



OCCIDENTAL COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
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March 28, 2023

TO LAFCO Members,

I am writing this letter in total opposition of the Gold Ridge consolidation efforts of CSA 40. In simple terms it does not make sense. The only way it makes sense, is if you wanted to hurriedly push CSA 40 off to somebody, anybody.

The formation of North Bay Fire should never have been allowed. They should have gone to the closest suitable fire district, and that district should have been given the proper funds to support and consolidate them into their district. I have had the opportunity to observe large consolidations while being told that it saves money. This is a flat out lie. It costs more for all the new hiring of overhead to run the large district. Another negative side effect of the consolidation is the loss of volunteers, who feel pushed out due to the strict training requirements imposed by the new district. I am witnessing the inability for some stations to not get a second truck out the door. A lot of the veteran firefighters have told me they are afraid of being kicked to the curb. It would be a detriment to the community to lose their valuable years of experience and service.

I propose this alternative: Divide Fort Ross. Geographically, give the upper half to Timber Cove along with the necessary financial support to run a larger area. Give the bottom half of Fort Ross to Cazadero along with the financial support to run them. In regards to Camp Meeker, Occidental is less than a mile away from their district line. We have a staffed station Monday through Friday, from 7:00am to 5:00pm. Occidental could provide a positive impact to the Camp Meeker citizens. With the proper funding, we could expand staffing to 7 days a week and work towards twenty-four/seven coverage. We want to keep the Camp Meeker station open and help them replace some of their aged equipment. I think the rest of the CSA 40 should be divided regionally and or to the closest district.

It is said that Gold Ridge and Camp Meeker have not discussed this with the Camp Meeker community and the majority of the CSA 40 fire stations. Gold Ridge Fire, Camp Meeker Fire, and the unelected board members for Camp Meeker Fire have purposely kept their community in the dark.

Ron Lunardi
Occidental Fire Chief