

# **Application for Reorganization**

**Consisting of the Dissolution of the  
Monte Rio Fire Protection District  
and Consolidation of the Same Territory into the  
Gold Ridge Fire Protection District**

Submitted December 30, 2024  
Shepley Schroth-Cary, Fire Chief  
Gold Ridge Fire Protection District



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## Application Information

**Submittal Date:** December 30, 2024  
**Name of Applicant:** Gold Ridge Fire Protection District  
**Mailing Address:** 4500 Hessel Rd. Sebastopol, CA 95472  
**Contact Person:** Fire Chief Shepley Schroth-Cary  
**Contact Email:** shepleyschroth-cary@goldridgefire.org

**Title of Application:** Application for Reorganization Consisting of the Dissolution of the Monte Rio Fire Protection District and Consolidation of the Same Territory into the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District.

**Project Description:** As provided in the Joint Resolution Monte Rio Fire Protection District No. MRO-2024-03 and Gold Ridge Fire Protection District No. 24/25-08, effective October 21, 2024, and included in this Application, the Project is reorganization consisting of the dissolution of the Monte Rio Fire Protection District and annexation of the same territory into the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District resulting in a reorganized fire protection district.

**Location/Area Involved:** As set forth in the Municipal Service Review and amended Spheres of Influence approved by Sonoma County LAFCO on November 6, 2024 in LAFCO Resolution No. **2789** the boundary of the reorganized Gold Ridge Fire Protection District will include the combined existing Monte Rio Fire Protection District boundaries and the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District. The map showing the entirety of the reorganized District is provided with Joint Resolution included in this Application.

## Concurrent Resolution

GRFPD Resolution No: 24/25-08  
MRFPD Resolution No: MR02024-03  
Dated: October 9, 2024 and October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024

**A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE GOLD RIDGE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AND THE MONTE RIO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT CONSTITUTING THE DISTRICTS' RESOLUTION OF APPLICATION TO THE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION OF SONOMA COUNTY FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE GOLD RIDGE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

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**WHEREAS**, the Boards of Directors of Gold Ridge Fire Protection District ("GRFPD") and the Monte Rio Fire Protection District ("MRFPD"), both located in Sonoma County, California, desire to initiate proceedings pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, commencing with section 56000 of the California Government Code ("Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act"), with the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma ("Sonoma LAFCO") for the reorganization of the Parties as specified herein; and

**WHEREAS**, GRFPD and MRFPD (the "Parties") have agreed to initiate proceedings with Sonoma LAFCO by adoption of this Concurrent Resolution for reorganization consisting of the dissolution of MRFPD and annexation to GRFPD of the MRFPD territory (the "Affected Territory") ("the Proposed Reorganization") resulting in a reorganized fire protection district (the "reorganized District"); and

**WHEREAS**, California Government Code section 56853 provides in part that, in the case of a concurrent resolution for reorganization, Sonoma LAFCO shall approve, or conditionally approve, the Proposed Reorganization; and

**WHEREAS**, the boundaries of the territory included in the reorganized District will be the combined territories of the GRFPD and MRFPD, as described in Exhibit "A", attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference; and

**WHEREAS**, the territory included in the reorganized District is inhabited, as defined in the Cortese-Knox- Hertzberg Act; and

**WHEREAS**, the Proposed Reorganization is consistent with the amended spheres of influence of the Parties, based on specific determinations which will be presented to Sonoma LAFCO at their regular commission meeting to be held on November 6, 2024; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Parties desire that the Proposed Reorganization be subject to the following terms and conditions as set forth herein:

- a. The name of the reorganized District shall be the "Gold Ridge Fire Protection District."
- b. The reorganized District is intended to achieve greater economy and efficiency in providing fire protection and emergency services. The Parties have determined that

the Proposed Reorganization is in the best interest of the Parties in order to provide better services to the residents of the reorganized District.

- c. Pursuant to the provisions of California Health and Safety Code §13842 and Government Code section 56866(n), the reorganized District shall continue to be governed by a seven (7) member Board of Directors, subject to District-wide election.
- d. All assets, unrestricted, restricted or fiduciary, held by the Parties shall be transferred to and become assets of the reorganized District, subject to specified limitations described herein. The reorganized District shall be the successor agency to the Parties.
- e. The Parties request a determination by Sonoma LAFCO that for the transfer of the taxes, assets, and equipment of MRFPD to the reorganized District, including both MRFPD ad valorem AB8 property taxes and the MRFPD allocation of Measure H sales tax revenue pursuant to Sonoma County Code section 12-60 et seq.
- f. The Parties request a determination by Sonoma LAFCO that the initial appropriation limit for the reorganized District shall be at least the total of the combined existing appropriation limits of GRFPD and MRFPD, as well as the anticipated tax collections projected from the extension of the GRFPD's special taxes throughout the reorganized District.
- g. The Parties request a determination by Sonoma LAFCO that the MRFPD Capital Reserve fund as constituted at the time of the Reorganization be allocated to the Affected Territory for a period of ten (10) years from the effective date of the Reorganization.
- h. The Parties request a determination by Sonoma LAFCO that the Special Tax funds allocated to specified parcels in the MRFPD pursuant to the Memorandum Of Understanding Between The Bohemian Club Of California And Monte Rio Fire Protection District Regarding Allocation Of Special Property Taxes, remain in place for the duration of that Agreement.
- i. All liabilities of the Parties shall be transferred to and become liabilities of the reorganized District.
- j. The effective date of the Proposed Reorganization shall be the date of recordation of the certificate of completion of reorganization as provided by Government Code section 57200 et seq.
- k. Distribution of Services: The Board of Directors of the reorganized District will authorize an annual work plan for services throughout the reorganized District; and

**WHEREAS**, the Parties hereby consent to the Proposed Reorganization without election by the registered voters within the respective Districts; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Parties' find that the Proposed Reorganization appears to be categorically exempt on the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") by virtue of section 15320 of the

State CEQA Guidelines ("Class 20 Exemption") because the Proposed Reorganization is a reorganization of a local government agencies where the changes do not change the geographical area in which previously existing powers are exercised.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Boards of Directors of Gold Ridge Fire Protection District and the Monte Rio Fire Protection District hereby find, determine, declare, resolve and order as follows:

1. The foregoing recitals are true and correct and are adopted as set forth herein.
2. Sonoma LAFCO is requested to undertake proceedings for the Proposed Reorganization and approve the reorganization Petition according to the terms and conditions stated above pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.
3. The President of the Board of Directors of each Party is authorized and directed to execute this Concurrent Resolution and any other documents as Sonoma LAFCO may reasonably request to accomplish the Proposed Reorganization initiated by this Concurrent Resolution, with an anticipated completion date of July 1, 2025.
4. The Fire Chief of the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District, and/or his designee, shall be, and is hereby, authorized and directed to perform any and all acts required to complete the Proposed Reorganization initiated by this Concurrent Resolution, including, but not limited to, preparation and coordination of the reorganization Petition to Sonoma LAFCO, and preparation and filing of Notice of Exemption with the County Clerk in accordance with the provisions of CEQA and the State CEQA guidelines.

This Concurrent Resolution may be executed in counterparts and is effective from the latest date of execution shown below.

**MONTE RIO FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT:**

**IN REGULAR SESSION**, the foregoing Resolution was introduced by Director Cahn, who moved its adoption, seconded by Director Marrissa, and passed by the Board of Directors of the Monte Rio Fire Protection District this 21<sup>st</sup> day of October 2024, by a regular roll call vote of the members of said Board:

Vote: Aye 5 No 0 Absent 0

**WHEREUPON**, the President declared the foregoing Resolution adopted, and

**SO ORDERED:**

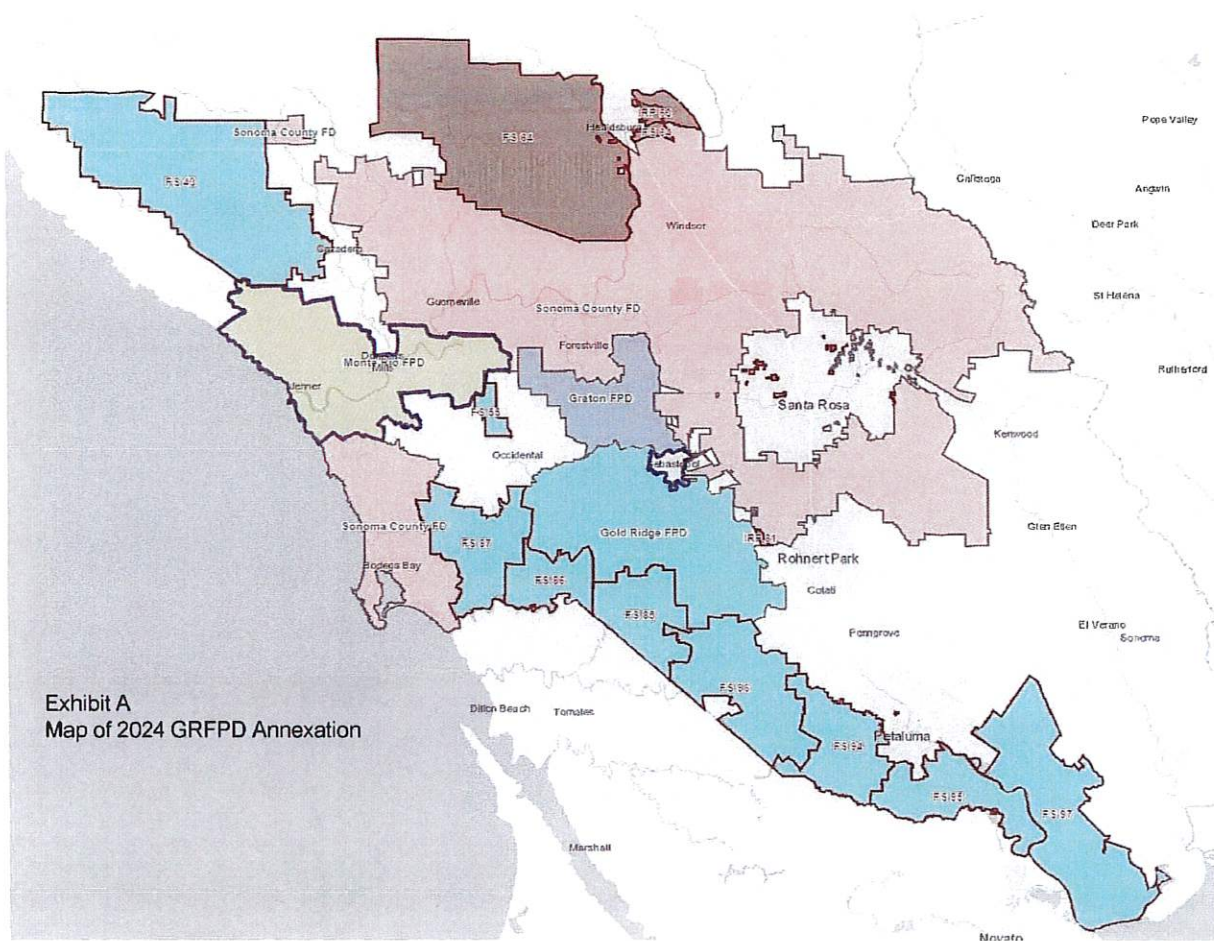
  
Dan Fein, Board President

**ATTEST:**

  
Tiffanie Herring, Board Clerk



### Map of Reorganized District



## History of Consolidating Agencies

### Gold Ridge Fire Protection District

The Gold Ridge Fire Protection District ("Gold Ridge" or "the District") was initially formed in 1993 as a consolidation of the Hessel and Twin Hills Fire Protection Districts. In 2023, the District consolidated County Service Area-40 which included 7 volunteer fire companies who served the communities of Fort Ross, Camp Meeker, Bodega, Valley Ford, Two Rock, Wilmar, and Lakeville. The District provides fire protection and emergency services to a resident population of approximately 30,000 across 226 square miles. The District's service area is mainly residential, but also includes a mix of commercial, light industrial and rural agricultural properties.

Gold Ridge is a combination Fire District consisting of 21 full-time fire suppression staff, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 2 Division Chiefs, a Fire Chief, 3 administrators and approximately 170 volunteers. The full-time fire suppression staff at Gold Ridge work a 48 hour on-duty, 96 hour off-duty schedule covering three rotating shifts.

Gold Ridge volunteers contribute to the organization in several important ways. They are available for response whenever needed, fill stipend daytime and sleeper shifts, staff engine companies during large wildland fire response, and provide station coverage. Gold Ridge volunteers are comprised of district residents and out of district members.

The District recruits interns from the Santa Rosa Junior College who make a year-long commitment to the organization. After their year-long internship, they have the option to become volunteers. Additionally, Gold Ridge has an Explorer Post which provides a pathway for new volunteers.

Gold Ridge currently operates 3 full-time staffed stations: Hessel Station 81 (Headquarters), Twin Hills Station 82, and Wilmar Station 94. The District also has volunteer stations located in Lakeville, Two Rock, Valley Ford, Bodega, Freestone, Camp Meeker and Fort Ross.

Fire Station	Response Area	Address	Staffing
43	FORT ROSS	24110 Fort Ross Rd, Cazadero	Volunteer
55	CAMP MEEKER	5240 Bohemian Hwy, Occidental	Volunteer
80	FREESTONE	456 Bohemian Hwy, Sebastopol	Volunteer
81	HESSEL	4500 Hessel Rd, Sebastopol	Full-time Captain/Engineer/ Volunteer Stipend
82	WATERTROUGH	1690 Watertrough Rd, Sebastopol	Full-time Captain/Engineer/ Volunteer Stipend
86	VALLEYFORD	14445 Hwy 1, Valley Ford	Volunteer
87	BODEGA	17184 Bodega Hwy, Bodega	Volunteer
94	WILMAR	3825 Bodega Ave, Petaluma	Full-time Captain/Engineer/ Volunteer Stipend
96	TWO ROCK	7599 Valley Ford Rd, Petaluma	Volunteer
97	LAKEVILLE	5070 Lakeville Hwy, Petaluma	Training Captain/Engineer (when not committed to a training assignment)



The center of the District is within County Exclusive Operating Area 1 in which emergency ground transport ambulance service is provided by Sonoma County Fire District (“SCFD”). The southern portion of the District receives emergency ground transport ambulance service from Petaluma Fire Department and Life West and in the northernmost part of the District ambulance service comes from Coast Life Support. Gold Ridge also has a First Responder Basic Life Support agreement with SCFD which further enhanced community emergency medical services.

### **Monte Rio Fire Protection District**

The Monte Rio Fire Protection District (“Monte Rio” or “Monte Rio FPD”) serves the unincorporated communities of Jenner, Duncans Mills, and Monte Rio. Formed in 1920, it is the oldest Fire Protection District in Sonoma County.

The Monte Rio Fire Protection District covers 45 square miles of diverse terrain including coastal beaches and bluffs, the lower swath of the Russian River, open wildland, and redwood forests. Most development is clustered on either side of the Russian River and along creek tributaries. Monte Rio also serves several seasonal camps, notably the Bohemian Grove. Some areas of the Monte Rio FPD, such as “The Terraces” immediately west and above the District headquarters, are heavily wooded and have very poor access, with very narrow, constricted roadways.

Monte Rio FPD serves both full and part-time residents within district boundaries, though the trend has been conversion of seasonal home use to year-round use. The district does experience a seasonal uptick in population in the summer, particularly due to camp use.

While outside County Exclusive Operating Area 1, Monte Rio FPD also receives emergency ground transport ambulance service as part of the ambulance zone of SCFD pursuant to Health and Safety Code section 1797.201.

### **Historical Call for Service Volumes and Average Response Times**

<b>Year</b>	<b># of Calls</b>	<b>Average Response Times (Dispatched to “Arrived On Scene”)</b>
2019	496	22 minutes 10 seconds
2020	499	23 minutes 20 seconds
2021	630	24 minutes 8 seconds
2022	619	22 minutes 24 seconds
2023	715	21 minutes

## **Plan for Service**

### **Description of Current Services**

The current staffing model at Monte Rio FPD consists of a Volunteer Fire Chief, 3 full-time Captains, 3 full-time Engineers, and a contingent of part-time/stipend firefighters. Monte Rio regularly achieves a three-person engine company 24/7, however, they rely heavily on the individual response of Chief 5400, Steve Baxman. Call volume increases with inclement weather and seasonal visitors.

### **Description of Proposed Services**

The Monte Rio Fire Station will be staffed 24/7 with a minimum of a 3-person engine company consisting of a captain, engineer, and firefighter. The proposed staffing model will include participation from volunteers in the form of a daily stipend position. The inclusion of volunteers is important to ensure appropriate response depth when multiple resources are required i.e.: fires, traffic accidents, storm flood events, and multiple calls within the response area. As a result of the reorganization, a larger volunteer and paid labor force will enhance the ability to cover responses and station coverage. The combining of the two agencies will provide an enhanced recruitment and retention tool, allowing more choices and opportunities for participation. A combined work force will strengthen specialized programs like water rescue and technical rescue. As one agency, immediate efficiencies will be achieved on a day-to-day operational level. This includes 24-hour Battalion Chief coverage. The staffing, along with the efficiencies from reorganization will ensure that we are able to meet the needs of our community and visitors. The location of the Monte Rio Fire Station will also provide improved connectivity to the Camp Meeker and Fort Ross response areas enabling more efficient coordination of resources and personnel.

Gold Ridge has three Training Captains who coordinate the annual training calendar, administer Target Solutions (an online training program), develop training curriculum, monitor training compliance, and provide hands-on training. These Captains work a 2x4 schedule ensuring that they are available to administer drills at night when the bulk of the volunteers receive training. Providing adequate training for nearly 200 volunteers in the reorganized District is a recognized challenge and the District has made a significant investment to meet the challenge.

The Gold Ridge Fire District's Management Team consists of the Fire Chief, two Division Chiefs, and three Battalion Chiefs. The daily operation of the District is managed by the Battalion Chiefs who work on 2x4 providing 24/7 coverage. The Fire Chief and the two Division Chiefs work a 40-hour work week and remain on call on a rotating 2x4 schedule as the Duty Chief to provide redundancy to the battalion chiefs. The depth of the management team ensures that fire ground leadership is present when needed. The Division Chiefs have additional expertise in training and fire prevention which helps to bolster these important programs.

The Gold Ridge District Administrative Team consists of an Executive Assistant/Finance Officer, a part-time Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper, and a part-time Volunteer Coordinator. This team handles all the business needs of the District including but not limited to budgeting and finance, accounts payable and receivable, and human resources. Notably, Gold Ridge Fire bookkeeping services are already contracted with Monte Rio Fire which would provide an advantage in terms of continuity of business practices.

The reorganized District will continue to have emergency ground transport ambulance service provided by SCFD. The existing First Responder Basic Life Support agreement will be extended into the former Monte Rio FPD territory to further enhance community emergency medical services throughout the entire reorganized District.

### **Schedule for Providing Services**

Based on consultations with Sonoma County LAFCO staff, with a submittal date in December 2024, LAFCO could move through application review, consideration, and approval process, including any protest proceedings, to complete approval of this application by the regular LAFCO meeting on May 7, 2025. Based on this ongoing coordination and timeline, the annexation of the Monte Rio Fire Protection District into the reorganized Gold Ridge Fire Protection District would be completed not later than June 30, 2025, for a "go live" date not later than July 1, 2025.

## District Financial Position

The Gold Ridge Fire Protection District seven-member elected board passes a balanced budget each fiscal year. The District's current operating budget for FY 2024-25 is \$12,794,185. Property tax accounts for 42% of total revenue, approximately 20% from Measure H Sales Tax, 36% is composed of intergovernmental revenue, i.e. county revenue sharing payment and contracts for services, and the remaining is made up of miscellaneous income and reimbursements. Salaries and employee benefits make up 63% of the expenditures, approximately 18% is dedicated to operating supplies and services, 9% is made up of building and equipment assets and loans, and 10% has been set aside for specific large purchases and contingencies.

The District has engaged Weist Law Firm and Cal Muni Advisors to assist the District in strategic planning, financial policy development, pension management, and municipal bond financing. This past year the Board has passed the following financial policies: Reserve Management Policy, Investment Policy, Debt Management Policy, and UAL Management Policy. Recently the District was awarded an AA+ credit rating by S&P which reflects the District's financial health and long-term stability. This high rating allows the District to secure more favorable borrowing terms and access to lower interest rates, resulting in significant cost savings when funding capital improvement projects.

## Gold Ridge Fire Protection District Tax Revenue Sources

### Special Tax

Gold Ridge Fire Protection District's special property tax revenue is generated from three voter-approved taxes. The 1997 tax approved in District Ordinance 96-97-1 is a unit of risk assessment at \$5.00 per unit of risk. A typical residential home is 4 units of risk equaling a total charge of \$20.00. The 2008 tax Measure O approved in District Ordinance 08-09-1-R is a simple tax applied to improved parcels at the rate of \$45.00/parcel. Finally, the 2018 tax Measure E approved in District Ordinance 2019/20-1 is a special tax which is levied at a rate not to exceed \$200.00 per assessor's parcel number plus \$100.00 per additional unit or site for residential and lodging properties; \$300.00 per assessor's parcel plus \$0.14 per square foot for commercial, industrial and warehouse property; \$50.00 for pastureland; and \$100.00 per assessor's parcel for other agricultural and vacant land. This special tax has an inflation adjustment which is applied each year and can be levied at a higher rate should the board vote to do so. Currently, the three special taxes combined, when applied to a typical single family home, total \$265 annually.

### Summary of Gold Ridge Fire Protection District Special Tax Rates

Tax	Rate	Unit
1997 Tax	\$5	per unit of risk - typical family home is 4 units
Measure O	\$45	per improved parcel
Measure E	\$200	per residential property + \$100/additional unit
	\$300	per commercial property = \$0.14 per sq. ft.
	\$100	per other parcel i.e. vacant
	\$50	for pastureland

Monte Rio Fire District passed Measure U in 2018, a special tax which generates roughly \$500,000 annually. Residential is assessed at \$200 annually, Commercial \$400, and \$100 for timberland and vacant land. Like Gold Ridge, there are variables to the charge base on some of the use codes. Additionally, the base tax rate can be adjusted for inflation annually.

**Summary of Monte Rio Fire Special Tax Current Rates/Use Codes**

Use Code	Rate / APN	Rate / Add'l Unit	Charge Base
MOBILE HOME/CAMPGROUND SPACES	200	50	SPACE
VACANT LAND	100	0	FLAT RATE
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	200	0	FLAT RATE
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	400	0	UNIT
HOTEL/MOTEL/LODGING	200	50	UNIT
COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL	400	0	FLAT RATE
WAREHOUSE	400	0	FLAT RATE
CLUB/LODGE	200	0	FLAT RATE
TIMBERLAND	100	1	ACRE
EXCLUDED	0	0	FLAT RATE

The Gold Ridge Fire Protection District special tax is estimated to generate \$2.4M in FY 2024/25. When applied to the 2,652 parcels within the Monte Rio Fire Protection District, the special tax is estimated to generate \$523,000.

**Ad Valorem Tax**

Gold Ridge ad valorem property tax is estimated to generate approximately \$3M in FY 2024/25. The characteristic of this revenue source provides steady growth, the housing market in the district is stable. Monte Rio generates \$675,000 in ad-valorem.

**Measure H Sales Tax**

In March 2024, Measure H or the “Improved and Enhanced Local Fire Protection, Paramedic Services and Disaster Response Initiative” was passed which imposes a ½ cent sales tax on retail transactions within Sonoma County starting October 1, 2024, and was estimated by the ordinance to generate approximately \$60M in County-wide revenue. The District’s allocation of Measure H funding is 9.67% and is estimated to generate approximately \$5.8 M annually. The Monte Rio Fire District Measure H funding is 2.43% which is estimated to generate approximately \$1.46 M annually.

**Cash Asset Transfer Agreement**

The Monte Rio Fire District has \$2 M in reserve and agrees to transfer all cash assets and fund balances to the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District.

## Five-Year Projection

Gold Ridge Fire Protection District						
5 year Financial Projection of Consolidated Fire District						
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
	Final	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
* Total 10 · Property Tax	3,059,826	3,796,023	3,871,943	3,949,382	4,028,369	4,108,937
Total 10.1 · Special Tax	2,400,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Total 17 · Use of Money/Property	13,212	13,212	13,212	13,212	13,212	13,212
* Total 20 · Intergovernmental Revenues	4,801,247	5,635,297	5,781,815	5,932,142	6,086,378	6,244,623
* Total 20.1 · Measure H	2,500,000	7,260,000	7,332,600	7,405,926	7,479,985	7,554,785
Total 30 · Charges for Services	760	560	560	560	560	560
Total 40 · Miscellaneous Revenues	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140	19,140
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>12,794,185</b>	<b>19,724,232</b>	<b>20,019,270</b>	<b>20,320,362</b>	<b>20,627,644</b>	<b>20,941,257</b>
* Total 50 · Salaries/Emp Benefits	8,074,290	13,806,962	14,013,489	14,224,253	14,439,351	14,658,880
* Total 60 · Services/Supplies	2,251,300	2,866,770	2,909,772	2,953,418	2,997,719	3,042,685
Total 75 · LT Debt	288,778	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total 85 · Assets	923,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000
Total 90 · Appropriations	1,256,817	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
<b>Grand Total Expenditures</b>	<b>12,794,185</b>	<b>18,973,732</b>	<b>19,223,260</b>	<b>19,477,671</b>	<b>19,737,070</b>	<b>20,001,565</b>
<b>Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>750,499</b>	<b>796,009</b>	<b>842,690</b>	<b>890,574</b>	<b>939,692</b>

\* Assuming 2% increase in Property Tax annually, 2.6% CPI increase in the County Revenue Sharing Agreement annually, 1% increase in Measure H Sales Tax annually, Salaries and benefits are 70% of the annual budget, and 1.5% increase in operating costs per year.

### Financial Benefits & Opportunities of Reorganization

- Cost reductions from shared management, fire prevention and administrative positions.
- Combining fleet into one available pool will reduce the need to purchase certain vehicles.
- Better positioned as a larger agency when competing for grants
- Increased purchasing power through volume purchases, competitive bid processes, and standardization of vendors.
- Administrative, indirect, and operative cost savings.
- Service improvement will include enhanced community risk reduction services, community outreach services, dedicated training officer, enhanced disaster preparedness and response, depth of operational resources, enhanced command and control of major incidents.
- Depth of labor force which reduces turnover and provides opportunity

## Capital Improvements

### Fleet Management

Gold Ridge will provide a comprehensive preventive maintenance (PM) program consisting of semi-annual service and safety inspections by equipment/safety specialists and a certified fire mechanic, brake and lamp inspections, and Basic Inspection of Terminal, if applicable. Repairs will be completed in-house, within our capability, and by outside vendors such as Twin Oaks Garage, Burton's Fire Apparatus in Modesto, Pete's Automotive in Sebastopol, as well as others, depending



on the nature of repair. Reserve apparatus may also be available when equipment is out of service for an extended time. The District has a comprehensive Fleet Replacement plan:

- Command Vehicles: 10 years. Battalion Chief's unit runs 3-4 years front-line, then is moved into utility use for the balance.
- Type 1 Engine: 20 years. One reserve.
- Type 3 Engine: 20 years. Two reserves.
- Water Tender: 25 years. No reserves.
- Ladder Truck: 25 years.
- Rescue: 25 years.

Monte Rio FPD took delivery of a new Type 3 engine in November and two new Type 6 engines in 2018 and 2019. The type 1 engine is due for replacement and the Water tender will require a rebuild in the near future. We will utilize cash reserves and our AA+ rating to seek lending to address future purchases. Additionally, a right sizing of the fleet will occur resulting in one type 1 engine, two type 3 engines, two type 6 engines, one water tender and two utilities. All current Monte Rio fleet and equipment will be transferred to the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District upon consolidation.

### **Facilities**

The Monte Rio Fire District has three stations. The primary station is in the town of Monte Rio and is currently staffed. This station is in need of renovation or replacement and will be a priority for capital investment in the reorganized District. The Duncan Mills station is located on Hwy 116 just prior to the community of Duncan Mills. A small number of volunteers use this station as their primary response location otherwise the station is used to store equipment. The third station is in Jenner and is primarily a vehicle storage facility. All current Monte Rio facility ownership will be transferred to the District upon consolidation.

### **Appropriations Limit for Reorganized Gold Ridge Fire Protection District**

As directed by the Gold Ridge FPD and Monte Rio FPD Joint Resolution effective October 9, 2024, LAFCO is requested to establish the initial appropriations limit for the reorganized Gold Ridge Fire Protection District starting in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 as the total of the combined appropriations limits of the Gold Ridge FPD and the Monte Rio FPD, as well as the anticipated increased tax collections projected from the extension of the Gold Ridge FPD special tax throughout the entirety of reorganized District and the revenues for all agencies from the County-wide sales tax measure which was passed in March 2024. Accordingly, it is requested that the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 appropriations limit for the reorganized Gold Ridge FPD be established at \$35,000,000.00.

### **Identification of Existing Fire Service Providers Affected by Reorganization**

As set forth in the Joint Resolution effective October 9, 2024, and included in this application; the reorganization includes the dissolution of the Monte Rio Fire Protection District and consolidation of the same territory into the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District.

Any existing automatic and mutual aid agreements with neighboring cities and fire districts will remain in place, including seasonal coverage on State Responsibility Areas by staffed Cal Fire stations within and adjacent to the reorganized District. An improved level of service will be achieved by consolidation and be realized by neighboring cities and fire districts.

## **Governance**

As set forth in the Joint Resolution effective October 9, 2024, it has been determined that the Gold Ridge Fire Protection District Board of Directors will continue to be comprised of seven Directors elected in District-wide election to at-large positions serving four-year terms of office. The formation of the Board of Directors is pursuant to the provisions of the California Health and Safety Code section 13842 and Government Code section 56886(n).

## **Impacts of Reorganization on Current Employees and Volunteers**

Gold Ridge is a combination Fire District consisting of 21 full-time fire suppression staff, 3 Battalion Chiefs, 2 Division Chiefs, a Fire Chief, 3 administrators and approximately 170 volunteers. The full-time fire suppression staff at Gold Ridge are represented by the International Association of Firefighters (IAFF) Local 1401, Gold Ridge Paid Firefighters Association. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) defines the salaries and benefits of these positions and is collaboratively negotiated on an annual basis. No change in staffing is anticipated.

The Monte Rio Station will be staffed 24/7 with a minimum of a 3-person engine company consisting of a captain, engineer, and firefighter. The proposed staffing model will include participation from volunteers in the form of a daily stipend position. Current Monte Rio FPD paid suppression staff will be blended into one District-wide workforce and will be assigned a shift and station assignment based on operational need by the Fire Chief or his designee.