



BOARD MEETING AGENDA SUBMITTAL

TO: GCSB Board of Directors

FROM: Pete Kampa, General Manager

DATE: August 10, 2021

SUBJECT: Agenda Item 6E: Review of Initial Draft of the District's Municipal Service Review (MSR) Under Consideration for Approval by LAFCO

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

No Board action is proposed at this meeting, however input to staff is appropriate

BACKGROUND:

State law requires that the LAFCO in every county conduct a municipal service review (MSR) for each special district every five years. The purpose of the MSR is to evaluate the ongoing operational and financial viability of the special district, identify whether the district is taking advantage of partnerships and other opportunities and delivering efficient and responsible services. The MSR is also intended to evaluate growth in and impacting the district for both its statutory boundaries, and sphere of influence. The sphere of influence is considered the logical ultimate district growth boundaries based on current circumstances. The district boundaries itself are the areas in which the district is expected to provide services, and from which they can receive fees charges and taxes.

GCSB's last MSR was completed in 2013 and is available for download [HERE](#). This MSR is not included in the Board agenda materials due to its length and irrelevance to the updated MSR. The 2021 MSR was emailed to the Board recently and is available for the public in the office, in this agenda packet and on the County website. As a career long special district manager, I take the municipal service review very seriously as it is a reflection of how competent, efficient and useful a special district is providing services in the area. As the GCSB manager, this is an important document that can inform the public about the services we provide and the hard work our staff perform under the policy direction of a great board.

District staff participated over the past two years in the preparation up this updated MSR and it appears that for the most part the consultant for the county has included most of the information that we have provided. At this time we are introducing the board to the MSR for informational purposes and to ensure that the document has the clarity necessary just tell the story about the district publicly and to LAFCO. It is also important that the MSR document the fact that district provided Fire Protection services are being stretched far outside our boundaries and that growth in those areas will continue distress services and reduce the level service available within the district

boundaries. In this way the MSR will serve as the documentation necessary for future legislative actions and agreements by the district and county in support up fire services in the region. The MSR is up for review by county LAFCO on Monday August 9th, and we will be in attendance at that meeting to provide comments. The MSR will likely be considered for action buy laugh go at its Sept 2021 meeting. A report will be provided verbally on any outcomes from the August 9th meeting. Please excuse the "comment icons" throughout the document, as these are areas where I have inserted comments for our response to LAFCO.

Please note that as discussed in the July 2021 General Manager's Report, I am attending the first of four workshops related to LAFCO'S role in review of fire services. The course instructor reached out in advance seeking participant concerns or questions to be addressed in the sessions; below is my response as submitted:

Many of the Fire Districts in the county are struggling financially and service demands are increasing significantly. Commercial resorts and camps are being developed placing hundreds of additional visitors (and service demands) far outside fire district boundaries in a location not served by a county fire station. Some fire districts/city department in the county spend nearly as much time responding outside their boundaries on mutual aid, than they do responding in-district; and he trend will increase with additional growth outside district's normal response areas. This is causing longer response times which are outside acceptable NFPA standards.

How should LAFCO approach growth in fire service demands "outside the boundaries" when there are no other departments/stations in the area to respond? Annexation may not be reasonable due to long distances (20+ miles) from development to district boundaries. Forming additional districts would be difficult to support financially and operationally due to low population and parcel county.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Draft GCSD MSR for August 9, 2021 LAFCO meeting

GROVELAND COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

Prepared for:

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June 2021

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1 AGENCY OVERVIEW

1.1 HISTORY

1.1.1 Formation

The Groveland Community Services District (GCSD/District) was formed in accordance with California GC §61000 on August 19, 1953 by the State Board of Equalization (BOE) to bring much needed utility services to the Groveland and Big Oak Flat area. Resolution Number 9 of the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of the Groveland Community Services District on August 19, 1953 (Tuolumne County 1953).

1.1.2 Boundary

The GCSD service area covers approximately 15 square miles in southern Tuolumne County. The District is bounded on the north by the Tuolumne River, on the south by Mariposa County, on the east by the Stanislaus National Forest, and on the west by Moccasin. (Figure 1)

The GCSD service area encompasses the community of Groveland, including the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision and Big Oak Flat. The Communities of Groveland and Big Oak Flat are located approximately 25 miles southeast of Sonora on State Highway 120. Property owners within the District boundaries receiving general services such as water, sewer, park/recreation, community fire protection and emergency services are considered customers of the District (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

The GCSD service boundary and SOI boundary are not coterminous. The GCSD is surrounded mainly by land zoned for agricultural and rural residential uses and public lands (lands managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM)). The SOI boundaries consist of an additional 11,777 acres surrounding the current District service boundaries (Figure 2). The residential development potential discussed above is located within the SOI and could require annexation to the District in the future.

1.1.3 Services

The GCSD is a multi-purpose special district providing water, sewer, fire and emergency, and park and recreation services. In January 2006, LAFCo enumerated the latent powers of the GCSD as follows:

1. Supply water for any beneficial uses, in the same manner as a municipal water district, formed pursuant to the Municipal Water District Law of 1911, Division 20 (commencing with §7100) of the Water Code. [GC §61100(a)]
2. Collect, treat, or dispose of sewage, wastewater, recycled water and storm water in the same manner as a sanitary district, formed pursuant to the Sanitary District Act of 1923, Division 6 (commencing with §6400) of the Health and Safety Code. [GC §61100(b)]
3. Provide fire protection services, rescue services, hazardous material emergency response services, and ambulance services in the same manner as a fire protection district, formed pursuant to the Fire Protection District Law, Part 2.7 (commencing with §13800) of Division 12 of the Health and Safety Code. [GC §61100(c)]

4. Provide emergency medical services pursuant to the Emergency Medical Services System and the Prehospital Emergency Medical Care Personnel Act, Division 2.5 (commencing with §1797) of the Health and Safety Code, except ambulance service. [GC §61100(n)]
5. Acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate recreation facilities, including, but not limited to, parks and open space, in the same manner as a recreation and park district formed pursuant to the Recreation and Park District Law, Chapter 4 (commencing with §57800) of Division 5 of the Public Resources Code. [GC §61100(e)]
6. Organize, promote, conduct and advertise programs of community recreation, in the same manner as a recreation and park district formed pursuant to the Recreation and Park District Law, Chapter 4 (commencing with §57800 of Division 5 of Public Resources Code. [GC §61100(f)]
7. Acquire, construct, improve, maintain, and operate community facilities, including but not limited to, community centers, libraries, theaters, museums, cultural facilities and childcare facilities. [GC §61100s)]

1.2 GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

1.2.1 Governing Body

The Board of Directors is the legislative body for the District and is responsible for establishing and implementing policy, adopting and amending the annual budget, enacting ordinances, and appointing committees. The GCSD is governed by a 5-member Board of Directors elected at-large to serve staggered, four-year terms (Table 1-1). If there are insufficient candidates for election, or if the number of filed candidates is equal to the number of vacancies, then Board members may be appointed in lieu of election by the County Board of Supervisors.

The Board of Directors elects officers annually, including a President and Vice-President. The Board may create additional offices and elect Board members to those offices, provided that no member of a Board of Directors shall hold more than one office. Board members receive compensation at the rate of \$75 per day's service, including regular or special meetings, trainings, conferences or seminars, negotiation sessions, depositions or meetings with District consultants, engineers, or other professionals for the purpose of conducting District business or potential business and other activities as approved by the Board, in accordance with Community Services District Law Section 61047(a), with a maximum of six paid meetings per month, and not to exceed 72 paid meetings per year by District policy. Board members may also receive compensation for their actual and necessary traveling and incidental expenses while on official business. Staff support for the Board includes the General Manager, contract attorney, contract auditor and contract engineer.


Table 1-1: GCSD Governing Body

Name	Role	Term Began	Term Expires
Janice Kwiatkowski	President	December 2018	November 2020
Nancy Mora	Vice-President	December 2018	November 2020
John Armstrong	Director	December 2018	November 2022
Spencer Edwards	Director	December 2018	November 2022
Robert Swan	Director	December 2018	November 2022

Source: GCSD 2020c.

1.2.2 Transparency and Accountability

Regularly scheduled meetings for the District Board of Directors are held on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 10:00 a.m. at the District office located at 18966 Ferretti Road in Groveland. In accordance with the Brown Act, all meetings are open to the public and are publicly posted a minimum of 72 hours prior to regular meetings or a minimum of 24 hours prior to special meetings. Public notice and meeting information including agendas, meeting minutes, reports, resolutions, and ordinances are published on the District's website and are available at the District's office upon request. Minutes are kept for all public Board meetings and are adopted at a subsequent meeting. The District maintains a website with pertinent documents and agenda materials at <https://www.gcsd.org/>.

 The GCSD maintains customer-oriented programs including posting publication of articles about District activities on its website and in local publications. The GCSD solicits customer feedback and comments from property owners within the District. The GCSD holds monthly meetings of the Board of Directors. The meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. The agendas for the meetings are posted at several public places at least 72 hours prior to a Board Meeting and are published in a local newspaper. Meeting agendas and minutes are also available at the front desk in the GCSD office and on the District's web site.

Customers may submit verbal comments or complaints in person or by phone at the District office during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm, or at the Board of Directors meetings during the general public comment period. Complaints are addressed in person by District staff.

The Political Reform Act requires all state and local government agencies to adopt and promulgate a Conflict of Interest Code pursuant to Government Code §81000 et seq. The Act also requires persons who hold office to disclose their investments, interests in real property, and incomes by filing a Statement of Economic Interests (Fair Political Practices Commission Form 700) each year pursuant to Government Code §87203. The District updated its Conflict of Interest Policy in 2020, and is in compliance with the policy, including the timely filing of Form 700 by those identified in the Policy.

According to AB 1234, if a local agency provides compensation or reimbursement of expenses to local government officials, then all local officials are required to receive two hours of training on public service ethics laws and principles at least once every two years and establish a written policy on reimbursements pursuant to Government Code §53235. The District has an appropriate written policy on reimbursements and all directors and the General Manager are current on the Ethics training requirements.

1.3 OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

1.3.1 Management and Staffing

The GCSD Board of Directors oversees the General Manager who is a contract employee responsible for administration of the day-to-day operations of the District. The Board of Directors also oversees a contract attorney, contract auditor and the contract engineer. The General Manager oversees three departments: Administrative-Services, Fire (staffed and managed by CAL FIRE), and Operations. Three individuals report directly to the General Manager, including the Administrative Services Manager, the CAL FIRE Unit Chief and the Operations Manager (GCSD 2019a).

The GCSD has reduced its staff from 33 full time employees in 2007, to 23 full time employees in 2012, and to 19 full time employees in 2019. The GCSD now employs 19 full time employees

and 3 contract employees. There are also two part-time resident fire inspectors and two part-time resident firefighters that are managed and paid by CAL FIRE (Table 1-2).

Table 1-2: Management and Staffing

Personnel Groups	FTE	PTE	Contract
Administrative	5	0	3
Operations	13	0	0
Fire ¹	1	4	0
Totals	19	4	3

Notes: ¹ Fire personnel are managed and paid by CalFire
 Source: GCSO 2019a.

1.3.2 Agency Performance

The GCSO strives for maximum budget efficiency through the annual budget preparation and performance monitoring process and maintains a balanced budget for its enterprise services of water and wastewater. The District produces an annual Management Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) that outlines the financial condition of all services provided by the District and action plans to address revenue deficiencies in its Park and Fire government type services. Capital improvements are planned for during the budget process. Additionally, the Board of Directors reviews and revises the District's goals and objectives each quarter and during the budget development process.

A component of agency performance is evaluating staff productivity, efficiency, safety, and service/work quality. The General Manager oversees three departments: Administrative Services Department, Fire Department (staffed by CAL FIRE), and the Operations Department. The District tracks employee workload through timesheets and software programs and conducts annual written performance evaluations for all employees. An employee portal and related software is in place to document and measure employee performance to established goals including training, certification, attainment of skills and other achievements. The Board of Directors holds quarterly public workshops during which they review the status of established goals and objectives assigned to the General Manager for implementation and make amendments and updates as needed. The performance of the General Manager is weighed annually against attainment of measurable goals and objectives. Fire department performance is monitored by reviewing monthly emergency call volume and trends, and call types and locations are reviewed on an annual basis.

Training

The Board of Directors has adopted an Excellence in Board Governance program that outlines the required and recommended training and educational conferences supported and encouraged for all Board members to attend. The Board members attend training through webinars, workshops, and conferences as well as regularly reviewing and updating the District's Adopted Board Norms and Protocols. Trainings include Ethics, Brown Act, The Great Board, Special District Governance, Manager Evaluation, Board Member training, Finance training, District Liability, Harassment Prevention, and Good Governance training. Conferences include Special District Leadership Academy and California Special Districts Association (CSDA) annual conference. The Board Secretary attends the CSDA Board Secretary Conference, covering topics of Brown Act Compliance, California Public Records Act, recording minutes, Board Member Liability, Online ADA Compliance, Transparency, Understanding Special District Laws, and Staying in Compliance.

The General Manager achieved certification as a California Special District Manager in 2010 and maintains this certification through required ongoing education and training including the annual

CSDA conference and General Manager Leadership Summit. Administration staff including the General Manager and Department Managers receive training such as Ethics, Harassment prevention, personnel management, employee supervision and leadership, and attendance at the annual General Manager Leadership Conference which provides the best networking and professional development opportunities for special district general managers and other management staff from districts of all types and sizes throughout California.

GCSD Administrative, Operations and Maintenance staff are trained and certified on a biannual basis in CPR-First Aid.

Operations and Maintenance staff are trained and Certified in Traffic Control, Trench and Shoring, Confined Space, Bucket Truck training and FROST Fit testing annually. Operators attend an onsite staff safety meeting on a weekly basis to go over important topics given by the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA), as well as attend training courses through SDRMA's Target Solutions, a safety training library and documentation program. Operators' off-site training includes state certification preparation, Safety Day offered by SDRMA and Water Expo through Clean Water Environment Association (CWEA).

1.3.3 Regional and Service-Specific Participation

The GCSD provides structural fire protection and emergency services, water service, sewer service, park/recreation services and community facilities management to the areas of Big Oak Flat, Groveland, and Pine Mountain Lake. Other service providers/districts in these areas include the County of Tuolumne, the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, and a County-wide ambulance district known as the Tuolumne County Ambulance Service (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

The GCSD has a significant degree of interdependence with the surrounding area due to the services provided and the mutual aid provided to other fire protection agencies in the County, CAL FIRE and the USFS. Often the fire department responds outside its boundaries in accordance with mutual aid agreements (GCSD 2020a).

The Department is a signatory to the Tuolumne County Mutual Aid Plan and the State of California Master Mutual Aid Agreement. Under the County Plan, every fire agency agrees to provide free assistance to any other County fire agency upon request, as available. For the District, however, given its remote location at the top of Priest Grade, there are no mutual aid resources available within approximately 20-30 minutes travel time other than the CAL FIRE Groveland Station resources, when available. In addition, the District is signatory to the Automatic/Mutual Aid Agreement between Tuolumne County, Mariposa County, and Stanislaus Consolidated Fire, as well as an Assistance-by Hire Agreement with the CAL FIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit.

1.3.4 Shared Facilities, Resources and Services

The GCSD works collaboratively with other service providers to deliver services more effectively or efficiently by maintaining several mutual aid and automatic aid agreements.

- Mutual Fire Aid is provided to all other fire protection agencies in the County, CAL FIRE and the USFS.
- An agreement with the Tuolumne Utilities District to respond to calls for mutual water and sewer service aid in case of emergency situations.

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tuolumne County for operation of the Groveland Youth Center which is now located within the Mary Laveroni Community Park.

In December 2012, the Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to an existing agreement for CAL FIRE to operate the two fire stations in the GCSD. Firefighters working at these two fire stations are now contracted through and report directly to CAL FIRE.

1.3.5 Government Restructure Options

The District is the primary municipal service provider in the area. The District is entirely unincorporated with the planning jurisdiction in the hands of Tuolumne County. The GCSD provides water, wastewater, fire protection and EMS, community facilities and park and recreation services. Law enforcement, code enforcement, transportation, and stormwater collection systems are provided by the County of Tuolumne. Since neither Groveland or Big Oak Flat are incorporated cities, public service districts, such as the GCSD, appear to be an excellent way to ensure effective community representation and accountability, public funds and operations transparency, and public participation high while at the same time maintaining consistent and adequate service levels. Consolidation of these services in a Community Services District is an efficient way to provide these services.

The Groveland Lighting District was created in 1919 to place electric lights in the downtown Groveland area of Tuolumne County. Lighting districts are commonly used by local governments to fund the costs of lighting in public areas. Many districts' funding can also be used to finance improvements such as parks, auditoriums, or other public infrastructure. Each lighting district receives its own ad valorem property tax allocations, which pays for its expenses. The County of Tuolumne currently operates the Groveland Lighting District. To obtain new lighting in the Mary Laveroni Park, or in downtown Groveland, the request must be approved by the County Administrator.

The GCSD boundaries overlap the boundaries of the Groveland Lighting District. A 2011 Grand Jury Report recommended a manager be hired to manage and oversee the County's lighting districts. The Groveland Lighting District could reorganize to be a part of the GCSD, which would then be responsible to maintain lighting, add lighting, and fund public improvements related to lighting. Such a reorganization would consist of an activation of latent powers for GCSD and concurrent dissolution of the Groveland Lighting District.

1.4 FINANCES

1.4.1 Current Fiscal Health

The GCSD prepares and adopts an annual budget prior to the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1), which serves as a financial planning tool and an expense control system. Expenses cannot exceed authorized budget amounts unless the budget is amended by the Board of Directors by resolution. The District has annual audited financial statements prepared by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) which serves as financial assurance for the use of public funds.

Table 1-3 provides year-end financial information for the District. This table summarizes the Statement of Activities included in the reference fiscal year audits. Refer to the following hyperlink from the District's website to download full copies of the District's FY 2018-19 Audit: <https://www.gcsd.org/fy-2018-19-audited-financial-statements>.

Table 1-3: GCSD Financial Summary

	FY 15-16	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20
Beginning Aggregated Net Position	9,274,140	9,486,579	9,563,414	10,686,304	11,533,780
Ending Aggregated Net Position	9,486,579	10,735,238	10,686,304	11,533,780	12,717,057
Revenue					
<u>General Revenue</u>					
Property Taxes	1,071,197	1,101,047	1,133,799	1,180,524	1,223,172
Interest earnings	6,717	17,833	17,697	56,162	77,989
Other Revenues	93,105	54,963	75,987	84,959	164,673
Loss on disposal of capital asset	-	-	-	(72,612)	-
Sub-total	1,171,019	1,173,843	1,227,483	1,249,033	1,465,834
<u>Program Revenues</u>					
Administration	-	-	-	-	-
Fire	-	-	-	-	-
Parks and Recreation	1,485	1,980	1,845	1,710	2,515
Water	2,603,079	3,168,754	3,165,584	3,184,980	3,256,867
Wastewater	1,867,943	1,862,515	1,862,027	2,023,058	2,283,618
Operating Grants/Contributions	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Grants/Contributions	-	868,469	348,699	410,016	431,844
Sub-total	4,472,507	5,901,718	5,414,155	5,619,764	5,974,844
Total Revenue	5,643,526	7,075,561	6,641,638	6,868,797	7,440,678
<u>Expenses</u>					
Administration	-	-	-	-	-
Fire	1,045,990	1,148,932	1,024,815	1,274,331	1,585,136
Parks and Recreation	83,112	96,952	109,500	331,678	167,847
Water	2,561,328	2,676,791	2,420,904	2,516,717	2,791,551
Davis-Grunksy	989	356	271	(113)	(314)
Wastewater	1,739,668	1,903,871	1,963,312	1,898,708	1,713,181
Total Expenses	5,431,087	5,826,902	5,518,748	6,021,321	6,257,401
Change in net position	212,439	1,248,659	1,122,890	847,476	1,183,277
Accumulated Depreciation	21,207,035	22,471,590	23,488,758	24,170,344	25,200,758

Source: GCSD Consulting CPA Gilbert and Associates Summary Spreadsheet with Notes

The GCSD employs various cost-avoidance practices in its daily operations and practices. The District has taken numerous actions in the last five years to save money and lower expenses. Cost saving practices include seeking grant funding opportunities, project performance tracking, and appropriately increasing water and sewage rates.

According to planned land uses in the GCSD's service area and its SOI, water and wastewater treatment plants and infrastructure will likely require improvements to accommodate growth and/or to meet new regulations.

Water Rates

The current water rates for the GCSD include a fixed rate charge, a usage rate and a District-wide debt service charge. The fixed rate charge is dependent upon the size of the meter, starts at \$38.48 (for a 5/8" x 3/4" meter) and increases to \$300.18 (for a 4" meter).

The District also charges a *Usage (Variable) Rate* with the cost per gallon depending on the number of gallons of water that are used in a month. A residence using between 0 and 3,300 gallons of water is charged \$0.00743 per gallon. A residence using greater than 3,300 gallons of water a month is charged \$0.01469 per gallon. As is indicated by the figures above, the per gallon price of water increases as the amount of water usage increases (GCSD 2019c).

In addition to monthly rates, all water customers are required to pay a *1996-1998 Capital Facilities Bond Fee* of \$9.83 and a *2007 Water Debt Service Fee* of \$10.75 for each water service connection, per month, to pay off water system improvement loans incurred in 1997 and 2007. These loans will be paid off in March 2026 and July 2027, respectively (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

Sewer Rates

The sewer fees consist of a monthly fixed rate service charge and a monthly usage (variable) charge. The monthly fixed rate for sewer service is \$72.69 for both residential and commercial properties. The monthly volume usage charge is \$0.00955 per gallon of metered water for residential use, and \$0.01535 per gallon of metered water for commercial use (GCSD 2019c).

A *2007 Wastewater Debt Service Fee* of \$10.75 is required to be paid for each sewer service connection per month. In addition, there is a district-wide Debt Service Charge of \$25.75 for all accounts that are tributaries to Lift Station 7, which serves parcels in the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision. This debt was incurred in 2007 for State mandated upgrades to the District's sixteen sewer lift stations. This debt will be paid off in July 2027 (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).


A 2018 Sewer Rate Study determined that the fees established above would generate adequate revenue through the District's connection and service charges to keep up with its operation and maintenance costs (GCSD 2018a).

It is the GCSD Board's policy to strive to keep rates for water and sewer as low as possible. The GCSD charges a fixed rate charge, a usage rate and a District-wide debt service charge as discussed above. Other sources of revenue are sought to off-set customer water and sewer rates, such as charging for septic tank and Recreational Vehicle (RV) waste dumping and seeking grant funding.

Fire Services

During the winter months, the GCSD is charged for providing emergency services through CAL FIRE's Amador station located on Merrill Road. An Amador station is a CAL FIRE station, with CAL FIRE staff and equipment. The cost of running the station is borne by the GCSD during fire season. The current contract is for a three-year term at \$263,466 a year.

In 2019, the Tuolumne Board of Supervisors was informed by GCSD of the challenges involved with affording the cost of providing fire services. Recently, the GCSD General Manager has stated that within three years GCSD will find themselves in a difficult place to afford to fund the CAL FIRE contract for fire services that are provided at the CAL FIRE station in Groveland. Due to the current evaluation of several land use projects that could utilize GCSD fire resources, the GCSD Board directed their General Manager to work with the County towards future fire revenues and/or

services. In considering the issues GCSD is facing and that the County does not provide any fire services along the Groveland SR-120 corridor, on September 22, 2020, the County approved an allocation of \$263,466 for the Groveland Amador station to fund the GCSD portion of the CAL FIRE contract. The action allowed the County to move towards their goal of providing additional first responder services along the SR-120 corridor as well as providing financial relief to GCSD. The County's payment for the three-year contract allowed the GCSD to direct over \$790,000 to other needs within the District, including additional staffing and/or equipment for provision of fire services. (ESA 2020) 

1.4.2 Long Term Financial Considerations

Public Debt and Bonds

The GCSD has incurred outstanding public debt for purchases, upgrades, or replacement of capital improvements such as storage tanks, water and sewer lines, and water treatment facilities. The most significant source of debt is from the District's capital facilities projects.

In 1996, bonds totaling \$4,600,000 were issued for the purpose of acquisition, construction and improvement of water storage and treatment facilities for the District. Increased population and State Health Department standards necessitated the addition of storage and water treatment capacity to be provided by the construction of two new storage tanks with related water treatment facilities. The project financing included the acquisition of land for one water storage site as well as engineering costs and costs of issuance of the securities. This bond was refinanced in 1998 (*1998 Refunding Bonds*) to acquire a lower interest rate and is expected to be paid off in March 2026. Each water service customer pays \$9.83 per month to help pay off this debt.

In 2007, the District issued an additional \$9,560,000 in bond/debt for various water and sewer capital projects as follows:

- *2007 Water Installment Sale Agreement – La Salle Bank National Association:* incurred a debt of \$5,031,000 in May 2007 to pay for federal and State-mandated disinfection upgrades to the two water treatment plants, construction of an alternative water supply system, and upgrades to the radio telemetry and control system (SCADA). The GCSD is collecting a \$10.75 per month *Water Debt Service Fee* from each customer to help repay this debt. This debt was refinanced for cost savings in 2014 and again in 2021, and will be paid off in July 2027, which was the original payoff date prior to refinancing.
- *2007 Sewer Installment Sale Agreement—La Salle Bank National Association:* a debt of \$4,529,000 was incurred in June 2007 to pay for State-mandated upgrades to the District's sixteen sewer lift stations. A monthly *Wastewater Debt Service Fee* of \$25.75 is charge to all wastewater customers tributary to Lift Station 7 to help repay this debt. This debt was refinanced for cost savings in 2014 and again in 2020, and will be paid off in 2026, which was the original payoff date prior to refinancing. Lift Station 16, which serves Big Oak Flat, was not included as a part of this indebtedness and was not upgraded as part of the 2007 debt issuance and was ultimately upgraded in 2016 with a grant from the Department of Water Resources for \$349,424.
- In 2008, a Commercial Loan, from Rabobank in the amount of \$35,586 was incurred as a business loan to finance vehicle replacement and was paid off in September 2013.
- In 2019, a Commercial Loan through the Municipal Finance Corporation in the amount of \$1,525,000 for immediately required Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements (2019) with annual payments of \$105,234 and scheduled to be paid off in 2039. This Installment Sales Agreement was included with the refinancing of the 2014 Sewer Bonds detailed

above. Revenue from wastewater rate increases approved in 2018 fund the annual loan payments.

Most of the District's debt was incurred to upgrade facilities and infrastructure improvements as mandated by regulating federal and State authorities. The existing debts detailed above are repaid through a per lot water stand-by fee, debt service charge, and allocation of water/sewer enterprise funds. The GCSD has never defaulted on repayment of any bonds or other debt (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

Reserve Funds

The GCSD's reserve funds, categorized in the Operational Policies and Procedures Manual (Manual) adopted by the Board in October of 2010, are Designated Reserve for capital improvements, Designated Reserve for operating and other contingencies, and Restricted Debt Service Reserve. The Manual defines the Operational Reserve as funds allocated for the purpose of paying the costs and expenses associated with unanticipated events including but not limited to: temporary cash flow shortages, repair/replacement of facilities, equipment, supplies or infrastructure resulting from a catastrophic event, or expenditures required to respond to an emergency which threatens public health and safety. Funds allocated to the Operational Reserve may also be used to pay damage claims against the District which are not covered by insurance. The Board of Directors may authorize expenditure of the funds allocated to the Operational Reserve on any expenses that may be incurred during the fiscal year for which no specific appropriation has previously been made.

The Manual also stipulates that in a State of Emergency, or in a local emergency as defined by GC §8558, the Board of Directors may temporarily transfer funds from the Operational Reserve to the District's General Fund to fund those costs necessary to respond to such emergencies. The Board of Directors shall restore any such funds to the designated reserve from which such funds were drawn as soon as feasible pursuant to the requirements of GC §61112 (GCSD 2010).

1.5 GROWTH

1.5.1 Present and Planned Land Use and Development

Future development will be based on land uses designated by the Tuolumne County General Plan and the ability of the GCSD to serve the area with water, sewer, fire protection and park and recreation services to meet the development requirements of the County of Tuolumne.

The District contains a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses. Tuolumne County's General Plan governs land use within the District and includes the following designations: Parks and Recreation (R/P), Public (P), Open Space (O), Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Estate Residential (ER), Homestead Residential (HR), Rural Residential (RR), Large Lot Residential (LR), Agricultural (AG), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), General Commercial (GC), Mixed-Use (MU), Business Park (BP), Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Special Commercial (SC) and Heavy Commercial (HC). (Tuolumne County 2018a)

The area encompassed by the District boundary of the GCSD contains property zoned R-1 (Single-family Residential), R-2 (Medium Density Residential), R-3 (Multiple-family Residential) RE-1 (Residential Estate, One Acre Minimum), RE-2 (Residential Estate, Two Acre Minimum), RE-3 (Residential Estate, Three Acre Minimum), RE-5 (Residential Estate, Five Acre Minimum), , A-10 (General Agricultural, Ten Acre Minimum), A-20 (General Agricultural, Twenty Acre Minimum), AE-37 (Exclusive Agricultural, Thirty-Seven Acre Minimum), M-U (Mixed Use), C-O (Neighborhood

Commercial), C-1 (General Commercial), C-2 (Heavy Commercial), C-K (Commercial Recreation), B-P (Business Park), M-1 (Light Industrial), M-2 (Heavy Industrial), K (General Recreation), O (Open Space) and P (Public). (Tuolumne County 2019b).


1.5.2 Existing Population and Projected Growth

Within the GCSD District boundary there are 4,335 total parcels, of which 807 are undeveloped (GCSD 2020d). According to Tuolumne County GIS data there are 4,613 total parcels within the SOI Boundary (Tuolumne County 2019b).

The 2010 US Census indicates that there were 4,924 residents in 2010 in the Groveland/Big Oak Flat Census County Division (CCD). The communities of Groveland and Big Oak Flat consist of both year-round and seasonal households. Many properties in the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision contain second homes, which are only seasonally occupied (Census 2010)

Population growth is expected to increase at an annual rate of approximately 0.8% for Tuolumne County (Tuolumne County, 2019). Based on this growth rate, the District can expect a population increase of approximately 670 people within the next five years.

There are two development projects that are being considered within the District's Sphere of Influence: the Airport Estates and the Long Gulch Subdivision project. Construction of the Airport Estates project would result in 9 residential lots, ranging in size from approximately 2 to 2.9 acres (see Section 4.1.2 for further detail). The Long Gulch project would result in 19 residential lots, ranging in size from approximately 3.0± acres to 12.5± acres.

Additionally, Yonder Yosemite is a proposed hospitality development on 36 acres located within the District's boundaries. The development includes 200 guest suites, a lodge, restaurant, pool, spa and outdoor movie theater. The project proposes connection to the District's water and wastewater systems. 

1.6 DISADVANTAGED UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Pursuant to GC §56430(a)(2), LAFCo is required to include in a MSR a description of the location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUC) within or contiguous to the SOI. Government Code §56033.5 defines a DUC as "inhabited territory that constitutes all or a portion of a disadvantaged community as defined Section 79505.5 of the Water Code." A disadvantaged community is defined as a community with a median household income (MHI) of less than 80 percent of the statewide annual MHI.

Further, GC §56425(e)(2) requires LAFCo to adopt additional determinations for an update of a SOI of a special district that provides public facilities and services related to sewer, water, and fire protection. The GCSD provides sewer, water, fire protection, park and recreation services to the DUC of Groveland, including the communities of Big Oak Flat. The GCSD also provides services to the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision. These services and facilities are provided in an efficient manner to all property owners, residents and visitors of the area regardless of income.

The GCSD service area encompasses the unincorporated community of Groveland, including the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision, and Big Oak Flat. The communities of Groveland and Big Oak Flat are located approximately 25 miles southeast of Sonora on State Highway 120. Property owners within the District boundaries receiving general services such as water, sewer, park/recreation, community fire protection and emergency services, are considered customers of the District. The Groveland Fire Department routinely provides fire suppression and rescue

response outside the District boundaries under an Automatic and Mutual Aid Agreement Local Operating Plan between the Tuolumne County Fire Department, Mariposa County Fire Department and the GCSD. Mutual Fire Aid is provided to all other fire protection agencies in the County, including CalFire, and the USFS.

The 2010 Census identifies the Groveland community as a census designated place (CDP) with a MHI of \$31,587 per year. Pine Mountain Lake is also a CDP that has a MHI of \$54,200 per year. The Census further indicates that the MHI for the State of California is \$61,632 per year. Eighty percent of the statewide MHI is \$49,306 per year. Since the MHI of the Groveland community is less than 80 percent of the Statewide median household income, the Groveland community is a DUC. However, the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision does not meet the definition of a DUC (Census 2010).

Senate Bill 1087 requires that water use projection of an Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) include projected water use for single-family and multi-family residential housing for lower income households as identified in the housing element of any city, county or other applicable general plan. Housing Elements rely on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) generated by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to allocate the regional need for housing for incorporation into housing element updates. Tuolumne County last updated Chapter 3, the Housing Element of the Tuolumne County General Plan in September 2019. The County's Housing Element identifies a five-year (2019-2024) low-income housing development goal. The target number for new lower income households is 62 extremely low-income units, 63 very low-income units, and 93 low-income units for a total of 218 lower-income units.

Consistent with GC §65589.7, it is GCSD policy to prioritize proposed developments seeking water and/or sewer service that include housing units affordable to lower income households. To further this policy, the GCSD adopted the following procedures:

GCSD will not deny or condition the approval of an application for services to, or reduce the amount of service by a proposed development that includes housing units affordable to lower income households unless GCSD makes a specific written finding that the denial, condition, or reduction is necessary due to the existence of one or more of the following:

1. GCSD does not have "sufficient water supply" as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Government Code Section 66473.7, or is operating under a water shortage emergency as defined in Section 350 of the California Water Code, or does not have sufficient water treatment or distribution capacity to serve the needs of the proposed development, as demonstrated by a written engineering analysis and report.
2. GCSD is subject to a compliance order issued by the State Department of Health Services that prohibits new water connections.
3. The proposed development is seeking sewer service, and GCSD does not have sufficient collection, treatment, or reclamation capacity, as demonstrated by a written engineering analysis and report on the condition of the collection, treatment, or reclamation works, to serve the needs of the proposed development.
4. The proposed development is seeking sewer service, and GCSD is under an order issued by a Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) that prohibits new sewer connections.
5. The applicant failed to agree to reasonable terms and conditions relating to the provision of service generally applicable to development projects seeking service

from GCSD, including but not limited to the requirements of local, state, or federal laws, and regulations or payment of a fee or charge.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCo) are quasi-legislative, independent local agencies that were established by State legislation in 1963 to regulate the boundaries of cities and special districts. There is a LAFCo in each of the 58 counties in California; each LAFCo is an independent public agency.

Through the implementation of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg (CKH) Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (California Government Code (GC) §56000 et. seq.), the objectives of LAFCo are to encourage the orderly formation of local government agencies and promote the efficient provision of public services, preserve agricultural and open space lands, and to promote orderly growth and discourage urban sprawl.

LAFCo has the authority to establish and reorganize cities and special districts, change their boundaries and authorized services, allow the extension of public services, and a responsibility to perform municipal service reviews (MSRs), and establish spheres of influence (SOI). Some of LAFCo duties include regulating boundary changes through annexations or detachments and forming, consolidating, or dissolving local agencies.

2.2 TUOLUMNE LAFCO

The CKH provides for flexibility in addressing State regulations to allow for adaptation to local needs. Tuolumne County LAFCo has adopted policies, procedures and principles that guide its operations. These policies and procedures can be found on Tuolumne LAFCo's website at the following location: <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/143/Local-Agency-Formation-Commission>. The Tuolumne County LAFCo adopted policies related to Municipal (urban) Services on November 26, 2001.

Tuolumne LAFCo has a public Commission with seven regular Commissioners and four alternate Commissioners. The Commission is composed of two members of the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors, two City Council members, two Special District representatives, and one Public Member-At Large. The Commission also includes one alternate member for each represented category.

2.3 MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

The CKH (GC §56430) is the statutory authority for the preparation of an MSR and periodic updates of the SOI of each local agency. MSRs are required prior to and in conjunction with the update of a SOI.

An MSR is a comprehensive analysis of the services provided by a local government agency to evaluate the capabilities of that agency to meet the public service needs of their current and future service area. An MSR must address the following seven factors:

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area.
2. The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence.
3. Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies including needs or deficiencies related to sewers,

municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence.

4. Financial ability of agencies to provide services.
5. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities.
6. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.
7. Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

MSRs include written statements or determinations with respect to each of the seven mandated areas of evaluation enumerated above. These determinations provide the basis for LAFCo to consider the appropriateness of a service provider's existing and future service area boundary.

2.4 SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The CKH Act requires LAFCo to adopt a SOI for all local agencies within its jurisdiction and review the SOIs every five years (GC 56425(g)). A SOI is "a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency or municipality as determined by the Commission" (GC §56076).

The SOI is only one of several factors LAFCo must consider in reviewing individual proposals, such as an application for an annexation to a district or city. (California Government Code Section 56668). However, inclusion of a particular area within an agency's SOI does not necessarily mean that the area will eventually be annexed.

In determining the SOI for each local agency, LAFCo must consider and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to each of the following (GC 56425(e)):

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.
2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.
5. For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection, that occurs pursuant to subdivision (g) on or after July 1, 2012, the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence.

These determinations provide the basis for LAFCo to consider the appropriateness of establishing or modifying a service provider's SOI or probable future boundary.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

As a public agency, LAFCo proceedings are subject to the provisions of California's open meeting law, the Ralph M. Brown Act (Government Code Sections 54950 et seq.) The Brown Act requires advance posting of meeting agendas and contains various other provisions designed to ensure that the public has adequate access to information regarding the proceedings of public boards and commissions. Tuolumne County LAFCo complies with the requirements of the Brown Act.

Each MSR is prepared as a draft and will be subject to public and agency comment prior to final

consideration by the Commission. The contents of this review are based primarily upon the information provided in the “Request For information for Municipal Service Reviews” completed for the Groveland Community Services District (GCSD) by Peter Kampa, General Manager, and staff of the GCSD.

2.6 CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Municipal service reviews are planning studies that are statutorily exempt from environmental review pursuant to GC §15262 of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. The MSR will be considered by LAFCo in connection with subsequent proceedings regarding the GCSD SOI. An SOI review or update is a project and as such is subject to CEQA consideration.

2.7 SENATE BILL 215

Senate Bill 215 (Wiggins) requires LAFCo to consider regional transportation plans and sustainable community strategies developed pursuant to SB 375 before making boundary decisions. Senate Bill 375 (Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act) requires each metropolitan planning organization (MPO) to address regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction targets for passenger vehicles in their Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) by integrating planning for transportation, land-use, and housing in a sustainable communities strategy.

Tuolumne County is not located within an MPO boundary and therefore is not subject to the provisions of SB 375. However, the Tuolumne County Transportation Council (TCTC) is responsible for developing transportation improvements that reflect the needs, concerns and actions of all the agencies (including Tribal Governments) involved in the Tuolumne County region, while contributing to the region's mobility needs, economic health, and environmental quality. TCTC is also responsible for allocating regional transportation funding to transportation improvement projects consistent with the 2016 RTP for Tuolumne County.

Tuolumne County and the City of Sonora are the local agencies primarily responsible for planning regional growth patterns through adoption and implementation of general plan and zoning regulations. While Tuolumne County is not subject to the provisions of SB 375, LAFCo will review applicable regional transportation and growth plans when considering a change of organization or reorganization application.

3 MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

3.1 SERVICE OVERVIEW

The CKH identifies seven factors, listed in Section 1.3, to be addressed when preparing a MSR. For each factor, information is gathered and analyzed, with written determinations prepared for LAFCo's consideration. This MSR will be used as an information base to update the GCSD's SOI, including any annexation considerations, and provides a basis for the public, County and LAFCo to discuss changes to the SOI.

3.1.1 Services

The GCSD water system distributes the water to the populated areas of Big Oak Flat, Groveland, and Pine Mountain Lake. The GCSD water supply and distribution system includes 3 water treatment plants, 5 storage reservoirs, and approximately 70 miles of distribution piping. The District provides a treated water supply to approximately 3,500 customers. The District also owns and operates the regional wastewater collection, treatment, and regional recycled water system, which provides sewer service to approximately 1,500 customers within the District's service area.

The areas of Groveland and Big Oak Flat encompassed by the GCSD include 3,230 water service connections, 1,590 sewer service connections and approximately 4,500 residents who receive Fire Protection/Emergency Services and Parks/Recreation Services, the majority of which are single-family residences (GCSD 2016a; GCSD 2019b; GCSD 2020a).

Additionally, Pursuant to the Tuolumne County Automatic and Mutual Aid Agreements, the Fire Department of the GCSD provides automatic and mutual aid response to fire and medical emergencies between Moccasin and Yosemite National Park along Highway 120 (Table 3-1). The Fire Department is the only staffed response agency in that unincorporated area of the County except for the CalFire Groveland Station when staffed and available (GCSD 2020a).

Table 3-1: GCSD services provided to the Groveland and Big Oak Flat Communities

Service	Connections	Population (full time)
Water	3,230	3,147
Wastewater	1,590	
Fire/EMS		4,500
Parks/Recreation		4,500

Source: GCSD 2016a; GCSD 2019b; GCSD 2020a.

3.1.2 Service Areas

The GCSD provides potable water delivery, wastewater collection, parks, and fire protection services to a 14.9 square-mile service area that includes the communities of Groveland, Big Oak Flat and Pine Mountain Lake with a population of approximately 4,500 residents. In addition to this resident population, the Tuolumne County Visitor's Bureau estimates upwards of 400,000 vehicles access Yosemite National Park annually by way of Highway 120 through Groveland (GCSD 2020a).

3.2 WATER

3.2.1 Service Overview

The GCSD operates 3 water treatment plants, 5 storage reservoirs, and approximately 70 miles of distribution piping. The GCSD provides potable water service to 3,230 service connections (See Figure 3). The Agreement with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) allows for the District to purchase a sufficient quantity of water to supply the total water needs of the District service area. The GCSD currently provides water service to 3,147 full-time residents (GCSD 2016a).

Capital Improvement Projects in Progress

As of the date of this review, the District has the following projects documented as recently completed, in construction, preparing for public bid or waiting for funding prior to bidding:

General Projects (Provide benefits to all services):

- Administrative Office Building Upgrades – completed 2020
- Administrative Office Asphalt Rehabilitation – construction contract to be awarded January 2021

Water Projects

- Big Creek/Second Garotte Clearwell Rehabilitation - in construction
- Tank 4 Emergency Generator – in construction
- Butler Way Bypass Pump – in construction
- Alternative Water Supply (AWS) Improvements – in planning and design
- Downtown Groveland/Big Oak Flat-Water Distribution System Replacement, design and permitting complete, awaiting \$3.4 million grant funding contract

Sewer Projects

- Wastewater Treatment Plant Headworks Replacement – Bidding March 2021
- Sludge Drying Bed Improvements – Bidding March 2021
- Rattlesnake Creek Crossing Replacement – completed 2020, \$45,000 grant funded
- Groveland/Big Oak Flat Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation – \$5.8 Million, 75% grant funded, Public Bidding in March 2021
- Generator Replacements for PSPS preparation – in design, grant applications submitted, \$300,000 in grants received for two generators
- Lift Station 5 Sewer Line Repair – in design
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Road Restoration – Bidding planned 2021
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Valve Vault Replacement – completed 2019
- Lift Station 2 Improvements – bidding planned for March 2021

Fire Projects

- Jones Hill Fire Fuel Break – in progress, \$165,000 grant funded
- Fire Station Driveway Restoration – completed 2019
- Fire Station Siding Replacement and Paint – completed 2020

Park Projects (all projects in Master Planning process)

- 2021 Capital Improvements – Irrigation system replacement, restroom plumbing replacements, parking lot resurfacing and striping, replacement of concrete slab under skate park, table, and barbeque replacements
- Bike Pump Track, Disc Golf Course, RV Park Development, Mountain Bike Course
- Hetch Hetchy Railroad Trail Development

3.2.2 Water Demand and Capacity

Water Sources

The GCSD has two sources of water: 1) Surface water from the SFPUC Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel at two locations (Second Garrote Shaft and Big Creek Shaft); 2) Surface water that flows into Pine Mountain Lake (water rights owned by the Turlock Irrigation District). The majority of the District's water is sourced from the Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel (GCSD 2020b).

The surface water supplied to the GCSD from the Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel is provided through a 1967 Agreement with the SFPUC, which was extended in 1984 and will not expire until March of 2034. Under the terms of the Agreement, the GCSD is a retail customer of the City and County of San Francisco. The source of supply for the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is the Tuolumne River. Big Creek Shaft and Second Garrote tap the underlying Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel as the primary source of water for the GCSD area. This water is considered "pristine" since it originates from high in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range and is protected in tunnels until it gets to the GCSD. Although the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) have approved the use of this water without filtering, water from both facilities is treated prior to distribution to its customers. The GCSD treats the water with ultraviolet (UV) light disinfection and chloramines before it is transmitted through the water distribution systems. The Big Creek Water Treatment Facility primarily serves Pine Mountain Lake, while the Second Garrote Water Treatment Facility serves Groveland and Big Oak Flat. The District has an interconnection tying the two distribution systems together between Water Storage Tanks 1 and 3 (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

From the treatment plants, the treated water travels to the GCSD's distribution system through the underground piping mainly contained in road rights-of-way. The GCSD serves its customers through a network of primarily asbestos cement pipe and polyvinyl chloride pipe ranging in diameter from 2 to 6 inches. The water distribution system is approximately 71 miles long and contains 11 different pressure zones. Figure 3 displays a map of the GCSD water system. Approximately 80% of the existing connections have pressure reducing valves, and all system services are metered (GCSD 2020b). The District has 3,246 active water connections and serves a population that varies between approximately 4,500 in the winter months to about 9,000 on busy holiday weekends in the summer. (GCSD 2020b)

Water Storage

The overall SFPUC system provides 265 million gallons per day (mgd) of water, of which the GCSD has a share of 0.4 mgd. The GCSD's two water treatment facilities have a combined water storage capacity of 4 million gallons. The GCSD also has five (5) storage reservoirs with a total capacity of approximately 2.5 million gallons. The tank number and storage capacity are shown in Table 3-2.

The District's total storage volume, including the storage at the water treatment plants is 6.64 million gallons of water storage, which is much more than current daily customer demands (discussed below). The GCSD has completed a *Water Supply Critical Dry Period Analysis* that shows even in dry and critical dry years the District has sufficient water storage to meet its customers' daily demands through year 2034 (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

Table 3-2: GCSD Storage Tanks

Tank Number	Water Source	Area Served	Tank Volume (gallons)
1	Second Garrotte Treatment Facility	Groveland, Big Oak and Yosemite Highland Subdivision	500,000
2	Big Creek Treatment Facility	Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision	750,000
3	Big Creek Treatment Facility	Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision	750,000
4	Big Creek Treatment Facility	Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision	500,000
5	Groveland Pressure Zone	Yosemite Highlands Subdivision	140,000
Total Tank Capacity			2,640,000

Source: GCSD 2020b.

Water Demand

According to the California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Section 64554, when monthly water usage data is available, the maximum monthly water usage for the past 10 years should be implemented to project the community's future water demands. Based on the observed water consumption from 2016 to 2019, the GCSD maximum monthly water consumption in August of 2017. Table 3-3 displays the observed water consumption for the GCSD from 2016 to 2019 (GCSD 2020b).

Table 3-3: GCSD Historical Water Consumption

Month	2016	2017	2018	2019
	Million Gallons	Million Gallons	Million Gallons	Million Gallons
January	7.2	8.48	6.69	6.55
February	6.85	1.64	7.2	5.75
March	6.61	1.55	6.51	7.18
April	8.43	8.22	7.39	8.13
May	10.71	6.3	9.64	10.53
June	13.51	12.39	12.56	11.48
July	16.85	13.19	15.31	14.73
August	16.2	20.05	13.82	15.31
September	12.52	15.52	12.04	11.45
October	9.98	12.31	10.15	9.71
November	8.11	11.08	8.56	8.64
December	8.48	7.73	8.06	8.12
Total Usage	125.45	118.47	117.93	117.59
Maximum Usage	16.85	20.05	15.31	15.31
Maximum Month	July	August	July	August

Source: GCSD 2020b.

Table 3-4 provides a summary of the District's potable water demand projections, as well as the Average Day Demand (ADD), Maximum Day Demand (MDD) and Peak Hour Demand (PHD) for the GCSD's water system through 2040. The ADD's were calculated from the maximum month demands reported for the region during the specified year and projected through the year 2040.

The MDDs were calculated using the ADD and a factor of 1.5, as specified in the CCR Title 22, Section 64554. The PHD was calculated by applying a factor of 1.5 to the MDD as specified by CCR Title 22, Section 64554 (GCSD 2020b).

Table 3-4: Projected Water Demands (Million Gallons)

	2017	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Projected ADD	0.65	0.66	0.68	0.69	0.71	0.73
Projected MDD	0.97	0.99	1.01	1.04	1.07	1.1
Projected PHD	1.46	1.48	1.52	1.56	1.6	1.65

Source: GCSD 2020b.

Water Treatment Plants

GCSD has three (3) Water Treatment Plants (WTP's). GCSD has relied on filtration avoidance to achieve compliance with the Surface Water Treatment Regulations (SWTR) using the disinfection process only. However, since the adoption of the Federal Disinfection Byproducts Rule (DBPR) on January 1, 2004, GCSD modified the disinfection process to achieve compliance with the DBPR and maintain filtration avoidance. Only two (2) of the three (3) treatment facilities are reliant on filtration avoidance: the Big Creek and Second Garrotte treatment facilities.

The GCSD has an alternative water treatment facility that is utilized when the Hetch Hetchy Mountain tunnel is undergoing maintenance or during emergency situations. This treatment facility is recognized as the Alternative Water System (AWS) WTP (GCSD 2020b). The water treatment capacity for each of the WTP's is listed in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5: Water Treatment Plant Capacity

Facility Name	Gallons Per Minute (GPM) Capacity	Gallons Per Day (GPD) Capacity
Big Creek Treatment Facility	1650	2,376,000
Second Garrotte Treatment Facility	620	892,800
Groveland AWS Treatment Facility	600	864,000

Source: GCSD 2020b.

Water for Fire Flows

Fire services in communities are classified by the Insurance Service Office (ISO), which is an advisory organization depended on by insurance companies for establishing the availability and costs for fire insurance. The ISO rating classifies fire service in communities with a ranking from 1 to 10, indicating the general adequacy of coverage. Communities with the best fire protection facilities, systems for water distribution, fire alarms, communications, equipment, and personnel receive a rating of 1. Primary factors assessed in establishing ISO ratings are maintaining more than one fire station within a district boundary to meet the 5-mile radius requirements, ensuring appropriate facility maintenance and upgrades are made, and sufficient personnel and volunteers exist to respond to each station.

The Tuolumne County Fire Department recently received an updated Public Protection Classification rating by ISO of 04/04x, which includes the services of and rating for the Groveland CSD Fire Department. The current ISO ratings are based on fire prevention activities and water storage and pumping capacity.

The GCSD has approximately 535 fire hydrants strategically placed throughout the service area. GCSD's Standards specify a fire flow requirement of 500 gpm for commercial and residential areas. In 2001, Tuolumne County performed a hydrant test within GCSD. The findings indicated that a majority of GCSD's fire hydrants are capable of exceeding the 500 gpm fire flow standard (GCSD 2020b). Figure 5 shows the location of the GCSD hydrants and Fire Stations.

Fire flow is dependent of volume, pressure, and flow duration. GCSD is capable of providing adequate volume of water, therefore satisfying two of the three requirements (volume, flow duration). In all regions where fire flow requirements were not met, the reasons were directly related to low pressure. Table 3-6 shows the areas that did not meet the fire flow requirements.

Table 3-6: Low Pressure Zones

Zone	Zone	Location	Pressure ¹
GL-C Fire	GL-C	HWY 120	< 0.0 psi
	GL-C	Millen Trailer Park	3.62 psi
BOF Fire	BOF	Majority of Community	< 0.0 psi
PML-W Fire	PML-W	Muller Dr. near PRV-PML-06	< 0.0 psi
	PML-W	Jackson Mill Rd.	< 0.0 psi
	PML-W	Ferretti Rd.	< 0.0 psi
GL-SE Fire	GL-SE	Hillhurst Circle below Tank No. 3	< 0.0 psi
	GL-SE	Elder Lane	< 0.0 psi
PML-C Fire	PML-C	Lower Skyridge Drive	< 0.0 psi

Notes:

¹ A pressure of < 0.0 psi indicates that the fire demand would not be achieved.

Source: GCSD 2020b.


The GL-C zone's low pressure was caused by a looped system comprised of 4-inch pipelines. The low-pressure zone at the Millen Trailer park may be resolved by increasing the hydraulic gradient line for the system.

The Big Oak Flat (BOF) zone's low pressure was triggered by system deficiencies. The BOF zone is provided potable water entirely through a single 6-inch dead-end pipeline. A 6-inch dead-end pipeline is not sufficient to provide fire flow conditions.


The PML-W zone is connected to the PML-SW zone. PRV-PML-06, separates the two zones. In normal operation, PRV-PML-06 is closed. By closing this valve, it creates low pressure within PML-W.

Similar to the BOF zone, the GL-SE zone's low pressure is introduced by system deficiencies. The GL-SE zone's deficiency is that it is supplied potable water through a single dead-end 6-inch pipeline that is connected directly to Tank No. 3.

The PML-C zone's low pressure was caused by an un-looped dead-end pipeline within Skyridge Drive.


The District has completed the design of a new water distribution system within Groveland and BOF to address the fire flow conditions and is waiting for DWSRF funding to construction the new distribution system improvements.  Funding is expected to become available in 2021 (GCSD 2020b).



3.2.3 Operations and Capital Needs

GCSD is located on the uppermost portion of the transmission system and has a contract with the SFPUC for raw water supply until 2034. GCSD and SFPUC estimate that sufficient quantities of water will be available from the Hetch Hetchy system to meet projected demands over the next 14 years (GCSD 2016a). Despite being under contract with SFPUC until 2034, repairs to the Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel are needed. During the period of 2007 to 2017 the tunnel was shut down once a year for approximately 60 days. Throughout those 10 years, the raw water supply was interrupted, which required the GCSD to find a new alternative way to supply the community. As stated above, the District was given rights to draw water from Pine Mountain Lake (PML), which is treated at the AWS WTP. The life span of the repairs made between 2007 and 2017 is unknown, and it is evident that the tunnel will need to be shut down again for repairs/maintenance in the future. To prepare for these shutdowns or any other catastrophic problem that could cause the shutdown of the tunnel, the GCSD recommends transitioning the temporary AWS WTP to a permanent facility (GCSD 2020b). 

The 2020 GCSD Agency Facilities and Infrastructure Report indicates that the GCSD provides water service to 3,246 active water connections. In 2019, the total water consumption for the District was 117.59 million gallons (GCSD 2020b).

3.2.4 Water Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies


The GCSD water system is in  good condition. The 2020 GCSD Agency Facilities and Infrastructure report stated that the GCSD water system does not have any active violations and has not received any violations since 2007. Potable water being provided to their customers meets the requirements set forth under the California Waterworks Standards and the SWRCB-DDW (GCSD 2020b).

Indicators of distribution system integrity are the number of breaks and leaks in the system and the rate of unaccounted for water loss. GCSD has drastically reduced the amount of water loss through the distribution system in recent years. This reduction is due mainly to metering the quantity of water being used for fire suppression or line flushing and replacement of outdated customer/source water meters.  2020 report identified two  water infrastructure needs for the district: water meters and AWS WTP improvements (GCSD 2020b).

Water Meter Improvements

The GCSD utilizes manual water meters to monitor and measure the amount of water used within each active connection. The District's operators must visit each individual meter and manually record each water meter reading to obtain water usage information. This is an outdated, inaccurate, and inefficient way to monitor water usage. District residents pay a fixed plus variable rate for water services. The variable rate is approximately \$0.01 per gallon, which plays a small role in the resident's total monthly water bill. The current rate structure is not conducive to encouraging water conservation within the District.

California legislature has recognized the importance of water metering and has passed several bills requiring meters throughout the State. In 2004, AB 2572 closed the loophole in the SB 229 by requiring urban water utilities to meter all municipal and industrial users by 2025 and charge metered customers based on the actual volume of water delivered.

Metering water usage and billing residents based on volumetric rates is the best way to promote water conservation and reduce lost or unmetered water. The District needs to transition their current metering system to a more efficient, accurate and more time efficient system before the 2025  deadline.

To fund the construction of these improvements, the GCSD has applied for a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant/loan funding to pay for the installation of a water meter improvements.

AWS WTP Improvements

The AWS WTP is a revolutionary facility that was designed with simplicity in mind. The District's main objective was designing a temporary facility that runs simply and can be constructed/deconstructed effortlessly and construct a treatment facility capable of treating raw water from the Pine Mountain Lake to drinking water standards. However, while the AWS WTP is capable of treating raw water from Pine Mountain Lake to drinking water standards, it is neither simple to run nor easily constructed/deconstructed. Many aspects of the treatment must be manually monitored and altered to ensure proper treatment is achieved and overflow does not occur (GCSD 2020b).

The AWS WTP was designed to be a temporary pop-up water treatment facility. The intent was that the plant would be constructed before the first day of maintenance each year and deconstructed after the annual 60-day maintenance shutdown period of the Hetch Hetchy Mountain Tunnel had lapsed. This way, the AWS WTP would not interfere with the Pine Mountain Lake Homeowner's Association (PMLA) or County Sheriff Department. Due to the complexity of the treatment facility, required tools to deconstruct and transport the treatment units and the need for the membrane filters to be submerged underwater, GCSD has decided to leave the AWS WTP system up year-round. For this reason, PMLA charges the District an annual fee to house the AWS WTP.

The GCSD must be capable of providing their customers potable water under the worst-case scenario. Due to the aging infrastructure of the Hetch Hetchy Mountain tunnel, the GCSD require a permanent alternative water supply method. For this reason, the GCSD has applied for a USDA grant/loan funding to fund the construction of a permanent AWS WTP (GCSD 2020b).

3.3 WASTEWATER

3.3.1 Service Overview

The GCSD wastewater infrastructure consists of a sewer collection system, a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and reuse/disposal fields. The District's WWTP receives wastewater generated by residential and commercial customers throughout the Groveland, Big Oak Flat and Pine Mountain Lake communities. The District provides sewer service to approximately 1,590 connections including residents and businesses.

The GCSD operates a wastewater collection, treatment, and storage system and a potable water treatment, storage, and distribution system. These facilities are managed by the Operations Department Manager. Most employees in this department are certified by the State of California in the areas of water treatment, wastewater treatment, sewage collection, and/or water distribution (GCSD 2019b).

3.3.2 Wastewater Collection, Treatment and Disposal

The District owns and operates one WWTP with a nominal capacity of 250,000 gallons per day (gpd). The treatment plant consists of primary and secondary treatment. On-site facilities consist of a mechanical shop, laboratory, and offices.

GCSD's sewer collection system consists of 16 lift stations, 7 miles of force main, 35 miles of

gravity lines, which serve the District's 1,590 connections. All of the lift stations are located in Pine Mountain Lake, except Lift Station 16, which serves Big Oak Flat. The physical state of some of these sewer lines is in poor condition and requires rehabilitation (discussed in detail below) (GCSD 2020b). Capital Improvement Projects are prioritized based on criticality to system operation and impact on system maintenance requirements and Sanitary Sewer Overflows, cost savings, safety, and regulatory requirements. Portions of the sewer collection system are internally evaluated annually using CCTV. Failed or failing items that affect regulatory compliance including system overflows are replaced and upgraded as the highest priority. Projects that improve operations and operator/public safety are typically second priority, and improvements for cost savings only are third priority. The District has a draft Capital Improvement Plan that is being evaluated and integrated into the 2021 Water/Wastewater Master Plan Update expected to be completed by February 2021.

There are two reclaimed water storage reservoirs. Reservoir 1 has a storage volume of approximately 14 acre-feet (AF). Reservoir 2 has a volume of approximately 170 AF. Pine Mountain Lake Golf Course operates a small reservoir that blends a portion of the District's effluent with lake water for irrigation of the 110-acre golf course and landscaping. The golf course uses 135 AF annually on average. The remainder of the District's reclaimed water is disposed of on the 14 acres of spray fields on District property (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).

Collection

A planning study grant was received in 2015 and a comprehensive engineering report evaluating the condition of the sewer collection network was completed. To fund the construction of the required repairs to the GCSD sewer collection network, the District has applied for and received SWRCB Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) construction grant and loan funding (GCSD 2020b) in the amount of \$4,384,176 (Grant) and \$1,461,392 (Loan).

The study revealed that the overall condition of the sewer collection system within Groveland and Big Oak Flats is rated as fair to good in accordance with pipeline standards described below. There are several areas of the collection system, including the pipelines rated as Fair to Immediate Action Required that are causing significant maintenance problems, including many collection manholes not included in the pipeline ratings, that require renovation and replacement. Currently, repairs are prioritized in response to emergency calls from the District's residents. Response consists of GCSD staff addressing problems with the collection system that typically consist of location and repair of back-ups and overflows/spills within the system. Additionally, some manholes become submerged under water during high precipitation events. In some cases, the structural condition of manholes is extremely poor, with cracks and erosion present in the concrete. Further, some areas within Pine Mountain Lake require frequent flushing due to sags in the sewer pipe.

In Spring of 2016 as a component of the planning study, the District conducted a comprehensive Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) inspection of the sewer collection system within the Groveland and Big Oak Flat communities, assessing approximately 35,000 feet of sanitary sewer.

The condition of the sewer mains was rated using the National Association of Sewer Service Companies (NASSCO) Pipeline Assessment Condition Program (PACP) standardized ratings. NASSCO PACP provides a standardized system for the consistent assessment of sanitary sewer conditions. PACP provides the capability to benchmark sewer conditions in order to track deterioration over time.

The PACP process identifies the major deterioration factors and assigns a rating that is related to the likelihood of failure or collapse. Deterioration factors include surrounding soil condition, position of groundwater table, frequency of sewer surcharging, above ground traffic loading, methods and materials used in construction, third party damages and defects such as roots, grease and debris

that result in the need for more frequent cleaning. It is important to note that while the condition of the sewer involves many deterioration factors, both internal and external, a CCTV inspection can only determine the internal defects that affect the sewer condition (GCSD 2020b).

PACP defects are assigned a grade of 1 to 5 in order of increasing severity. Table 3-7 shows the criteria of NASSCP PACP ratings.

Table 3-7: NASSCO Ratings

Rating	Importance	Likelihood of Failure
5- Immediate Attention	Defects require immediate action	Pipe has failed or will likely fail within the next 5 years
4- Poor	Severe defects	Pipe will probably fail in 5 to 10 years
3- Fair	Moderate defects that will continue to deteriorate	Pipe may fail in 10 to 20 years
2- Good	Defects that have not begun to deteriorate	Pipe unlikely to fail for at least 20 years
1- Excellent	Minor defects	Failure unlikely in the foreseeable future

Source: GCSD 2020b.

Due to the topography of the area, the sewer collection system was designed with numerous changes in pipe alignment. Structural pipe ratings are only based on the structural integrity of the pipes and do not factor in operation and maintenance issues such as changes in pipe alignment. Table 3-8 presents a summary of the ratings observed in the 35,037 feet of CCTV video evaluated.

Table 3-8: Summary of Structural PACP Defects

Rating	Size (inches)	Total Length (ft)
5	6"	170
4	none	0
3	6"	340
2	6"	721
1	6" and 8"	34,172

Source: GCSD 2020b.

The CCTV inspection has revealed the condition of approximately 170 feet of line that require immediate attention and another 340 feet that are rated fair. Defects found in the lines include a crushed pipe, delamination, infiltration runners, sags, medium to large joint displacements, deposits, and root intrusion.

3.3.3 Operations and Capital Needs

There are plans for several other repairs, rehabilitations, replacements, and capital improvements at the District's treatment facility. The GCSD has received a loan to fund the construction of various improvements throughout the District's WWTP. The various upgrades include improvements to the headworks, irrigation pump station, scum pump station, polymer activation system, screw press and effluent pump station. By completing these improvements, it will increase the plant's efficiency, overall sustainability, and introduce redundancy within the facility (GCSD 2020b).

A planning study grant was received in 2015 and a comprehensive engineering report evaluating the condition of the sewer collection network was completed. To fund the construction of the required repairs to the GCSD sewer collection network, the District has applied for SWRCB Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) construction grant funding (GCSD 2020b).

3.3.4 Regulatory Environment

All wastewater treatment providers are required to comply with effluent quality standards under the waste discharge requirements determined by the RWQCB. There have been no formal Notices of Violation (NOV) from regulatory agencies concerning the District's collection system. The major concerns associated with the GCSD sewer are age and operating condition of the District's collection system. The District has adopted a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP), evaluates performance annually and updates the SSMP every five years as required.

The GCSD operates under a permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Valley Region (CRWQCB). The permit regulates waste discharge requirements for the wastewater collection, treatment and reclamation system as well as the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. The CRWQCB adopted Cleanup and Abatement Order No. 5-01-713 in 2001 as a result of sanitary sewer overflows and other Waste Discharge Permit violations. As a result, the District secured the 2007 Sewer Installment Sale Agreement—La Salle Bank National Association and upgraded fifteen sewer lift (pump) stations surrounding Pine Mountain Lake and completed wastewater treatment plant improvements. In 2011, the District was issued a Notice of Violation (NOV) from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) alleging various violations of water quality and reporting laws as a result of two sewer spills occurring in 2010 and 2011, and a second NOV on April 9, 2012 for unapproved sludge disposal practices at the wastewater treatment plant.

In response to the two NOV, in May of 2013, the CRWQCB issued the District a Settlement Agreement and Stipulation for Entry of Administrative Civil Liability Order R5-2013-0542. The District complied fully with this order by development of a Sewer System Management Plan (SSMP) in 2012, increasing sewer system inspections and maintenance, making payments to the State Water Board, and completing improvements at the wastewater treatment plant.

The District received a planning grant from the State Water Board to evaluate the condition of the sewer collection system, which has resulted in the Downtown Groveland/Big Oak Flat Sewer Collection System Renovation project and which has received a state water board funding agreement in the amount of \$5.8 million of which \$4.8 million is grant. Construction will begin in May 2021 and be completed by December 31, 2022. This project is expected to likely eliminate SSO caused by poor system condition.

3.4 FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

3.4.1 Service Overview

The GCSD is authorized to provide fire prevention services, fire suppression, paramedic or emergency medical response and search and rescue. The Fire Master Plan prepared by Citygate in 2020 found that the GCSD Fire Department is well organized to accomplish its mission to serve a rural population across a varied land-use pattern with a minimal career staff and no volunteer firefighters. The GCSD provides mutual aid to the Tuolumne County Fire Department, CAL FIRE and the USFS under its CAL FIRE Schedule A contract and Amador Plan Agreement. The department receives good value and benefit from its CAL FIRE Schedule A contract and Amador Plan Agreement, including mutual aid as needed from the CAL FIRE Groveland Station when staffed during the summer fire season (GCSD 2020a).

The District owns, maintains, and is responsible for the operations of the GCSD Fire Department. The District funds the entire fire department operation including equipment and fire station, and contracts with CAL FIRE for personnel to staff the station through a combination of the Schedule A Contract. The Groveland Fire Station is staffed on a full-time basis. The Schedule A contract provides for five (5) fire fighters total that rotate; one (1) captain and four (4) engineers. Two (2) bodies man the station 24/7. When the state declares the official end to a fire season, funding is halted for the CAL FIRE Schedule B station located on Merrell Rd. Prior to the 2020/21 fiscal year, the District then funded the staffing of two (2) fire fighters at this station through its Amador Plan contract. The financial obligation for the cost of the Amador Plan contract was assumed by the County of Tuolumne effective July 1, 2020. This ensures the District always meets the two in two out requirements to enter a structure fire to initiate fire suppression measures (GCSD 2020d).

The GCSD Fire Department currently provides fire protection services and emergency response to a population of approximately 4,500 in the winter months to about 9,000 on busy holiday weekends in the summer. The GCSD provides Mutual Aid to the Tuolumne County Fire Department, CAL FIRE and the USFS. There are two fire stations within the District. The GCSD Station # 78 houses two Type-1 engines and one Type-3 engine, while the CAL FIRE Groveland Station houses two Type-3 engines (GCSD 2020a).

GCSD completed a Fire Department Master Plan in 2020 that contains various recommendations that are identified in Section 3.6.1.3 below (GCSD 2020a).

3.4.2 Facilities and Assets

The Department provides services from one District fire station with a daily response force of two personnel as summarized in Table 3-9. The County also has an Amador Plan contract with CAL FIRE that maintains a two-person CAL FIRE engine based at the CAL FIRE Groveland Station, located approximately one mile west of Groveland, during the winter months. The CAL FIRE Groveland Station also responds to emergency incidents within the District during the summer wildland fire season, as available. Response personnel work a 72/96-hour shift of three consecutive 24-hour days on duty, followed by four consecutive days off (GCSD 2020a).

Table 3-9: Department Facilities, Resources, and Staffing

Station	Address	Assigned Resources	Resource Type	Minimum Staffing	
				Fire Season 5/1- 10/30	Non-Fire Season 11/1- 4/30
GCSD Station 78	18930 State Highway 120 Groveland, CA	E-781 E-787 E-783	Type-1 Engine Type-1 Engine (Reserve) Type-3 Engine	2	2
CAL FIRE Groveland Station	11300 Merrill Road Groveland, CA	E-4466 E-4476	Type-3 Engine Type-3 Engine	3 3	2
Total Daily Staffing				8	4

Note: Bold font indicates staffed apparatus
Source: GCSD 2020a.

3.4.3 Service Adequacy

There are no mandatory federal or state regulations directing the level of fire service staffing, response times, or outcomes. Thus, the level of fire protection services provided is a local policy decision and communities have the level of fire services they can afford, which may not always be the level desired. However, if services are provided, all local, state, and federal regulations relating to firefighter and citizen safety must be followed (GCSD 2020a).

Service response time includes three distinct components (1) 9-1-1 call processing/dispatch time; (2) crew turnout time; and (3) travel time. Recommended best practices for these response components for urban population density areas are 1:30 minutes, 2:00 minutes, and 4:00/8:00 minutes respectively for first-due and multiple-unit Effective Response Force (ERF) responses. For rural response areas, they equate to 1:30 minutes, 2:00 minutes, and 10:30/16:00 minutes, respectively. This slower response performance goal also generally results in less-desirable outcomes including total building fire loss, lower serious emergency medical services (EMS) survivability, and larger wildland fires. Table 3-10 summarizes the GCSD Fire Department’s 90th percentile operational response performance over the previous three years (GCSD 2020a).

Table 3-10: Best Practice and GCSD Response Performance

Response Performance Component	Best Practice Goal	GCSD
Call Processing/Dispatch	1:30	0:46
Crew Turnout	2:00	4:25*
First-Due Travel	10:30	9:51
First-Due Call-to-Arrival	14:00	13:42

*Crew turnout performance cannot be accurately measured given current CAL FIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Emergency Command Center procedures.

Source: GCSD 2020a.

The 2020 Fire Master Plan Update found that the District is providing the best quality fire services it can afford and is facing two primary challenges in its efforts to continue to maintain adequate fire services: (1) long-term fiscal sustainability, and (2) daily staffing capacity (GCSD 2020a).

3.4.4 Operations and Capital Needs

Beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016–17, and continuing again since FY 2018–19, the District has spent more on fire services than it received in revenue. This is the result of several factors including voter defeat of the District's former parcel tax in 2012, minimal growth in the District's property tax base, an increase in revenues of 19 percent from FY 2014–15 to FY 2018–19 compared to an increase in expenditures of 63 percent over the same time, and a 50 percent increase in the District's CAL FIRE Schedule A contract cost over the same time. Tables 3-11 and 3-12 summarize projected Fire Fund expenditures and revenues through FY 2029-30 (GCSD 2020a).

Table 3-11 Projected Fire Service Costs - FY 2020-21 through FY 2024-25

Cost Category	Annual Change Factor	Projected Costs				
		FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
CAL FIRE Schedule A Contract	5.00%	1,131,604	1,188,184	1,247,593	1,309,973	1,375,472
Operations/Maintenance	5.00%	76,124	79,930	83,927	88,123	92,529
District Administration	5.00%	21,007	22,058	23,161	24,319	25,535
Fire Fund Reserve	0.00%	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500
Capital Replacement/Renewal		236,500	211,500	231,500	233,500	213,500
Total Projected Expenditures		1,777,873	1,828,616	1,928,147	2,013,655	2,081,337
Projected Revenue		1,142,871	1,174,452	1,208,541	1,244,167	1,280,862
Gap		-635,002	-654,164	-719,607	-769,488	-800,475

Source: GCSD 2020a.

Table 3-12 Projected Fire Service Costs - FY 2025-26 through FY 2029-30

Cost Category	Annual Change Factor	Projected Costs				
		FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029-30
CAL FIRE Schedule A Contract	5.00%	1,444,245	1,516,457	1,592,280	1,671,894	1,755,489
Operations/Maintenance	5.00%	97,156	102,013	107,114	112,470	118,093
District Administration	5.00%	26,811	28,152	29,559	31,037	32,589
Fire Fund Reserve	0.00%	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500	26,500
Capital Replacement/Renewal		236,500	236,500	242,500	239,500	218,500
Total Projected Expenditures		2,196,404	2,299,074	2,397,578	248,157	2,645,065
Projected Revenue		1,318,658	1,357,588	1,397,685	1,438,986	1,481,525
Gap		-877,746	-941,487	-999,893	1,044,171	1,163,540

Source: GCSD 2020a.

Elimination of the District’s CAL FIRE Amador Plan Agreement would not close this budget gap, and the District would require an additional estimated \$0.635 million in revenue next fiscal year to close the projected gap to maintain current fire services, increasing approximately five percent each subsequent year to an estimated \$1.164 million in FY 2029-30. Section 3.6.1.3 below identifies potential funding strategies for the District to consider to close this revenue gap (GCSD 2020a).

The Fire Master Plan found that the Department’s physical resources are appropriate to protect against the hazards likely to impact the District; however, the daily staffing of two to five career response personnel and volunteers is barely adequate to safely perform the critical tasks associated with small, emerging fires and routine single-patient EMS incidents. Even a best-case staffing level of nine career personnel (two District personnel and seven CAL FIRE Groveland Station personnel including a Chief Officer) is insufficient to safely and effectively perform the critical firefighting/rescue tasks at a confined building fire, moderate vegetation/wildland fire, serious multiple-patient EMS incident, or complex rescue incident in a timely manner without additional assistance. In addition, the District is not geographically located for timely mutual aid, thus a worst-case District staffing of two personnel reflects a likely outcome of not even being able to confine building fires to the building or parcel of origin, an inability to confine a rapidly developing vegetation/wildland fire, and the non-survival of some EMS patients (GCSD 2020a).

Recognizing that the District is currently providing the best fire services it can afford, according to the Fire Master Plan, optimal daily operational response staffing for the District is six personnel given the values to be protected and the risks. This could be achieved incrementally as funding permits by adding one full-time equivalent (FTE) on the District engine, and one Amador Plan firefighter during the winter months, with associated estimated annual costs as summarized in Table 3-13 and Table 3-14. To help ease the fiscal transition associated with adding daily on-duty staffing, the District could seek a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant that reimburses 75 percent of first- and second-year costs, and 35 percent of third-year costs.

Table 3-13: Estimated Optimal Staffing Level Costs (FY 20-21 through FY 24-25)

Expenditure Category	Annual Change Factor	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
CAL FIRE Schedule A Contract	5.00%	1,131,604	1,188,184	1,247,593	1,309,973	1,375,472
3.0 Additional Engineer FTEs	5.00%	616,497	647,322	679,688	713,673	749,356
Schedule A Contract Total		1,748,101	1,835,506	1,927,281	2,023,646	2,124,828

Source: GCSD 2020a.



Table 3-14: Estimated Optimal Staffing Level Costs (FY 25-26 through FY 29-30)

Expenditure Category	Annual Change Factor	FY 2025-26	FY 2026-27	FY 2027-28	FY 2028-29	FY 2029-30
CAL FIRE Schedule A Contract	5.00%	1,444,245	1,516,457	1,592,280	1,671,894	1,755,489
3.0 Additional Engineer FTEs	5.00%	786,824	826,165	867,473	910,847	956,389
Schedule A Contract Total		2,231,069	2,342,623	2,459,754	2,582,741	2,711,879

Source: GCSD 2020a.

3.5 PARKS AND RECREATION

3.5.1 Service Overview

The GCSD owns and operates two parks: Mary Laveroni Community Park and Leon Rose Ball Field. There is an amphitheater in the Mary Laveroni Community Park that consists of a grassy area, one stage and three sets of bleachers. In 2008, the County’s Youth Center relocated to Mary Laveroni Community Park. The Mary Laveroni Community Park also includes a dog park, a skate park, basketball court and a “tot lot”. In 2012, the parking lot and lighting were upgraded at Mary Laveroni Community Park as a joint project with Tuolumne County. Funding was provided by the Groveland Lighting District. The GCSD hopes to do more improvements to Mary Laveroni Community Park as more Lighting District Funds become available.

The Leon Rose Ball Field is used for baseball and softball games, including practice and league play by the Tioga High School Boys Baseball Team and Girls Softball Team. The ballpark has a snack bar, announcer’s stand, restrooms, and lighting for night games. Playground equipment is also located at the Leon Rose Ball Field (GCSD 2017a).

Community Facilities

Community events are held at Mary Laveroni Community Park in the stage area. The District has been working to develop the Groveland Community Resilience Center. Located partially on a parcel of land donated by the District to the County. There is also a library and museum adjacent to the Mary Laveroni Park that is operated by the Southern Tuolumne County Historical Society.

3.5.2 Operations and Capital Needs

As discussed above, the GCSD owns and operates two parks: Mary Laveroni Community Park and Leon Rose Ball Field. These facilities are maintained annually, and improvements added regularly with funding from grants and donations. The following improvements were recommended in the GCSD Parks Master Plan:

Mary Laveroni Park (Upper Park)

- Replacing current play structures to make ADA compliant;
- Access to play structure needs improvement;
- Routine maintenance of grounds, landscaping, trash receptacles, restrooms, parking lot, and picnic areas;
- Park rules signage should be introduced in more locations to reinforce proper behavior in the park.

Mary Laveroni Park (Lower Park)

- Routine maintenance of grounds, landscaping, trash receptacles, restrooms, parking lot, picnic areas, and play structure could be improved to enhance image and condition of the park;
- Park rules signage should be introduced in more locations to reinforce proper behavior in the park;
- Deferred maintenance is needed to the shade structure, storage, and amphitheater facilities.

Leon Rose Ballpark

- Accessibility of public restrooms needs to be verified;
- Accessibility improvement to and from parking lot (including signage) need to be verified;
- Accessible pathway to existing play structure is needed or new play structure may be required if no longer ADA compliant
- Parking lot is in need of resurfacing, restriping and drainage improvements;
- Undertake certified ADA Compliance assessment to identify opportunities to improve accessibility;
- Routine maintenance of grounds, landscaping, trash receptacles, restrooms, parking lot, picnic areas and play structure could be improved;
- Park entrance signage could be improved to allow motorists travelling along Ferretti road to more easily determine park location;
- Park rules signage should be introduced in more locations to reinforce proper behavior in the park (GCSD 2017a).

3.6 DETERMINATIONS

3.6.1 MSR Review Factors

3.6.1.1 Growth

1. With the development of the Airport Estates and the Long Gulch project discussed above, an additional 28 lots could be developed. Additionally, there are 807 vacant parcels within the district that could be developed, resulting in growth occurring in the Groveland Community Services District.
2. In the Groveland Community Service District, parcels can be divided, or discretionary permits issued to allow additional development that would be dependent on GCSD services.

3.6.1.2 Disadvantaged Communities

1. The community of Groveland/Big Oak Flat has been identified as a disadvantaged unincorporated community.
2. The Groveland Community Services District (GCSD) provides water, sewer, structural fire protection, park and recreational services within its District.
3. The GCSD provides services and facilities to property owners, residents, and visitors within its District in an efficient manner.

3.6.1.3 Capacity of Facilities and Adequacy of Services

Water

1. The GCSD's water system is adequate to serve the existing and future population until at least 2034.
2. The GCSD needs to transition their current metering system to a more efficient, accurate and time efficient system before 2025.
3. The PML AWS WTP must be converted to a permanent alternative water treatment plant due to the aging infrastructure of the Hetch Hetchy Mountain tunnel.
4. In the future, replacement of infrastructure may be necessary due to age-related degradation and changes in regulations.

Wastewater

1. The GCSD sewer collection system within Groveland and Big Oak Flats is poor and requires repairs.
2. Repairs are needed in areas identified in the Engineering Report.
3. Repairs, rehabilitations, replacements, and capital improvements at the District's WWTP are needed. The various proposed upgrades include improvements to the headworks, irrigation pump station, scum pump station, polymer activation system, screw press and effluent pump station. Completing these improvements will increase the plant's efficiency, overall sustainability, and add redundancy within the facility.
4. In the future, replacement of infrastructure may be necessary due to age and changes in State regulations.


Fire Protection and Emergency Services

1. The District Board of Directors adopted the following fire deployment goals to deliver outcomes that will save medical patients when possible upon arrival and to keep small but serious fires from becoming more serious.
 - a. Distribution of Fire Stations: First-due response units should arrive within 14:00 minutes, 90 percent of the time from the receipt of the 9-1-1 call at the fire dispatch center, which equates to a 90-second dispatch time, 2:00-minute crew turnout time, and 10:30-minute travel time.
 - b. Multiple-Unit Effective Response Force (ERF) for Serious Emergencies: A multiple-unit ERF, including at least one Chief Officer, should arrive within 19:30 minutes from the time of 9-1-1 call receipt at fire dispatch, 90 percent of the time. This equates to a 90-second dispatch time, 2:00-minute company turnout time, and 16:00-minute travel time.
 - c. Hazardous Materials Response: To provide hazardous materials response designed to protect the community from the hazards associated with uncontrolled release of hazardous and toxic materials, a fire-due response should arrive within 14:00 minutes, 90 percent of the time from the receipt of the 9-1-1 call at the fire dispatch center to isolate the hazard, deny entry into the


hazard zone, and notify appropriate officials/resources to minimize impacts on the community. Following initial hazard evaluation and/or mitigation actions, a determination can be made whether to request additional resources from a regional hazardous materials team.

- d. Technical Rescue: To respond to technical rescue emergencies as efficiently and effectively as possible with enough trained personnel to facilitate a successful rescue, a first-due response unit should arrive within 14:00 minutes, 90 percent of the time from the receipt of the 9-1-1 call at the fire dispatch center to evaluate the situation and/or initiate rescue actions. Following the initial evaluation, assemble additional resources as needed within a total response time of 19:30 minutes to safely complete rescue/extrication and delivery of the victim to the appropriate emergency medical care facility.
2. The Department should work with the CAL FIRE Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Emergency Command Center to modify its procedures to accurately track crew turnout time.
3. The District should consider augmenting daily on-duty staffing as funding permits.
4. The District's staffing would be much safer and more effective if a total of six firefighters were always stationed in Groveland between the District and CAL FIRE.
5. The District should consider seeking voter approval off an annual parcel assessment or special tax to provide necessary supplemental funding to, at a minimum, maintain current fire protection services.
6. The District should consider seeking a cost recovery/reimbursement agreement with Tuolumne County for the District's percentage of total responses outside of the automatic mutual aid zone.


Parks & Recreation

1. The services provided by the GCSD are adequate for the community. 
2. The GCSD operates two public park facilities, including Mary Laveroni Community Park and Leon Rose Ball Field.
3. The Groveland Youth Center is now located within Mary Laveroni Community Park. The District has an MOU with Tuolumne County for the operation of the Youth Center.
4. Improvements are needed at both parks to meet ADA compliance.
5. Routine maintenance of both parks is recommended in the Parks Master Plan.
6. Deferred maintenance is needed to the shade structure, storage, and amphitheater facilities at Mary Laveroni Community Park.
7. Parking lot is in need of resurfacing, restriping, and drainage improvements at Leon Rose Ball Field.
8. The community services currently provided by GCSD are adequate. Community events are held at Mary Laveroni Community Park at two stage areas. The District's Board/Conference room is also available for public meetings.


3.6.1.4 Financial Ability of Agency

1. The GCSD prepares a budget annually. Water and sewage rates were determined through rate studies conducted in 2016 and 2018, respectively. These studies determined that multi-year increases to the current rates were necessary to provide sufficient revenue in both services to fund operations and capital improvements (GCSD 2019c). A portion of the sewer rate increases approved in 2018 was necessary for the District to be in a financial condition to secure the \$1.4 million loan and \$4.8 million grant from the State Water Resources Control Board for the 
2. It is the GCSD Board's desire to strive to keep rates for water and sewer applied as equitably as possible among current and future District customers. The Board has directed the preparation of long-term master plan updates in the fire, water and sewer services to accurately understand current cost and the predictable, long term cost of infrastructure and major equipment replacements. These infrastructure and operations plans establish the financial framework to be used by the District to ensure that known long term investments and costs are not deferred to future generations for the sake of subsidizing low service rates today. The GCSD charges a fixed rate charge, a usage rate and a debt service charge as discussed above. Other sources of revenue are sought to off-set customer water and sewer rates, such as evaluating and updating connection and capacity fees charged based on current capital improvement plans, leasing property to cellular providers, charging for services such as new development and building plan review and charging fees for certain permits and seeking grant funding (GCSD 2019c). The District is in the process of establishing Development Impact Mitigation fees for fire and park services, intended to offset the facility and equipment impacts of new development projects and provide funding for service capacity increases such as new fire engines, fire station expansion and new park amenities to serve increased populations. The District is in the process of forming a Community Facilities District (CFD) to levy a special parcel tax on new development projects to fund the ongoing operating expenses of fire and park services.
3. The GCSD follows the Governmental Accounting Standings Board (GASB) 34 accounting standards.
4. The GCSD has incurred outstanding public debt for purchases, upgrades, or replacement of capital improvements such as sewage pump stations, water and sewer lines, water and wastewater treatment facilities. The most significant source of debt is from the capital facilities projects. The current debts are repaid through a per lot water stand by fee, debt service charge, water and sewer enterprise fund revenues. The GCSD has never defaulted on repayment of any bonds or other debt.
5. The funding sources for water and wastewater are from user rates. The fire and park funds are special revenue funds and are funded with general property taxes. A fire services special parcel assessment was not continued by the voters in 2012, and as a result fire department staffing in the GCSD is now provided by CAL FIRE under a Schedule A Cooperative Agreement. GCSD owns and operates the Groveland fire station and provides/maintains all equipment and apparatus used by the CAL FIRE staff. GCSD administers the fire service and manages its planning and finances.
6. As discussed in Section 3.4.4 above, since Fiscal Year (FY) 2016–17, the District has spent more on fire services than it received in revenue. Five full time career fire staff are needed to provide two persons on duty at all times, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. As detailed in the District's 2020 Fire Master Plan Update, the current daily staffing of two full time career response personnel is barely adequate. The District is



working with the County to plan for increased fire staffing in the region, and the GCSD Board has directed evaluation of the cost and funding opportunities to increase full time GCSD contracted staff to a minimum of 10 to provide 4 on duty at all times. Section 3.6.1.3 discusses recommendations to ensure that the department has adequate funding.

7. The GCSD takes advantage of cost avoidance opportunities, including moving from reactive maintenance programs to pro-active and preventative maintenance programs, establishing infrastructure replacement reserves and replacing maintenance-intensive infrastructure/equipment, cross-training personnel, better computer tracking of operations, maintenance and finance, seeking grant funding, project performance tracking and developing a 5-year running budget. The District is also updating its 20-year-old water and sewer Master Plans, expected for completion in February 2021 and which will include a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan. The District has secured over \$9 million in state grant funding in the past year for critical infrastructure projects and refinanced outstanding debt to lower interest rates and cost.
8. The five-member Board of Directors receive a stipend per meeting, which is determined at the first meeting of each fiscal year in July.
9. The GCSD employs 19 full-time employees, 4 part-time employees and 3 contract employees. One recently established Information Technology position is currently vacant.
10. The District is under a Schedule A contract with CAL FIRE. The Schedule A contract provides for five (5) fire fighters total that rotate; one (1) captain and four engineers. Two (2) bodies man the station 24/7. When the state declares the official end to a fire season, funding is halted for the CAL FIRE Schedule B station located on Merrell Rd. Prior to the 2020/21 fiscal year, the District funded the staffing of two (2) fire fighters at this station through an Amador Plan contract. The financial obligation for the cost of the Amador Plan contract was assumed by the County of Tuolumne effective July 1, 2020.
11. There is an adequate number of customers within the GCSD to pay the current operating costs for providing water and sewer services.
12. It is likely that additional parcels will be annexed, improved, or divided in the future which would increase the number of customers paying water and sewer fees. 

3.6.1.5 Shared Facilities

1. The Groveland Lighting District could be reorganized to be a part of the GCSD. The GCSD would then be responsible to maintain lighting, add lighting, make public improvements related to lighting. This would also increase funding opportunities for the GCSD. 

3.6.1.6 Accountability, Structure, and Operational Efficiencies

1. There are very few government structure options currently available to the Communities of Groveland and Big Oak Flat and the GCSD. 
2. Changing the governmental structure in GCSD is generally not feasible. The CSD is an efficient way to provide public services, such as water and sewer  the area.
3. Landowners within the GCSD service area are adequately provided water, wastewater,

fire protection, emergency, community facilities, and parks and recreation services.

4. The Groveland Lighting District could be reorganized to be a part of the Groveland Community Services District. The potential for this reorganization is discussed further below.
5. The Groveland Community Services District has reduced its staff from 33 full time employees in 2007, to 23 full time employees in 2012, to 19 full-time employees in 2019. The GCSD now employs 19 full time employees and 3 contract employees.
6. It is reasonable to conclude that management is efficient.
7. The GCSD's outreach program includes distribution of articles about the District and maintaining a website. The District website design engine is a special service provided to California local government, updated continuously to ensure continuous compliance with all state laws and requirements including SB 929. The District received recognition for Excellence in Transparency issued in 2019 by the Special District Leadership Foundation of the California Special Districts Association.
8. The GCSD conducts business during the regularly scheduled monthly meetings that are open to the public, in compliance with the Brown Act.
9. There is an e-mail address on the website maintained by the GCSD where customers can send comments and/or request information.
10. The GCSD solicits customer feedback and comments from property owners within the District. Customers can submit feedback electronically on the District website, physically at the District office, and the District board meetings.

4 SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

4.1 SOI UPDATE

LAFCo prepares a MSR prior to or in conjunction with the SOI Update process. An SOI Update considers whether a change to the SOI, or probable future boundary, of a local government agency is warranted to plan the logical and orderly development of that agency in a manner that supports CKH Law and the Policies of the Commission. The MSR and required determinations are presented in Chapter 3 of this document and form the basis of information and analysis for this SOI Update. This chapter presents the SOI Update and required determinations pursuant to California Government Code §56425(e) for GCSD.

4.1.1 Existing Sphere of Influence

The existing SOI for GCSD is larger than the District boundary. The SOI for the GCSD was established concurrently with formation of the Community Services District. There have not been any reorganizations of the GCSD or changes in its Sphere of Influence since its establishment. The existing Sphere of Influence boundary for the GCSD is farther reaching than the existing District boundary. In its contract for water with the City of San Francisco and SFPUC, the GCSD's SOI was referred to as its "contract area." The contract area is the extent to which the SFPUC will supply water to GCSD (Figure 2) (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013).



4.1.2 Study Areas

See Study Areas in Figure 6.


Airport Estates Subdivision

The Airport Estates Subdivision consisting of 21.6± acres and 9 parcels, was approved by Tuolumne County in 2018; however, the subdivision has not been developed. This subdivision is located immediately east of the Pine Mountain Lake Subdivision. The parcels range in size from approximately 2 to 2.9 acres. The 21.6-acre property was rezoned from AE-37:AIR (Agricultural Exclusive, Thirty-Seven-Acre Minimum Airport Combining) to RE-1:AIR (Residential Estate, One-Acre Minimum Airport Combining); and included a General Plan Amendment to change the land use designation from Rural Residential (RR) to Low Density Residential (LDR). The proposed residential subdivision is intended for homeowners with private airplanes to be able to access the adjacent Pine Mountain Lake Airport.

The Subdivision is not located within the GCSD service area boundary; however, the entirety of the project is located within its SOI (Tuolumne County 2018b). Although not a condition of approval for the subdivision, the project developer has requested the GCSD provide water service to all lots and sewer service to one lot within the Subdivision. The GCSD agreed to annex the proposed project to its service area to provide water, sanitary sewer, fire and parks services on the condition that the applicant assume all expenses related to design, preparation of plans, specifications, development, construction and installation of the necessary improvements to extend GCSD services (GCSD 2020e). To facilitate water and sewer service being provided to this subdivision, an application requesting annexation and an annexation agreement has been approved by GCSD's Board of Directors. GCSD has conducted an analysis of the capacity of its sewer and water facilities to accommodate the Airport Estates project. LAFCO will be able to accept the annexation application for processing upon completion of the GCSD MSR/SOI Update.

In the interim, the Tuolumne LAFCo approved an Out of Boundary Service Agreement on October 8, 2020 to allow provision of water and sewer services to Lots 1 through 8 of the Airport Estates. A condition of approval requires the GCSD and property owner to complete an annexation of the property within one year of the approval of the Agreement.

Long Gulch Ranch Subdivision


The Long Gulch project would result in 19 residential lots, ranging in size from approximately 3.0± acres to 12.5± acres. The project proposes to use on-site wells and private septic systems. It is unclear what impact there will be on GCSD's emergency services. The project is located within the District's SOI and is eligible for application for annexation. 

Terra Vi

Terra Vi Lodge Yosemite is a master planned hotel lodging development designed to address the increased demands for eco-sensitive resorts and local recreation tourism. The project is comprised of various single, two- and three- story buildings and structures beginning at the northwest entrance of Sawmill Mountain Road and continuing northeast as it unfolds and curves back towards SR120. Elements of the project include a public market, general lodge with 100 guestrooms, two manager's suites, and multi-purpose uses, indoor and outdoor areas, and seven guest cabins providing 26 guestrooms, as well as five employee apartments with four rooms in each unit, for a total of 20 employee rooms. It is estimated that the buildings would host an average of 104 guests, and they would accommodate a maximum occupancy of 156 guests.

The project is located outside of the GCSD boundaries and SOI. However, all hazard emergency response service to the project site and the surrounding area is currently provided by the GCSD, though resources from other providers (CALFIRE, USFS, NPS) also could be dispatched to the site depending on the type of incident and resource availability. The GCSD responds to emergencies within its District, and also to out-of-District areas like the project site and the surrounding area through its mutual aid agreement with the County.

To assist with the provision of emergency response services to the project site, the project applicant has agreed to financially support emergency response efforts on the Highway 120 corridor. The County is currently in the process of determining an appropriate fair-share fee for the project, which would be based on per unit of lodging. Proceeds from the fee would be utilized to offset the cost of providing emergency services to the project, and to assist the County with equipment and staffing needs. (Tuolumne County 2020c)

The language of the project's condition of approval reflects the possibility that the future will bring changes to the funding of emergency services. Currently, the County is conducting a study evaluating the potential for a commercial County Services Impact Fee to be adopted, which would collect funds at the time of a building permit for a development's fair share draw on County services. Additional efforts by County staff are underway to increase emergency response availability on the Highway 120 corridor. Therefore, at this time, it is not certain how the fair share payment will be made. In the event that at the time of the issuance of the building permit for this project, no other fees or assessments have been adopted by the Board of Supervisors to fund the cost of providing emergency response to the project site, the applicant will be required to pay an annual fair share contribution to Tuolumne County for their use of emergency services. This fair share fee will be collected for the life of the project or until another substantially similar funding mechanism is in place. (Tuolumne County 2020c) 

Yosemite Under Canvas Project

The Under-Canvas project is a transient, 99-tent campground with supporting facilities located

adjacent to SR 120 in the vicinity of Hardin Flat, east of the community of Groveland. The camp will operate March through October, as weather allows. Potable water and sanitary sewer is provided by on-site systems owned and operated by Under Canvas (ESA 2020). Mitigation measures for the project include fire prevention planning review by agencies, including the GCSD, for construction and operations.

Similar to the Terra Vi project, all hazard emergency response service to the project site and surrounding areas is also provided by the GCSD, which responds to emergencies within its boundaries and also to out-of-district areas through its mutual aid agreement with the County. To assist with the provision of emergency response services to the project site, the project applicant has agreed to financially support emergency response efforts on the Highway 120 corridor. The County is currently in the process of determining an appropriate fair-share fee for the project, which would be based on per unit of lodging. Proceeds from the fee would be utilized to offset the cost of providing emergency services to the project, and to assist the County with equipment and staffing needs. (ESA 2020) (See also Section 2.4)

Groveland Lighting District

The Groveland Lighting District (GLD) was created in 1919 to place electric lights in the downtown Groveland area of Tuolumne County. The GLD is governed by the Highway Lighting District Act of 1941, Streets and Highway Code Section 19000 et seq. The County of Tuolumne currently operates the Groveland Lighting District, which is governed by the County Board of Supervisors. The Groveland Lighting District is approximately 239 acres and located entirely within the GCSD and SOI boundary (Tuolumne County 2020b).

The GLD is funded through a portion of the ad valorem property taxes paid by the owners of the parcels within the District. In FY 2018-19, District revenues were \$28,404 and expenses were \$2,439. GLD expenses typically consist of paying power bills for the streetlights and changing bulbs in the lights. The District revenues typically exceed the expenses; consequently, the GLD has accumulated a maintenance fund of approximately \$410,594 (beginning balance, FY 2019-20). (Tuolumne County 2020b)

During the 2012 Municipal Review of the Groveland Lighting District, LAFCo recommended that the Groveland Lighting District be dissolved and future lighting services be provided by the GCSD.

Community Facilities District

In June 2021 the GCSD sought adoption of a resolution of intention for the formation of a Community Facilities District (CFD) within the boundaries of the GCSD to provide funding for fire and park services from new development projects. Tuolumne County's approval of new land development projects would be conditioned on annexation into the CFD and a special tax would then be levied on the properties that annex into the CFD. This funding is an annual tax to fund the additional operating cost of providing fire and park services for these new projects. Individual parcels securing building permits, lot splits/combinations, and/or parcel maps of five parcels or less would not be required to annex into the CFD. Annexation to the CFD would be required for subdivisions of more than five lots, new commercial developments, and/or properties receiving Conditional Use Permits for commercial development through the county and other similar entitlements.

The services to be funded, in whole or in part, by the CFD would consist of services authorized under Section 53313 of the Government Code, including, but not be limited to, fire protection and suppression services, ambulance and paramedic services, and park maintenance and landscaping services. These services may include direct and incidental costs related to providing for the maintenance of public infrastructure within the area of the CFD and areas adjacent to or in the

vicinity of such areas. In addition, the CFD may fund the following related services: furnishing, operating and maintaining equipment, apparatus or facilities related to providing the services and/or equipment, apparatus, facilities or fixtures in areas to be maintained, paying the salaries and benefits of personnel necessary or convenient to provide the Services, payment of insurance costs and other related expenses and the provision of reserves for repairs and replacements and for the future provision of services. It is expected that the services would be provided by the GCSD, either with its own employees or by contract with third parties, or a combination thereof. The services to be financed by the CFD are in addition to those provided in the territory of the CFD before the date of creation of the CFD and would not supplant services already available within that territory if/when the CFD is created.

4.1.3 Proposed SOI Changes

There is no current proposal by the GCSD to expand or reduce its SOI. There is no anticipated change to the provision of water, wastewater and parks and recreation services. However, there exists a demand for GCSD fire and emergency response services as the primary responding entity outside its SOI. The GCSD continues to work closely with Tuolumne County through the discretionary entitlement process for pending applications (4.1.2 Study Areas) to identify impacts and mitigation for providing fire and emergency services to these areas, particularly along the SR-120 corridor.

4.1.4 Consistency with LAFCo Policies

The District is comprised of a historical mixed use residential and commercial community with a visitor-oriented economy and open space resources. Affirming the District's 2013 SOI is consistent with LAFCO Policies.

4.2 DETERMINATIONS

It is recommended that the Commission affirm the existing SOI for the GCSD. The following statements have been prepared in support of this recommendation.

4.2.1 Land Uses

- The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.

The GCSD contains a combination of residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses and densities. Land use designations within the District include Parks and Recreation (R/P), Public (P), Open Space (O), Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), High Density Residential (HDR), Estate Residential (ER), Homestead Residential (HR), Rural Residential (RR), Large Lot Residential (LR), Agricultural (AG), Neighborhood Commercial (NC), General Commercial (GC), Mixed-Use (MU), Business Park (BP), Light Industrial (LI), Heavy Industrial (HI), Special Commercial (SC) and Heavy Commercial (HC) General Plan Land Use designations as provided in the Tuolumne County General Plan.

The area surrounding the GCSD and SOI also contains residential zoning which will allow for future development. The area surrounding the District is primarily rural residential, agricultural and forest.

4.2.2 Need for Facilities and Services

- The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

The District provides structural fire protection and emergency services, water service, sewer

service, park/recreation services and community facilities management to the areas of Big Oak Flat, Groveland, and Pine Mountain Lake. Other service providers/districts encompassing these areas include the County of Tuolumne, the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District, and County-wide Ambulance District (Tuolumne County LAFCo 2013). The GCSD is estimated to serve a population of approximately 4,500 residents in the winter months and up to 9,000 on busy summer weekends. The residents and visitors currently receiving services from the District will continue to need these public services. Additionally, as discussed above, it is recommended that the 239-acre Groveland Lighting District, which funds lighting in the downtown Groveland area, be dissolved and future lighting services be provided by GCSD.

The Study Areas discussed in Section 4.1.2 will impact the District's provision of fire protection and emergency services due to their location along the SR-120 corridor. Because the District participates in Mutual Aid Agreements with other local, state, and federal emergency response agencies in the area (CAL FIRE, USFS, County), it routinely provides emergency services outside of its boundaries and SOI. In response to the Study Area developments, the County is undertaking a study to determine appropriate funding mechanisms and structures to fund the cost of emergency services in the area.

4.2.3 Capacity of Facilities and Adequacy of Services

- The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

As determined in the MSR prepared for the District, the GCSD requires updates and repairs to existing infrastructure, facilities, and equipment to meet current and future demands for public services within the next five years. The GCSD water system is adequate to serve the existing and future population until at least 2034, however the District needs to transition their current metering system to a more efficient, accurate and time efficient system before 2025. The PML AWS WTP must be converted to a permanent alternative water treatment plan due to aging infrastructure of the Hetch Hetchy Mountain tunnel. The MSR determined that the GCSD sewer collection system is poor and requires repairs. The district has spent more on fire services than it received in revenue since Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17, thus the District should consider seeking voter approval off an annual parcel assessment or special tax to provide the necessary supplemental funding to, at a minimum, maintain current fire protection services.

The Study Areas discussed in Section 4.1.2 will impact the District's provision of fire protection and emergency services due to their location along the SR-120 corridor. In response to the increasing demand for out-of-District emergency service provision, the District has identified the need for additional funding. The County has agreed to fund the District's Amador contract with CAL FIRE for a three-year period. Further, in response to the proposed developments along the SR-120 corridor outside the District's boundaries and SOI, the County is undertaking a study to determine appropriate funding mechanisms and structures to fund the cost of emergency services in the area.

4.2.4 Communities of Interest

- The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

The Airport Estates and Long Gulch Subdivisions are included in the Sphere of Influence, which makes them eligible to be annexed into the District boundary upon application to LAFCo (GC Section 56375.5).

The proposed projects known as Airport Estates, Terra Vi, and Yosemite Under Canvas are recreation lodging/camping projects along the SR-120 corridor. The projects are located outside of

the GCSD boundary and in some cases, the SOI as well; however, offsite traffic generated by the project will be using SR-120 and could increase the impact on emergency and fire services, which are provided by the District.

4.2.5 Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

- The present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence.

As discussed in Section 2.6 above, the Groveland community is a disadvantaged unincorporated community. Groveland has a MHI of \$31,587 per year while the MHI for the State of California is \$61,632 per year. Eighty percent of the statewide MHI is \$49,306 per year. Since the MHI of the Groveland community is less than 80% of the statewide MHI, the Groveland community is considered a disadvantaged unincorporated community consistent with LAFCo Policy.



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6 ACRONYMS

ADD	Average Daily Demand
AF	Acre-feet
AWS	Alternative Water System
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BOE	Board of Equalization
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CDP	Census Designated Place
CKH	Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000
CRWQCB	California Regional Water Quality Control Board
CSD	Community Services District
CWSRF	Clean Water State Revolving Fund
DPH	Department of Public Health
EMS	Emergency Management Services
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ERF	Effective Response Force
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GC	Government Code
GCSD	Groveland Community Services District
GHG	Greenhouse gas emissions
GPM	gallons per minute
HCD	Housing and Community Development
ISO	Insurance Service Office
LAFCo	Local Agency Formation Commission
MDD	Maximum Day Demand
MG	million gallons
MGD	million gallons per day
MHI	Median household income
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MSR	Municipal Service Review
NASSCO	National Association of Sewer Service Companies
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
PACP	Pipeline Assessment Condition Program
PHD	Peak Hour Demand
PMLA	Pine Mountain Lake Homeowner's Association
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Assessment
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan
RV	Recreational Vehicle
SAFER	Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response

SB	Senate Bill
SFPUC	San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
SOI	Sphere of Influence
TCTC	Tuolumne County Transportation Council
USFS	United State Forest Service
UV	Ultraviolet
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
WTP	Water Treatment Plant
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

7 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

7.1 REPORT PREPARATION

This MSR/SOI Update was prepared by Helix Environmental, Inc. and Hinman & Associates Consulting, Inc.

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