

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
RESOLUTION NO. 2025- 9023

**DESIGNATE LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREA MODERATE, HIGH, AND VERY HIGH
FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES CONSISTENT WITH STATE LAW
WITH AN ASSOCIATED OFFICIAL HAZARD MAP**

WHEREAS, Government Code Sec. 51175 states the California Legislature hereby finds and declares as follows:

1. Wildfires are extremely costly, not only to property owners and residents, but also to local agencies. Wildfires pose a serious threat to the preservation of the public peace, health, or safety. The wildfire front is not the only source of risk since embers, or firebrands, travel far beyond the area impacted by the front and pose a risk of ignition to a structure or fuel on a site for a longer time. Since fires ignore civil boundaries, it is necessary that cities, counties, special districts, state agencies, and federal agencies work together to bring raging fires under control. Preventive measures are therefore needed to ensure the preservation of the public peace, health, or safety; and
2. The prevention of wildland fires is not a municipal affair, as that term is used in Section 5 of Article XI of the California Constitution, but is instead, a matter of statewide concern. It is the intent of the Legislature that Government Code, Title 5 Local Agencies, Division 1 Cities and Counties, Part 1 Powers and Duties Common to Cities and Counties, Chapter 6.8. Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Sec. 51175 – 51189) apply to all local agencies, including, but not limited to, charter cities, charter counties, and charter cities and counties. This subdivision shall not limit the authority of a local agency to impose more restrictive fire and public safety requirements, as otherwise authorized by law; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is mandated by Government Code Sec. 51178 to identify levels of fire hazard designated as Moderate, High, and Very High in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) that are not in the State Responsibility Area (SRA); and

WHEREAS, Government Code Sec. 51179 requires the State Fire Marshal to make recommendations of fire hazard severity zones to local agencies (Sec. 51177(e)), for city and county designation and adoption by ordinance; and

WHEREAS, on February 10, 2025, Plumas County received a transmittal from the State Fire Marshal with the 2025 updated official LRA hazard map entitled “Plumas County – Unincorporated LRA Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Identified by the State Fire Marshall” (dated January 22, 2025), which is intended to enhance California’s approach to wildfire preparedness; and

WHEREAS, the official LRA hazard map evaluates “hazard,” not “risk” to include areas or zones of Very High, High, and Moderate fire hazard based on consistent statewide criteria such as fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread and the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas (Government Code Sec. 51178); and

WHEREAS, “Hazard” is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildfire, or fuel reduction efforts; and

WHEREAS, “Risk” is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, accounting for any modifications such as fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Sec. 51178.5 requires Plumas County within 30 days after receiving the 2025 updated official LRA hazard map to make the information available for public review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2025, the Plumas County Board of Supervisors made available for public review and comment the 2025 updated official LRA hazard map entitled “Plumas County – Unincorporated LRA Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Identified by the State Fire Marshall” (dated January 22, 2025) through establishing a LRA website (<https://www.plumascounty.us/3354/LRA-Fire-Hazard-Severity-Zones-FHSZ-Map>) in addition to posting a notice pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51179(g) at the office of the County Clerk/Recorder, County Assessor, and County Planning Department; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors directed Planning Department staff to conduct public outreach for public review and comment on the 2025 updated official LRA hazard map and send a U.S. postal direct mailing to property owners within the LRA; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Director participated in the following state and public meetings: 1. March 24, 2025, Chester Town Hall Public Meeting; 2. March 29, 2025, Plumas County Fire Chiefs Association Meeting; 3. April 1, 2025, Office of the State Fire Marshall Meeting; 4. April 2, 2025, Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District Board Meeting; 5. April 10, 2025, Plumas County Fire Safe Council Public Meeting; and 6. May 14, 2025, Firewise Communities Leads Meeting; and

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2025, a standard postcard direct mailing was sent to 2,052 property owners within the LRA notifying them they may be impacted by the proposed official LRA hazard map amendments and informing them of the public comment opportunity at the Board of Supervisor ordinance and map adoption public hearings on June 3, 2025, and June 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, LRA areas in unincorporated Plumas County are within the Town of Chester, Town of Quincy, Town of East Quincy, and Sierra Valley and are areas where the local agency fire protection special district is responsible for wildfire protection; and

WHEREAS, responsible local agency fire protection special districts include Peninsula Fire Protection District (Chester), Quincy Fire Protection District (Quincy/East Quincy), and Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District (Sierra Valley); and

WHEREAS, Government Code Sec. 51179(a), requires Plumas County to adopt an LRA ordinance, with an associated map, within 120 days of receiving the 2025 updated official LRA hazard map on February 10, 2025, or no later than June 10, 2025; and

WHEREAS, thereafter within 30 days, or by July 10, 2025, Plumas County shall transmit a copy of the Board of Supervisors adopted ordinance and associated map; and

WHEREAS, Government Code Sec. 51179(b)(3) directs that Plumas County cannot decrease the level of fire hazard severity zones for any area and may only increase the level; and

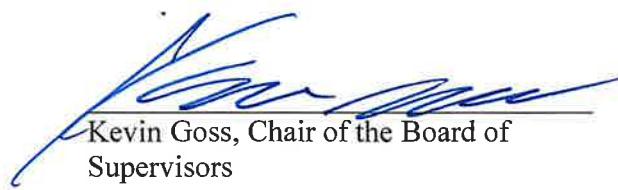
WHEREAS, on behalf of the County and LRA property owners, the Board of Supervisors expresses significant frustration with Government Code Sec. 51179(b)(3) as Plumas County should have direction to decrease the fire hazard severity zone level for an LRA area if findings can be made based on best available local data and inputs to the geospatial model to support.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Plumas, State of California, that this Board, pursuant to the authority granted by the Government Code of the State of California:

- A. The official hazard map entitled “Plumas County – Unincorporated LRA Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Identified by the State Fire Marshall” (dated January 22, 2025) has not been modified by the Board of Supervisors as recommended by the State Fire Marshall pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51178 and shall be for the purpose of evaluating local wildfire hazard planning decisions and not insurance wildfire risk underwriting decisions.
- B. Finds the Ordinance adoption not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sec. 15060(c)(3) as the activity is not a “Project” as defined in Public Resources Code Sec. 21065, meaning, “an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment,” and CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sec. 15378 because the Ordinance has no potential for resulting in a direct or indirect physical change in the environment.
- C. Adopts Ordinance No. 2025-_____ adding Chapter 9.5 Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones to Title 9 Planning and Zoning of the Plumas County Code to designate Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) and incorporates by reference the official hazard map entitled “Plumas County – Unincorporated LRA Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Identified by the State Fire Marshall” (dated January 22, 2025) as shown in Exhibit “A” attached herein.

The foregoing resolution was duly passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Plumas, State of California, at a regular meeting of said Board held on this 10th day of June, 2025, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors: Goss, Hall, McGowan
NOES: Supervisors: Engel
ABSENT: Supervisors: Ceresola
ABSTAIN: Supervisors:



Kevin Goss, Chair of the Board of
Supervisors

ATTEST:



Allen Hiskey, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

Approved as to form:



Joshua Breitbach, Attorney
County Counsel's Office

“EXHIBIT A”

PLUMAS COUNTY CODE TITLE 9 PLANNING AND ZONING CHAPTER 9.5 LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREA FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES

Article 1. - PURPOSES AND APPLICATION

Sec. 9-9.5.101. - Purposes.

- (a) The provisions of this chapter are to designate into this Code levels of fire hazard consistent with State Law pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51179 in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) that being moderate, high, and very high Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs) as recommended by the State Fire Marshall pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51178.
- (b) The official hazard map hereby incorporated by reference and entitled “Plumas County – Unincorporated LRA Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones as Identified by the State Fire Marshall” (dated January 22, 2025) has not been modified by the Board of Supervisors and shall be for the purpose of evaluating local wildfire hazard planning decisions and not insurance wildfire risk underwriting decisions. The official hazard map is also located electronically on the following County website: <https://www.plumascounty.us/3354/LRA-Fire-Hazard-Severity-Zones-FHSZ-Map>.

Sec. 9-9.5.102. - Application.

- (a) The application of the provisions of this chapter and those portions of this Code which implement the LRA FHSZs shall identify LRA areas in unincorporated Plumas County by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51178 as moderate, high, and very high FHSZs based on consistent statewide criteria and the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high FHSZs shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.
- (b) LRA areas in unincorporated Plumas County are within the Town of Chester, Town of Quincy, Town of East Quincy, and Sierra Valley and are areas where the local agency fire protection special district is responsible for wildfire protection.
- (c) Local agency fire protection special districts responsible include Peninsula Fire Protection District (Town of Chester), Quincy Fire Protection District (Town of Quincy and Town of East Quincy), and Beckwourth Peak Fire Protection District (Sierra Valley).

Article 2. - DEFINITIONS

Sec. 9-9.5.201. - Application.

For the purposes of this chapter, unless otherwise apparent from the context, certain words and phrases used in this chapter are defined in this article.

Sec. 9-9.5.202. - “Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs)” means areas designated as moderate, high, and very high by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to Government Code Sec. 51178 in the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) that are not in the State Responsibility Area (SRA).

Sec. 9-9.5.203. - “Fuel” means any combustible material, including petroleum-based products, cultivated landscape plants, grasses, and weeds, and wildland vegetation.

Sec. 9-9.5.204. - “Hazard” is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildfire, or fuel reduction efforts.

Sec. 9-9.5.205. - “Local agency” means a fire protection special district responsible for wildfire protection within the Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

Sec. 9-9.5.206. - “Local Responsibility Area (LRA)” means an area which a local agency is responsible for wildfire protection.

Sec. 9-9.5.207. - “Risk” is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, accounting for any modifications such as fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction.

Sec. 9-9.5.208. - “Vegetation” is fuel for a wildfire and means all plants, including trees, shrubs, grass, and perennial or annual plants.

Sec. 9-9.5.209. - “Wildfire” means an unplanned, unwanted wildland fire, including unauthorized human-caused fires, escaped wildland fire use events, escaped prescribed fire projects, and all other wildland fires where the objective is to extinguish the fire.