

EXPLAINER: PROPOSED FIRE DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION

INTRODUCTION: As you may know, Fire Chiefs of the [Elk Creek](#), [Inter-Canyon](#), and [North Fork](#) Fire Protection Districts (FPDs) advocate a merger of the three districts, seek to increase our common mill levy to as much as 16 mills, and hire an additional 12 firefighter/EMTs on rotating shifts for 24/7 service.

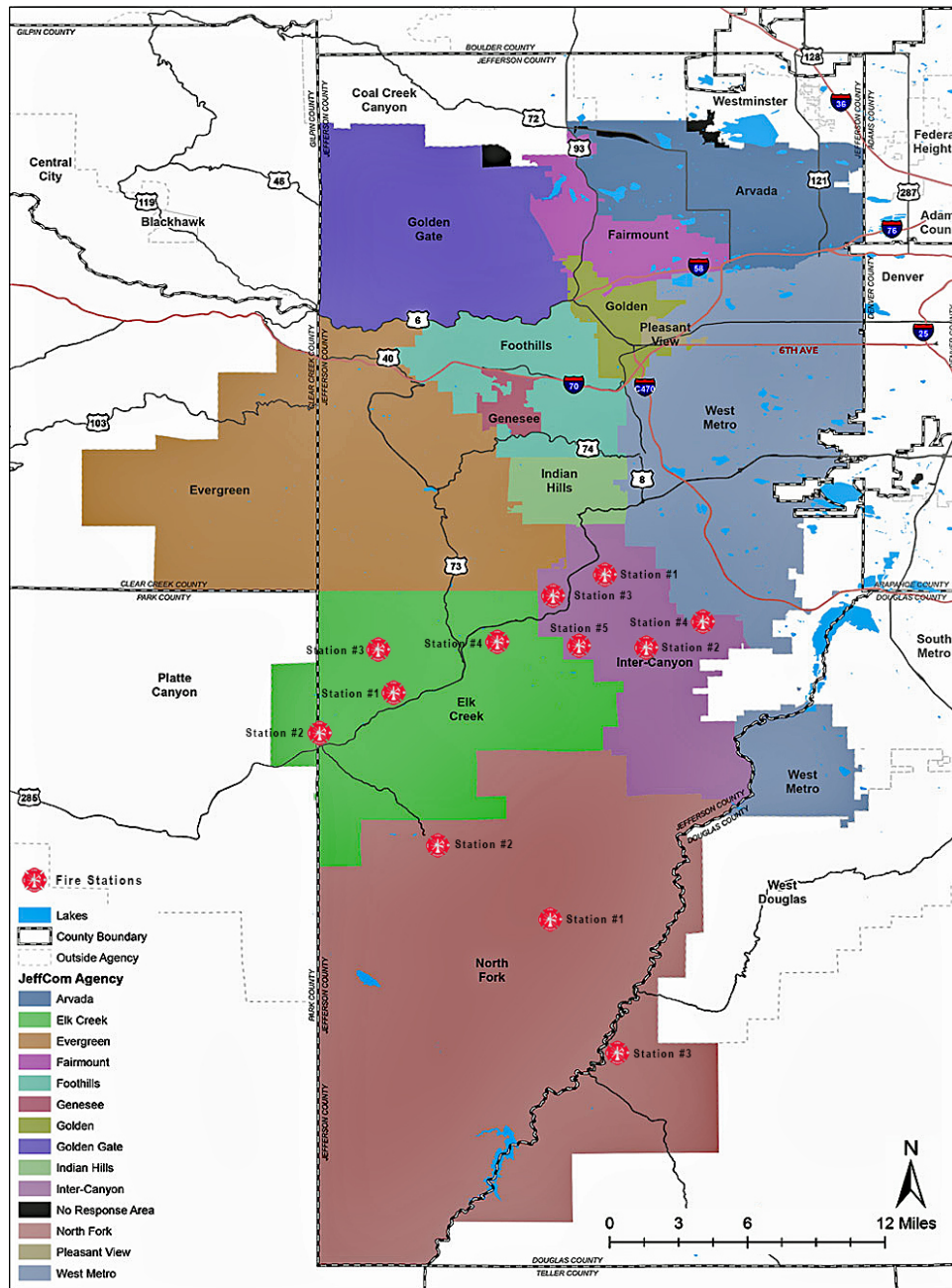


FIGURE 1: Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs, source [JeffCom GIS](#).

The proposed merger would consolidate the firefighting, emergency services, and rescue operations; firefighter/EMT personnel; firefighting apparatus/equipment; as well as the fire station facilities into a single fire district deploying more than 100 firefighter/EMT personnel; covering almost 400 sq-mi; utilizing 12 fire stations with apparatus and communication towers; and involving \$10M+ of annual spending while serving 24,000 full-time residents. A comprehensive study of possible collaboration between the Elk Creek, Indian Hills, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs conducted in 2021 can be found here: [Consolidation Study](#) (Indian Hills FPD subsequently dropped out of consideration going forward).

CURRENT FIRE DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS AND STATISTICS: Table 1 lists key demographics and statistics for the three individual fire protection districts compared with the proposed merged fire protection district.

TABLE 1: Fire Protection District Demographics and Statistics.

DEMOGRAPHIC/ STATISTIC	ECFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD	Merged FPD
POPULATION	17,000	5,250	1,700	24,000
GEOGRAPHIC AREA	98 sq-mi	52 sq-mi	240 sq-mi	390 sq-mi
CURRENT MILL LEVY	12.54 ¹	13.56	12.08	16.00 ²
2022 ANNUAL REVENUE SPENDING PER- PERSON PROPERTY VALUATION⁵	\$5,800,000 ³ \$340/person \$366,826,000	\$2,313,000 \$440/person \$170,575,000	\$450,000 ⁴ \$265/person \$37,252,000	\$10,000,000 \$420/person (estimated)
CAREER FIREFIGHTER/EMT PERSONNEL	12 3 shifts of 4 24/7 service	3 no 24/7 service	2 no 24/7 service	24 ⁶ 3 shifts of 8 24/7 service
VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER/EMT PERSONNEL	35	30	30	90
ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL	5 ⁷	3 ⁷	3 ⁷	5
FIRE STATIONS	4	5	3	12 ⁸
BOARD OF DIRECTORS	5	5	5	5 or 7 ⁹

NOTES FOR TABLE 1:

1. Unless reapproved by fire district voters, 2.5 mills of the current Elk Creek FPD mill levy will expire at the end of 2023 thus the district mill levy will revert to total of ~10.00 mills.
2. Estimated annual revenue is based on a 16 mill levy across the entire fire district using current property valuations.
3. The Elk Creek FPD \$5.8M in annual revenue includes ~\$1.2M of CRRF ([Colorado Resource Report Forms and Guidelines](#)) Wildfire Reimbursements for firefighting services delivered outside the fire district, thus, the 2022 revenue/spending within the fire district is projected to be approximately \$4.6M or ~\$270/person. Some of the CRRF reimbursements are for consumables (diesel fuel), salaries, and day rates for fire engines. The actual "profit" to Elk Creek FPD for in-district use is unknown to CoSECC.
4. Estimated from \$208,000 in property taxes; \$12,000 in specific ownership taxes; \$90,000 in fees-in-lieu of-taxes; and \$140,000 in ambulance fees.
5. Fire district property valuations shown are the total combined commercial and residential property valuations as determine by the respective county assessors associated with the fire district.
6. Twenty-four, full-time career personnel would allow the consolidated fire protection district to staff multiple fire stations with 24/7 rotating firefighter/EMT crews at locations within Conifer, Morrison, and Pine Grove service areas.
7. Currently, three administrative personnel are shared among the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs.
8. Some fire district facilities may be refurbished and/or newly constructed in order to accommodate additional firefighter/EMT personnel.
9. The makeup of the volunteer board of directors (Colorado Law specifies that Special District boards are all volunteer) for a consolidated district has not been determined; however, the number of members of the new Board of Directors would decrease from the present total of 15 board members – currently, 5 on each board – to an either 5 or 7 member board. CoSECC presumes some members would be elected from wards of equal population with one or two members elected at-large.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: While the three fire districts have recently conducted a coordinated citizen survey, that survey is now closed but the need for community engagement is more important now than ever. Clearly, the proposed consolidation of our three local fire districts is a matter of serious concern for members of all three communities, as a result, we strongly encourage you to attend the monthly board of directors meetings for your district. Currently, CoSECC has not made a complete assessment regarding the fire district consolidation question; however, we do strongly believe that members of the community must ask questions, express

concern, and make comments regarding this proposal. The leadership at your fire district want to hear from you!

Elk Creek FPD: Board of directors meeting are held every 2nd Thursday of the month beginning at 6:00pm at Station #1 located at 11993 Blackfoot Road, Conifer CO 80433. You can also find a Zoom option at the fire district website here: [Elk Creek FPD BoD Meetings](#)

Inter-Canyon FPD: Board of directors meeting are held every 2nd Wednesday of the month beginning at 6:00pm at Station #3 located at 8445 U.S.-285, Morrison CO 80465.

North Fork FPD: Board of directors meeting are held every 3rd Wednesday of the month beginning at 1:00pm at Station #1 located at 19384 County Road 126 Buffalo Creek CO 80425.

CONTACT US: Also, please sent your comments, questions, and concerns to us via email at: cosecc.co@gmail.com