

EXPLAINER: THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL PLAN FOR FIRE DISTRICT "UNIFICATION"

WHAT ARE THE FIRE CHIEFS' "UNIFICATION" PLANS? You may have been notified that the Fire Chiefs of the [Elk Creek](#), [Inter-Canyon](#), and [North Fork](#) Fire Protection Districts (FPDs), in conjunction with their boards of directors and attorneys, have recently announced that they have found a way to force on our mountain community what they are calling "unification". In reality, their plan is the very same Consolidation Plan that Elk Creek FPD voters soundly rejected—49% FOR vs 51% AGAINST—during the November 2023 ballot election. Despite their loss at the ballot box, the Fire Chiefs have now decided to subvert the will of the people in order to move their agenda forward, so that—in the guise of the need to hire firefighters—claimed to be at "crisis" levels¹—they will be able to unnecessarily and improperly convert our combination volunteer/full-time fire district personnel into a so-called "professional" fire protection and emergency medical services organization.

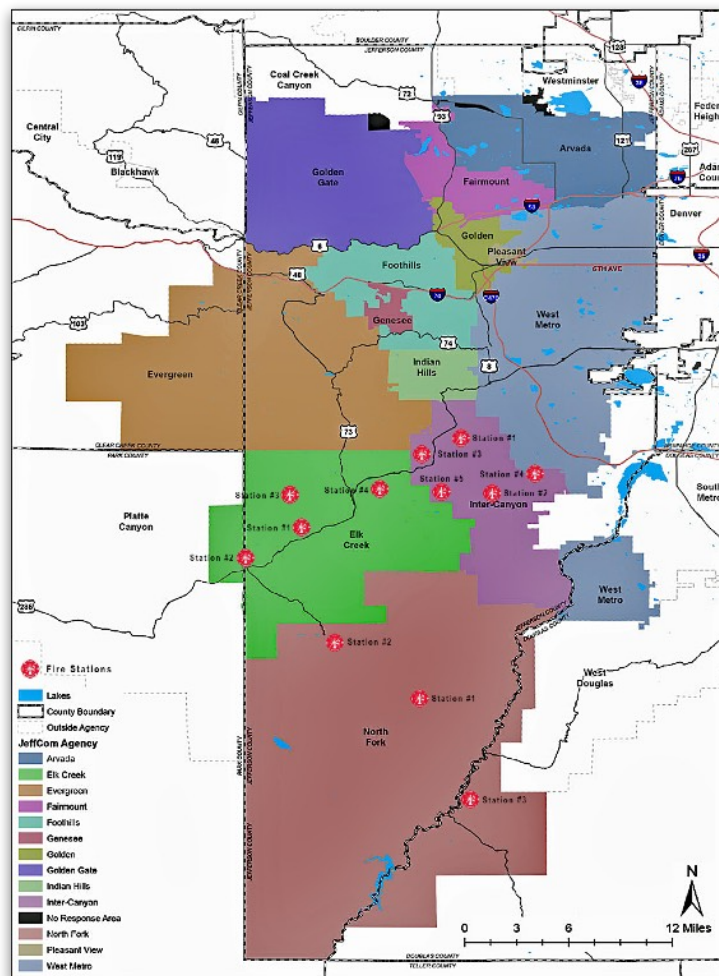


Figure 1: The consolidated/merged Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs—to be rebranded "Conifer FPD"—would encompass nearly 400 sq-mi of Jefferson, Douglas, and Park Counties, source [JeffCom GIS](#).

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF FIRE CHIEFS’ "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PLAN? Using "unification" propaganda information released recently by the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs, along with previously available public information regarding the consolidation/merger plan (their previously described Consolidation Plan²), an analysis performed here reveals that this unconstitutional "plan"—developed behind-the-scenes, out-of-view of the community—will have significant negative impacts on the emergency response capability, level-of-service, and financial soundness, not only on the 17,000 residents of the current Elk Creek FPD, but on the 5,250 Inter-Canyon FPD and 1,700 North Fork FPD residents as well.

Table 1 summarizes the negative impacts that this "Unification" = Consolidation Plan will create for our mountain community.

TABLE 1: Summary Impacts of the Fire Chiefs’ Consolidation Plan.

ANALYSIS: IMPACTS OF THE "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PLAN
Unconstitutionally Subverts the Will of the Voters of Elk Creek FPD
Illicitly Raises the Taxes on Elk Creek FPD Property Owners
Unlawfully Forces Loss of Local Control on Elk Creek FPD Community Voters
Recklessly Diminishes the Current High Level-of-Service Within the Elk Creek FPD Community
Illegitimately Places an Enormous Debt Burden on the Entire Mountain Community at \$10,000+ per Household
Needlessly Requires Elk Creek FPD Taxpayers to Substantially Subsidize Upgrading of Services at Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs

The Fire Chiefs’ "Unification" = Consolidation Plan, through its legal mechanism of the First Amendment to Pre-consolidation Inter-government Agreement (the Amended Pre-consolidation IGA) , dated September 26, 2024 WILL NOT reduce Elk Creek FPD property owners taxes by 0.500 mills as claimed but by the Fire Chiefs, instead once the Amended Pre-consolidation IGA is fully executed, the North Fork FPD will possess the authority under to tax former Elk Creek FPD (and former Inter-Canyon FPD) property owners at a mill levy rate of 12.8960 mills rate than the current Elk Creek FPD mill rate of 12.5510 mills, please see the explanation in the endnote below as well as updated information at <https://cosecc.org>.³

Importantly, while the citizens of the Conifer, Aspen Park, South Evergreen, and Pine Junction communities will bear the vast majority of the economic burden envisioned by this

Consolidation Plan, the communities of Morrison, Pine Grove, and Buffalo Creek will also be economically burdened for years to come, the entire population of a consolidated fire district will be locked into a plan that has not yet been developed to meet the needs of our community, instead, the plan that Fire Chiefs are determined to force on residents-taxpayers is narrowly focused toward increasing property taxes in future in order to pay for unnecessary new personnel, capital spending, and projects that will not benefit residents if the three fire districts but which will cost the average household \$10,000+.

WHAT YOU CAN DO! If you live within either the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, or North Fork FPDs but believe that the Fire Chiefs' Consolidation Plan is not in the best interests of our community, please consider completing a [Letter of Protest](#)—which we hope will be accepted by the fire districts—from these suggested samples then email it to your fire district board members as described in the sample letter(s).

Additionally, if you live in either the Inter-Canyon or Elk Creek FPDs, please plan to attend your fire district's Exclusion Hearing—on November 13, 2024, 6pm and November 21, 2024, 6pm—to personally protest these actions and submit your Letter of Protest. If you live in the North Fork FPD, please plan to the November 20, 2024, 1pm Inclusion Hearing to personally protest these actions. By statute, the 1st Judicial District Court must review and then either approve or disapprove these Exclusion, Inclusion, and Dissolution actions, presumably some time in December 2024.

What is going on here is a bulldozer operated by the three fire chiefs: THE ONLY PLACE THAT THEY CAN BE STOPPED IS IN COURT. We believe that the evidence showing that the fire chiefs have violated the ballot box decision is a strong enough legal wall to stop them.

CONTACT US: For late breaking news regarding the Fire Chiefs' Consolidation Plan and how you can help stop it, please the CoSECC website here: <https://cosecc.org> or contact us via email at: cosecc.co@gmail.com.

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE FIRE CHIEFS' "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PLAN

UNDERSTANDING THE FIRE CHIEFS' "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PROCESS: Using provisions of the Colorado Title 32 Special Districts Act that were never intended for this purpose—specifically, Sections 32-1-501(1.5) and 32-1-710 of the Act—the three Fire Chiefs, their boards of directors, and their attorneys have developed the following process that unconstitutionally subverts the will of the People:⁴

1. First, the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPD Boards of Directors have recently voted to adopt of the [First Amendment to Pre-consolidation IGA](#) and [Resolution and Order of Exclusion/\(Inclusion\)](#) which together have the legal effect of moving all of the residential and commercial real property currently/originally within the boundaries of Elk Creek and Inter-Canyon FPDs into the North Fork FPD;
2. Next, the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPD Boards of Directors will conduct

rubber-stamp hearings to determine whether or not the preliminarily adopted exclusion/inclusion resolutions "...are in the best interests of the respective fire districts...", ratify the Elk Creek and Inter-Canyon exclusion resolutions/orders, ratify the North Fork FPD inclusion resolution/order, and then file each of these actions with the 1st Judicial District Court; and

3. Finally, presumably at a special meeting in December, the Elk Creek and Inter-Canyon FPD Boards of Directors will vote to dissolve their respective fire protect districts, and file their dissolution resolutions/orders with the 1st Judicial District Court. The now nearly 400 sq-mi North Fork FPD will begin operating as the consolidation of the three fire districts, appoint a new board of directors, and change its name to Conifer FPD—done!

For the latest information regarding where the three fire districts are in this process, please the Committee's website here: <https://cosecc.org>.

UNDERSTANDING THE FIRE CHIEFS' "COMMUNITY OUTREACH CAMPAIGN": Instead of respecting the will of the Elk Creek FPD voters, the three Fire Chiefs have collaborated—with the full support of their respective Boards of Directors (except for one Elk Creek FPD Director)—to mislead the public with a media campaign that portrays their fire district "unification" scheme as a normal, legally appropriate action-plan that will solve a litany of ills that our fire districts are currently facing, which they claim have reached "crisis" levels.

Critically, during recent propaganda appearances the fire chiefs have made a significant number of materially inaccurate statements in order to justify their actions. For example, in an "interview" conducted with Inter-Canyon FPD Fire Chief Skip Shirlaw posted to the Internet on August 17, 2024 ([Chief Shirlaw "Unification" Interview August 2024](#)), the fire chief makes a number of important, impactful claims which must be addressed: Here we present a quick fact-check of a few of these claims:⁵

- **CLAIM:** The exclusion/inclusion provisions of the Colorado Title 32 Special District Act is an intended legal process for so-called "Fire District Unification".
FACT: We assess that these provisions of the statute were never intended to serve as a vehicle to accomplish consolidation of entire fire districts, that this use is improper, and it is likely unlawful.
- **CLAIM:** In recent years, as amply demonstrated by the recent Quarry and Twin Forks Fires, emergency call volumes as well as their acuity have increased so dramatically that "Unification" is the only means available to the three fire districts to deal with the ever increasing wildfire danger and need for emergency medical services, the fire districts are on the verge of "crisis", now surviving on "luck" alone.
FACT: Since the beginning of 2020 to the present, the number monthly incident responses by Elk Creek FPD personnel has remained relatively constant at an average of approximately 110 incidents per month with an average of 32 monthly ambulance transports—these incident counts include calls when a resident is locked out of their home, fire safety related calls, and emergency medical incidents⁶—thus, for the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs this purported "crisis" is completely made-up, a pure fabrication.
- **CLAIM:** Volunteerism is down in our mountain community—as it is across the nation—thus fire districts must "professionalize" its staff through Consolidation ("Unification") since we can no longer count on volunteers to show up.

***FACT:** Historically, volunteerism within our mountain community has been robust, volunteer firefighters/paramedics have consistently done an excellent job working for the Elk Creek FPD Community, and Consolidation will not solve the difficulties regarding personnel that fire district leadership has created over the past 15 years due to the failure to utilize best management practices. Put simply, whenever the fire chiefs consistently fail to actively seek out, train, develop, and promote volunteer firefighter/ EMT personnel in the ranks, the volunteer cadre will decline over time—this is exactly what can be seen in current practice at the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs.*

For the latest in misinformation fact-checking relating to the Fire Chiefs' ongoing media campaign, please the Committee's website here: <https://cosecc.org>.

ANALYSIS OF FIRE CHIEFS' "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PLAN: A summary of the key demographics for each of the three individual fire protection districts is listed under the green column headers of Table 2 while a summary of comparable demographics of the proposed consolidated/merged fire district are listed under the orange column header.

TABLE 2: Summary of Fire Protection District Demographics.

DEMOGRAPHICS	ECFPD	ICFPD	NFFPD	MERGED FPD
POPULATION ^a	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	12.5510 ^b	14.5470	12.9860 ^b	12.9860 ^c
2024 ANNUAL REVENUE PROPERTY VALUATION^f	\$7,001,514 ^d \$362,161,144	\$2,235,422 \$138,545,552	\$657,450 ^e \$25,003,872	\$9,900,000 (projected revenue)
CASH RESERVES	\$6M+	\$67K	\$50K	\$6M+
ISO RATING	5/10	4	5/10	5/10
CAREER FIREFIGHTER/EMT PERSONNEL	12 3 shifts of 4 24/7 service	3 no 24/7 shifts	2 no 24/7 shifts	17 3 shifts of 4 24/7 services

Specifically, the "Unification" = Consolidation Plan creates a number of critical risks for the Elk Creek FPD community, an expansion of Table 1 presented below:

- **Unconstitutionally Subverts the Will of the Voters of the Elk Creek FPD** - Under provisions of Colorado Revised Statutes Title 32 Part 6 Consolidation, Elk Creek FPD submitted the consolidation question to the voters and, on November 7, 2023, 51% of voters answered a clear NO to the consolidation question.
- **Illicitly Raises the Taxes on Elk Creek FPD Property Owners** - The Fire Chiefs' "Unification" = Consolidation Plan, through its legal mechanism of the First Amendment to Pre-consolidation Inter-government Agreement (the Amended Pre-consolidation IGA) , dated September 26, 2024 WILL NOT reduce Elk Creek FPD property owners taxes by

0.500 mills as claimed but by the Fire Chiefs, instead once the Amended Pre-consolidation IGA is fully executed, the North Fork FPD will possess the authority under to tax former Elk Creek FPD (and former Inter-Canyon FPD) property owners at a mill levy rate of 12.8960 mills rate than the current Elk Creek FPD mill rate of 12.5510 mills, please see the explanation in the Endnote 3 below as well as updated information at <https://cosecc.org>.

- **Unlawfully Forces Loss of Local Control** - The Consolidation Plan requires that—in January of 2025—the 17,000 citizens of the Conifer, South Evergreen, Aspen Park, and Pine Junction communities give political control, taxing authority, and operational decision-making over to a five-member board-of-directors, three of whom local voters did not elect. Additionally, we surmise that the voters will not have an opportunity to elect new directors until May 2025, but then only two, while the remaining three directors do not stand for election until 2027.

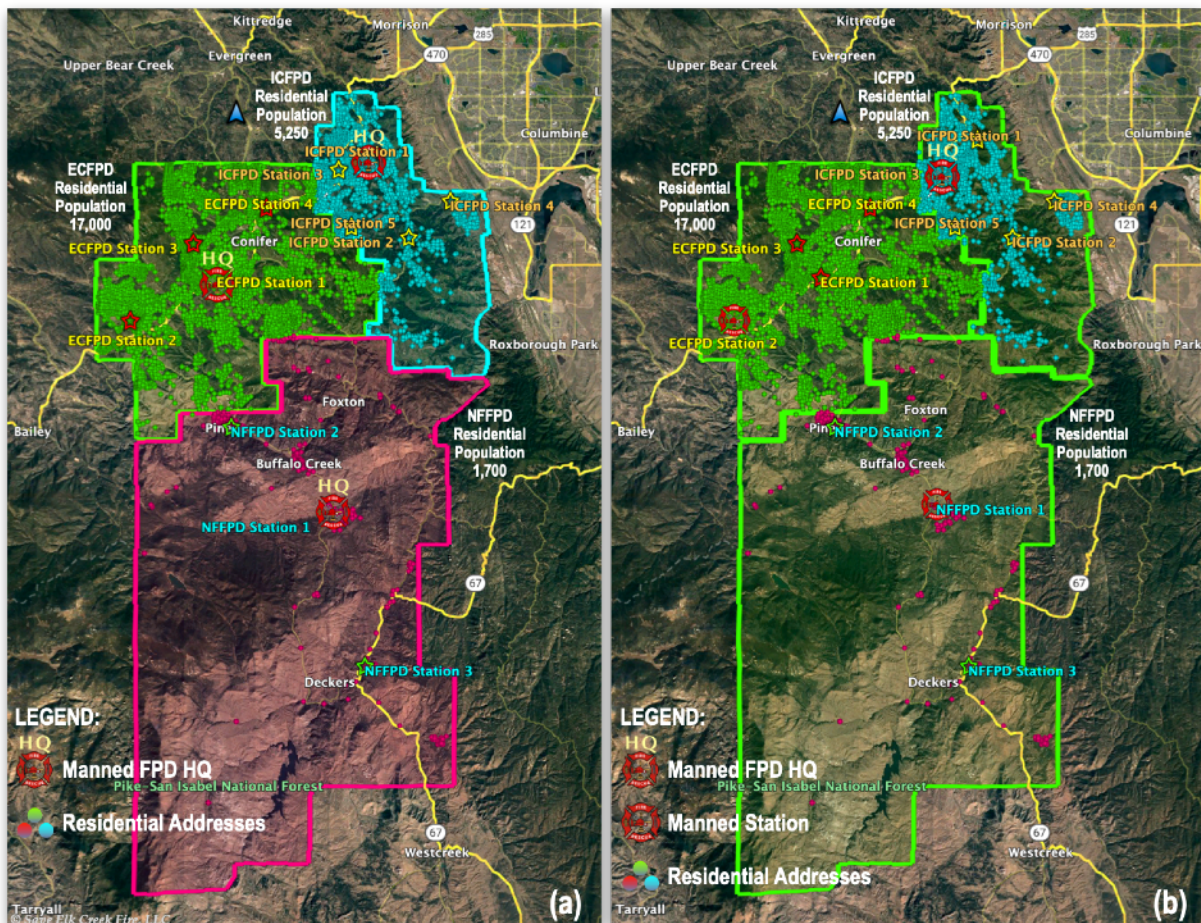


FIGURE 2: Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, & North Fork FPDs: (a) Pre-consolidation & (b) Post-consolidation.

- **Recklessly Reduces the Current High Level-of-Service to the Elk Creek FPD Community** - The reduction in the level-of-service that the residents of the Elk Creek FPD will experience—as envisioned by the Consolidation Plan—is clearly illustrated by contrasting the before and after situations shown in Figures 2(a) and (b).

Importantly, note that whereas prior to consolidation, the Elk Creek FPD fire stations with their firefighter/EMT personnel are appropriately located relative to the populations

they serve, immediately following consolidation, the same 24/7 shift personnel would be required to serve—instead of a 98 sq-mi fire district, a nearly 400 sq-mi service district—and that residents of the former Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs will have the legal right to demand that they receive **AN EQUAL, EVEN IF, A SERIOUSLY DEGRADED LEVEL OF EMERGENCY SERVICE.**

NOTE: The residents-taxpayers of the former Elk Creek FPD will pay, out of their pockets, \$690 of every \$1000 of services provided to the new fire district and, with necessary mill levy rate increases from a starting forced rate of 12.8960 mills to 20+ mills and likely more, thus this so-called "unification" is expected to cost the average Elk Creek FPD taxpayer household an additional \$10,000+ over the next twenty years.

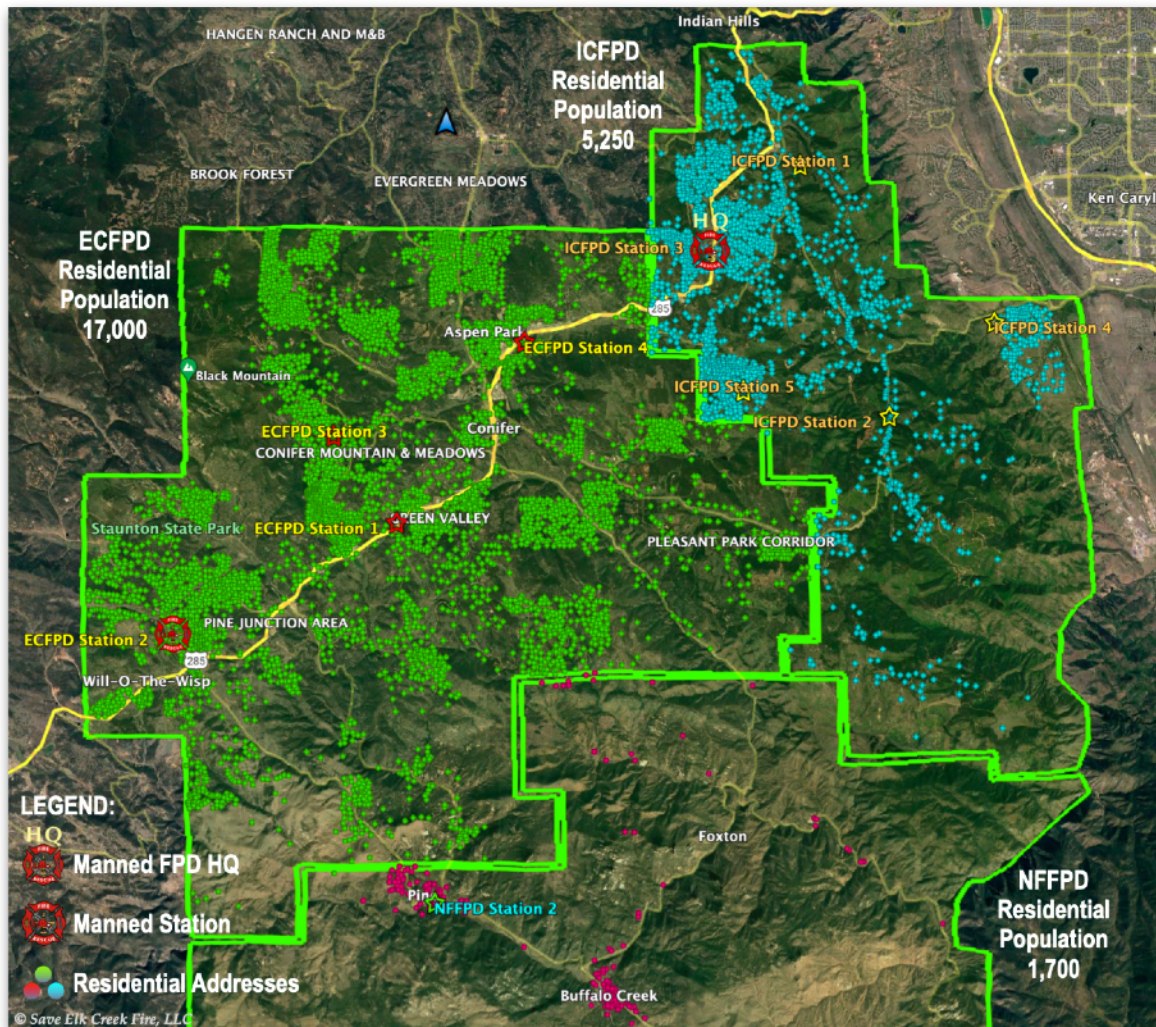


FIGURE 3: Consolidation Plan Reduces Services for Residents of the Elk Creek FPD.

- **Illegitimately Places an Enormous Debt Burden on the Community** - The Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPD Fire Chiefs have created a Consolidation Plan that calls for the follow key initiatives:
 1. Hire an undisclosed number of new career staff including Firefighters/EMTs, a Fire Chief, Battalion Chiefs, & Administrative Staff.⁷
 2. Construct a new three-story, 14,000 sq-ft "Flagship Fire District HQ" at Inter-Canyon FPD Fire

Station 3, at Settlers Drive & U.S.-285 in Morrison CO (nextdoor to the Compassionate Dharma Cloud Monastery), please see Figure 4.⁸

3. Refurbish Elk Creek FPD Station 1 then construct a new multi-story, 7,000 sq-ft "Fire Battalion HQ" at Elk Creek FPD Station 2, on Mt Evans Boulevard in Pine CO.⁹
4. Refurbish the currently one-story 7,500 sq-ft "Fire Battalion HQ" at North Fork FPD Station 1, at CO HWY 126 in Buffalo Creek CO.¹⁰
5. Purchase new fleet engines, tenders, & ambulances.¹¹

Crucially, estimates are that the baseline cost for this new spending would be \$22M but the interest paid on bonds/loans will increase the project baseline spending to a taxpayer indebtedness of up to \$30M when repaid over the next twenty years thus adding \$10,000+ to the average household tax bill over the period. Additionally, indebtedness this large will require an additional \$3M in tax revenue yearly, just for debt service, thus necessitating an additional mill levy increase to at least 20 mills but, more than likely, even more.¹²



FIGURE 4: [Flagship Fire District HQ](#) at Settlers Drive & U.S.-285, Morrison CO, source F&D International.

- **Needlessly Requires Elk Creek FPD Taxpayers to Subsidize Upgrading of Services at Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs** - Given the assessed value disparities among the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs it is clear that—due to its concentrated population of 17,000 residents, \$362M property tax base, and already high-quality firefighting/EMS infrastructure—the Consolidation Plan envisions that the taxpayers of the Elk Creek FPD will be required to subsidize, at a ratio of \$690 for every \$1,000 spent, the future daily operations plus capital improvements planned for the other two fire districts just to bring those districts up to a reasonable standard-of-service. That is, for every \$1,000 in spending, the taxpayers of the current Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs will be required to spend only \$260 and \$50 respectively, truly, a bargain for taxpayers in those areas of the new district.¹³

While the citizen-taxpayers of the Elk Creek FPD have for years enjoyed a very high level of firefighter/EMS services on a 24/7 basis, the adoption of the Consolidation Plan will require those taxpayers to take on the very significant difficulties that have troubled the Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs for years:

- Inter-Canyon FPD, despite its well-clustered population of 5,250 residents across 52 sq-mi, relatively high \$138M property valuation, more than adequate fire protection/EMS apparatus/

equipment, & low call volume, has for years struggled to deliver an even satisfactory level-of-service with no 24/7 responders.

- North Fork FPD with its small population of 1,700 residents scattered across 240 sq-mi of the most hard-to-reach, mountainous areas of Jefferson & Douglas Counties, has a low property valuation of only \$25M & a high proportion of federal lands within the fire district, thus will need a large infusion of resources in order to improve its substandard level-of-service with no 24/7 responders.

It is simply unfair to ask the citizen/taxpayers of the Elk Creek FPD to subsidize the massive infusion of dollars over twenty years or more that it will take to bring the Inter-Canyon and North Fork FPDs into the 21st century.

NEED FOR TRUTH-TELLING REGARDING FIRE CHIEFS' "UNIFICATION" = CONSOLIDATION PLAN:

The need for disclosure to the public of truthful information relating to the proposed consolidation is clear, please contact the three fire district board presidents to help make this happen:

CONTACT NAME	EMAIL	TELEPHONE
Greg Pixley, Board President	gregpixley@gmail.com	(303) 503-2345
Bob Scott, Board President	bob.scott@intercanyonfire.org	(303) 697-4413
Steve Brown, Board President	nffpd@hotmail.com	(303) 838-2270

WHERE ARE WE HEADED AND WHAT DO WE SEEK? The Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs, having failed at the ballot box to obtain consolidation are in the midst of attempting to use a statutory provision to thwart the Will of the People. Submit a Letter of Protest at the three board hearings/meetings in November. Not that your protest letter will make a speck of difference—more importantly, we have asked that these letters be made part of the Case Record, but this is an unknown at this time.

After Elk Creek FPD affirms exclusion on November 21, 2024, we expect a speedy hearing before the District Court , 1st Judicial District Court (at the Taj Mahal). We will be there with our attorney/pro se.

If we prevail, we expect an appeal by the three fire districts to appellate court. If the three districts prevail, we will take the fight to appellate court. Why are we going through all of this? Especially, since our opposition are well-equipped for the fight with lawyers paid for by your tax dollars. It is the principle of things and in the defense of our precious Democracy that is being run-over roughshod by the three fire protection districts.

We are seeking to force them to see if they can obtain the will of the voters with an all three fire districts mail-out paper ballots in May 2025 (held in conjunction of the election of two new Elk Creek FPD Board Members) OR in the General Election of November 2025. Even those who support "Unification" = Consolidation should be chagrined at the insulting to Democracy behavior of the Elk Creek, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs.

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

Conifer & South Evergreen Community Committee

TABLE 1 NOTES – In 2021 AP Triton, a fire services industry consulting company, performed a comprehensive study of the merits of possible collaboration between the Elk Creek, Indian Hills, Inter-Canyon, and North Fork FPDs (Indian Hills FPD subsequently dropped out of consideration going forward), the study can be found here: [Cooperative Services Feasibility Study, by AP Triton, November 2021](#):

- (a) Residential household population estimates and firefighter/EMT personnel head counts are from the AP Triton study.
- (b) These mill levy rates are currently in effect and have been certified by Jefferson and Douglas Counties.
- (c) Based on estimated annual revenue projections given mill levy rates and property valuation levels.
- (d) The Elk Creek FPD \$7M in annual revenue projection includes ~\$1.3M of CRRF ([Colorado Resource Report Forms and Guidelines](#)) Wildfire Reimbursements for firefighting services delivered outside the fire district, thus, the 2024 revenue/spending within the fire district is projected to be approximately \$5.0M. CRRF reimbursements are for consumables (diesel fuel), salaries, and day rates for fire engines.
- (e) North Fork FPD revenue is estimated from \$322,450 in property taxes; \$15,000 in specific ownership taxes; \$150,000 in payments-in-lieu of-taxes (PILT); and \$110,000 in ambulance fees.
- (f) Fire district property valuations shown are the total combined commercial and residential property valuations as determined by the county assessors. Due to the higher tax rate and valuation of commercial properties, a high proportion of Elk Creek FPD property tax revenues are derived from commercial properties, principally properties within the Aspen Park Village, Conifer Town Center, and Conifer Marketplace shopping centers.

ENDNOTES:

¹ For the specific statements in this regard made by Inter-Canyon Fire Chief Skip Shirlaw, please see the [Shirlaw "Unification" Interview](#) at beginning at 11m:30s. Additionally, the following recent statement from the Elk Creek FPD on social media reveals that the fire chiefs' plan for "Unification" really is just 2023 Consolidation Plan, *"To be clear, as noted in part 1 of this question, unification under our current budget is the best scenario for the time being, but this current revenue status only gets us part way. We are not increasing our capacity to the point we truly need. As our service area grows and changes, we will continuously evaluate staffing, service, and infrastructure, and the respective funding for those needs."* Please see: [Fire District "Unification" Q&A Question Part 2](#).

² For details regard the late stage 2023 fire district Consolidation Plan, please see: [Analysis of Proposed Fire District Consolidation Plan](#).

- ³ North Fork FPD electors have given this fire district the taxing authority that operates to adjust upward its mill levy rate from its "base" 12.00 mills to a rate adjusted by the following formula: $12.00 \times 7.2/6.7 = 12.8960$ mills. After the Amended Pre-consolidation IGA is fully executed (planned for this year), North this Fork FPD taxing authority will automatically be extended to the real property within the boundaries of the former Elk Creek and Inter-Canyon FPDs. For the more information regarding the details of how the taxing authority is derived, please visit <https://cosecc.org>.
- ⁴ You can find the current version of the act here: [Colorado Revised Statutes Title 32 Special Districts Act](#).
- ⁵ You can find that interview here: [Chief Shirlaw "Unification" Interview August 2024](#).
- ⁶ Incident averages are derived from published Elk Creek FPD Incident Reports 2020-2024.
- ⁷ The Consolidation Plan unnecessarily plans to hire 26 new career staff including 18 Firefighters / EMTs, a Fire Chief, 3 Battalion Chiefs, & 5 Administrative Staff, please see the [Merged Fire District Organization Chart](#).
- ⁸ The Consolidation Plan envisions constructing a 14,000 sq-ft Flagship Fire District HQ soon after consolidation is approved largely along the lines of the construction plans found here: [Inter-Canyon Station 3 Construction Plans](#). The estimated baseline construction cost of \$10M for this fire station is based upon the currently projected cost of a similar fire station rebuild project currently being undertaken by the building contractor originally slated to build out the Inter-Canyon FPD Station 3 project, F&D International, LLC. A description of the \$8M, 11,000 sq-ft rebuild of South Metro Fire Station 15 can be found here: [South Metro Fire Station 15 Rebuild Project](#).
- ⁹ Additionally, the Consolidation Plan envisions constructing an estimated ~7,000 sq-ft Elk Creek Battalion HQ reasonably soon after consolidation approval in order to "free-up" the current Elk Creek Station 1 for seasonal use by the 18 Wildland Division firefighters. In order to house the current 24/7 firefighter/EMT crew of 12, the Committee estimates that the following facilities will be required: 2,500 sq-ft crew quarters, 400 sq-ft kitchen, 400 sq-ft exercise room, 400 sq-ft restroom/shower as well as 3,300 sq for four bay for engines, tenders, and ambulances. Since the current building at Elk Creek FPD Station 2 is unusable for rebuilding purposes, the estimated baseline cost for this project is expected be \$5M.
- ¹⁰ While the Consolidation Plan envisions that the extent and cost to refurbish the current 7,500 sq-ft North Fork Station will be "minimal", the Committee estimates that, at minimum, the following facilities will be required: 1,500 sq-ft crew quarters, 300 sq-ft kitchen, 300 sq-ft exercise room, and a 300 sq-ft restroom/shower. Since new, add-on construction is highly likely, the estimated baseline cost for this construction project is expected to be closer to \$1.5M but could be \$2M or more.
- ¹¹ Moreover, the Consolidation Plan calls for replacement of firefighting apparatus/EMT equipment thus requiring purchase of new apparatus/equipment using a continuing 10 year lease/purchase agreement at an estimated baseline cost of \$5.5M.

¹² The Fire Chiefs' Consolidation Plan will ultimately require mill levy increases and indebtedness for the general obligation bonds that will be required for new construction and purchase of new equipment, together, these costs are estimated to be:

- 1) Indebtedness of Inter-Canyon FPD Flagship HQ at Station 3 with 20 year loan/bond at estimated cost of \$10M at 5.75% interest = \$16M;
- 2) Indebtedness of Elk Creek FPD HQ at Station 2 with 20 year loan/bond at estimated cost of \$5M at 5.75% interest = \$8M;
- 3) Indebtedness of North Fork FPD HQ at Station 1 with 20 year loan/bond at estimated cost of \$1.5M at 5.75% interest = \$2.5M;
- 4) Indebtedness of consolidated fire district for purchase of new apparatus with 10 year lease/purchase agreement at estimated cost of \$5.5M at 7% interest = \$7.5M;
- 5) Consolidation Plan total new indebtedness will be up to \$34M (for the best case scenario, this debt load can be reduced to \$30M if, as assumed in Table 1, \$4M in cash reserves are used to help fund this new spending);
- 6) Total new debt service per annum = ~\$2M – \$3M; and
- 7) Mill levy most likely will need to go to 20 mills or, more than likely, much more in order to cover these new obligations.

¹³ Since the property tax valuation total for the three fire districts is \$362M + \$138M + \$25M = \$525M, the contribution of the residents of the Elk Creek FPD fire district will be in the ratio of \$362M/\$525M = 69%; the contribution of the residents of the Inter-Canyon FPD fire district will be in the ratio of \$138M/\$525M = 26%; and the contribution of the residents of the North Fork FPD fire district will be in the ratio of \$25M/\$525M = 5%.