive. However, there is no national standard for what is considered acceptable. Clearly, it is in the best interest of the communities served by each fire district to have their ambulances back in service in their normal response area as soon as possible.

Hospital Turnaround Time Study

A study published in 2011 looked at hospital turnaround times in a large metropolitan system.[18] The study found that the length of turnaround times was typically associated with patient acuity, the destination hospital, and the time of day. Of all 61,094 transports, the mean hospital turnaround time was 35.6 minutes, while higher-acuity cases had a mean of 52.5 minutes. Moderate-acuity and low-acuity patients had a mean hospital turnaround time of 42.0 minutes.

Although Triton does not suggest that this single study represents a standard for all EMS systems, it does provide some indication that hospital turnaround times at SMC and SAH and among the four fire districts may be somewhat longer than seen in urban communities—except for high-acuity patients. However, since there is no industry standard for acceptable hospital turnaround times, stakeholders and fire chiefs ultimately need to determine local standards for hospital turnaround times.

Population Growth & Service Demand Projections

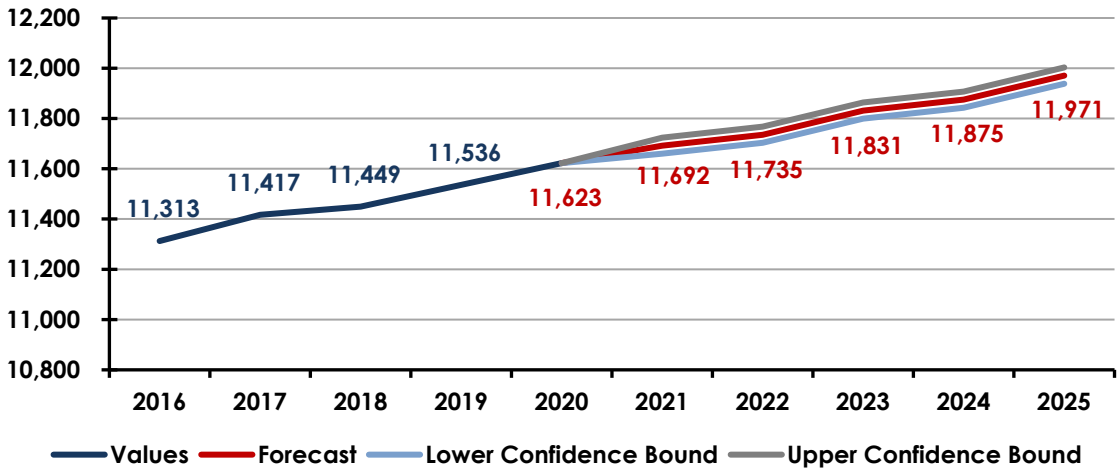
The following section utilized historical data, linear projections, and detailed research to provide planning tools for future service delivery. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed society's perspective on people's capacity to work remotely. The result may be a migration of individuals and families moving out of the urban environment and into more suburban and rural communities. It is unknown if this trend will impact northern and central Jefferson County. ECFPD has the largest district population at approximately 15,000 residents. IHFPD has the smallest population, at about 1,280 residents.

Population Growth Projections

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

As previously mentioned, ECFPD has a current population of 12,000. In addition, the median property value in the ECFPD area is $548,000, supporting the potential migration of individuals out of the Denver Metro Area. The following figure shows the projected population growth over the next ten years.

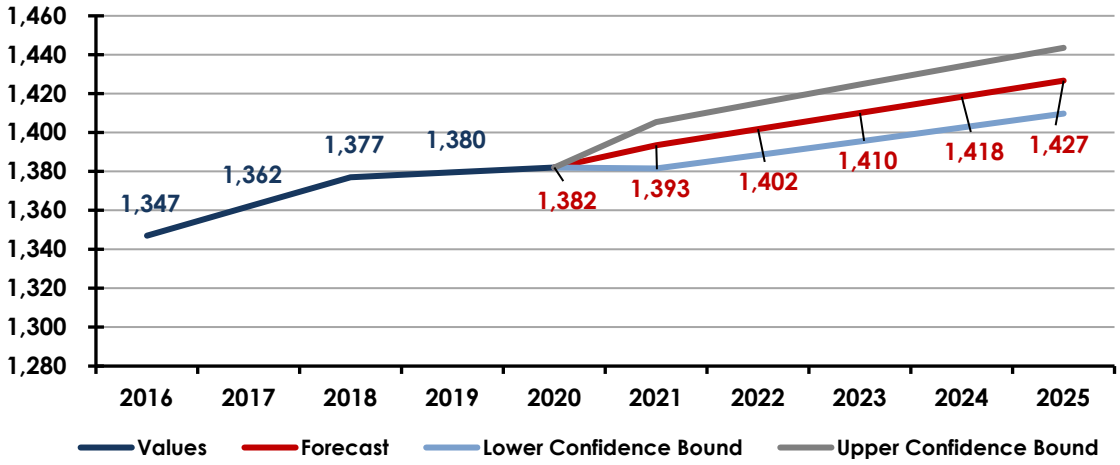
Figure 134: ECFPD Population Projections (2021–2030)



Indian Hills Fire Protection District

IHFPD has approximately 1,393 residents. Property values are higher than the other fire districts participating in this study, with a median price of $724,000. Based on this evaluation, the IHFPD will have minimal growth in new construction and overall residents.

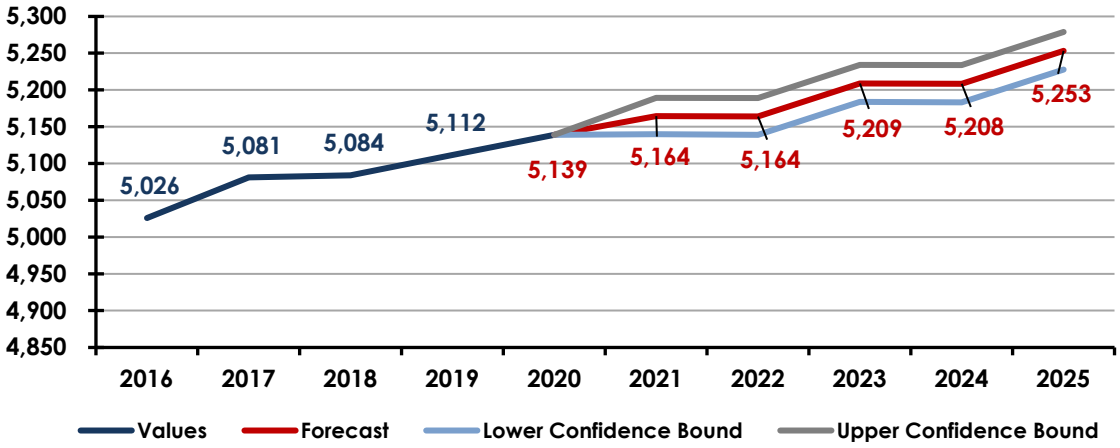
Figure 135: IHFPD Population Projections (2021–2030)



Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

ICFPD has excellent access to the Denver metropolitan area via Highway 285 and Deer Creek Canyon Road. Median home sales are $720,000, supporting potential relocation trends. The projected population growth over the next ten years could be about 3% a year.

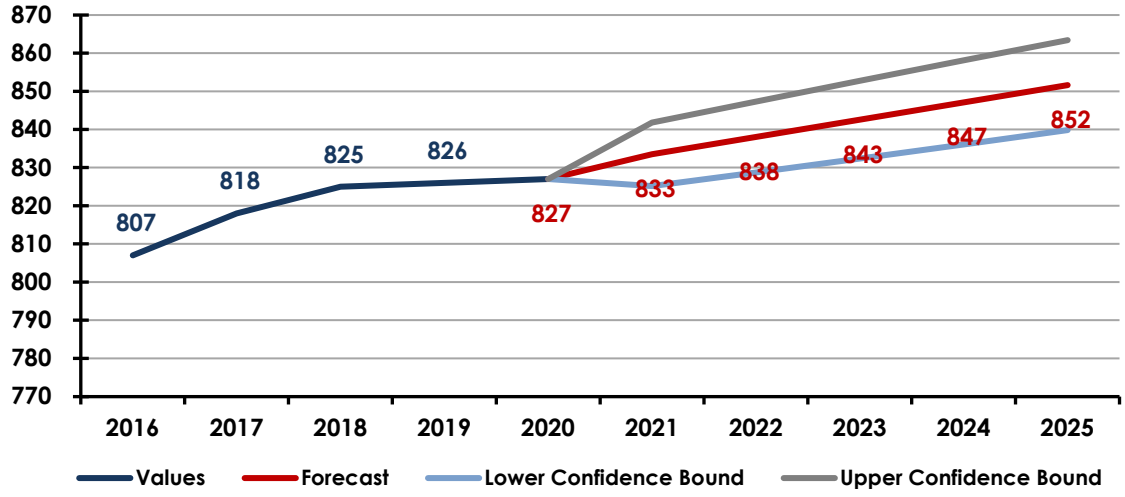
Figure 136: ICCFPD Population Projections (2021–2030)



North Fork Fire Protection District

NFFPD serves a large geographic area, including sprawling public lands. The district has limited access to major roadways, which reduces the number of commuters desiring to leave the Denver metropolitan area. This analysis supports a minimum potential growth of the overall population in the North Fork Fire Protection District.

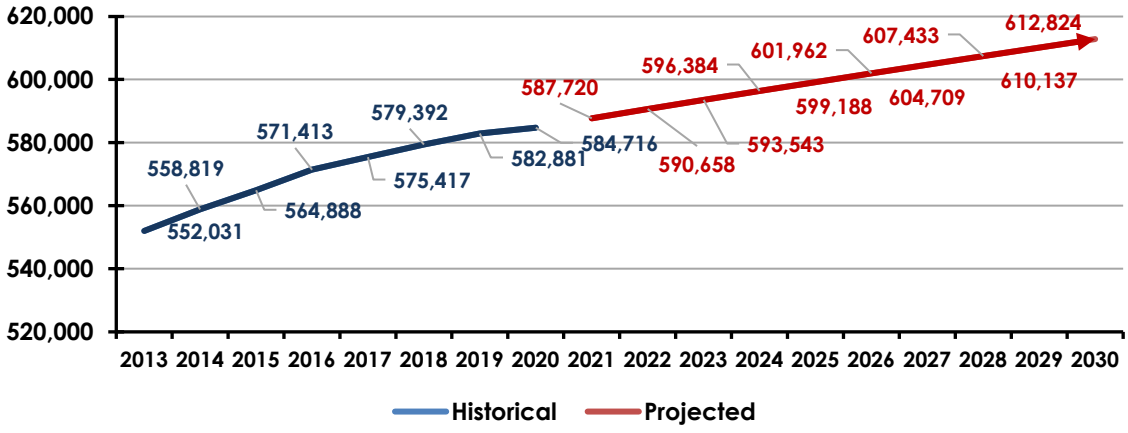
Figure 137: NFFPD Population Projections (2021–2030)



Jefferson County

Jefferson County's overall population is currently 584,716 residents. The County is a mix of communities, including dense urban to frontier public lands. As previously discussed, the potential of residents moving into the rural parts of the county is difficult to predict. As a result, the growth rate over the past has been limited to 1% per year. The following figure shows the expected growth in Jefferson County over the next ten years.

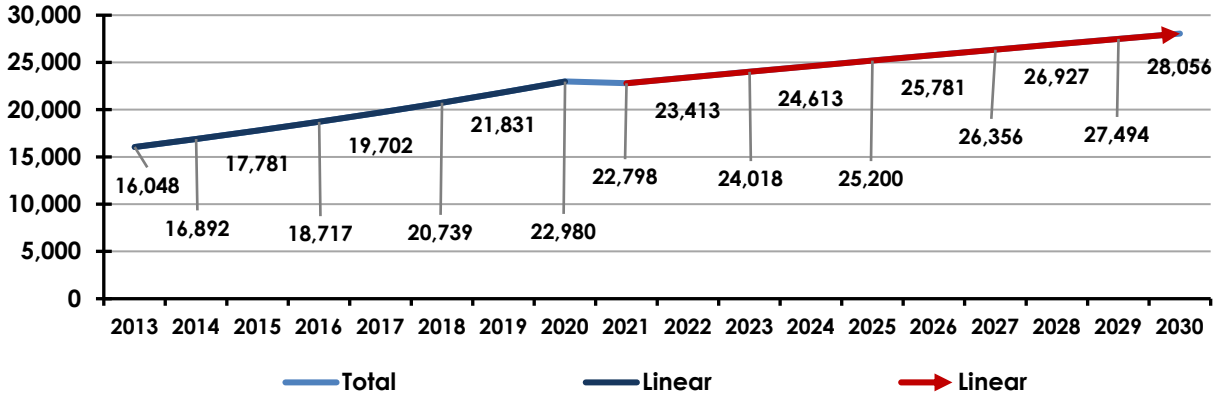
Figure 138: Jefferson County Population Projections (2021–2030)



Collective Projections of the Districts

The combined fire protection districts currently have a population of approximately 22,908 residents. Based on the following analysis, the projected population for a combined organization would be 28,056 by 2030.

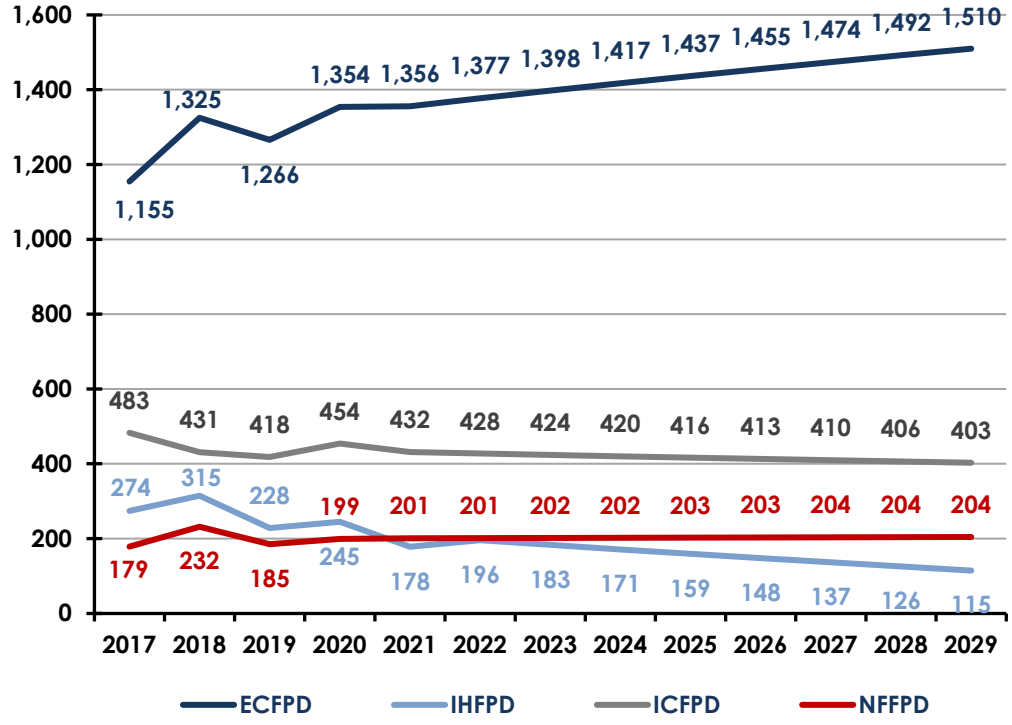
Figure 139: Study Area Combined Population Projections (2021–2030)



Service Demand Projections

AP Triton utilizes the population projections within each of the fire districts in the study to forecast the demand for future emergency services. Without significant mitigating circumstances, it is unlikely—when using population growth and aging population data—for the volume of emergency incidents to decline. The following figure shows the projected volume for each fire district. This analysis utilized historical data, which includes the effects of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 140: Service Demand Projections by District (2017–2029)



The preceding figure shows a slight decline in service demand for ICFPD and IHFPD over the next ten years. As discussed previously, this is a linear analysis based on historical data.

The population tends to be a relatively good indicator of future service demand since people drive the demand for service. Therefore, the current number of calls per 1,000 persons can provide a standard for predicting service demand into the future.

A typical assumption is that future demographics will be the same as the current demographics. The current service demand per 1,000 population is determined by taking the annual number of responses and dividing it. The projected service demand is based on historical data from 2017–2020. This analysis uses a four-year service demand average and the current population. The service demand for a combined organization is shown in the following figure.

Figure 141: Projected Service Demand for the Combined Organizations (2030)

NFIRS Type	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average
1–Fire	91	77	120	113	**100**
2–Rupture, Explosion, Overheat-No Fire	1	4	4	4	**3**
3–EMS	1,191	1,303	1,231	1,281	**1,252**
4–Hazardous Condition	54	68	75	113	**78**
5–Service Call	126	114	99	134	**118**
6–Good Intent Call	544	477	418	388	**457**
7–False Alarm	120	162	153	141	**144**
8–Severe Weather, Disasters	3	7	6	4	**5**
9–Special Incident-Other	2	4	8	7	**5**
Totals:	**2,132**	**2,216**	**2,114**	**2,185**	**2,162**

Impact of Aging Population on Service Demand

The previous method produces the potential number of calls into the future. However, it does not consider demographic changes. The existing population will likely continue to age in place. An aging population will increase the demand for emergency medical services as the elderly population is a disproportionately greater consumer of these services. National medical industry studies suggest that patients over 65 are three times more likely to access local emergency services than other age groups. The following figures show the projected growth in residents 65 years of age and older.

Figure 142: ECFPD Aging Population Projections (65 years & Above)

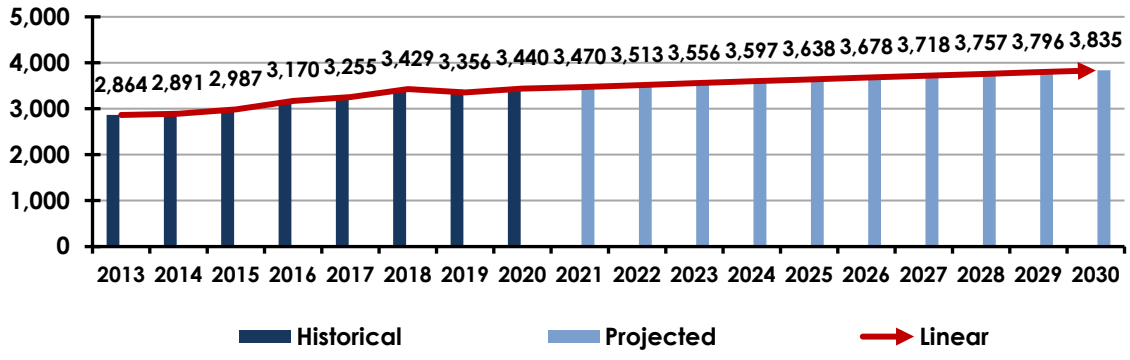


Figure 143: IHFPD Aging Population Projections (65 years & Above)

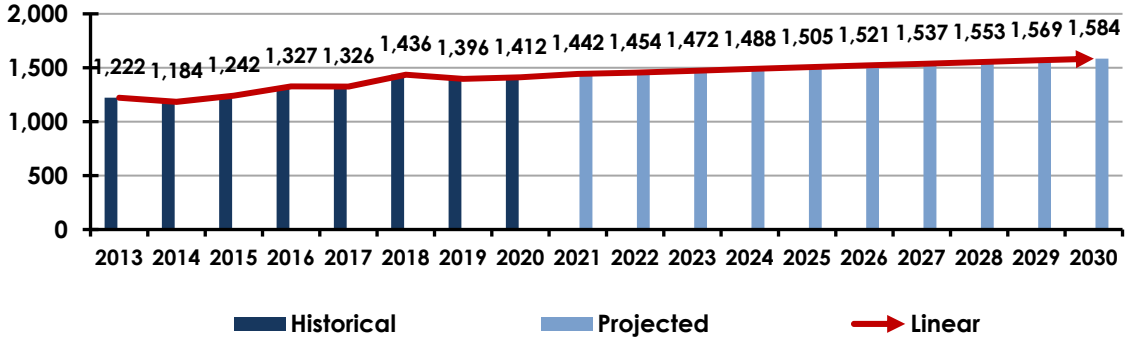


Figure 144: ICFPD Aging Population Projections (65 years & Above)

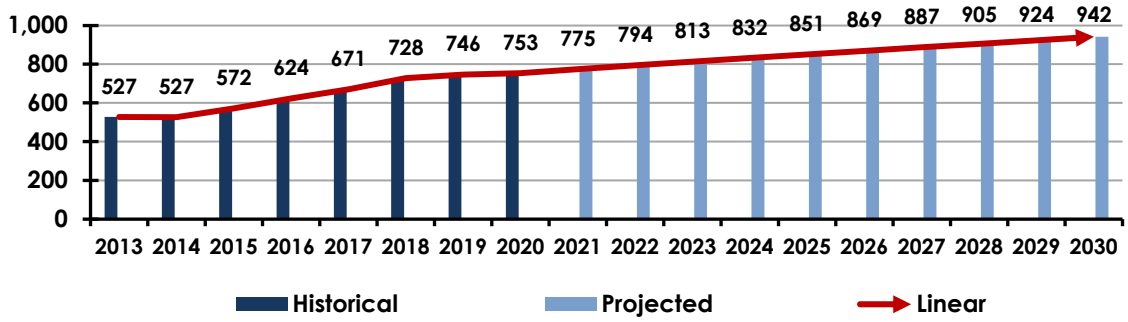
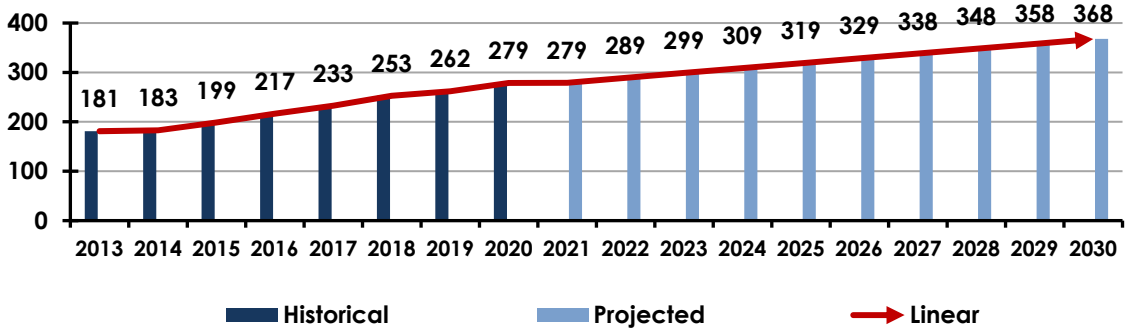


Figure 145: NFFPD Aging Population Projections (65 years & Above)



The combined fire districts are projected to increase the aging population by 29% over the next ten years. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the demand for EMS in this age group will increase proportionally. This means that a single consolidated fire district will experience a rise in the demand for EMS in ten years due to the more significant population in the elderly category.

Since the service demand data for EMS calls is not stratified by age, it is difficult to predict the exact impact on call volumes. It is also impossible to know whether people will remain in the region or move to other areas as individuals age. Conversely, it may be that the individuals moving into the area may disproportionately be in the "over 65" demographic.

In addition to standard emergency medical services, there will be an increased need for non-emergent medical services and transport that could be provided by an appropriately designed Community Paramedicine or mobile healthcare program. Such a program might be developed through a cooperative venture between the hospitals and the new consolidated fire protection district.

Section II:
FIRE DISTRICT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Training & Continuing Education

Delivering safe and effective fire and emergency services requires a well-trained workforce. Initial, ongoing, and high-quality training and education are critical for fire service effectiveness and the safety of its personnel. Without it, the community may experience poor outcomes or a firefighter injury or death.

The initial training of newly hired firefighters is essential, requiring a structured recruit training and testing process, after which regular, ongoing verifiable training must be conducted to ensure skill and knowledge retention and competency. Delivering high-quality training requires dedicating significant internal training resources or contracting with outside agencies and providers for these services. In addition, high-quality training requires specific written objectives, lesson plans, and methods to verify learning knowledge comprehension and retention.

Triton has reviewed each district's fire, EMS, special operations training programs, resource allocation, schedules, training documents, and assorted practices in the following sections. First, specific training program criteria are listed in the following figures, followed by general descriptions of each district's training programs and resources.

General Training Competencies

The following figure summarizes the general training topics and certification levels provided in each fire department.

Figure 146: General Training Competencies by Fire District

General Training	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Incident Command System	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Accountability Procedures	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Training SOGs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recruit Academy	Internal	Internal/Ext.	Internal w/ECFPD	External
Special Rescue Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HazMat Certifications	Ops	Aware/Ops	Ops	Ops
Wildland Certifications	NWCGFFT2	FFT2	Yes	FFT2
Vehicle Extrication Training	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Defensive Driving Program	Yes	Annual	Yes	Yes
Communications & Disp.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The next figure lists emergency medical training competencies among each of the participating fire protection districts.

Figure 147: EMS Training Competencies by Fire District

EMS Training	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Internal EMT/EMT-P Initial Training	No	No	No	No
CME Provided In-House	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
BLS/ALS Skills Training	BLS/ALS	BLS/ALS	BLS/ALS	BLS/ALS

Training Delivery & Scheduling

The following figure summarizes the training methodologies utilized by each of the participating fire protection districts.

Figure 148: Methodologies Utilized in Training by Fire District

Training Provided	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Manipulative skills & tasks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fire training requirements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
EMS training requirements	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Training hours tracked	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Use of lesson plans	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
In-house or commercial	Both	In-house	Both	Both
Night drills	Unspecified	Unspecified	Yes	Yes
Multi-agency drills	Yes	No	No	Yes
Inter-station drills	No	N/A	No	N/A
Disaster drills	Unspecified	Unspecified	No	Yes
Pre-fire planning included	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The next figure lists the annual training hours delivered by each fire district, in addition to the funds allocated for annual training.

Figure 149: Annual Training Hours & Training Budgets by Fire District

Description	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Hours Delivered	420 total hours (34 members)	216 total hours (23 members)	120 total hours (31 members)	670 total hours (28 members)
Training Budget	$54,400	$7,600	$40,000	$5,000

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

The ECFPD has a comprehensive training program under both an assigned Training Chief and a separate EMS Coordinator. The agency provides wildland, hazardous materials operations, low-angle, vehicle extrication, and rescue training. They also provide internal EMS, Incident Command, and defensive driving training.

The agency has a heavy presence in wildland firefighting, and all members must maintain NWCG FFT2 minimum certifications. In addition, hazardous material certifications and associated training is completed at the Operations level.

ECFPD has a modest annual budget for training, which includes funds to operate and maintain a small number of props. In addition, the district does not have adequate training grounds, a training tower, or live-burn training facilities.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The IHFPD has a comprehensive training program under both an assigned Training Captain and a separate EMS Captain. The agency provides wildland, hazardous materials operations, low-angle, vehicle extrication, and rescue training.

The fire district has a heavy presence in wildland firefighting, and all members must maintain NWCG FFT2 minimum certifications. Hazardous material certifications and associated training are done at the Awareness and Operations level.

IHFPD has a relatively small limited annual budget for training, which includes funds to operate and maintain a small number of props. IHFPD does not have adequate training grounds, a training tower, or live-fire training facilities. IHFPD occasionally uses the ICFPD training tower and facility for joint training.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

ICFPD has a comprehensive training program under the direction of both an assigned Training Captain and a separate EMS Captain. The fire district provides wildland, hazardous materials operations, low-angle, vehicle extrication, and rescue training.

The fire district has a heavy presence in wildland firefighting, and all members must maintain various wildland certifications at a minimum. Hazardous material certifications and associated training is completed at the Operations level.

ICFPD has a modest annual budget for training, which includes funds to operate and maintain a relatively small tower and associated props. ICFPD believes they do not have adequate training grounds, a training tower, or live-fire training facilities.

North Fork Fire Protection District

The NFFPD has a comprehensive training program under the direction of the Fire Chief and an assigned Training Captain. The EMS training is delegated to the Centura Pre-Hospital Coordinator. In addition, the district provides wildland, hazardous materials operations, low-angle, vehicle extrication, and rescue training.

North Fork FPD has a heavy presence in wildland firefighting, and all members must maintain NWCG minimum certifications. Additionally, hazardous material certifications and associated training is completed at the Operations level.

NFFPD has a small annual budget for training and does not have adequate training grounds, a training tower, or live-fire training facilities. As a result, NFFPD occasionally utilizes other regional jurisdictions' training towers and live-fire buildings and props.

Life Safety & Prevention Programs

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

ECFPD maintains a Life Safety Division staffed by a half-time Fire Marshal. The district has adopted the *2018 International Fire Codes* with local amendments but does not have a local sprinkler ordinance.

New construction and tenant improvement plans are reviewed and approved by the Fire Marshal, and a Knox® entry system is required for specific businesses. In addition, the local water purveyor manages and maintains fire hydrant flow records.

The Fire Marshal performs all annual business inspections for the community. In addition, the Division inspects all target occupancies annually but does not issue citations for code violations.

Fire crews assist in fire safety and public education, and other fire prevention activities. Elk Creek FPD does not conduct fire-cause determination services.

The Elk Creek Fire Protection District maintains a current Community Risk Reduction (CRR) plan and periodically updates the assessment.

The Elk Creek FPD manages and maintains fire prevention records using the *Emergency Reporting*® application for its records management system.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

The Indian Hills Fire Protection District does not currently maintain a Life Safety Division. However, the Board of Directors has adopted the *2018 International Fire Code* with local amendments. The district contracts for a part-time Fire Marshal to conduct plan reviews, fire inspections, code enforcement, and fire cause determination.

IHFPD requires a Knox® entry system for various occupancies. Fire hydrant records management and incidents are documented in the district's electronic records management system.

Indian Hills FPD provides a limited public education program offering CPR courses and Wildland Interface education. The district participated in the Jefferson County Hazard Mitigation Plan in both 2016 and 2021.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

The Inter-Canyon FPD does not maintain a Life Safety Division. Its Board of Directors has adopted the *2018 International Fire Codes* with local amendments but does not have a local sprinkler ordinance. ICFPD contracts with ECFPD's Fire Marshal for plan reviews, fire inspection, code enforcement, and fire-cause determination services.

Inter-Canyon FPD requires the use of the Knox® entry system for specific businesses. The local water purveyor manages and maintains fire hydrant flow records.

The contracted Fire Marshal inspects all target occupancies annually but does not issue citations for code violations.

Currently, public education programs are limited and are provided by the career and volunteer staff as designated by the Fire Chief. Additionally, ICFPD has completed a current Community Risk Assessment and contracts with the Elk Creek FPD for Community Risk Reduction planning services.

The Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District utilizes the *Emergency Reporting*® application as its records management system.

North Fork Fire Protection District

The North Fork Fire Protection District does not maintain a Life Safety Division. Its Board of Directors has adopted the *2018 International Fire Codes* with local amendments but does not have a sprinkler ordinance. NFFPD contracts with Evergreen Fire & Rescue for plan reviews, fire inspection, code enforcement, and fire-cause determination services.

The district requires a Knox® entry system for specific businesses. Fire hydrant flow records are unnecessary as there are no pressurized hydrants in the district.

The contracted Fire Marshal inspects all target occupancies annually but does not issue citations for code violations.

Public Education programs include Exit Drills in the Home (EDITH), fire extinguisher education, injury prevention, and participation in community events by district personnel.

Community Risk Assessment planning is accomplished in cooperation with Jefferson County.

Comparison of Life Safety Programs

The following figures compare the life safety programs of each fire protection district participating in the study.

The next figure lists and describes the various public education programs currently being delivered by the fire districts.

Figure 150: Public Education Programs

Public Education Programs	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Annual fire prevention report	No	No	No	No
Babysitting safety classes	No	No	No	No
Bilingual info available	No	No	No	No
Calling 9-1-1	No	No	No	Yes
Carbon Monoxide Alarm installations	No	No	Yes	No
CPR courses, BP checks	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Curriculum used in schools	No	No	Yes	N/A
EDITH (exit drills in the home)	No	No	No	Yes
Eldercare and safety	No	No	No	No
Fire brigade training	No	No	No	No
Fire extinguisher use	No	No	No	Yes
Fire safety	No	No	No	Yes
Injury prevention	No	No	No	Yes
Juvenile fire-setter program offered	No	No	No	No
Publications available to the public	No	No	No	No
Smoke alarm installations	No	No	No	No
Wildland interface education offered	No	Yes	No	No

In this next figure, the various code enforcement activities among the fire districts are listed and compared.

Figure 151: Code Enforcement Among the Fire Agencies

Code Enforcement Activity	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Consulted on new construction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fees for inspections or reviews	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hydrant flow records maintained	Water District	Yes	Water District	N/A
Key-box entry program	Knoxbox®	Knoxbox®	Knoxbox®	Knoxbox®
Perform occupancy inspections	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Perform plan reviews	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sign-off on new construction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Special risk inspections	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Storage tank inspections	No	No	No	No
Company Inspections (pre-plan)	No	No	No	No

Special Operations

Elk Creek Fire Protection District

ECFPD provides low-angle rope rescue with one high-angle certified technician and vehicle/machinery rescue within the department. The district's training program for technical rescue service meets minimum requirements and guidelines for a small agency with limited technical rescue team (TRT) resources. In addition, high-angle rescue, trench rescue, structural collapse rescue, surface water, and swiftwater rescue response are available by request of regional mutual aid organizations.

The region's hazardous materials response is provided by request to the Adams & Jefferson County Hazardous Response Authority (AJCHRA). The district's training programs for hazardous materials response meet the minimum qualifications for first responders following national requirements and guidelines. All personnel are trained to the Hazardous Materials Operations level.

Indian Hills Fire Protection District

IHFPD provides low-angle rope rescue and vehicle/machinery rescue. The district's training program for technical rescue service meets minimum requirements and guidelines for a small agency with limited technical rescue team (TRT) resources. High-angle rescue, trench rescue, structural collapse rescue, surface water, and swiftwater rescue response are available by request of regional mutual aid organizations.

The region's hazardous materials response is provided by request to the Adams & Jefferson County Hazardous Response Authority (AJCHRA). The district's training programs for hazardous materials response meet the minimum qualifications for first responders following national requirements and guidelines. As a result, IHFPD has a limited number of personnel trained to the Hazardous Materials Operations level.

Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District

ICFPD provides low-angle and high-angle rope rescue, limited structural collapse rescue, and vehicle/machinery rescue. The district's training program for technical rescue service meets minimum requirements and guidelines for a small agency with limited technical rescue team (TRT) resources. In addition, trench rescue, confined space rescue, advanced structural collapse rescue, surface water, and swiftwater rescue response are available by request of regional mutual aid organizations.

The region's hazardous materials response is provided by request to the Adams & Jefferson County Hazardous Response Authority (AJCHRA). The district's training programs for hazardous materials response meet the minimum qualifications for first responders following national requirements and guidelines. All personnel are trained to the Hazardous Materials Operations level.

North Fork Fire Protection District

NFFPD provides low-angle rope rescue, limited surface water/swiftwater rescue, and vehicle/machinery rescue. The district's training program for technical rescue service meets minimum requirements and guidelines for a small agency with limited technical rescue team (TRT) resources. High-angle rescue, trench rescue, confined space rescue, structural collapse rescue, and advanced surface water and swiftwater rescue response are available by request of regional mutual aid organizations.

The region's hazardous materials response is provided by request to the Adams & Jefferson County Hazardous Response Authority (AJCHRA). The district's training programs for hazardous materials response meet the minimum qualifications for first responders following national requirements and guidelines. All personnel are trained to the Hazardous Materials Operations level.

Summary & Comparison of Services

The following figure is a comparative view of the special operations services provided by the four fire protection districts.

Figure 152: Comparison of Special Operations Services among the Fire Districts

Service Description	ECFPD	IHFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD
Technical Rescue Services				
Confined space rescue	No	No	No	No
High-angle rescue	Yes	No	Yes	No
Low-angle rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Trench collapse rescue	No	No	No	No
Structural collapse rescue	No	No	Yes[A]	No
Vehicle/machinery rescue	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Surface water rescue	No	No	No	Yes[A]
Swiftwater rescue	No	No	No	Yes[A]
Partnership with regional agency	Internal	Internal	Internal	Internal
Hazardous Materials Response				
Annual hazmat training hours	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Certified Awareness level	0	3	0	0
Certified Operations level	35	8	31	13
Certified Technician level	0	0	1	0
Certified Hazmat Safety Officer	0	0	0	0
Maintain Level A suits	No	No	No	No
Maintain Level B suits	No	No	No	No
Partnership with regional agency	MA	MA	MA	MA

[A]Limited services. MA=Provided by mutual aid or a regional agency.

Section III:
STRATEGIES & OPPORTUNITIES FOR COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Findings & Observations

The following lists Triton's various findings and observations based on conversations, direct observations, formal interviews, confidential online surveys, and collected data from each fire protection district.

- **Opportunities exist for increased efficiency.**

  Based on eliminating the duplication of efforts in all program areas and including personnel at all levels, a consolidated fire district would likely create efficiencies and effectiveness of fire protection and EMS throughout the communities. In addition, this would most likely create opportunities for adequate firefighter staffing throughout the new fire protection district.

- **The potential for wildland fire incidents and the resulting loss of life and property is high.**

  The Eastern Slope is considered seventh in the United States for the greatest potential loss due to interface wildfires. There is a substantial amount of wildland areas and adjacent residential properties throughout each of the fire districts. This produces a high potential for significant wildland fires and risks to lives and property.

  Both ECFPD and ICFPD have an individual assigned as a Wildland Captain for their respective communities. Each district has a variety of wildland mitigation programs, although much more may be needed.

  As a consolidated fire district, the organization would likely have a greater capacity to address wildland fire responses and provide mitigation programs.

- **Volunteer staff are a critical element at each of the four fire districts.**

  Each of the fire districts is a combination department that relies heavily on volunteer firefighters for emergency operations. The skills, training, and experience vary among these individuals. Should the fire districts choose to consolidate, over 90% of the organization will be comprised of volunteer personnel.

  Although it varied among the fire districts, many of the volunteers expressed frustration that there was no single individual to whom they report and that the opportunities for responding to incidents are infrequent. This was particularly true at ECFPD since the district utilizes career staff at Station 1.

- **All four fire districts are dependent on each other.**

  All four fire districts are currently dependent on each other for mutual aid assistance during significant incidents. In addition, the fire districts rely on each other for adequate resources to make up an effective response force.

- **The majority of volunteers, career firefighters, and other employees surveyed and interviewed favored consolidating the fire districts.**

  Triton found this to be true in both the in-person and phone interviews and the online survey. In the survey, 29% were generally in favor and 33% in favor so long as the consolidation improved services. Another 30% of the survey respondents had no opinion.

- **EMS, wildland fire protection, and personnel/staffing issues were considered the top three priorities by the online survey respondents.**

  Respondents to the online survey indicated that EMS and patient transport was by far the issue that warranted the highest priority (72%), followed by wildland fire protection (49%) and personnel/staffing issues (35%).

- **Cultural differences exist among the fire districts.**

  As expected, there are some cultural differences between the four fire districts and even between some of the sub-groups within each district. However, cultural differences can be overcome with time, frequent and comprehensive communication, working together and partnering, and learning that each district and its personnel are more similar than they recognize.

- **Each of the fire protection districts values its history and accomplishments.**

  There is a great deal of history and pride within the four districts. This history is important to document, frame, and display to future personnel and the community. Additionally, should the districts move forward with consolidation, it will be important to preserve these organizations' history and display the honor and respect deserved by each.

- **Each of the fire districts has strengths and leadership that complement each other.**

  All four fire districts have something to contribute to a potential new consolidated fire protection district. This ranges from apparatus and equipment to fire stations and trained personnel. In addition, the four current fire chiefs bring a variety of abilities, experience, and knowledge that will contribute positively to a new fire district.

- **The fire districts utilize different records management systems, and the quality of the data collected varies, making it difficult to conduct accurate analyses.**

  Data used for the assorted analyses were acquired primarily from three sources: fire district internal records management systems, CAD records, and call volumes as reported on the AP Triton survey tables. In some cases, the data were incomplete or did not have the fields necessary for an in-depth analysis. Participation of the four districts in a new organization should lead to better CAD data in the future.

General Partnering & Consolidation Options

Several options exist for integrating the fire districts participating in this study. The options range from maintaining the status quo to full consolidation and creation of a new organization encompassing two or more fire districts. The following alternatives have been evaluated and are discussed in this report:

- Maintain Status Quo
- Contract for Services
- Fire Authority
- Merger
  - Legal Consolidation
  - Merger of the Fire Districts (exclusion-inclusion)

A basic understanding of the methods of collaboration is necessary to effectively evaluate the opportunities for cooperative efforts. The various options will be described in the following section. This will begin with an approach that does nothing by maintaining the status quo and ends with the complete integration of the fire districts into a new organization.

Consolidation Defined

Many states differentiate between the terms "consolidation" and "merger," giving each a special legal meaning and process. Unless otherwise specified, in this report the terms are used interchangeably when referring to a type of integration defined by law that joins existing units of government, or dissolves existing units of government, and creates a new fire district. In most cases, states give contiguous fire districts the power to merge. Unless otherwise specified, the term "collaboration" will also be used but will not be consistent with consolidation.

Maintain Status Quo

The status quo option is to do nothing and simply continue with the current system. This can occur by avoidance or by actively choosing not to do anything to address the challenges to the fire districts that could occur in the future. Even though this can be viewed negatively, in some cases, the best action is no action. Maintaining the status quo means that essentially nothing changes. The participating fire districts remain as they currently exist—as adjacent fire districts that occasionally rely on each other for mutual aid but remain completely independent.

Contract for Services & Collaboration

Both the Colorado Constitution and Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) allow for the provision of services through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between governmental jurisdictions.[19] This enables two or more jurisdictions to provide a service they are empowered to provide as a separate entity. This process is often used when two participating governments differ in type and revenue sources or where they may have different taxation rates.

One or more fire districts can use collaborative agreements to contract for certain services or create collaborative relationships. There are three types of collaborative agreements often utilized in the development of fire service consolidations:

- Administrative Collaboration
- Functional Collaboration
- Operational Collaboration

In Colorado, these interagency agreements are sometimes referred to using the term "consolidation" instead of collaboration. Any of these options could be adopted independently or combined into one strategy.

Administrative Collaboration

An *Administrative Collaboration* can occur when two or more agencies maintain separate legal status and operational elements but combine a portion or all of their administrative functions. Examples include combining the administration under a single fire chief and combining clerical, human resources, legal, financial, and other functions while maintaining separate operational and other activities. An Administrative Collaboration is accomplished legally through an IGA.

Advantages

The advantages of this approach include reduced overhead costs by eliminating administrative duplication, a gradual alignment of otherwise separate operations under a single administrative head, and less resistance to change by the affected employees in operations and other divisions—which often occurs in other consolidation options. In addition, it results in a singularity of purpose, focus, and direction at the governance level of the participating fire districts. Finally, this option lends itself well to a gradual move toward a single, consolidated agency, where differences in attitude, culture, or operations are otherwise too great to overcome in a single consolidation process.

The success or failure of this type of collaboration is heavily dependent on identifying and hiring the right leader who can clearly define and support the desired direction for multiple departments while avoiding the political issues that inherently arise from simultaneously serving the interests of multiple groups.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages include potential conflicts in policy direction from the various boards and councils; potentially untenable working conditions for the fire chief ("one person with multiple bosses"); and increases the potential for personnel conflict as separate employees, volunteers, and other internal groups vie for dominance and supremacy. In addition, inherent management inflexibility can occur due to the political complexity of the agreement. An administrative team who must answer to two or more political bodies might become "whip sawn" by these entities with conflicting direction and disagreement on crucial issues—resulting in a limited ability to manage the organization effectively.

To sustain a long-term alliance effectively, this approach requires close governance collaboration and agreement when creating the terms of the IGA and trust in the administrative team to manage the alliance effectively. There are many ICAs (or IGAs) in effect throughout the United States that have successfully centralized the administrative functions of fire districts.

Functional Collaboration

A *Functional Collaboration* occurs when the participating fire districts continue to exist separately but combine certain functions into a common resource, such as combining firefighter training, fire prevention, public education, and apparatus maintenance. Implementing this option requires aligning standard operating guidelines, policies, procedures, and certain operational aspects to perform the collaborative processes properly.

A structure of shared administrative decision-making is typically created as they relate to the collaborative effort. This requires policymakers and administrators to voluntarily forfeit or delegate their authority to unilaterally change actions, activities, or direction in the common functional areas in favor of a collaborative approach. Like an Administrative Collaboration, a Functional Collaboration is also properly accomplished legally through an IGA between the fire districts.

Advantages

The advantages of this option are greater opportunities for efficiency; an opportunity to reallocate redundant available resources to those areas lacking in resources (e.g., transferring redundant training officers back to an operational function and increasing operational strength, assigning them to address training deficiencies or special programs; etc.); and a closer working relationship between members of the participating fire districts in the consolidated functions—which can spill over to other unrelated activities in the otherwise separate districts.

This type of collaboration may segue into greater levels of cooperation. Also, this option usually has the advantage of being a low-cost and low-risk improvement strategy. It can serve as a foundation on which fire districts build the experience and trust necessary to implement other collaborative strategies and programs. Finally, this approach may reduce the human factor barriers as members of each fire district begin to develop positive interagency relationships.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages of this approach are that the functional option requires much greater collaboration between the participating fire districts than the other partnering options. In addition, numerous details must be identified and addressed in advance, including but not limited to work rules, employee assignments, compensation, office location, department logos, asset allocation, authority, and even the name of the collaborative function. Further, independence and autonomy are lost in the consolidation areas, spilling into other seemingly unaffected areas.

Operational Collaboration

This partnering option takes the next step in the continuum of closer collaboration and potential full consolidation. In this option, all operations are consolidated under a single fire district that serves all participating fire districts. From a legal, political, and taxing standpoint, each fire protection district remains an independent organization. However, the "collaborative organization" operates as a single emergency services agency from a service-level perspective. Operational Collaboration is also legally accomplished through an IGA among the participating organizations.

To be successful, this option should be considered only in the context of a formal agreement and substantial movement toward full consolidation between the fire district policymakers and administrations. The level of trust required to implement an Operational Collaboration is very high since independence and autonomy have been willingly relinquished in favor of the preferred future state of full consolidation.

Advantages

One of the primary advantages of this form of collaboration is that it produces the maximum opportunity for organizational flexibility and efficiency. This is typical of the operational option, where services are delivered to the communities, and the level of trust and cooperation required to successfully implement this option implies a near-readiness to take the next step towards full consolidation.

Disadvantages

The disadvantage is that administrators and policymakers must share power and gain consensus where they once had unilateral authority to control and implement.

Collaborative Implementation

As mentioned, one or more collaborative agreements can be initiated before formal legal consolidation. This can be done incrementally or all at once. For example, an Administrative Collaboration could be initiated for the first six months prior to an Operational Collaboration. This process can assist the fire district leaders in determining how well their respective organizations can work together.

Fire Authority

As discussed under the preceding "Contracts for Services & Interlocal Agreements" section, Colorado regulations allow jurisdictions, such as fire protection districts, the ability to create IGAs for the provision of services. In the Fire Authority (FA) model, the partnering entities fund the provision of services using some type of formula. The Authority can contract back for employees from a district (i.e., one entity has all the employees), or all the employees are transferred to the new Authority. In addition, obligations and assets owned by the governments may be transferred to the Authority. Contracts also can be assigned to the Authority, which operates the services for the cooperating governments.

Forming a Fire Authority is typically a complex and time-intensive process that requires careful planning and substantial attention to detail. Labor agreements will need to be negotiated, along with the creation of new accounts with vendors and Jefferson County (and possibly other counties), registration with the Internal Revenue Service, payroll systems re-established, any existing contracts re-assigned, and much more.

A Fire Authority can be temporary (e.g., until mill levies can be equalized to transition into one district) or continue to operate indefinitely. A funding formula will need to be established to ensure fair and equitable costs among the jurisdictions. The are several options that can be considered. Formulas can be based on each fire district's assessed property value, call volumes, population, or a combination of all three.

The ownership or transfer of ownership of capital assets is not prescribed by Colorado law and will need to be determined by an agreement prior to formal consolidation. Usually—but not always—ownership of equipment, vehicles, and facilities is transferred to the newly formed FA. The responsibility for bonded indebtedness for capital assets will remain that of the originating fire district until the debt is satisfied.

The FA model is useful when taxation levels or methods differ. For example, it can be an intermediate step toward legal consolidation or a merger of fire districts. In addition, an Authority does not require an election, can be customized to address any unique needs of the fire districts, may be less expensive, and can be accomplished relatively quickly.

Fire Authorities tend to have several disadvantages that include:

- Pre-existing Boards of Directors may remain for taxation purposes. This can result in administrative duplication and increased complexity for the fire chief.
  - The fire chief and staff must spend the necessary time working with multiple Boards.
- A vote of one Board can easily dissolve authorities. In this case, it may be difficult to separate the jurisdictions and return to the previous status.
- FAs do not have taxing authority and thus create an extra layer of government.
- Authorities are subject to non-appropriation.

Merger

A merger is the result of the total consolidation of the participating fire districts into a single jurisdiction. One or more existing fire districts are absorbed into and become part of the surviving fire district. There are two types of mergers: a legal consolidation and a fire district-to-fire district transfer—otherwise known as an inclusion-exclusion merger. In this regard, the Colorado Revised Statute states:

"*The general assembly further declares that it is the policy of this state to provide for and encourage the consolidation of special districts and to provide the means therefore by simple procedures to prevent or reduce duplication, overlapping, and fragmentation of the functions and facilities of special districts; that such consolidation will better serve the people of this state; and that [such] consolidated districts will result in reduced costs and increased efficiency of operation*."[20]

Essentially, the State of Colorado legislature has determined that consolidating special districts (i.e., fire protection districts) for greater effectiveness results in good government and has developed legal mechanisms to encourage such jurisdictions to capture those opportunities for efficiency.

Legal Consolidation

Colorado Revised Statutes allow for a process in which the four current districts could merge into a single consolidated fire protection district. Before consolidation, the fire districts would need to define the joint expectations of the resulting merger. Then, one fire district would pass a resolution proposing the consolidation and stating that the:

> "*Specified services of each of the districts may be operated effectively and economically as a consolidated district and that the public health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the inhabitants of the special districts initiating the consolidation will be better served by the consolidation of such districts or services.*"[21]

The resolution would specify the services offered by the consolidated district, the name of the consolidated district, whether there will be five or seven directors, and other special conditions, including a time limit for the other districts to approve (not to exceed six months).

The other boards pass a concurring resolution agreeing to the consolidation. These are filed with the Court, which schedules a hearing to determine the legality and whether it is in the public interest to form a consolidated fire district. If the court determines that the filing is in order, it will set an election within each fire district for approval. Approval of a majority of eligible voters within each of the fire districts establishes the consolidated district.

The organizational board—members of the consolidating boards—selects the members who will be on the new board and sets the terms based on the length of their current terms. The remaining board members may serve in an advisory capacity until the end of their respective terms.

Advantages

Some of the advantages of a legal consolidation include:

- It is permanent
- If approved, it reflects citizen support.
- It creates only one layer of government.
- Director wards can be established.
- A seven-member Board of Directors can be established.

Some of the disadvantages include the requirement of approval by the electorate and the complexities associated with any election. This option is more expensive than a fire district-to-fire district merger or Fire Authority formation. Having a consolidation election requires increased costs for the election and the informational campaign. Ensuring the public is fully aware of the impact of consolidation is much more challenging—particularly if there is citizen opposition who may not be well-informed of the issues. The regulation also does not allow the participation of municipalities as partners.

In some cases, it may require approval from the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). In the case of this study, it may involve three BOCCs, since ECFPD and NFFPD each have portions of their service areas outside of Jefferson County.

Exclusion-Inclusion or "Merger-by-Inclusion"

The second method of merger exists within Colorado law. This process can be used if the districts' mill levies are equal at the time of the exclusion and inclusion, similar to the pre-consolidation agreement described previously. This can also be implemented if all participating fire districts agree to accept the lowest of all the mill levy rates.

The four district boards approve an IGA that defines the expectations of both parties. The absorbing fire district approves a resolution that agrees to include all the properties from the other districts. Each of the other fire districts that will ultimately be dissolved creates a resolution agreeing to exclude the properties in their districts. Those properties will then be included in the absorbing fire district.

All four fire districts subsequently file a joint request for the exclusion-inclusion with the District Court. The Court then issues an Order of Exclusion and Inclusion. After the process is complete, the other three fire districts—with all property excluded—file to dissolve.

All assets would become the assets and financial responsibilities of the merged districts, such as contracts and pensions, unless defined otherwise and agreed to previously. Bonded indebtedness would remain with the properties within the originating district and not be assumed by the greater taxpayers.

Advantages

The advantage of the exclusion-inclusion model is that it:

- It is permanent and only creates one layer of government
- Does not increase taxes but could decrease taxes.
- Does not require Board of County Commissioner approval.
- It is relatively simple and does not require a vote of the district's citizens.

Although it does not require a vote of approval by the electorate, it should still be proceeded by a comprehensive informational campaign for as many community members as possible to understand the process. The disadvantages are possible citizen opposition that could shut down the process. In addition, it cannot include municipalities, cannot establish director wards, cannot establish a seven-member board, and there are service plan limitations.

Proposed Recommendations

The next section includes Triton's assorted recommendations regarding a potential consolidation of the four fire protection districts participating in this study.

Consolidation Recommendations

AP Triton recommends that the four fire protection districts consider:

- Create a temporary consolidation in the form of a **Fire Authority.**
- Within 12–24 months or sooner, the fire districts should pursue a permanent merger into the Elk Creek Fire Protection District.
  - In this option, ECFPD would essentially extend its boundaries to incorporate the other three fire districts.
- **Merger Option 1**: Implement an **Inclusion-Exclusion Merger.**
  - In this option, the four fire districts would agree to operate at the lowest mill levy rate of 12.000 (see forecasted revenue and expenditures in "Financial Impact of the Recommendations").
- **Merger Option 2**: Implement a **Legal Merger.**
  - This option would entail a mill levy rate above 12.000 and require voter approval (see forecasted revenue and expenditures in "Financial Impact of the Recommendations").

Additional Consolidation Recommendations

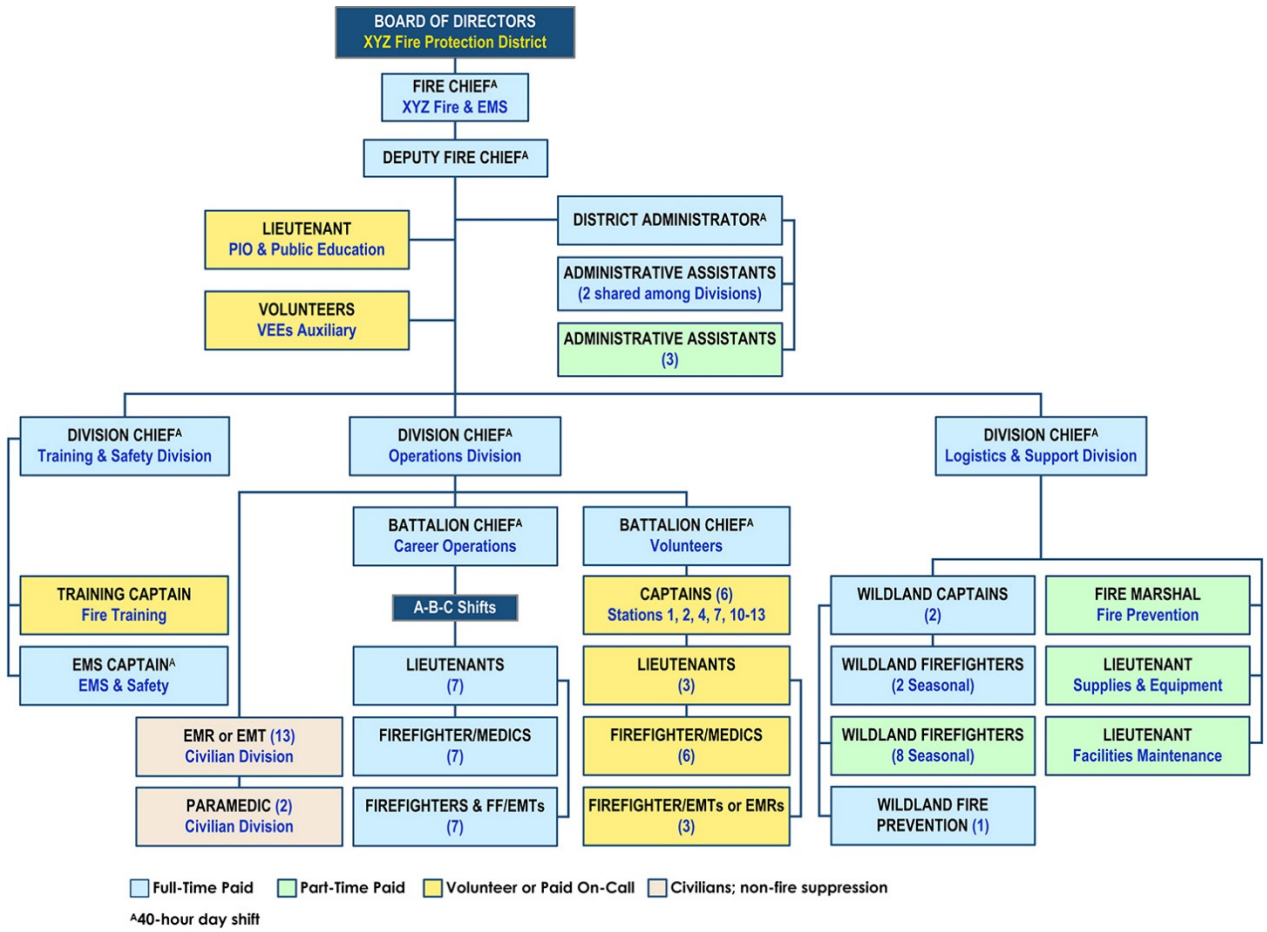
- Triton recommends that a five-member Board of Directors be appointed.
  - This should include one director from each current fire district and an at-large representative.
- Elk Creek FPD should change its name and undergo a complete rebranding program in which representatives of the four fire districts would select a new name for ECFPD.
- Include a new logo, uniform patches, badges, apparatus decals, signage, and other identifying information.
  - This can be done incrementally, but the purpose is to create the sense of a new organization that integrates the best of the policies, procedures, and other components of the combined fire districts—and not just ECFPD.

  - Triton recognizes the substantial costs associated with re-branding but believes the immediate benefits would outweigh the costs.
- Triton recommends that the fire districts retain a qualified and experienced law firm early in the process. The intent is to ensure the process meets applicable Colorado Revised Statutes and any other regulatory requirements.
- The fire districts should begin the planning and implementation process by creating various committees and subcommittees and appointing individuals to these groups (see "Planning & Implementation" later in this report).

Recommended Organizational Structure

The following figure is a proposed organizational chart for a new fire district. It is intended to include all current full-time and part-time staff in addition to all active volunteers from each of the four fire districts.

Figure 153: Proposed Organizational Structure for a New Fire Protection District



The organizational chart in the preceding figure has been developed primarily for discussion purposes and to prepare budget forecasts. Triton encourages the leadership to make any necessary modifications to accomplish the needs of the new district.

Triton recommends that all four current fire chiefs be assigned a full-time position within the new fire district. Triton's policy is to not recommend specific individuals to the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief positions, as the elected officials are better positioned to make that determination.

Recommended Disposition of the Fire Stations

Using historical incident data from 2018–2020, the following figure lists each of the fire stations based on that facility's percentage of the combined service demand of all fire stations in the study, and in descending order:

Figure 154: List of Fire Stations by Historical Service Demand (2018–2020)

Current District Station	No. of Calls	% of Total
ECFPD Station 1	3,284	46%
IHFPD Station	1,051	13%
ICFPD Station 3	892	11%
ICFPD Station 1	458	5%
ECFPD Station 4	421	5%
ICFPD Station 4	400	5%
NFFPD Station 2	338	4%
NFFPD Station 1	278	3%
NFFPD Station 3	258	3%
ECFPD Station 2	189	2%
ECFPD Station 3	118	1%
ICFPD Station 2	99	1%
ICFPD Station 5	21	<1%

Not surprisingly, as the preceding figure shows, Elk Creek FPD Station 1 had a substantially higher number of calls than any of the other fire stations in the study. As expected, the majority of these calls were EMS incidents.

The next figure entails a list of the current fire stations renumbered with a proposed disposition of each facility. The new station numbers were selected arbitrarily and based loosely on geographic locations. The figure also includes recommended staffing for each. Eventually, the leadership and key stakeholders of the fire districts may want to consider changing the fire station numbers, along with the apparatus and staffing assignments shown in this figure.

Figure 155: Proposed Dispositions of the Fire Stations & Apparatus Assignments

Station No.	New No.	% Calls	Staff	Notes
Elk Creek FPD				
Station 1	Station 8	46%	C (4)	Cross-staff medic & other units
Station 2	**Station 10**	**2%**	**V**	**Retain current staff & apparatus**
Station 3	**Station 9**	**1%**	**None**	**Retain for communications**
Station 4	Station 7	5%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus
Indian Hills FPD				
Fire Station	**Station 1**	**13%**	**PT/V**	**Peak-demand staff; 12 hours**
Inter-Canyon FPD				
Station 1	Station 2	5%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus
Station 2	**Station 6**	**1%**	**N/A**	**Potential future training center**
Station 3[B]	**Station 3**	**11%**	**C (2)**	**Cross-staff medic & other units**
Station 4	Station 4	5%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus
Station 5	**Station 5**	**<1%**	**N/A**	**Consider closing**
North Fork FPD				
Station 1	Station 12	3%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus
Station 2	Station 11	4%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus
Station 3	Station 13	3%	V	Retain current staff & apparatus

[A]C = Career staff. PT = Part-time staff. V = Volunteer personnel only.

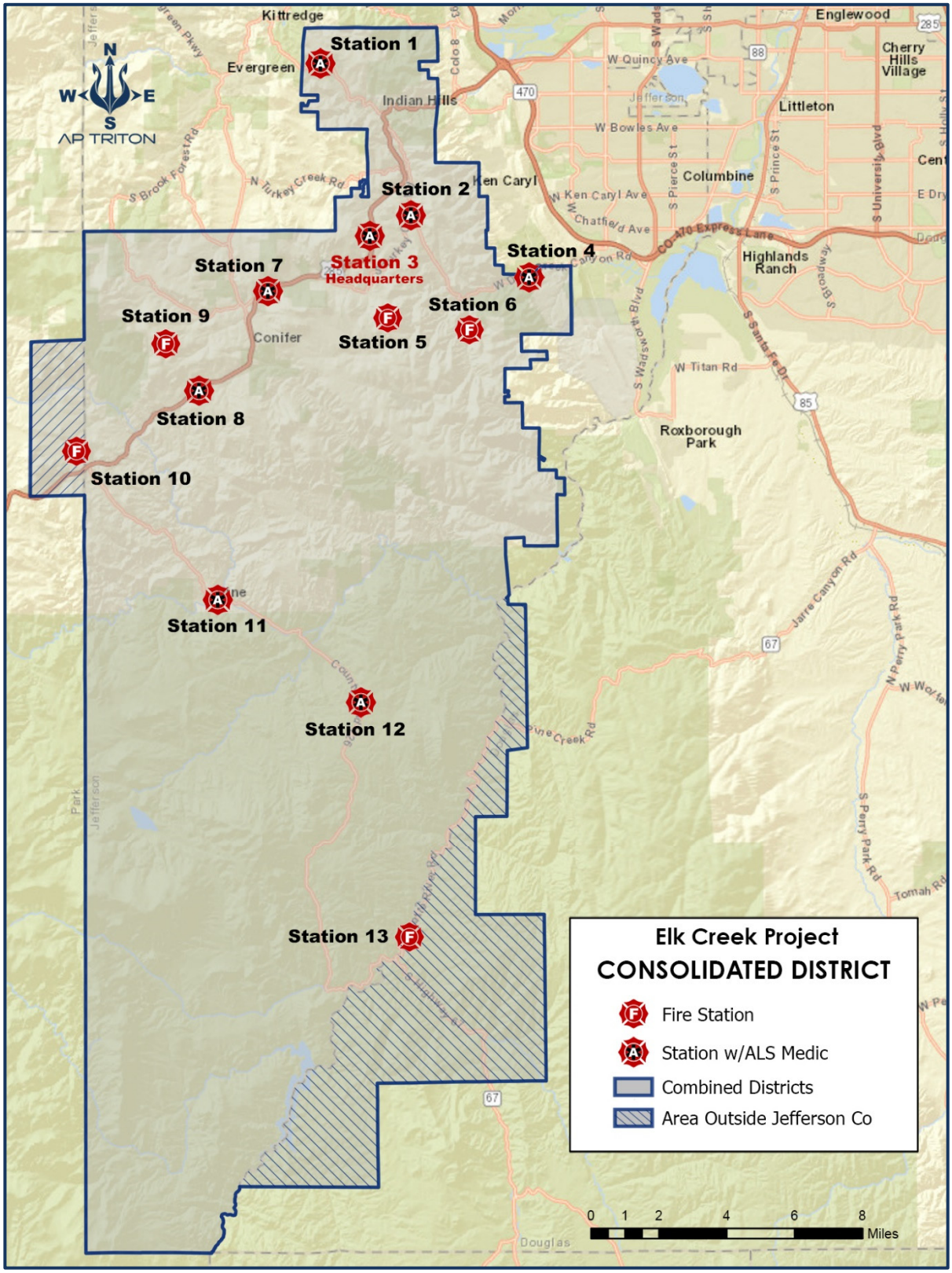
[B]Refers to new Station 3, which is under construction. Would be the new district's headquarters.

As shown in the preceding figure, ECFPD Station 1 (new Station 8) would be staffed with a minimum of four career firefighters (24 hours daily). Two to staff one ALS medic unit and two to staff a second ALS medic unit when necessary. This crew would also cross-staff an engine or other apparatus when indicated.

IHFPD's fire station (new Station 1) could be staffed with a combination of part-time personnel and volunteers during the peak-demand periods. For the remainder of the time, this station would be staffed by volunteers.

ICFPD Station 3 (new Station 3) would cross-staff an ALS medic unit and other apparatus as indicated. This could be a 24-hour crew or possibly staffed 12 hours daily during peak-demand periods.

Figure 156: Boundaries of a Potential Consolidated Fire District



The preceding figure illustrates the boundaries of a potential new consolidated fire protection district with new numbers for each existing fire station.

Projected Travel Times from the Busiest Fire Stations

The next two figures illustrate projected travel times (the interval between the time the unit begins to respond and the time it arrives on the scene) for the three busiest fire stations based on historical incident data analysis. Using the new recommended station numbers, the three busiest are Station 8, Station 1, and Station 3, respectively (previously ECFPD Station 1, IHFPD Station 1, and ICFPD Station 3).

As described previously in this report, historical incident data demonstrated that most EMS incidents, fire calls, and other incidents occurred primarily in the corridor along U.S. Route 285. Therefore, the highest service demand tends to start at Station 1 (previously IHFPD Station 1) and extends down to Station 10 (previously ECFPD Station 2). As expected, the highest service demand tended to follow those areas with higher population densities.

The next figure shows the distance that can be traveled within 6-minute and 8-minute travel times—assuming normal road conditions without weather impediments. As shown, those areas with the highest recorded calls for service and higher population densities can be accessed from Stations 1, 3, and 8 within 8 minutes or less—and much of it in 6 minutes or less.

Note that these do not represent total response times, which also incorporate a call-processing time interval and a turnout time interval.

Figure 157: Travel Times from the Three Busiest Fire Stations: 6 & 8 Minutes

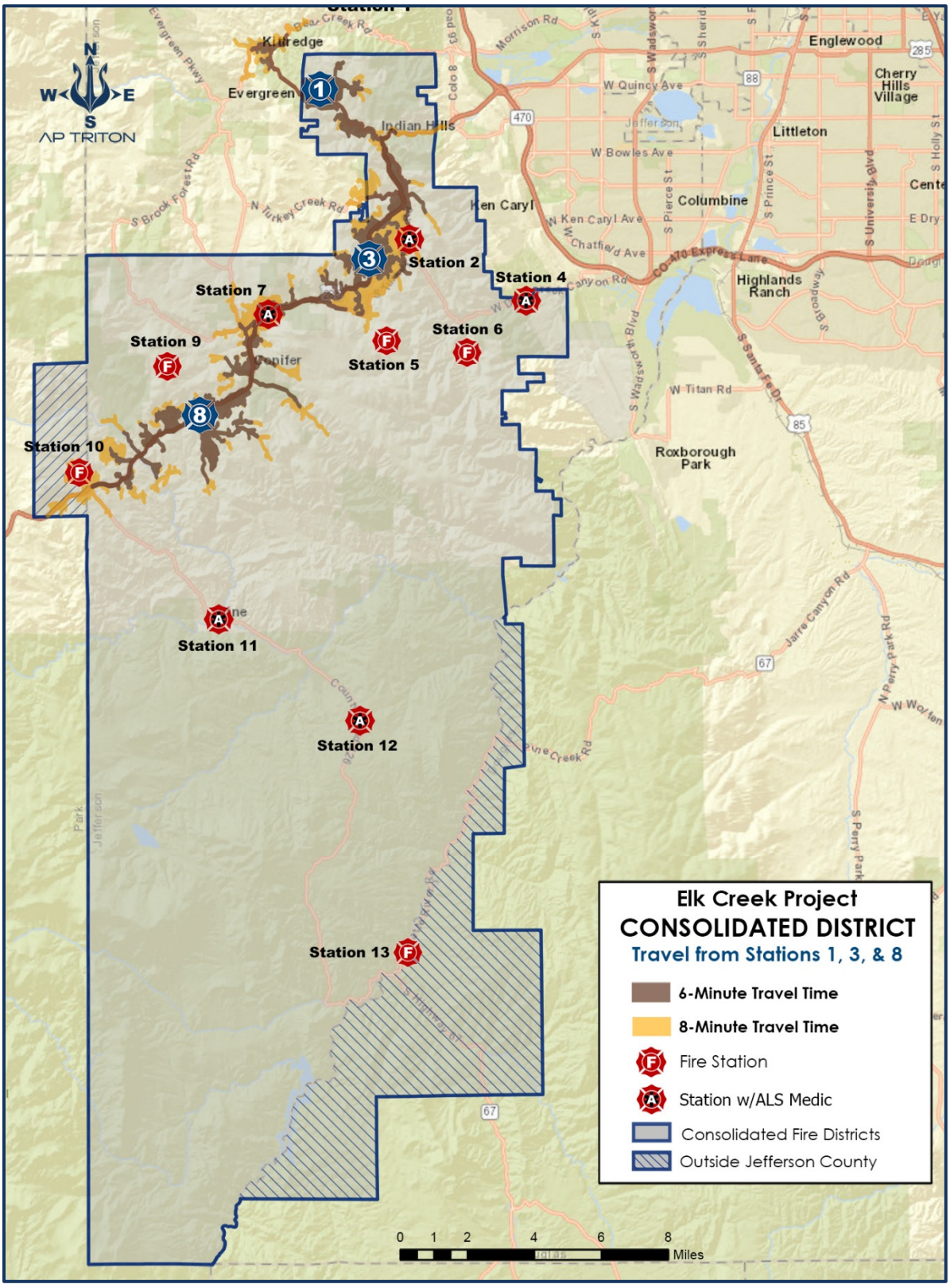
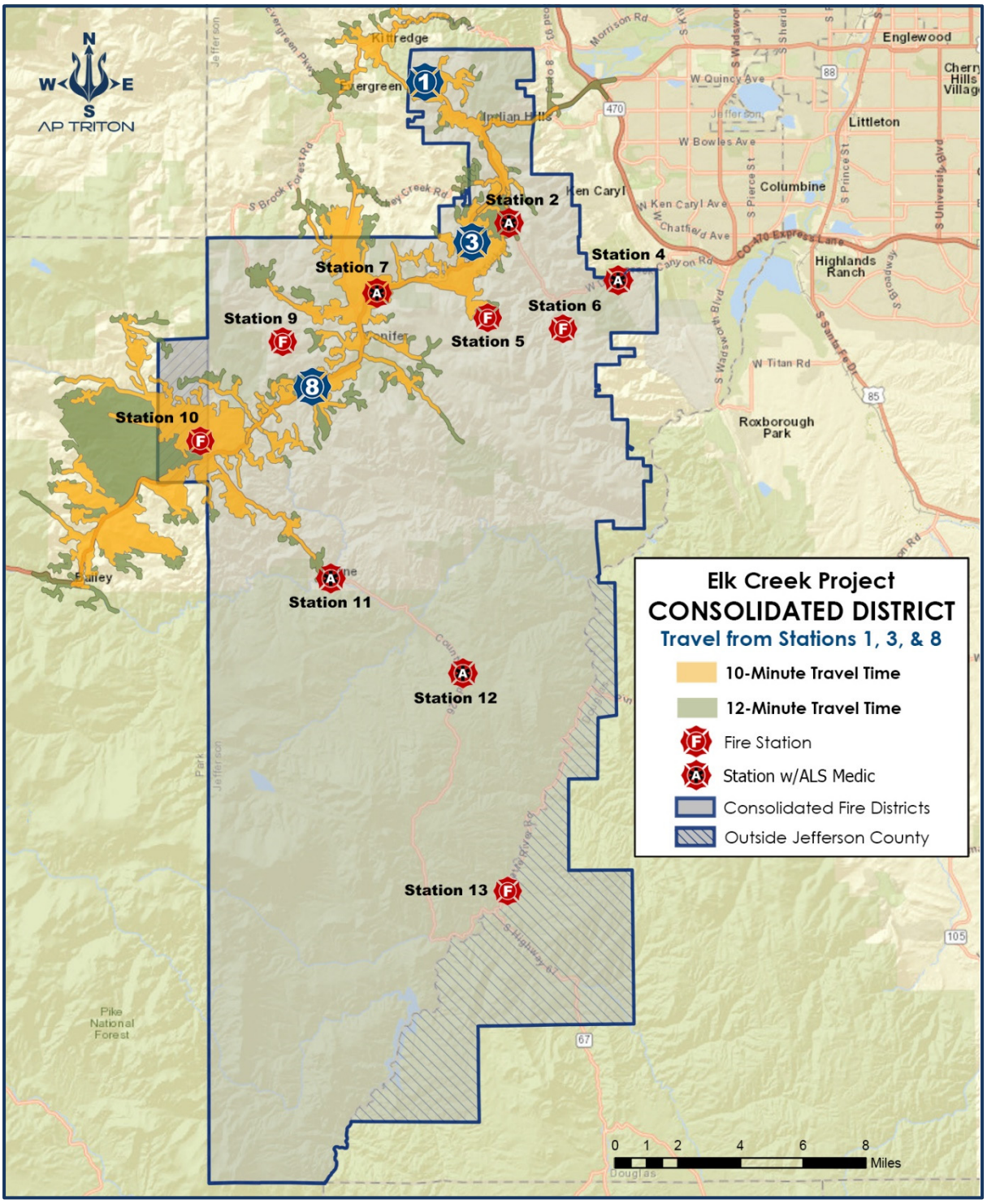


Figure 158: Travel Times from the Three Busiest Fire Stations: 10 & 12 Minutes



The preceding figure shows that nearly all of the most densely populated areas in a potential consolidated fire protection district can be accessed from the three busiest fire stations within a travel time of 12 minutes or less. The GIS analysis demonstrates that portions of Station 11's service area can be accessed within a 10- or 12-minute travel time. Station 11 is slightly busier than the three NFFPD fire stations.

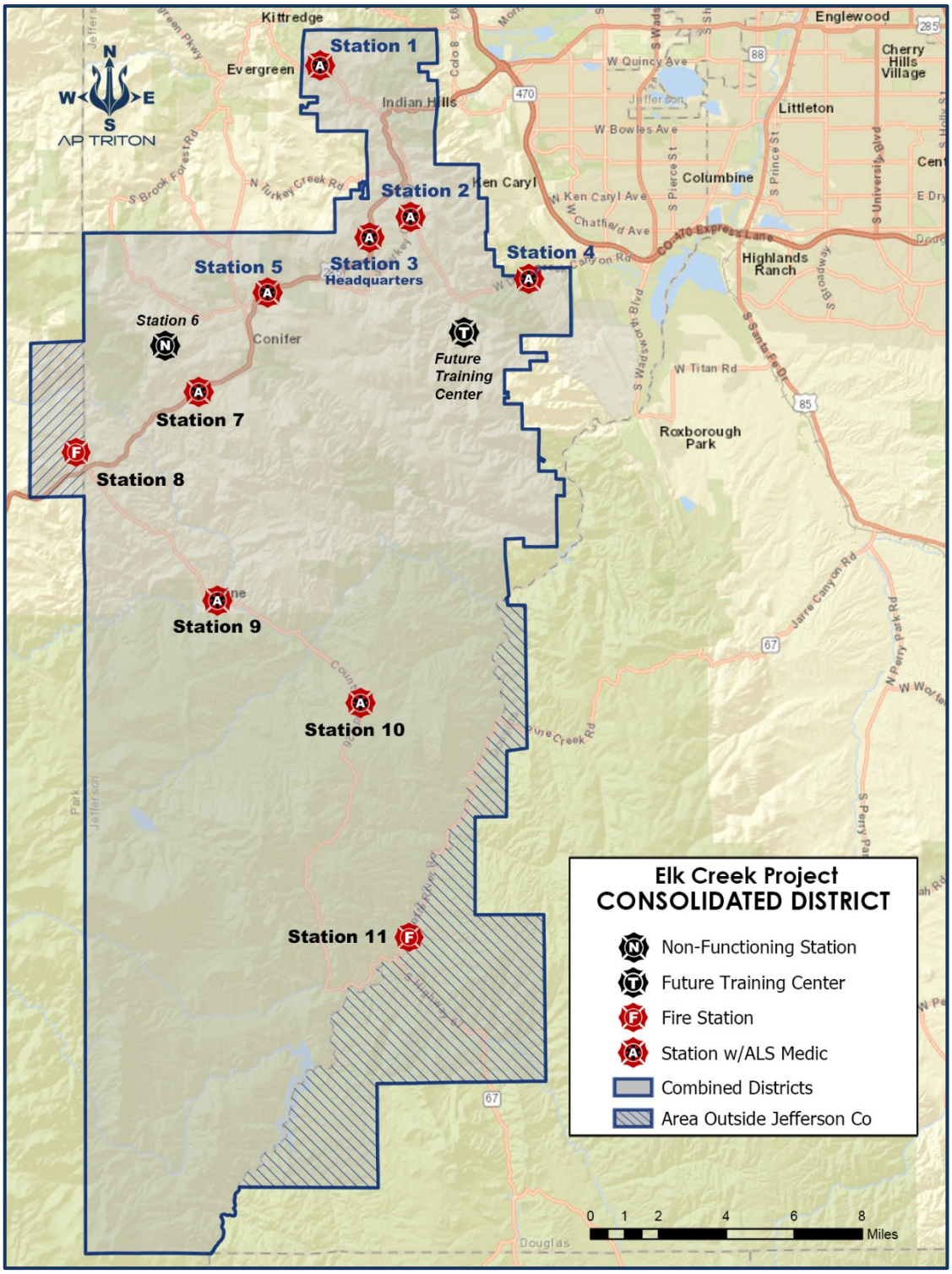
Because Stations 1, 3, and 8 tend to have the highest number of calls, and due to their proximity to areas with higher population densities, they were selected as the most logical facilities to calculate various travel times. In addition, if more resources—such as apparatus, medic units, or part-time or full-time staff—are to be added to the system, these stations would be logical locations.

However, it must be emphasized that the remaining stations continue to have significant importance to the communities they serve. Therefore, they must be maintained with adequate fire apparatus, vehicles, volunteer staff, and support services.

Consolidated District with Alternative Fire Stations

The next figure shows a consolidated district with closed stations and new numbering.

Figure 159: Consolidated District with Alternative Fire Station Configurations



General Recommendations

The following section entails an assortment of general recommendations intended to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of fire protection and EMS.

Deployment & Operations

- The planning and implementation process should include developing response zones for each fire station in a new fire protection district.
- A new consolidated fire district should consider developing a process for utilizing trained and qualified volunteers and civilian staff to transport patients requiring BLS treatment only.
  - This would enable the career staff and ALS medic units to remain in service within the fire district.
  - These volunteers should be compensated in a higher amount than usual in accordance with fire district policies.

Staffing & Personnel

- To improve overall response, Triton recommends hiring additional career staff with a specific emphasis on supporting the volunteer staff.
  - Additional career staff could limit responses to non-urgent events, improve the availability of training, and support operational needs.
- A combined organization should consider medical and mental health screening before selecting new staff and throughout the firefighter's career or service.
- Triton recommends emphasizing the recruitment process to support participation by female and minority firefighters.
  - The process should include ensuring appropriate facilities and personal protective equipment.
- Consider increasing emphasis on initiatives that support diversity within the new fire protection district.
  - This should include training programs that enhance emergency response to the diversity within the community.
- The new fire district should continue to use part-time Firefighter/Paramedics from the Denver Metro career departments.
  - This practice takes advantage of the experience and training of these individuals, which may be more to difficult to obtain locally.

Roles of the Volunteers & Other Staff

- Should the fire districts choose to consolidate, over 90% of the organization will be comprised of volunteer personnel. Therefore, there should be a strong emphasis on supporting the volunteers, as they will be essential to the district's sustainability.
- In a new consolidated fire district, the roles and responsibilities of volunteers, part-time staff, and civilian personnel should be carefully re-evaluated.
- Current volunteers should be encouraged and provided more opportunities to participate as an additional firefighter working with career staff or to take "shifts" at the busier fire stations.
- Consider evaluating other successful volunteer and reserve programs for best practices.
- Consider specific volunteer, civilian, and other positions. Examples may include:
  - Traditional Volunteers—personnel that respond from home or work to the closest fire station. These individuals should only respond directly to the scene in private vehicles on rare occasions.
  - General Volunteers—as new volunteers are recruited, they should participate in a new program that requires spending a specific number of hours on duty at a fire station or as supplemental staff to career personnel.
  - Non-Combat Volunteers—individuals or older previous volunteers capable and trained to drive tenders or a rehabilitation vehicle to an incident scene. These individuals would not participate in fire suppression or EMS operations but serve in a support role.
  - Reserve Firefighter Program—the new fire district should explore the feasibility of developing a program for individuals seeking a career in the fire service. Participants would receive Firefighter 1 and EMT training in exchange for voluntary service. Many successful models around the U.S. can be evaluated.
  - Civilian EMS-Only Volunteers—the new district should evaluate the use of civilian EMS providers to determine what their most valuable role would be within the new organization.

Financial Recommendations

- Public Emergency Medical Services Supplemental Payment.
  - Sometimes referred to as "GEMT" funding in other states, the *Public EMS Supplemental Payment* is an amendment to the Colorado State Plan. It allows eligible EMS providers to receive an annual supplemental payment for the uncompensated costs incurred by providing ground or air emergency medical transportation services to Medicaid beneficiaries.
  - Currently, ECFPD is the only district among the four collecting funds from this program ($46,095 in FY 2018/2019).
  - A new consolidated fire district should ensure participation in this program.
- First Responder Fees (FRF).
  - There may be potential for substantial additional revenue by adopting First Responder Fees.
  - The leadership should evaluate the possibility of these fees during the consolidation planning process.

Miscellaneous Recommendations

- During the planning process, a committee should be established to evaluate the implementation of a new records management (RMS) system.
  - The new system should have the minimum features to document EMS incidents and transports (including billing information), fires and other non-EMS incidents, training, personnel records, occupancy and inspections data, and fire investigations.
  - The new district should consider an RMS that can interface with the CAD system at the dispatch center.
  - Written standard operating guidelines should be established defining minimum documentation requirements—especially for EMS and non-EMS incidents.

Advantages of Consolidation

The following section includes a basic list of the advantages of consolidation. These are primarily applicable to the overall community and not necessarily specific to any of the individual fire districts. The advantages are based on both Triton's experience conducting numerous consolidation studies along with other resources. These should be considered estimations and not definitive.

- Based on historical performance data, mutual aid responses, the need for an ERF, and other statistical analyses, a consolidated fire district would produce a regional approach to responding to emergency incidents throughout the new fire district boundaries.
  - A consolidated fire protection district would likely be able to balance resources and produce shorter response times.
- While the fire districts currently work relatively well with each other, they all must rely heavily on mutual and automatic aid to effectively mitigate the majority of incidents.
  - The dependency on neighboring urban departments—such as West Metro Fire Rescue—would be minimized.
- Improved efficiencies in administrative procedures and processes by eliminating duplication or reassigning duplicate resources.
  - Increased administrative support among the various divisions.
  - Consolidation would result in the same administrative and operational Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG), training, and command structure.
- All current employees and volunteers would be brought into the new organization without loss of pay or benefits.
  - In a larger organization, full-time employees would potentially have more opportunities for promotion and expanded responsibilities.
  - In the event of staff reductions due to attrition, personnel can be realigned to meet the needs as necessary to create a more effective organization.
- Possible improvement in economies of scale that ultimately could produce
  - These could include technology costs, property and liability insurance costs, and reduced costs of employee health insurance programs.
- Consolidation could enable improvements in technologies such as implementation of district-wide computer network, e-mail for all personnel, a single records management system, and other technological improvements.

- The potential for significant wildland fire incidents is high and potentially devasting for the community.
  - Consolidating prevention activities would likely reduce the potential for wildland fires throughout the fire district.
  - With the expansion of personnel, equipment, and other resources, the ability to respond to and more quickly mitigate wildland fires would improve.
  - During peak fire danger periods a larger group of mitigation experts can be focused on a specific area.
  - During periods of vacation and other leave, the mitigation efforts can continue uninterrupted.
- There would be an increase in the amount of capital equipment and resources that could be utilized throughout the new fire district.
  - Apparatus and other equipment could be re-assigned to fire stations where they may have more efficacy.
  - Some capital equipment and apparatus may be able to be placed in reserve or sold, and funds used for other purposes.
- Individuals who serve as volunteer firefighters tend to do so due to various motives. Some because of a sense of community service, while others with a desire to acquire training and experience for a career in the fire service.

  During Triton's discussions with volunteers from the various districts, the majority indicated a desire to have more frequent participation on fire, EMS, and other incidents.
  - Consolidating four fire districts into a single organization would expand the call volume and provide more opportunities for experience and training for both volunteers and career staff.
  - A larger fire district would likely attract more volunteers and others looking for opportunities.
  - Would enable different types of volunteers (e.g., tender drivers only, fully trained volunteer firefighters, etc.), and the establishment of a reserve firefighter program for individuals looking for a career in the fire service.
  - Would allow for the creation of a volunteer division with dedicated supervision and command structure.

Financial Impact of the Recommendations

The following section entails various cost estimates ranging from potential salaries and benefits to projected annual budgets. It must be emphasized that the figures are based on current and historic data and not intended to be final. Instead, these numbers can be utilized as a starting point for discussion and planning purposes. Ultimately, the elected officials of the fire districts will need to determine the final amounts.

Estimated Wages & Benefits

The following figure represents potential full-time and part-time employee salaries and benefits following a consolidation.

Figure 160: Estimated Salaries & Benefits for a Consolidated Fire District

Full-Time & Part-Time Positions	FTE	Salary (each)	Benefits (each)	TOTAL COMPENSATION
Fire Chief	1	$101,000	$45,450	**$146,450**
Deputy Fire Chief	1	$95,950	$43,178	**$139,128**
Division Chief	3	$91,153	$41,019	**$396,513**
Battalion Chief[A]	2	$86,595	$38,968	**$251,125**
Staff Captain[A, B]	3	$82,265	$37,019	**$357,853**
Lieutenants	7	$78,152	$35,168	**$793,242**
Firefighter/Paramedics	7	$68,923	$31,015	**$699,568**
Firefighter/EMTs	4	$56,104	$25,247	**$325,403**
Firefighters[C]	3	$55,000	$24,750	**$239,250**
District Administrator	1	$56,773	$25,548	**$82,321**
Administrative Assistant (FT & PT)	3.5	$32,136	$14,461	**$163,090**
Wildland Staff	2	$40,290	$18,131	**$116,841**
Fire Marshal (2 part-time)	1	$86,594	$38,967	**$125,561**
Single-Role Paramedic (PT)	0.5	$56,104	$25,247	**$40,675**
Grand Total Employee Costs:	**39**	**$987,038**	**$444,167**	**$3,877,021**

[A]Day shift, 40-hour schedule, but may participate in operations.

[B]Includes Wildland Captains & the EMS Captain. [C]Career Firefighters should be required to obtain EMT cert.

FT=Full-time. PT = Part-time. Dollar amounts rounded to the nearest integer.

The amounts in the preceding figure are based on the highest salaries and benefits of the four fire districts. These are not in any way intended to represent the *final figures* but are used here for illustrative and discussion purposes. The line-time titled "Volunteer Retirement" comes from the current obligations. However, this will not be increased as Triton agrees with ECFPD's position to discontinue this.

Volunteer Compensation & Benefits

Volunteer compensation is much more difficult to project. Therefore, Triton used a conservative estimate that will be shown in the forecasted budget later in this section. Costs were based on each fire district's percentage of service demand.

Forecasted Budget of a Consolidated Fire District

In this section, Triton has developed forecasts of revenue and expenditures based on the specific recommendations for a consolidated fire district. As mentioned previously, these are educated estimates developed for the purpose of discussion. Eventually, the new district leadership will need to develop a comprehensive budget.

At present, each fire district has established millage rates to support the needs of its operations. For the districts that operate in more than one county, their millage rate applies throughout their district boundaries.

The following figure shows the total revenue that would be generated in a consolidated district at each of the different mill levy rates. ICFPD currently has the highest rate at 13.561, while IHFPD has the lowest at 12.000.

Figure 161: Projected Property Tax Revenue in a Consolidated District by Mill Levy Rates

Mill Rate by District	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Rate = 12.000 (IHFPD)	5,290,881	5,502,516	5,722,617	5,951,521	6,189,582
Rate = 12.083 (NFFPD)	5,327,476	5,540,575	5,762,198	5,992,686	6,232,394
Rate = 12.513 (ECFPD)	5,517,066	5,737,749	5,967,259	6,205,949	6,454,187
Rate = 13.561 (ICFPD)	5,979,136	6,218,302	6,467,034	6,725,715	6,994,744

The next figure lists forecasted annual expenditures of a consolidated fire district. Beginning salaries and benefits are projected using the base amounts shown in Figure 159 but increased by an annual factor of 3% for two years, 2021–2023.

Figure 162: Forecasted Expenditures in a Consolidated Fire District (FY 2023–2027)

Projected Expenditures	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Employee Salaries	2,744,774	2,854,565	2,968,748	3,087,498	3,210,998
Employee Benefits	1,235,148	1,284,554	1,335,936	1,389,374	1,444,949
Volunteer Compensation	40,000	41,600	43,264	44,995	46,795
Past Volunteer Retirement Benefits	116,732	116,955	117,182	117,414	117,651
Total Employee & Volunteer Costs:	**4,136,654**	**4,297,674**	**4,465,130**	**4,639,281**	**4,820,393**
Board of Directors	12,700	12,904	13,112	13,324	13,542
Fire Operations	1,727,376	1,761,091	1,795,529	1,830,704	1,866,638
EMS Operations	95,979	97,899	99,857	101,854	103,891
Administrative Costs	566,895	578,573	590,517	602,734	615,232
Miscellaneous Expenses	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Recurring Expenses:	**6,564,604**	**6,773,141**	**6,989,145**	**7,212,897**	**7,444,696**
Debt Service	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Capital Outlay	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Non-Recurring Expenses:	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**	**175,000**
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENDITURES:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase:	**522,996**	**578,595**	**637,221**	**699,010**	**1,011,715**
Beginning Reserves:	5,406,689	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511
Ending Reserves:	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511	8,856,226

The preceding forecasted budget was intentionally prepared from a conservative perspective—meaning costs were estimated slightly higher than might be necessary. Triton believes that a comprehensive planning process could potentially produce expenses below what is presented here. The

The following pages of this report include forecasted revenue beginning in 2023 at both the lowest and highest mill levy rates among the four fire districts.

Option 1: Inclusion-Exclusion Consolidation—Financial Projections

The following figure represents forecasted revenue using the lowest millage rate (currently the Indian Hills Fire Protection District rate). Annual growth is forecasted at 4%, and a collection rate of 98% of current taxes is assessed. However, it must be noted that a rate different than any of these four could be selected based on the needs of the new fire protection district.

Figure 163: Option 1 Forecasted Revenue in a Consolidated Fire District

Revenue Sources	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Property Taxes **(rate of 12.000)**	5,290,881	5,502,516	5,722,617	5,951,521	6,189,582
Specific Ownership Tax	178,025	179,631	181,304	183,045	184,859
Total Property Taxes:	**5,468,906**	**5,682,147**	**5,903,921**	**6,134,566**	**6,374,441**
Fire Prevention Income	20,700	20,700	20,700	20,700	20,700
Ambulance Fees	648,624	672,545	697,398	723,221	750,051
Lease Revenue	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
Interest Income	36,020	36,020	36,020	36,020	36,020
Payments in Lieu–Counties	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Total Recurring Revenues:	**6,359,250**	**6,596,412**	**6,843,039**	**7,099,507**	**7,366,212**
Fire Reimbursements	136,408	136,624	136,849	137,083	137,328
Grants/Donations	68,264	69,995	71,794	73,666	75,614
Mitigation Contracts	104,040	106,121	108,243	110,408	112,616
Refunds	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other	26,376	26,792	27,217	27,650	28,091
Total Non-Recurring Revenues:	**340,088**	**344,532**	**349,103**	**353,807**	**358,649**
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUE:	**6,699,338**	**6,940,944**	**7,192,142**	**7,453,314**	**7,724,861**

The next figure is a summary of the forecasted revenues and expenses for a consolidated fire protection district.

Figure 164: Option 1 Summary of Forecasted Revenue & Expenses in a Consolidation

Revenue & Expenses	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Recurring Revenue	6,359,250	6,596,412	6,843,039	7,099,507	7,366,212
Non-Recurring Revenue	340,088	344,532	349,103	353,807	358,649
Total Estimated Revenue:	**6,699,338**	**6,940,944**	**7,192,142**	**7,453,314**	**7,724,861**
Recurring Expenses	6,564,604	6,773,141	6,989,145	7,212,897	7,444,696
Non-Recurring Expenses	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
Total Estimated Expenses:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase (Decrease):	**(40,266)**	**(7,197)**	**27,997**	**65,417**	**105,165**
Beginning Reserves:	5,406,689	5,366,423	5,359,226	5,387,223	5,452,640
Ending Reserves:	5,366,423	5,359,226	5,387,223	5,452,640	5,557,805

The preceding figure shows that using the projected budget from Figure 161 and a mill levy rate of 12.000, a consolidated fire protection district could be nearly fully funded in the first two fiscal years and completely funded beginning in FY 2025.

Option 2: Legal Consolidation—Financial Projections

The following figures represent the revenue and expenditures at a 13.561 millage rate (current Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District rate). Annual growth is forecasted at 4%, and a collection rate of 98% of current taxes is assessed.

Figure 165: Option 2 Forecasted Revenue in a Consolidated Fire District

Revenue Sources	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Property Taxes **(rate of 13.561)**	5,854,143	6,088,308	6,331,841	6,585,114	7,096,132
Specific Ownership Tax	178,025	179,631	181,304	183,045	184,859
Total Property Taxes:	**6,032,168**	**6,267,939**	**6,513,145**	**6,768,159**	**7,280,991**
Fire Prevention Income	20,700	20,700	20,700	20,700	20,700
Ambulance Fees	648,624	672,545	697,398	723,221	750,051
Lease Revenue	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000	65,000
Interest Income	36,020	36,020	36,020	36,020	36,020
Payments in Lieu–Counties	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000
Total Recurring Revenues:	**6,922,512**	**7,182,204**	**7,452,263**	**7,733,100**	**8,272,762**
Fire Reimbursements	136,408	136,624	136,849	137,083	137,328
Grants/Donations	68,264	69,995	71,794	73,666	75,614
Mitigation Contracts	104,040	106,121	108,243	110,408	112,616
Refunds	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other	26,376	26,792	27,217	27,650	28,091
Total Non-Recurring Revenues:	**340,088**	**344,532**	**349,103**	**353,807**	**358,649**
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUE:	**7,262,600**	**7,526,736**	**7,801,366**	**8,086,907**	**8,631,411**

Based on the needs of a new fire district, a different mill levy rate could be selected, which the electorate would have to approve.

The next figure is a summary of the forecasted revenues and expenses for a consolidated fire protection district.

Figure 166: Option 2 Summary of Forecasted Revenue & Expenses in a Consolidation

Revenue & Expenses	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027
Recurring Revenue	6,922,512	7,182,204	7,452,263	7,733,100	8,272,762
Non-Recurring Revenue	340,088	344,532	349,103	353,807	358,649
Total Estimated Revenue:	**7,262,600**	**7,526,736**	**7,801,366**	**8,086,907**	**8,631,411**
Recurring Expenses	6,564,604	6,773,141	6,989,145	7,212,897	7,444,696
Non-Recurring Expenses	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000	175,000
Total Estimated Expenses:	**6,739,604**	**6,948,141**	**7,164,145**	**7,387,897**	**7,619,696**
Net Increase:	**522,996**	**578,595**	**637,221**	**699,010**	**1,011,715**
Ending Reserves:	5,929,685	6,508,280	7,145,501	7,844,511	8,856,226

As shown in the preceding figure, a consolidated fire protection district could be fully funded using the projected budget from Figure 161 and a mill levy rate of 13.561.

Financial Discussion

Option 1 represents an inclusion-exclusion type of consolidation, which is much less complex to implement than Option 2. With a small number of cost reductions, there should be sufficient revenue to operate a new consolidated fire protection district. Therefore, Triton believes that the advantages of Option 1 outweigh those of Option 2.

It is important to emphasize that both the projected revenue and expenditure figures are based on historical financial and other data and are not intended to be final. Instead, the results should be utilized for discussion and planning purposes.

Planning & Implementation

A study such as the one contained herein is typically comprehensive, containing complex information. Often in these cases, the study participants and policymakers are overwhelmed with multifaceted information and various options. It takes time to digest the report and decide what to do next. Triton finds it helpful to offer a process whereby the clients can break the process down into smaller segments. Those smaller pieces allow policymakers, fire chiefs, and communities to examine details and discuss what is possible. The following is offered as a framework to consider in the initial stages of evaluation. It is a strategic planning approach to partnerships.

Triton recommends the following implementation process be considered as the fire districts move forward. The thrust of the implementation process should consist of open, honest, and frequent communication, with a sharp focus on what is in the best interests of the citizens served.

The accompanying flowchart outlines a process whereby the strategies in this report can be further refined, other critical issues identified, timelines assigned, and specific tasks developed and implemented.

The flowchart starts with the policymakers convening a series of meetings to discuss and develop a shared vision of all four fire agencies.

Key external stakeholders are often invited into the process to lend their expertise and perspective, ensuring that the community at large is represented in these important deliberations. Often, internal stakeholders have difficulty with "possibilities thinking" because of their close association with the status quo, which is human nature. The external stakeholders can add a valuable perspective by asking key questions and challenging the status quo.

Figure 167: Planning Process

Establish Implementation Working Groups

As the flowchart indicates, various Implementation Working Groups should be established to perform the necessary detailed work involved in analyzing and weighing critical issues and identifying specific tasks. Membership for these Implementation Working Groups should be identified as part of that process as well.

The number and titles of the working groups will vary depending on the type and complexity of the strategies being pursued. The following list provides some key recommended working groups used in many collaboration processes and a description of their primary assigned functions and responsibilities.

Joint Implementation Committee (Task Force)

This committee is typically made up of the fire chiefs or chief executives of each of the participating agencies. It may also include outside stakeholders such as business and community interests. The responsibilities of this group are to:

- Develop goals and objectives which flow from the joint vision statement approved by the policymakers' vision.
- Include recommendations contained in this report where appropriate.
- Establish the workgroups and commission their work.
- Identify anticipated critical issues the workgroups may face and develop contingencies to address these.
- Establish timelines to keep the workgroups and the processes on task.
- Receive regular updates from the workgroup chairs.
- Provide regular status reports to the policymakers as a committee.

Governance Working Group

This group will be assigned to examine and evaluate various governance options for any cooperative services effort. A recommendation and the proposed process steps will be provided back to the Joint Implementation Committee and the Policy-Maker Group. Once approved, this working group is typically assigned the task of shepherding the governance issue through to completion. The membership of this group typically involves one or more elected officials and senior management from each participating agency. Equality of representation is a key premise.

Administration Working Group
Working in partnership with the Governance Working Group, this group will study the administrative and legal aspects of the selected strategies assigned and identify steps to ensure the process meets all administrative best practices and the law. Where necessary, this group will oversee the preparation and presentation of policy actions such as joint resolutions, dissolutions, and needed legislation to the policymakers. The membership of this group typically involves senior management staff from the entities involved and may also include legal counsel.

Operations Working Group
This group will be responsible for extensive work and may need to establish multiple sub-groups to accommodate its workload. The group will work out all of the details necessary to make operational changes required by the strategy. This will involve a detailed analysis of assets, processes, procedures, service delivery methods, deployment, and operational staffing. Detailed integration plans, steps, and timelines will be developed. The group will coordinate closely with the Logistics/Support Services Working Group.

The membership of this group typically involves senior management, mid-level officers, training staff, volunteer leadership, and labor representatives. This list often expands with the complexity of the services being provided by the agencies.

Logistics/Support Services Working Group
This group will be responsible for any required blending of capital assets, disposition of surplus, upgrades necessary to accommodate operational changes, and the preparation for ongoing administration and logistics of the cooperative effort. The membership of this group typically involves mid-level agency management, administrative, and support staff. Where involved, support functions such as fleet maintenance should also be represented.

Finance Working Group
This group will be assigned to review the financial projections contained in the feasibility study and complete any refinements or updating necessary. In addition, the group will look at all possible funding mechanisms and work in partnership with the Governance Working Group to determine the impact on local revenue sources and options.

Where revenue is to be determined by formula rather than a mill levy rate, such as in a contractual cooperative venture, this group will evaluate various formula components and model the outcomes, resulting in recommendations for a final funding methodology and cost distribution formula. The membership of this group typically involves senior financial managers and staff analysts and may also include representatives from the fire districts' administrative staff.

Volunteer Working Group

This group will be responsible for developing proposals and practices of the volunteers into the integrated agency. This often includes reviewing existing volunteer response patterns, training activities, recognition activities, recruitment and retention programs, rank structure, authority, roles, and responsibilities. This group typically is made up of volunteer leadership and may also include senior management staff. This is a small but important group, and to the extent their role changes, it is critical that they be engaged in the change-making process.

Labor Working Group

This group will have the responsibility, where appropriate, for blending the workforces involved. This often includes analyzing differences between collective bargaining agreements, shift schedules, policies, and working conditions. The process also includes developing a consensus between the bargaining units on any unified and cooperative agreement that would be proposed. Often, once the policy-makers articulate the future vision, labor representatives are willing to step up and work together to identify challenges presented by differing labor agreements and offer potential consensus solutions. The membership of this group typically involves labor representatives from each bargaining unit, senior management, and, as needed, legal counsel. This does not supplant any obligation to bargain.

Communication Working Group

This group will be charged with developing internal and external communication policies and procedures to ensure consistent, reliable, and timely distribution of information related exclusively to the cooperative effort. The group will develop public information releases to the media. It will select one or more spokespersons to represent the communities in their communication with the public on this particular process.

The importance of speaking with a common voice and theme, both internally and externally, cannot be overemphasized. Fear of change can be a strong force in motivating people to oppose what they do not clearly understand. A well-informed workforce and community will reduce conflict. The membership of this group typically involves public information officers and senior management.

Continued Communication & Updates

Once the working groups are established, they will set their meeting schedules and begin working on their various responsibilities and assignments. It will be important to maintain organized communication up and down the chain of command. The working group chairs should also report regularly to the Joint Implementation Committee. When the working groups identify new challenges, issues, impediments, or opportunities, this needs to be communicated to the Joint Implementation Committee right away so that the information can be coordinated with the findings and processes of the other working groups. Where necessary, the Joint Implementation Committee and a working group chairperson can meet with the policymakers to discuss significant issues that may require a refinement of the original joint vision.

The process is continual as the objectives of the plan are accomplished one by one. Finally, when sufficient objectives have been met, the Joint Implementation Committee can declare various goals fully met, subject to implementation approval by the policy bodies. This formal "flipping of the switch" will mark the point at which implementation ends and integration of the agencies, to whatever extent has been recommended, begins.

Factors to Consider in a Consolidation

Motivating Factors

When organizations were asked to list reasons for undertaking strategic restructuring, respondents most often cited internal decisions to increase their organization's effectiveness and efficiency.[22] Notwithstanding the tax limitation issues facing many communities, most perceive that they undertook strategic restructuring to improve service quality and range.

The least mentioned reasons for restructuring were funding issues, but not surprisingly, when funding was judged as a motivator, those involved in developing an intergovernmental alliance were less likely to mention it than those organizations undertaking complete consolidation.[23] Collaboration is less threatening than consolidation to an organization's autonomy. Nevertheless, the recognition of imminent financial problems can cause some to take a greater organizational risk.

Fire districts sometimes tend to consider the options of collaboration and consolidation when the agencies experience certain events. This may be due to a sudden interruption of the status quo, such as the loss of key leadership, a financial crisis, a rapid change in the community, or a substantial increase in service demand—any or all of which can compel significant change.

Other times, forward-thinking policymakers or fire district leaders may champion the idea. But, frequently, these same leaders work against their self-interest, especially in promoting consolidation. Last, the political or operational climate in which the fire districts operate may dictate a change in how they do business.

Triton conducted multiple interviews with the leaders and elected officials of the various fire districts participating in this study. It was evident among the majority of those interviewed that the primary motives for exploring consolidation included the desire to:

- Improve fire protection and EMS.
- Increase cost-effectiveness and reduce costs, if possible.
- Improve efficiency and reduce unnecessary duplication of services.

While the motivating factors were not limited to the preceding list, these tended to be the most commonly identified through Triton's interviews and discussions.

Success Factors

The success of fire district consolidations depends on many things. However, in Triton's experience with dozens of consolidations and cooperative agreements, leadership is the single most important factor that most frequently determines success. Often, a credible key staff or board member champions the concept, garnering the support of the various affected groups (political, labor, employees, and community). In addition, good leadership fosters an organizational culture receptive to planning, calculated risk-taking, and flexibility.

How leaders promote a trusting relationship between all groups and enable respectful and meaningful dialogue between them is essential. For example, research by Kohm, Piana, and Gowdy identified five factors that most often tend to contribute to the successful implementation of a collaboration or consolidation.[24] These include:

- Leadership that believes strongly in the collaborative partnership demonstrates this belief—often by acting selflessly to maintain it.
- Multiple forms of communication keep all persons (employees, elected and appointed officials, community members) up to date about plans, problems, and benefits concerning the partnership.
- Consistent face-to-face communications with the collaborative partners in the form of meetings, training, and other forums to build trust and understanding among staff.
- Flexibility through an expectation that even in the best-planned collaborative efforts and partnerships may have unforeseen issues that will arise, mistakes will be made, and alternative paths will be identified.
- Early evidence of the potential benefits to assure everyone that they are on the right track—such as better service, lower costs, and improved efficiencies.

Potential Complications

Fire district collaborations or consolidations may fail for many reasons. Sometimes legal constraints prohibit the concept at the outset. Other times, the proposal may be doomed by the unfavorable outcome of a public election or the reality of finance. Aside from these issues, four major pitfalls may cause even the most feasible consolidation to fail. Specifically, these are command, communication, control, and culture.

Command

Undertaking any partnership requires a demonstration of consistent, courageous, and effective leadership at all levels. Policymakers and leaders must guide their respective fire districts yet (at the same time) cooperate with the other jurisdictions. Ineffective or perceived selfish leadership styles may tend to cause passive resistance at best and open conflict at worst. Problems with sharing control and making decisions send the wrong message to the firefighters and employees of the fire districts, which can lead to an unraveling of even the best proposal.

Even in the best-planned collaborative efforts, unforeseen issues may arise, errors made, and alternative paths identified.

Communication

Silence or limited information from leaders about potential or upcoming collaborative efforts breeds fear, mistrust, and misinformation among affected persons. Therefore, the leadership of the collaborating fire districts must agree to communicate actively with all affected groups. Everyone must be provided the same information at the same time. Most importantly, leaders must demonstrate two-way communication skills by carefully listening to, considering, and strategically acting on the concerns of the affected parties.

Control

Frequently, the collaborative or consolidation process is compared to a marriage. As the saying goes, "Marriage is when two people become as one; the trouble starts when they try to decide which one." As in marriage, consolidation often fails because of organizational or personal ego issues.

The tenets of leadership require that someone be in charge, but in the interest of the greater good, some in leadership positions must agree to yield power. Some who are used to operating in a control position may have trouble adjusting to new roles that require more collaboration. Personal sacrifice in the interest of community good may not always win out.

Culture

There tend to exist two schools of thought regarding organizational culture. The first camp views culture as implicit in social life, naturally emerging as individuals transform into social groups (tribes, organizations, communities, and nations).

The second camp offers that culture comprises distinct observable forms (language, use of symbols, customs, methods of problem-solving, and design of work settings) that people create and use to confront the broader social environment. This second view is most widely used in the evaluation and management of organizational culture. Still, the first is no less important when considering bringing two or more discrete organizations into a closer relationship.

The general characteristics of a fire district encourage the creation of a culture unique to that organization. The paramilitary structure, reliance on teamwork, and the work hazards build strong bonds between the members, who tend to share group behaviors, assumptions, beliefs, and values. Bringing two or more such groups together with cultures formed through different experiences usually changes all organizational cultures. If the partnership is successful, no one culture will overcome the other—instead, a new culture will evolve. If the organizational cultures are incompatible—the partnership will likely fail.

Often, the planners of consolidations forget about the intangibles found in the individual cultures of the affected organizations. Leaders must be aware of the importance of these and their role in the wellness of the agency's soul. Attempting to eliminate those cultures to create a new culture can prevent the creation of a new organization and disrupt or destroy the positive attributes and morale.

New cultures tend to be created naturally as firefighters, officers, and employees merge their former cultures into a new culture. A new department name, new uniforms; new patches and logo; and other organizational identifiers can contribute to the transition to a new culture. Previous traditions and organizational identifiers, however, must also be recognized and honored.

During the Triton interviews, some individuals voiced opposition to one particular fire district potentially annexing their department. However, none of those interviewed provided a specific rationale as to why they were opposed. Although these comments were not widespread and should not be the sole reason for avoiding this particular option, they should be considered during the planning process. It is important not to allow a small setback or period of adversity to derail the momentum for cultural change.

Other Potential Complications

In addition to the potential issues described previously, in his article in *Fire Engineering*, Murphy lists other elements that should be considered.[25]

- People (employees)
- Money
- Politics

People (Employees)

Culture and communication are closely related to this element. Effective leaders recognize that the most important resource in their organization is their people. A consolidation that results in reductions of salaries and benefits of any employees would only produce disgruntled and discontented staff members and should be avoided. Firefighter and company officer representatives should be given a voice and role in the process of consolidation.

However, the firefighters and employees of each fire district have a degree of responsibility towards making a consolidation successful. Undoubtedly, there will be differences in culture, operational methods, and training among the Firefighters and company officers of each department. Nevertheless, it will be important for members to recognize that change is inevitable and begin to develop an attitude of mutual respect.

The career firefighters at ECFPD are represented by IAFF Local 4710. It will be important for the bargaining unit and leadership to come together and determine how the members of a potential consolidated fire district will be represented. Firefighters are stronger together than divided. By working together and providing constructive suggestions to management, the potential for a successful consolidation is much greater.

Because many changes can occur in a consolidation, every effort should be made to ensure that employees (in all positions) are not adversely affected. During the consolidation process, the planners should work diligently to transfer all employees to similar or better positions within the new organization. In some cases, it may be necessary to "grandfather" a few employees who do not meet the job standards of the new organization. It has been Triton's experience that requiring these individuals to work towards attaining the standard will suffice in the long term.

Money

This study includes a detailed financial analysis of a potential collaboration or consolidation. A common misconception is that a merger will produce major cost savings to the individual jurisdictions. Often, this is not the reality. The real objective of a consolidation is to create and achieve improved efficiencies in the delivery of emergency services. Efficiencies can also be found in leaner and less top-heavy leadership, increased purchasing power, consolidation of stations, larger sources of revenue, and the ability to pass bonds and levies successfully.

Certainly, there may be methods to lower costs by reducing overhead, eliminating redundancies, merging certain administrative, support, operational functions, and other potential cost-saving methods. However, the primary impetus for consolidation should not be the desire to generate major reductions in costs.

Politics

Not surprisingly, local politics can be a significant obstacle in collaborative or consolidation efforts. Political issues can occur at all levels, from firefighters to the elected officials of each jurisdiction. To achieve success, the following (and other) political questions must be addressed before moving forward with a full consolidation.

- Who will be the political/elected leaders of the new organization?
- How will each of the jurisdictions be represented?
- Will it be necessary to go for a vote of the taxpayers?
- Who will be the Fire Chief?
- Why is my jurisdiction paying more than the partner agencies?

Section IV:
APPENDICES

Appendix A: Comments from the Online Survey

The following is a list of the respondent comments from where provided. In some cases, the comments were excluded to ensure confidentiality. There was a total of 99 respondents who answered most of the survey questions.

Question #1: "I am a member or affiliated with:"

- Comments excluded, not relevant.

Question #2: "My current position with one of the fire districts is:"

- Comments excluded, not relevant.

Question #3: "If you are directly affiliated with one of the fire districts in this study, how long have you been with the organization (volunteer, career, or both)?"

- Comments excluded, not relevant.

Question #4: "My EMS certification level is:"

- Comments excluded, not relevant.

Question #5: "My opinion of a potential consolidation of two or more of the fire districts in this study is:"

- If the districts consolidate, will we rotate our meetings to different locations? It would be too far for anyone to commit to far away meetings, [especially] if volunteering. Same with responding to emergencies. Seems like this will create more complex processes and operations to be learned by volunteers, and more bureaucracy.
- Leaning more to being opposed.
- Out of about 24 active volunteers only about 20% make the required 10% call attendance. Volunteers are allowed to make up for calls by doing shift work for "Call credits" 4 hours will give you one credit. We still have only about 6 volunteers make their required 10%.
- I don't quite know if it is going to do anything positive for our district particularly for our size unless it can help with updated equipment and public fire prevention initiatives that I feel are lacking. Our chief is well liked and cares deeply about the department and district and I feel our needs would be overshadowed by the other districts with larger constituency to influence decisions that would [affect] us.
- Opposed based on existing information, but willing to reconsider if presented with new data.

- I'm in favor of the consolidation, but I question merging with N. Fork since that will make our district massive.
- I feel that this potential merger will bring great opportunities to all individuals, programs, and the districts as a whole. This merger will also benefit the communities that we all serve.
- I am in favor of consolidation if it's done with Due Care and Due diligence, and it improves or, at the very least, does not degrade the services. As of Spring'21, I am comfortable with the direction of the consolidation process.
- I am strongly in favor of a consolidation.
- Geographically, North Fork would be hurt by consolidating with agencies on the 285 Corridor. Also, the way elk creek runs their ship would discourage me from continuing to volunteer.

Question #6: "In my opinion, the top priorities in both my district and a potential consolidated fire district should be rated as follows (1 being the highest priority and 5 the lowest priority)."

- As a 911 agency, response will remain our number one priority, and, as we do not choose the types of calls we receive, there is really no way to separate the priority of types of calls—even including the rarer or more unusual ones listed above such as ice rescue or hazmat. We will be first to these calls regardless of what we believe the priority is. Wildfire education, prevention, and mitigation are vastly important in these districts, and if we can continue building a cohort of staff that focuses on this, the districts will benefit. As for "personnel and staffing issues," I do not really know what is entirely meant by this and the statement is very broad, however, I rate it as a top priority because your services will only be as good as your personnel and this includes prioritizing quality training, a supportive work environment and culture, appropriate HR resources, quality pay and benefits, and opportunities for growth and advancement.
- EMS is by far the largest percentage of what we do and is the most likely type of call to result in loss of life or limb. Our responsibility is to the residents of the district and they should be the priority.
- I can't really answer this. In my opinion, EMS, structure fire, and wildland fire should have equal priorities. I would put fire prevention and mitigation next, and set a lower priority for "personnel and staffing issues."

- Finding and retaining volunteers and staff is first because nothing else can happen without them.
- [I have] noticed a decrease in personnel to respond for Elk Creek. Other departments seem to have adequate staffing during the day, a little slimmer on weekends.
- I see EMS, structure, wildland, and prevention all as top priorities. As a commonality in different agencies is life, property, and land.
- This question has more areas to prioritize than available options, also I find it difficult to prioritize between EMS and Fire protection, all are equally important.
- "Personnel and staffing issues"—this doesn't really fit in with the other five options, but the lack of personnel responding to calls is a concern. The Elk Creek volunteers are not engaged.
- Safety of life is priority one. EMS represents our largest demand. Adequate[ly] trained personnel are also critical. You can't get the job done without them.
- You have 6 options with 5 rankings.
- Our district is large with a lot of National Forest and open space area and not much housing density. Tax base is relatively low, volunteer personnel low in numbers.
- This is a tough one to fil out. They are all highest priority.
- I believe all the mountain area districts will in particular better serve public EMS and wildland needs from consolidation. I think we already do pretty well for structural fires. Hazmat and others will benefit, but are not a large component of our events. Overall having our departments combined will draw on the shared personnel and may leverage paid staffing.

Question #7: "Please list, in order of priority, what you think are top three most critical issues concerning your fire district (feel free to add more than three)."

- Educating our collective public on safety, fire, [especially] wildland fire topics.
- Reliably being able to quickly put together an ALS ambulance response.
- Wildland.
- Collateral duties.
- Not enough paid EMTs to transport.
- Not losing volunteers in a potential consolidation.

- Ability to attract—and RETAIN—quality staff, and the ability to train them for leadership or management positions. This is multi-faceted. The obvious factor is the ability to provide appropriate/attractive pay and benefits. The other part is the ability to provide opportunity for advancement or leadership. This is not only a way to create job-satisfaction for employees, but it is going to become crucial for the district(s). If the departments merge and grow, more quality leadership and managerial positions will be necessary. It is hard to grow good leaders if employees keep leaving within a few years. The districts would benefit from a development and mentorship program that would seek to understand both the goals and ambitions of employees as well as the future needs of the department and where these things may align. Employees would have something to work toward and the department would gain needed assets. This would help the district with more long-term growth and succession planning as opposed to what has often had to be reactionary responses to staffing needs.
- Low engagement of district residents in useful wildland mitigation efforts on private property.
- Rescue and Fire Prevention.
- Lack of financial/physical capabilities for Home Mitigation in our district.
- Close ties and comfortable with you team members.
- Access to efficient/effective training for probationary members.
- Retention of Volunteers.
- Fire protection, EMS
- Wildland fires with a unified command structure.
- Unappreciated fringe members perceptions and disillusionment.
- Increasing expectations of residents, especially for EMS.
- EMS and patient transport.
- Wildland firefighting.
- Volunteers should be held more accountable to make their required 10%.
- Not enough daytime availability of volunteer members.
- Station's ability to accommodate newer apparatus.
- Lack of EMTs.
- Recruiting.

- Recruiting and retaining volunteers, budgeting for more paid staff.
- Mostly Urban Interface area with heavy woodland.
- Evacuation routes and support.
- Limited personnel to respond to emergencies.
- Wildfire awareness and mitigation.
- Adequate funding to operate the department.
- Shrinking staff/lack of volunteers.
- Wildfire protection.
- Community education and outreach.
- Low call volume with a large district.
- Response time.
- Water availability.
- Fire prevention & mitigation (high potential for wildfire).
- Personnel capabilities (turnout of volunteers).
- Wildland Urban Interface (which ties both structure and wildland together, the only reason this is in front of mitigation is because its already an IMMEDIATE threat).
- Efficient management.
- Covering multiple calls at [the] same time.
- Emergency equipment shortage.
- Training new volunteers in appropriate time frame.
- Issues related to development in the wildland urban interface.
- Extreme wildland fire potential.
- Maintain sufficient firefighting resources to control and extinguish common size residential house fire.
- 24x7 manned response from station 2.
- Long response times.
- Wildfire prevention.
- Lack of training and coordination between neighboring agencies.
- Already requesting mutual aid for multiple medicals at once. This could lead to the community wondering why THEIR department is there [to] help them.

- Budget.
- Fire protection and operations.
- Increased call volumes.
- Resource management/coordination.
- Vehicle maintenance.
- Cost of paid staff.
- Requiring all or nothing at Elk Creek. Locals have a lot to offer, let them have some options and use them.
- Aging department members and volunteers.
- Lowering the average age of our responders.
- Old apparatus in smaller stations.
- Wildland fire protection.
- Fiscal responsibility.
- EMS call overload.
- Declining number of volunteers.
- Common training/SOPs-SOGs (same playbook, game plan).
- Wildland response.
- Keeping volunteers as critical parts of the organization.
- Training.
- Retention.
- Lack of people responding to calls.
- Very large service area for North Fork.
- Lack of volunteer members.
- Wildland fire.
- Ability to cover multiple calls.
- Managing overall costs of service.
- Structure.
- Rovers or expected roving.
- The aging state of our station, apparatus, and equipment.

- Overall resources—both people and equipment. The population of the district is steadily increasing. Any incoming housing developments will boost this even more. In addition, the Conifer area itself has an older-than-average population/median age, meaning more potential for medical service needs as the population grows older. The main highway is getting busier. More people, more houses, more traffic means more staff and resources needed to take care of all types of emergency needs as well as to maintain the growing needs of daily station maintenance, upkeep, training, and other collateral duties.
- Paid people not 24-hour shifts so don't want to have to always transport.
- District residents' low awareness of severity of wildland fire risk and resulting minimal proactive mitigation efforts.
- Wildland fire preparedness/actions.
- Having the budget to be completely paid after a consolidation.
- Wildfire fighting.
- Fire and safety education for community at large.
- Communication with the residents of the district.
- Equipment issues and aging frontline apparatus.
- Personal training to improve beyond scheduled training.
- Leadership.
- Increasing number of visitors to the district.
- Structural fire protection.
- Volunteers who do not make their required 10% should have to do shift work to cover their district and make up for calls not attended.
- Not enough resources to handle larger wildland scenario.
- Ability to attack structure and wild land fire in some parts of the district, equipment.
- We don't have fitness standards, increasing the likelihood of injury or death.
- Public outreach.
- Lack of adequate dispatch personnel for 8 departments.
- Appropriate financing to support district needs to deal with the urban wildland concerns faced in the district(s).
- Growing population in the mountains.

- Maintaining salaries to help retain career staff.
- Ensuring firefighter safety.
- District expansion, coverage, and limited budgets.
- Transparency in planning.
- Long response times to scene.
- Equipment, facilities, and apparatus maintenance.
- EMS & patient transports, don't have staffing to run multiple calls.
- Resources for training Personnel.
- Prevention and mitigation (more land and projects need to be completed in all areas of our districts to help prevent catastrophic wildfires).
- Cost-effective operations.
- Enough responders for a large event.
- Rapid community expansion.
- Worthy retirement package to [attract] volunteers.
- Staffing—the volunteers are not engaged in the department.
- Funds needed to adequately pay and retain staff.
- Resource sharing of specialized equipment.
- Resources not being able to handle multiple calls.
- Not all districts have the budget to maintain apparatus and equipment, consolidation may allow for fewer resources across the area but in better condition.
- Strategic planning.
- Improved radio communication.
- Unionization alienating volunteers.
- Visitors from the city camping, recreating, driving fast.
- Increased recreational activity which stresses our volunteers.
- Reducing the load on the most frequent responders.
- Poor coverage with equipment on district edge.
- Special operations.

- Leadership of volunteer staff.
- Lack of volunteers shifting or responding.
- Extreme inconsistency and ambiguity regarding the implementation of standards, if the standard actually even exists.
- Losing great volunteers.
- Local Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Optimized method for resource dispatch.
- Structure fire response.
- Low call volume.
- Training, all aspects, fire/EMS/wildland, etc.
- Financial difficulties.
- Old drama with neighboring department.
- Inadequate and spurious training.
- Poor radio communications.
- Lack of paid staffing.
- Infrastructure replacement/sustainment.
- Knowing your equipment and trucks throughout.
- Community evacuation plans.
- Additional support from the State.
- Aging population base.
- Increasing mil levy to pay for this plan.
- Station locations.
- Hydrant pressures are sporadic by location.
- Lack of water supply.
- Inadequate tax base to support demand for services.
- Low tax base for potential paid department members.

Question #8: "Please share any other comments you have below."

- Each [of the] departments [alone] are great, and can be even better together.
- Consolidation of the fire districts is necessary to provide the best service possible to the residents and wildland. Paid employees should strive to not be cliquish and treat the volunteers with the respect they deserve.
- Merge[r] will benefit the community. Will be a big hurdle to break down prior barriers of dept lines, ensure satisfaction of all.
- The new consolidated district should have new leadership independent of the current command structures of any individual department.
- I'm glad we're looking at this and I hope those in power will seriously consider consolidation. I believe consolidation needs to be in our future. I expect the volunteers will resist consolidation but our top priority needs to be the quality of the services which we provide to the community. I don't think our department can remain financially viable for too many more years without compromising services simply because the budget won't allow us to continue to keep the infrastructure up-to-date. We will need to fight for Indian Hills in a consolidated department. Creating a consolidated department where the closest staffed station is far outside of our district may result in worse service than our current model and needs to be avoided.
- I don't believe merging would help us out due to the large area we would be covering. That would require being familiar with too much territory. We would need to be familiar with over 30 trucks which is not realistic. Most important, we would be working with people that we are not familiar with, which could be dangerous. Every dept trains and organizes in their own way because that's what works best for them. I don't think you can expect the same results for every dept in unified training technics. Some trainings, as in wildland, could be positive, but others could make things more complicated and time wasting. I believe that our fast, quality responses are due to our small, close-knit department and our thorough knowledge of our surrounding. Our response times are good, our quality of care is exceptional. I see no need to change and complicate things.
- I have never seen a "consolidation" that did not end as essentially one department taking over another. Our department typically has a turnout of 5–10 volunteers per call. I am skeptical that you can maintain that if we move to more of a combination model. As volunteers are left behind by the paid staff or end up only cleaning up after a call it will be hard to keep volunteers showing up.

- Not sure how a small district like Indian Hills would benefit by merging. being that we only run around at best 200 calls a manned station makes no sense to me or the personal that would [staff] it. A response from Inter-Canyon or Elk Creek in my opinion, I do not see this benefiting the needs of the residents of Indian Hills. I also believe that if this station became a paid and union position, I see the volunteer firefighter being looked down on by paid staff and driving volunteers away from something they desire to do.
- Afraid that being the smallest dept in funding and district size, we would be lost in the shuffle and our personnel and their needs would not receive the priority they deserve.
- Maintaining current members needs to be a priority.
- I have concerns with Jeffcom being able to accommodate the response changes this would cause. They can't automate the auto / mutual aid recommendations now despite having detailed maps and direction. Dispatchers must remember all of the intricacies. Also, during the day, there is 1 dedicated dispatcher for all 8 agencies on Mountain channels, and from 2200-0600, that dispatcher takes on 4 additional Central Fire Agencies. There may or may not be other personnel in the center qualified and or capable of assisting the Mountain dispatcher in the event of a large-scale event/wildfire/etc. It is my understanding that the IGA has Jeffcom providing 2 mountain dispatchers at all times. This has not been the case from inception and it is dangerous. The mountain chiefs have not pursued this deficiency, putting our personnel at risk.
- I just don't see how North Fork would benefit from the merger. Our call volume and district size make it seem that there will not be a paid crew down here. That can make a huge issue since we have low number of members so if they have to come from Conifer then that will make for an unreasonable response time.
- I'd like to see appropriate weight and consideration be given to the volunteer core who've donated their years to building these departments. They should be the ones who are given the first opportunity to become paid staff. Too many mergers and consolidations disregard the people who made it possible to be there in the first place.

- If all 4 combine that is a ridiculously large district. ECFD and ICFD as has been seeming to be in the works seems reasonable but quadrupling the response area seems dangerous. A solid mutual aid plan for large events or 3rd and 4th calls seems better. The cultures seem quite different between departments which could be good or bad but needs to be addressed/remembered in any merge.
- Small volunteer departments are first on scene of smaller wildland fires that are suppressed preventing larger forest fires. If the State could contribute money to these departments, it saves them money in the long run.
- ECFD has made a great deal of positive changes over the past couple years. I think the merger will continue that trend.
- I'm looking forward to seeing what the future will hold with this consolidation and I am completely for it with all agencies involved.
- I like the idea of combining resources/working event more closely with other FDs, but am concerned with having a larger area and what that means for response times/coordination of stations/call volume, etc.
- Consolidation is long overdue. We watch large suburbs of Denver with significant commercial tax base move toward consolidation while we remain static. There will be opposition to consolidation by those who fear job loss, loss of individual department identity, and fear of new oversight, but consolidation must move forward. We cannot provide the level of services expected by the public (response to large wildfires, paramedic level EMS transport, suburban level fire protection and response times) with the existing system and resources. Consolidation can reduce duplication of resources and enhance coverage.
- Combining four departments will require leadership of personnel that's extremely competent and skilled not only in fire service tactics but in leading people.
- In regard to "optimized method for resource dispatch" - as the combined departments have a larger area, we'll need some method to dispatch nearest resources other than just an 'all-hands' dispatch. The challenge of course will be to know (with volunteer resources) who is available. I am very much in favor of the merging of the mountain area fire departments.
- As long as it betters the district and our community... I'm for it. It will be a challenging time, but worth it if it betters our response and care we bring to the community.

- I support consolidation for purchasing, planning, and training opportunities. But for North Fork, the large service area will be a challenge for timely response from other [departments].
- Have we looked into how the community will respond to this? What will be some of the impacts both positive and negative. How will the combined district be staffed and will it affect our response times?
- I believe that a 285-corridor ambulance district would benefit the citizens more than consolidating these particular districts.

Appendix B: Colorado Revised Statutes on Consolidation

Colorado Revised Statutes 2018
TITLE 32
SPECIAL DISTRICTS
SPECIAL DISTRICT ACT
ARTICLE 1
Special District Provisions

PART 6
CONSOLIDATION

Law reviews: For article, "Consolidation of Fire Protection Districts: A Case Study", see 24 Colo. Law. 813 (1995).

32-1-601. Definitions. As used in this part 6, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1) "Concurring resolution" means a resolution passed in accordance with this part 6 by the board of any special district for the purpose of accepting the consolidation resolution.

(2) "Consolidated district" means a quasi-municipal corporation of this state resulting from the consolidation of two or more special districts; or resulting from the consolidation of one or more of the services of two or more special districts, one of which is not a metropolitan district, which consolidation of services may include the consolidation of all services of a special district with only specified services of one or more special districts; or resulting from the consolidation of one or more of the services of two or more metropolitan districts and may include the consolidation of all services of a metropolitan district with only specified services of another metropolitan district. If a district which provides a single service or water and sanitation services consolidates its service or services with another single service district, no new separate district may be formed.

(3) "Consolidation resolution" means a resolution passed in accordance with this part 6 by a board of any special district for the purpose of initiating the consolidation of two or more such special districts into a single and consolidated district, the consolidation of one or more of the services of two or more special districts, one of which is not a metropolitan district, or the consolidation of one or more of the services of two or more metropolitan districts.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1563, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** (2) and (3) amended, p. 1111, § 1, effective July 1.

Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-112 (2) to (4) as it existed prior to 1981.

32-1-602. Procedure for consolidation. (1) (a) Two or more special districts may be consolidated into a single consolidated district, and such consolidation may occur between or among such districts whether or not they were originally organized for the same purpose and whether or not such districts are contiguous.

(b) Two or more special districts may consolidate one or more of their services whether or not they were originally organized for the same purpose and whether or not such districts are contiguous.

(2) Consolidation may be accomplished in the following manner:
(a) The board of any special district shall pass a consolidation resolution declaring that such district and any specified special district or districts are so situated that all such districts may operate or that one or more specified services of each of the districts may be operated effectively and economically as a consolidated district and that the public health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the inhabitants of the special district initiating the consolidation will be better served by the consolidation of such districts or services. The resolution shall also state the proposed name of the proposed consolidated district, the special districts or services to be included within the proposed consolidated district, whether the board of the consolidated district will have five or seven directors, any special conditions that may attach to the consolidated district, and the time limit within which the included special districts must approve the consolidation resolution in order to be included within the proposed consolidated district. Such time limit shall be not later than six months after the date of such resolution.
(b) After receipt of such consolidation resolution and prior to the time limit fixed in the consolidation resolution, the board of each of the special districts named in the resolution proposing the consolidation, other than the special district initiating the proposed consolidation, shall pass a resolution either concurring in the consolidation or rejecting the same and shall send a copy of such resolution to the special district initiating the consolidation.
(c) Each special district desiring to be included or have its service or services included within the consolidated district shall file the concurring resolution with the initiating special district. If one or more special districts sought to be included in the initiating resolution file concurring resolutions stating that such consolidated district will promote the public health, safety, prosperity, and general welfare of the inhabitants within the concurring special districts, the initiating special district, within thirty days after the date of the receipt of all concurring resolutions, shall file with the board of county commissioners of each county having territory within one or more of the districts and in the court wherein the organization petition of the initiating special district was filed a copy of such consolidation resolution and the concurring resolutions of the other special districts seeking consolidation of the districts or the specified services. Any proposed consolidated district which is subject to the provisions of part 2 of this article pursuant to section 32-1-607 (6) shall first obtain approval of the service plan in accordance with the provisions of part 2 of this article. Any special district rejecting the consolidation resolution shall not thereafter be included in any consolidation proceedings then pending.
(d) When the consolidation resolution and one or more concurring resolutions are filed in court, the court shall fix a date, not less than thirty days nor more than forty days after the date of filing, within which time a hearing shall be held to determine the legality of the proposed consolidation. Notice of the filing of the resolutions and of the date fixed for hearing objections to the proposed consolidation shall be given by publication, and written notice shall be provided to the governing body of any municipality entitled to notice pursuant to section 32-1-607 (6). No pleadings shall be filed by any special district involved, but any eligible elector of, the fee owner of any real property situated within, or any county or municipality having territory within any of the special districts involved in the proposed consolidation which desires to oppose the consolidation or the inclusion of property or territory in a consolidated district shall file a written and verified petition in the court five days prior to the hearing date and serve copies thereof upon each of the special districts desiring consolidation. The petition shall set forth clearly and concisely the objections of the petitioner, which objections shall be limited to the failure of any

initiating district or concurring district to comply with this part 6, or, in a consolidation of services proceeding, duplication of service to the petitioner's property or territory by an existing municipality or special district not part of the proposed consolidated district or the provision of new and unwanted service to the petitioner's property by the proposed consolidated district. The court shall hear the petition and all objections to it at the time of the hearing on the consolidation resolution and the concurring resolutions and shall determine whether, in the general public interest and subject to the requirements of section 32-1-503, the property should be excluded or included in the proposed consolidated district.

(e) At the hearing, if the court finds that the consolidation resolution and the concurring resolutions have been properly filed and that the board of each special district desiring to be consolidated or desiring to have specified services consolidated has proceeded in accordance with this part 6, the court shall enter an order ex parte setting an election within each of the consolidating special districts for the approval of the consolidated district by the eligible electors affected by the consolidation at the next regular special district or special election, which shall be held and conducted pursuant to articles 1 to 13.5 of title 1, C.R.S. The order shall require publication of notice as required by section 1-13.5-510, C.R.S., specifying the name of the consolidated district; the names of the special districts to be consolidated or the name of the district into which specific services are to be consolidated and the names of the special districts presently empowered to provide the services; a summary of any special conditions that may attach to the consolidated district, including any preconsolidation agreements and the provisions included therein regarding the assumption of debt and the approval of any financial obligation, including accrued unfunded pension liability, as debt to remain payable by the taxpayers of the consolidating special district which incurred the obligation or maintained the pension plan to which the accrued unfunded liability attaches; if the consolidated district may be granted the powers of a metropolitan district, the effect of the change and the services a metropolitan district may provide, including any change in maximum mill levies set forth in section 32-1-1101 (1), or, if the mill levy is unlimited, the fact that there is no mill levy limit established by statute; and the area to be included within the consolidated district, which shall be all of the area originally contained within the organization order for each individual special district, together with all areas contained in any inclusions, the consolidated area not to include any area excluded by any special district being so consolidated or by the court pursuant to paragraph (d) of this subsection (2). If two or more districts are to be consolidated and if the consolidated district is to assume metropolitan district powers, the court shall order that the eligible electors vote separately on the question of consolidation and the question of granting the consolidated district the powers of a metropolitan district. If the eligible electors approve consolidation but reject the granting of metropolitan district powers, the consolidated district shall have only those powers granted single-purpose districts providing the same services. If all or part of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of all of the consolidating special districts is to be assumed by the consolidated district, the court shall also order that the eligible electors vote separately on the question of consolidation and the question of assuming the indebtedness at the consolidation election. If the eligible electors approve consolidation but reject the assumption of indebtedness by the consolidated district, the outstanding bonded indebtedness shall remain the obligation of the special district which incurred the bonded indebtedness and shall be paid and discharged by the taxpayers having taxable property within the boundaries of the indebted special district. If a preconsolidation agreement provides that the consolidation shall be contingent upon assumption of debt by the consolidated district, then the consolidation shall not be approved unless the assumption of indebtedness is approved by the eligible electors. If any financial obligation of

one or more of the consolidating districts is to be submitted to the electors for approval as debt, the court shall also order that the electors vote separately on the question of consolidation and the question of approval of each financial obligation as debt, which issue shall be presented to the electors in accordance with the provisions of section 32-1-606.5. If the electors approve consolidation but do not approve the treatment of one or more financial obligations as debt, the financial obligations not so approved shall be assumed by the consolidated district in the same manner as other obligations of consolidating districts are assumed, unless a preconsolidation agreement providing that the consolidation shall be contingent upon the approval regarding treatment of the financial obligation as debt, in which case the consolidation shall not be approved. The area of the consolidated district after the election shall be the total area of the special districts consolidated existing as of the date of the court order. No appeal shall lie from any orders of the court.

(f) Approval by a majority of the eligible electors voting in the election within each of the consolidating special districts concerning the consolidation of the special districts or specified services shall be deemed to conclusively establish the consolidated district against all persons except the state of Colorado which, within thirty-five days after the election, may contest the consolidation or the election in an action in the nature of a writ of quo warranto. Otherwise, the consolidation of the districts or services and the organization of the consolidated district shall not directly or indirectly be questioned in any action or proceeding.

(3) Any proceeding for consolidation undertaken pursuant to this section which is not approved shall not operate as a bar to any subsequently proposed consolidation of one or more of the special districts or services named in the consolidation resolution with any other special district or with each other. The provisions of section 32-1-106 shall not apply to any subsequently proposed consolidation.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1563, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** (1), (2)(a), (2)(c) to (2)(f), and (3) amended, p. 1112, § 2, effective July 1. **L. 92:** (2)(d) to (2)(f) amended, p. 878, § 112, effective January 1, 1993. **L. 93:** (2)(e) amended, p. 562, § 1, effective April 30. **L. 2012:** (2)(f) amended, (SB 12-175), ch. 208, p. 881, § 147, effective July 1. **L. 2016:** (2)(e) amended, (SB 16-189), ch. 210, p. 786, § 85, effective June 6.

Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-113 as it existed prior to 1981.

32-1-602.5. Consolidation and review by administrative action. Whenever the division finds, upon its own investigation or upon the receipt of information from any source, that the consolidation, restructuring of services, or other changes in the operations of one or more special districts would be in the best interests of the residents of the special districts or will improve the quality of services or lower the costs of services, the division may review the operations and performance of such special districts and issue recommendations. The division may require one or more special district boards to hold a public meeting to discuss the operations and performance of such special districts. If such public meeting involves two special district boards and both boards agree that consolidation is appropriate, they shall commence consolidation procedures pursuant to section 32-1-602. If the public meeting involves three or more special district boards, a majority of such boards must approve consolidation before consolidation procedures are commenced.

Source: L. 91: Entire section added, p. 787, § 13, effective June 4.

32-1-603. Procedure after consolidation election. (1) After the election approving the consolidated district, the members of the board of each of the special districts consolidated or having services consolidated into the consolidated district shall constitute the organizational board of the consolidated district, regardless of the number of directors thereof. This organizational board shall remain as the board of the consolidated district until such time as the first board of the consolidated district is selected as provided in this section.
(2) The organizational board, within six months after the date of the consolidation election, shall:
(a) (I) If the board of the consolidated district is to have five directors, determine the terms of the directors of the first board as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection (2); or
(II) If the board of the consolidated district is to have seven directors, divide the consolidated district into seven director districts, each of which shall have, as nearly as possible, the same number of eligible electors and which shall be as contiguous and compact as possible, and determine the terms of the directors of the first board as provided in paragraph (b) of this subsection (2). In making the division, the board shall consider existing or potential developments within the proposed director districts which when completed would, in the reasonably near future, increase or decrease the number of eligible electors within the director district. The organizational board shall then select from its members a representative of each director district, and, if possible, the representatives shall be eligible electors within the boundaries of the director district which they are selected to represent. Thereafter, directors shall be eligible electors of the director district which they represent.
(b) Determine the terms of the directors of the first board of the consolidated district. In making the determination, the organizational board shall fix the terms of the first board as follows: The terms of two directors, if there are five directors, or three directors, if there are seven directors, of the first board having the fewest years to serve on the board to which they were originally elected shall expire at the first regular special district election after the date of order of the court as provided in subsection (4) of this section; and the terms of the remaining three directors, if there are five directors, or the remaining four directors, if there are seven directors, having the greatest number of years to serve on the board to which they were originally elected shall expire at the second regular special district election. If the terms of the directors so selected to the first board of the consolidated district expire on the same date, the terms of the directors shall be determined by the organizational board. The terms shall be determined, however, so that two or three directors, as applicable, shall have terms expiring in two years and three or four directors, as applicable, shall have terms expiring in four years. Thereafter, each board member shall have a term of four years.
(c) Determine the amount of bond for each director of the consolidated district, which amount shall not be less than one thousand dollars per director and may be an individual, schedule or blanket bond at the expense of the consolidated district, and fix the amount of the treasurer's bond in an amount not less than five thousand dollars, which bonds are conditioned upon the faithful performance of their duties.

(3) After making such determinations, the organizational board shall promptly file in the court having jurisdiction as provided in section 32-1-602 (2)(c) a petition stating the name of the consolidated district, the name and address of each member of the first board of the consolidated district, the term of each member thereof, the amount of the surety bonds fixed in accordance with this section, and a description of the director districts, if any, of the consolidated district. Such petition shall also have attached to it photocopies or duplicates of the bonds duly certified by the insurance or surety company issuing the bonds, the originals of which bonds shall be retained in the files of the consolidated district.
(4) The court, upon the filing of such petition, if satisfied that the allegations therein are true, shall enter an order ex parte stating the name of the consolidated district, the name and address of each member of the first board of the consolidated district, a description of the director districts, if any, of the consolidated district, a description of the total consolidated district, any conditions that may attach to the consolidated district if services are consolidated, a description of the specified services to be provided by such district, and the term of office of each member of the board of the consolidated district, and, at the same time, the court shall approve or disapprove the bond or bonds attached to the petition. This order shall be forthwith recorded in the office of the county clerk and recorder in each county wherein the consolidated district is organized, and notice of such action shall be given in accordance with the provisions of section 32-1-105.
(5) The members of the first board named in the order of court as provided in subsection (4) of this section, upon taking the oath of office, shall constitute the board of the consolidated district. The board shall elect one of its members as chairman of the board and president of the consolidated district, one of its members as treasurer of the board and the consolidated district, and a secretary of the board and the consolidated district who may be a member of the board. The secretary and the treasurer may be one person, but, if such is the case, he shall be a member of the board.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1565, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** (1) and (4) amended, p. 1115, § 3, effective July 1; (2)(a)(II), (3), and (4) amended, p. 1084, § 3, effective July 1, 1986. **L. 92:** (2)(a) and (2)(b) amended, p. 880, § 113, effective January 1, 1993.
Editor's note: (1) This section is similar to former § 32-1-114 as it existed prior to 1981.
(2) Amendments to subsection (4) by House Bill 85-1009 and House Bill 85-1062 were harmonized.

32-1-604. Advisory board members. The members of the organizational board of the consolidated district not selected to act as the members of the first board of the consolidated district may act, however, as advisory members to the first board until such time as the terms of office for which they were originally elected would have expired. Advisory members may be compensated equally with compensation paid to the board of the consolidated district for each meeting attended. Advisory board members may not act as officers of nor bind the consolidated district and shall have no vote on any matters before the board of the consolidated district, but they may be employed by the board of the consolidated district in any capacity.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1566, § 1, effective July 1.

Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-115 as it existed prior to 1981.

32-1-605. Special election provisions for consolidated districts. (1) The first election of the consolidated district shall be the next regular special district election. Except as otherwise provided in this part 6, nominations and elections for the consolidated district shall be governed by articles 4 and 13.5 of title 1, C.R.S.
(2) (a) For those consolidated districts having seven directors on the board, beginning with the first regular special district election and continuing with each regular special district election thereafter, members of the consolidated board shall be eligible electors of the director district which they represent. Nominations for a director shall be signed by eligible electors from the director district which the director to be elected is to represent.
(b) After the first regular special district election of directors to the board in such consolidated districts, the board of the consolidated district, at least ninety days prior to any subsequent regular special district election, shall determine the boundaries of each director district pursuant to section 32-1-603 (2) and shall not make any change until after the regular special district election has been held. Upon making any change in the boundaries of any director district, the board, within ninety days prior to a regular special district election, shall file a resolution changing the boundaries with the clerk of the court having jurisdiction and shall give notice by one publication within the consolidated district.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1566, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** (1)(b) amended, p. 1084, § 4, effective July 1, 1986. **L. 92:** Entire section amended, p. 880, § 114, effective January 1, 1993. **L. 2016:** (1) amended, (SB 16-189), ch. 210, p. 787, § 86, effective June 6.

Editor's note: (1) This section is similar to former § 32-1-116 as it existed prior to 1981.
(2) Changes were made in numbering in 1994 to conform to C.R.S. format.

32-1-606. Bonded indebtedness of consolidated districts. (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this section and approved by the eligible electors pursuant to section 32-1-602 (2)(e), all of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of any special district which becomes part of a consolidated district or which has all of its services completely consolidated shall be paid and discharged by the taxpayers having taxable property within the boundaries of the special district which incurred the bonded indebtedness. The board of the consolidated district shall levy a general property tax annually, for so long as may be necessary to pay the bonded indebtedness according to its terms, upon the properties lying within the boundaries of the special district which incurred the bonded indebtedness as the boundaries existed when the special district became a part of the consolidated district. The levying of the tax shall not prevent the board of the consolidated district from imposing special rates, tolls, or charges for services and facilities afforded within the boundaries of the indebted special district or made available to the properties lying within the indebted special district.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this section and approved by the eligible electors pursuant to section 32-1-602 (2)(e), all of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of any special district which consolidates less than all of its services into a consolidated district shall remain the obligation of the special district which incurred the bonded indebtedness and shall be paid and discharged by the taxpayers having taxable property within the boundaries of the indebted special district. The board of the special district which incurred the bonded indebtedness shall levy a general property tax annually, for so long as may be necessary to pay the bonded indebtedness according to its terms, upon the properties lying within the boundaries of the indebted special district. The levying of the tax shall not prevent the board of the consolidated district from imposing special rates, tolls, or charges for services and facilities afforded within the boundaries of the indebted special district or made available to the properties lying within the indebted special district.

(3) Nothing in this section shall prevent a consolidated district from being bound by preconsolidation agreements which have been entered into between or among consolidating districts and which have become part of the terms and conditions of consolidation as set forth in the court order under section 32-1-603 (4), including the assumption of all or part of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of all of the consolidating special districts by the consolidated special district.

Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1567, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** Entire section amended, p. 1115, § 4, effective July 1. **L. 92:** (1) and (2) amended, p. 881, § 115, effective January 1, 1993.

Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-117 as it existed prior to 1981.

32-1-606.5. Elector approval of financial obligations of consolidating districts. (1) Whenever the board of a consolidating special district determines, by resolution, that the interest of the special district, the resulting consolidated district, and the public interest require that the obligation to pay and discharge any financial obligation, including accrued unfunded pension liability, remain the obligation of the taxpayers of said consolidating special district, the board shall request that the court order the submission of the proposition of treating the financial obligation as general obligation indebtedness to the electors of said consolidating district at the consolidation election. Such request shall be made to the court at the hearing held in accordance with section 32-1-602 (2)(e) and shall recite, as to each financial obligation to be submitted at the election:

(a) The object and purpose for which the financial obligation was incurred or the pension plan to which the accrued unfunded liability attaches;

(b) The estimated total cost of discharging the financial obligation;

(c) The estimated term over which the financial obligation will be discharged and the estimated annual cost;

(d) The initial mill levy necessary to pay the annual cost; and

(e) Whether the consolidation is contingent upon approval of the financial obligation as debt.

(2) If the court finds that the board's request complies with the requirements of subsection (1) of this section, the court shall grant the board's request and include in its order entered pursuant to section 32-1-602 (2)(e), that the electors of the consolidating special district vote separately on each financial obligation proposed to be treated as debt.

(3) If approved as debt by the electors at the consolidation election, the financial obligation of the consolidating special district, which becomes part of a consolidated district, shall be paid and discharged by the taxpayers having taxable property within the boundaries of the consolidating special district which incurred the obligation or maintained the pension plan to which the accrued unfunded liability attaches. The board of the consolidated district shall levy a general property tax annually for so long as may be necessary to retire the elector-approved debt.
(4) Nothing in this section shall prevent a consolidated district from being bound by preconsolidation agreements which have been entered into between or among consolidating districts and which have become part of the terms and conditions of consolidation as set forth in the court order under section 32-1-603 (4) including the assumption of any or all of the financial obligations of the consolidating special districts by the consolidated special district.
Source: L. 93: Entire section added, p. 563, § 2, effective April 30.

32-1-607. Powers. (1) Subject to the provisions of section 32-1-602 (2)(e), a consolidated district has all of the rights, powers, and authorities which were granted by statute to each of the special districts which are consolidated and may have the rights, powers, and authorities granted to a metropolitan district. Any consolidated district which embraces any special district is not limited in its exercise of the rights, powers, and authorities granted in this section because the full extent of the purposes and powers to be exercised by the consolidated district was not stated or was stated otherwise in any organization petition, court order, or ballot of any one or more of the special districts so consolidated, but a consolidated district established on or after July 1, 1985, is limited in its exercise of the rights, powers, and authorities granted or validated in this section to the extent the purposes and powers to be exercised by the consolidated district are stated in the consolidation resolution or subsequently approved by a vote of the eligible electors of the consolidated district.
(2) The consolidated district, upon order of the court as provided in section 32-1-603 (4), shall immediately become the owner of and entitled to receive, hold, sue for, and collect all moneys, funds, taxes, levies, assessments, fees, and charges and all property and assets of any kind or nature owned, leased, or claimed by or due to any of the special districts so consolidated. The obligations of the special districts, other than bonded indebtedness and elector-approved debt, shall be assumed by the consolidated district and paid by the consolidated district.
Inclusions and exclusions of lands to and from the consolidated district shall be governed by the provisions of parts 4 and 5 of this article.
(3) In the case of a district into which services are consolidated, the district shall have all of the rights, powers, and authorities which are granted by statute for each of the consolidated services. Unless all of the rights, powers, and authorities of a metropolitan district are granted pursuant to section 32-1-602 (2)(e), if the consolidated district is authorized to provide two or more of the services specified in section 32-1-1004 (2), the consolidated district shall have only those rights, powers, and authorities granted and shall be subject to the limitations applicable to other single-purpose special districts providing a similar service. Any consolidated district which embraces any special district is not limited in its exercise of the rights, powers, and authorities granted in this section because the full extent of the purposes and powers to be exercised by the consolidated district was not stated or was stated otherwise in any organization petition, court order, or ballot of any one or more of the special districts so consolidated, but the consolidated district is limited in its exercise of the rights, powers, and authorities granted or validated in this section to the extent the purposes and powers to be exercised are stated in the consolidated resolution or subsequently approved by a vote of the eligible electors of the consolidated district.

(4) A consolidated district, upon order of the court as provided in section 32-1-603 (4), shall immediately become the owner of and entitled to receive, hold, sue for, and collect all moneys, funds, levies, assessments, fees, and charges and all properties and assets of any kind or nature owned, leased, or claimed by or due to any of the special districts so consolidated for the services consolidated, subject to the terms of a preconsolidation agreement, contract, or bond covenant affecting the conveyance. The obligations of the special districts for the services consolidated, other than bonded indebtedness and elector-approved debt, shall be assumed by the consolidated district and paid by the district. Inclusions and exclusions of lands to and from the consolidated district shall be governed by the provisions of parts 4 and 5 of this article.
(5) Except as provided in this part 6, any special district which consolidates less than all of its services into a consolidated district may remain in existence and not be affected by the consolidation proceeding or may, on motion of the board after notice to the court and after providing for the payment of any outstanding indebtedness, be dissolved. If the special district remains in existence, such special district shall no longer possess the power to provide the services so consolidated. If such special district is authorized to provide only a single remaining service, it shall have only those rights, powers, and authorities granted and shall be subject to the limitations applicable to other single-purpose special districts providing a similar service.
(6) No consolidation proceeding under this part 6 is subject to the provisions of part 2 of this article; except that any consolidation proceeding under this part 6 that will result in the creation of a consolidated district that will provide new or different services within the boundaries of any existing municipality as compared to the services that are either being provided or that are authorized to be provided to the municipality by one or more of the consolidating special districts as of the commencement of the consolidation proceedings subjects the proposed consolidated district to the provisions of part 2 of this article. In such event, the provisions of part 2 of this article relating to the organization of a proposed special district must be complied with by the special district initiating the consolidation after adoption of the consolidation resolution and concurring resolutions but prior to filing such resolutions with the court as specified in section 32-1-602 (2)(c); except that the provisions of section 32-1-203 (2)(b) are not applicable when existing service is being provided by a consolidating special district. Any such municipality is an interested party and entitled to notice of the proceedings for all of the purposes provided in part 2 of this article and in this part 6. If the board of either the initiating special district or a concurring special district disapproves the final action taken on such service plan, the consolidation proceeding must be terminated.
Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1567, § 1, effective July 1. **L. 85:** (1) amended and (3) to (6) added, p. 1116, § 5, effective July 1. **L. 92:** (1) and (3) amended, p. 882, § 116, effective January 1, 1993. **L. 93:** (2) and (4) amended, p. 565, § 3, effective April 30. **L. 2013:** (6) amended, (HB 13-1302), ch. 317, p. 1733, § 1, effective August 7.
Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-118 as it existed prior to 1981.
32-1-608. Subsequent consolidations. Any consolidated district may initiate proceedings for the consolidation of one consolidated district with another special district, whether or not a consolidated district, as provided in section 32-1-602. Such proceedings shall proceed in accordance with this part 6 without regard to the fact that the districts have been previously consolidated.
Source: L. 81: Entire article R&RE, p. 1567, § 1, effective July 1.
Editor's note: This section is similar to former § 32-1-120 as it existed prior to 1981.

Appendix C: Implementation Plan—Task Assignment Form

The following form can be utilized during the planning and implementation process.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN—TASK ASSIGNMENT				
Task:				
Start Date:		**End Date:**		
Task Lead:		**Assisting:**		
Action Steps	**Start Date**	**End Date**	**Person Assigned**	**Resources Required**
Desired Outcome:				
Special Considerations:				
Results:				

Appendix D: Table of Figures

Appendix E: References

[1] United States Census Bureau.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Vintage 2019 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

[4] 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

[5] Ibid.

[6] 2019 Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates (SAIPE), U.S. Census Bureau.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Elk Creek FPD website and completed Triton data tables.

[9] Indian Hills FPD website and completed Triton data tables.

[10] North Fork FPD website and completed Triton data tables.

[11] North Fork Fire Protection District Audit Report, 2019.

[12] National Volunteer Fire Council.

[13] DataUSA.

[14] Firefighters and Cancer, National Fire Protection Association (2018).

[15] Confronting Behavioral Health Issues in the Fire House, Fire Rescue.

[16] Fire Suppression Rating Schedule, Section 504A, Insurance Service Office, 2012.

[17] "How Busy is Busy?" Fire Engineering website. May 1, 2016.

[18] Vandeventer S, Studnek JR, Garrett JS, et al. "The Association Between Ambulance Hospital Turnaround Times and Patient Acuity, Destination Hospital, and Time of Day." *Prehospital Emergency Care* 15(3):366-70. May 2011.

[19] Colorado Constitution Article XIV, Section 18(2)a & Colorado Revised Statutes 29-1-203.

[20] Colorado Revised Statues Title 32, Section 32-1-102, Subsection (4)

[21] Colorado Revised Statues 32-1-602 (2) (a).

[22] Amelia Kohm, David La Piana, and Heather Gowdy, "Strategic Restructuring, Findings from a Study of Integrations and Alliances Among Nonprofit Social Service and Cultural Organizations in the United States," Chapin Hall, June 2000, page 15.

[23] Ibid

[24] Ibid

[25] Murphy JK, "Fire Department Mergers, Consolidations, and Annexations." *Fire Engineering*; 9-04-14.