

RESOLUTION NO. 22/23-0615-02

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District

**INITIATING THE FORMATION OF A VEGETATION MANAGEMENT ZONE UNDER
DIVISION 12, PART 2.7, CHAPTER 10 OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY CODE**

RECITALS:

- A. Since the onset of the 2017 catastrophic wildfires that have burned through large sections of the District and beyond and in other portions of Sonoma County, the District has initiated and deployed vegetation management efforts, primarily supported by grant funding that was made available in the wake of the great fires. The District has established a vegetation management “fuels crew” to perform hand crew treatments, pile burning, and support prescribed burning. The District has also obtained chippers and a masticator to increase vegetation management services, contracted with private companies, and has obtained substantial grant funding to support these efforts.
- B. Property and economic losses from these fires is in the hundreds of millions of dollars and affects local landowners, residents, businesses, major industries including agriculture and tourism, and critical infrastructure. Without comprehensive regional vegetation management and other risk reduction efforts these losses will be repeated in the future.
- C. Following the recently approved annexation of territory, the District now encompasses 412 square miles, most of which is forested and wildland areas, which are classified as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by the California Board of Forestry.
- D. No other public agency has the authority or the capacity to provide vegetation management services within the District.
- E. The District has supported and cooperated with over 20 local community-based wildfire hazard and emergency response organizations located throughout the District on emergency and wildfire hazard reduction planning and completion of targeted vegetation management projects. A special vegetation management service zone would enhance this cooperation.
- F. The District has cooperated with other public agencies within and beyond the District to conduct, complete, and maintain vegetation management projects and will continue and expand these cooperative efforts.
- G. As part of its Strategic Plan, currently under preparation, the District will develop plans, implement programs and projects, and adopt a financing strategy to achieve the comprehensive District-wide vegetation management needed to prevent or reduce the severity of losses related to future wildfires.

NOW, THEREFORE, BASED ON THE ABOVE RECITALS, THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

1. The above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated herein.
2. The Board determines that it is in the public interest to provide comprehensive vegetation management services through the creation of a service zone to administer and fund these vegetation management services.
3. The Board proposes the creation of a service zone named “Service Zone 1 – Comprehensive Vegetation Management Zone.”
4. The formation of this service zone is made under Division 12, Part 2.7, Chapter 10, section 13950 of the Health and Safety Code.
5. The boundary of the territory to be included in Service Zone 1 shall be coterminous with the boundary of the District.
6. The Service Zone will serve as a management and administrative unit for comprehensive vegetation management services provided by the District, which includes fuel reduction using various methods, wildfire risk reduction planning, vegetation management project planning, environmental review, and permitting within the District.
7. Vegetation management services of the zone will be funded from a variety of funding sources including existing funding as well as special fees and charges levied on participating or benefitting landowners, special parcel taxes, benefit assessments, abatements, and grant funding. The approval and creation of the Service Zone will not create any new fees, charges, taxes, or special assessments, which can be created only by subsequent acts of the Board and the approval of the voters or landowners of the District as required by the relevant controlling law for the creation of such fees, charges, taxes, or special assessments.
8. A public hearing on the formation of Service Zone 1 shall be held on July 20, 2023 at 6:00 PM at the Geyserville Fire Station, 20975 Geyserville Avenue, CA 95441.
9. At the hearing, the Board will hear and consider any protests to the formation of the proposed zone, and at the conclusion of the hearing the Board may adopt a resolution ordering the formation of the Service Zone.
10. Staff of the District is directed to give notice of the hearing in the following manner at least fifteen days before the hearing:
 - a. Publish notice of the hearing, including all of the information stated in this resolution, once in a newspaper of general circulation in the district.
 - b. Mail notice of the hearing, including all of the information stated in this resolution, to all owners of property within the proposed zone.
 - c. Post notice of the hearing, including all of the information stated in this resolution, in at least three public places within the territory of the District.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District, on June 15, 2023
by the following vote:

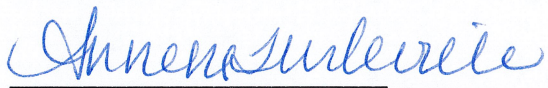
Ayes: Heiges/Newman/Peterson/Abercrombie/Stewart

Noes: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 0

Attest:



Anneke Turbeville, Clerk of the Board