CHIEF’S REPORT

For 2024

To the Citizens of the

Seal Rock Rural Fire Protection District

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## Mission Statement

**“Making a difference”**

By: Protecting Lives, Property and Resources

The Seal Rock Fire Protection District mission is to provide life safety, property protection, emergency medical response, mitigate and protect from hazardous material events, and begin the recovery process from large scale disasters whether natural or manmade.   
  
These tasks are accomplished through the district's budget process, constant training, and the professionalism and dedication of our district firefighters to the best of our ability letting the taxpayers know "**WE CARE**".

**Board of Directors**

*As of 12/31/2024*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Name* | *Title* | *Position #* | *Term Expires* |
| Karl Kowalski | President | 3 | 6/30/2027 |
| Russ Harley | Vice President | 2 | 6/30/2027 |
| Mike Burt | Secretary | 4 | 6/30/2027 |
| Paul Rimola | Treasurer | 1 | 6/30/2025 |
| Skip Smith | Director | 5 | 6/30/2025 |

Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month,

beginning at 5:00 PM and are open to the public.

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**MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE CHIEF’s message**

**•** **Introductory letter from the Fire Chief**

Much has changed since the Autumn of 2021. The biggest change is our culture, we have moved from a culture that embraced an all-paid department, to one that believes in volunteers.

That said we still embrace the three philosophies.

* First is transparency. There is very little we do that is not the business of the public. Therefore what we do is your business.
* Second is the principal that Seal Rock is a small fire district and we must foster and embrace volunteerism. It is my honor to work with everyday people to prepare for and mitigate emergencies.
* Lastly, we are firmly committed to good stewardship of tax dollars. Seal Rock Fire realizes that our taxpayers, and residents are hardworking people; we do our best daily, to protect your tax investment into this community.

This past year has seen some epic changes in Seal Rock. Much of this will be described further in the report. But suffice it to say that we have a very robust volunteer corps that is supported by a very capable paid staff. It is no mistake. It is hard work, and dedication by all that makes this work. Our ability to handle calls within the district has grown to a degree that support from other agencies is longer a mandate, it is an occasional outcome, based on the call. For example, the fire at the Our Savior Lutheran church required aid from other departments, mostly due to its potential. Yet it was mostly handled by our responders.

It is true that many of our volunteers do not reside in our district. This seems to rub some the wrong way. But we get folks that give a full 24, or 48, and sometimes 72 hour dedicated shifts. They come here and stay. More times than not we have 4-5 out of district folks here on shift. We could not buy that. Later in this report I will provide some supporting numbers. The cross section of the Seal Rock population could not support fire operations and we must look outside. It must also be stated that there are very few volunteer fire opportunities, and by opening our minds and recruiting from out of the area we are able to maintain a substantial response force.

With the passage of the equipment levy we will be able to keep up with this growth. Before the levy we had a dismal outlook in regards to keeping our responders properly protected. Thanks to the levy we can now incentivize the new comers with great safety philosophies and equipment. Keep your eyes on the web site for updates on how we are spending the levy funds. And thank you for that!

The responders are well trained, and very competent personal. The work professional is thrown out in reference to a firefighting crew. If professional means paid then we are not, if professional is related to capability and performance we definitely are!

William Ewing

Fire Chief

Seal Rock Fire

2024 accomplishments

2024 was a good year for Seal Rock. We did achieve some of the goals set forth in last year’s Chiefs report, noted with Arrows. We also achieved others that were not on the list, noted with Circles

.

**2024 Goals**

* Continue upgrade of building B

Evaluation of septic system

* Start preventive replacement of tires
* Solidify training program

Seek a large grant for new breathing apparatus.

Enhance disaster response capacity

* Have all accounting done in house
* Increase roster by 10 percent
* Deployment to state fire through the Department of Oregon State Fire Marshal
* Passage of an equipment levy
* Obtain operational grants
* Build redundancy in response capacity

**2025 Goals**

* Complete the remodel of Building B
* Partner With East Lincoln
* Continue to build the volunteer force
* Start plans for addition to Station 62
* Strengthen the ending fund balance
* Begin office renovation
* Start the development of disaster caches
* Officer development and appointments

**SWOT a**nalysis

(strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis)

A SWOT is a very in-depth form of self-evaluation. A good SWOT is done in an open setting with valued members including volunteer responders, board members, and staff. That said my opinion of SWOT for us is as follows:

**Strengths.** A positive volunteer culture that continues to grow. The roster shows over 37 response capable volunteers with an additional 10 that serve in non-traditional capacity such as: event coordination, incident support and civilian advocacy.

Multi-talented responders that can provide services of many types:

* + - Several types of fire suppression
    - First Responder Medical response to Advanced life support level
    - Rescue
      * Motor vehicle extrication,
      * Rope rescue
      * RAT (Reach And Treat) responses
    - Disaster response

Solid Family culture

Flexibility

Passed a levy

Solid fiscal management

Availability for state conflagration deployments

**Weakness**

Stability of administrative staff.

Age of rolling stock.

Equipment failure

Building maintenance deferment

**Opportunities.**

Capitalize on positive culture**.**

Grant seeking. ($45,000 dollars in grants 2024)

Develop disaster caches in Maki, Seal Rock, Bayshore

Maintain positive community support

Assist in regional wildland fire response generation a new revenue stream

Purchased 8 sets of turnouts from the conflagration revenue

**Threats.** Local attacks on Seal Rock Fire leading to morale issues.

Unfunded mandates

Reliance on the aging tax base

Unsettled members, leading to cultural drift, and some internal animosity

**EXPENDITURES\**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fund** | **FY19-20** | **FY20-21** | **FY21-22** | **FY22-23** | **FY23-24** |
| Firefighters Levy | $234,521.00 | $213,037.00 | $265,704.00 | $222,814.00 | $251,350.00 |
| Chiefs levy | $95,249.00 | $84,470.00 | $122,643.00 | $107,464.00 | $109,169.00 |
| General Fund | $139,474.00 | $256,286.00 | $391,675.00 | $323,088.00 | $391,687.00 |
| Truck and Building | $38,647.00 | $38,403.00 | $13,161.00 | $41,530.00 | $41,530.00 |
| Total Expenses | $507,891.00 | $507,647.00 | $793,183.00 | $694,896.00 | $793,736.00 |

**TAX INFORMATION**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Lincoln County Statement of Taxes for fire *Districts*  *FOR YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, ASSESSMENT ROLL OF 2024-2025* | | | | | | | |  | |
| TAXING DISTRICT | TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE ON ROLL | TOTAL ASSESSED VALUE TO CALCULATE RATE | OPERATING RATE | LOCAL OPTION RATE | BOND RATE | BILLING RATE |  | |
| CENTRAL COAST F/R | $495,889,820 | $487,931,100 | 0.8209 | 1.5200 | 0.0000 | 2.3409 | $1,141,578 | |
| NORTH LINCOLN | $2,872,950,660 | $2,809,098,660 | 0.6783 | 1.2200 | 0.3248 | 2.2231 | $6,244,905 | |
| YACHATS | $742,632,280 | $682,966,725 | 0.2896 | 1.2000 | 0.5590 | 3.05386 | $2,085,678 | |
| DEPOE BAY | $1,600,763.900 | $1,568,500,040 | 0.8323 | 1.0900 | 0.0000 | 1.9223 | $3,015,127 | |
| ALSEA  fire | $10,707,360 | $10,707,360 | 1.1363 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 1.1363 | $12,166 | |
| Siletz fire | $197,591,280 | $197,591,280 | 1.33 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.331 | $262,796 | |
| East Lincoln fire | $243,139.300 | $243,139,300 | 1.0255 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 1.0522 | $255,830 | |
| **SEAL ROCK RFPD** | **$656,422,620** | **$656,422,620** | **0.4634** | **0.6000** | **0.0000** | **1.0634** | **$698,040** | |
| NEWPORT RFP | $399,999,750 | $378,781,754 | 0.9634 | 0.0000 | 0.0000 | 0.9634 | $385,359 | |

**GRANTS RECEIVED**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Date* | *From* | *For* | *Amount* |
| May 2024 | Oregon State Fire Marshal | Summer fire resistance | $35,000 |
| Nov. 2024 | Weyerhaeuser timber | Wildland PPE | $8,000 |
| May 2024 | Lincoln County emergency management |  | $2,000 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NUMBER OF ALARM RESPONSES** | | | | | | | | | | |
| Year | *2015* | *2016* | *2076* | *2018* | *2019* | *2020* | *\*2021* | *\*\*2022* | *2023* | *2024* |
| In district |  |  |  |  |  |  | 95 | 380 | 436 | 481 |
| Out of district |  |  |  |  |  |  | 12 | 340 | 159 | 137 |
| Total responses |  |  |  |  |  |  | 107 | 720 | 594 | 618 |

\*2021 stats are three months of data

\*\* Auto aid with CCF

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STAFFING** | | | | |
|  | # of  volunteer emergency responders | # of volunteer support staff/office staff | # of full-time paid responders | # of part-time (reserve) paid responders |
| 12/31/2021 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| 12/31/2022 | 16 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| 12/31/2023 | 26 | 6 | 2 | 7 |
| 12/31/2024 | 42 | 10 | 1 | 6 |

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**

Station 61

Lieutenant

Not filled

Response

Group D

Volunteers

Response Group C

Volunteers

Response Group A

Volunteers

Response Group B

Volunteers

**Duty Officers**

1011

Non-emergent/support

Station 62

Lieutenant

Not filled

Fire Marshal

Musil

Assistant Chief

Not filled

Captain/Training

Munger

Captain/Maintenance

Not filled

tizens

South Lincoln Emergency Responders

Office Administration

Fire Chief

Ewing

**Elected Board of Directors**

**Citizens**

**APPARATUS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [Engine 6301 is a 1989 Ford L9000 carrying 1000 gallons of water and a 1500 GPM pump. It serves as our second-out engine for structure fires.](https://sealrockfire.com/trucks/6301.jpg) | **Engine E-61**  1988 Ford L9000  1000-gallon tank  1500 GPM pump  Station 61 |
| [Engine 6207 is a 2001 American LaFrance that carries 1000 gallons of water, and is equipped with a 1500 GPM pump. It seats three firefighters, and aside from carrying equipment for fire suppression, it also carries emergency medical equipment and vehicle extrication tools.](https://sealrockfire.com/trucks/6207.jpg) | **Engine E-62**  **2001** American LaFrance  1000-gallon tank.  1500 GPM pump  Station 61 |
| [Tender 6324 is a 2008 Rosenbauer that carries 1800 gallons of water, and has a 750 GPM pump. The tender carries a floating pump system for drafting water from rivers and other bodies of water, and a 2500 gallon portable water tank.](https://sealrockfire.com/trucks/6324.jpg) | **Tender E-61**  **200**8 Rosenbauer  1800-gallon tank  750 GPM pump.  A 2500-gallon portable water tank  Station 61 |
| [Rescue 6235 is a 2001 Ford F550 carrying 480 gallons of water and a 125GPM Pump. It carries emergency medical equipment, self-contained breathing apparatus, as well as wildfire equipment. It serves as the district's wildfire response vehicle.](https://sealrockfire.com/trucks/6235.jpg) | **Rescue/Wildland R-61**  **2001** Ford F550  480-gallon tank.  125 GPM pump  Station 61 |
| [Rescue 6231 is a 2010 Chevy Suburban 1500. It serves primarily as a personnel response vehicle, and carries emergency medical equipment.](https://sealrockfire.com/trucks/6231.jpg) | **Squad S-62**  **2010** Chevy Suburban 1500.  It serves primarily as a personnel response vehicle, and carries emergency medical equipment  Station 62 |
|  | **Squad S-61**  **2014 Ford 150**  **Utility and EMS Response** |
|  | **Engine E-64**  **1991 Pierce**  **700-gallon tank.**  **1250 GPM pump**  **Station 62**  \*Loaned to us from East Lincoln Fire  (a 190 agreement) |
|  | **Rescue/Wildland/Duty R-62**  **2004 Ford**  **130 GPM pump**  **280 gallon tank**  **Station 62**  **(This is a Federal excess Vehicle on loan to Seal Rock indefinitely)** |
|  | **Engine 65 E-65**  1991 Bosie mobile Equipment  1500 GPM pump  700 gallon Tank  Station 61 |

**FACILITIES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Seal Rock AdminStation 6100 | **Administrative Office**  **Station 61A**  **10349 NW Rand St**  Administration and Board/Conference |
|  | **Training Room**  **Station 61 B**  **10349 Grebe St**.  Training and meeting facility |
| Seal Rock Station | **Station 61 C** **10255 NW Swallow St** Apparatus housing and Disaster Preparedness |
| . | **Station 62**  **2009 Hilton Dr**  **Apparatus housing/Day quarters** |
|  | Repeater  Building |

## PARTNERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

This past year has seen a more robust Seal Rock. We have developed several new to us relationships. The biggest is with the Lincoln County fire defense board. Attending the meeting is now a regular event. Prior to this past year the focus had to be internal to Seal Rock to assure a long lasting rebuild. The talent we have in place now at the duty officer level is consistent and well developed. This allows me to pay attention to some peripheral tasks. As a participating member of the FDB, and having developed the capacity to do so we were able to be active on out of county fire deployments. More on this later. I was also appointed as the Chairman of the ASRC committee. This committee oversees ambulance service in the county and reports to the County Board of commissioners

Seal Rock Fire was able to respond apparatus and personal to fires within the state. This is a new partnership that is made available through the state mobilization plan. That plan allows fire agencies to respond to larger events such as wildland fires and receive compensation. This program helps all involved. We are able to generate a bit of revenue through this program while helping other communities. This was a very positive experience for Seal Rock fire as a whole and a source of revenue as well. Our name was associated as the can do, group. It was exciting. The district also netted a bit more than $44,000 dollars for the use of our vehicles on these deployments.

Seal Rock continues to develop locally into a strong response agency. We often provide aid to other agencies that need help. We are currently the strongest volunteer agency in Lincoln County.

With the calamity in Toledo, we have absorbed some of those responders. But we also provide East Lincoln with assistance. Some of our Volunteers pull shifts out in Toledo and we assist with training. Our new relationship with East Lincoln Fire may well prove to be beneficial to both Seal Rock Fire and East Lincoln Fire. The situation in Toledo became unsettled in September when things went sour there. All the volunteers were let go in one form or fashion. East Lincoln Fire did a quick evaluation of the situation and decided the mission could not be met by Toledo. They took on all the expatriated volunteers and began running their own calls. I was appointed the chief there in December after it was appearance this was not a transient event. East Lincoln is now its own entity after a 62-year relationship with Toledo. This coming year we may be able to work a 190 agreement with East Lincoln for administrative services such as Training and budgeting. A draft agreement has been presented to Seal Rock and a decision could be made in June.

Our program continues to grow. That growth is not just related to personal; the growth includes capabilities. For example, Jeff Mathia wrote a grant for an EMT class and was successful in getting that grant. In 2022 we paid thousands for an EMR class. This not only helps the budget but increases our skill set.

We happen to have a group of young people who are striving to do more and do better each day. We are often staffed with up to 12 people at station 62. This usually has a training component to it. There is always food.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DISPATCH SERVICES** | |
| The Willamette Valley Communications Center (WVCC) is a regional center based in Salem, Oregon. It provides 9-1-1 dispatch services to agencies in three counties. Police, fire, ambulance, and emergency services agencies in Marion, and Polk & **Lincoln** counties and the Grand Ronde. All in these areas rely on the communications center to take emergency calls (PSAP) and handle incidents (dispatch) | |
|  | |
| LINCOLN COUNTY FIRE DEFENSE BOARD (*MUTUAL AID*) | |
| [Central Oregon Coast Fire & Rescue](http://www.centralcoastfire.net/) | [Depoe Bay Fire District](http://depoebayfire.com/) |
| [Newport Fire Department](https://www.newportoregon.gov/dept/nfd/) | Newport RFPD |
| [North Lincoln Fire & Rescue](http://www.nlfr.org/) | Seal Rock RFPD |
| Siletz Valley RFPD | [Toledo Fire Department](https://www.cityoftoledo.org/fire) |
| [Yachats RFPD](http://yachatsfire.org/) | East Lincoln Fire District |
| **OTHER AGENCIES SEAL ROCK RFPD RESPONDS WITH:** | |
| [Pacific West Ambulance](http://pacificwest.us.com/) | American Red Cross |
| Lincoln County Sheriff's Office | Oregon State Police, |
| Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office | Oregon Department of Forestry, Toledo Unit |
| Life Flight/ REACH | Air Medical Services |
| U.S. Coast Guard. |  |
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| **PROFESSIONAL PARTNERS AND ASSOCIATES** | |
| Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training | Local Government Law Group P.C., Eugene |
| WHA Insurance Agency Inc., Eugene | EMS Advisor: Consortium of physicians: |
| Lincoln County Emergency Management | Oregon Health Authority |
| [Samaritan Pacific Communities **Hospital**](https://www.samhealth.org/find-a-location/s/samaritan-pacific-communities-hospital) |  |
| Central Coast Community College |  |
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**HISTORY**

The Seal Rock Fire District was established in 1962 and was an all-volunteer department.

The Main station in Seal Rock was built in 1968 and was equipped with two fire trucks.

The Bayshore station was constructed primarily by fire department volunteers in 1980.

The first paid Fire Chief was hired in 2008. The Seal Rock Fire District, as well as most fire service agencies, have had major additions to service provision. It started in the 1970ies with a medical component. Many smaller departments had, what were referred to as, Medical Quick Response Teams. After some time, these were folded into the regular fire response model. This doubled our response numbers. For some bigger departments this worked to validate the expenses of having paid fire responders. For the smaller departments and districts, it was another expense. What started as a, “get to” do type of service provision, is a, “have to” do it. This trend didn’t stop with medical provision. The fire service seems to be the only serviced type agency that will respond to what I refer to as social services. Our aging population is often in some type of situation where assistance is needed. These types of incidents use to be handled by family and neighbors but with the advent of 911, and the lack of nuclear families the 911 dispatcher often has little choice of providers for the incident so fire is tapped. These types of incidents include: Falling, non-ambulatory in home needs, and welfare checks.

Seal Rock Fire is working to meet all these needs while being good stewards of the finances. Unfortunately, the dollars just do not match the demand. Small fire districts are at risk of shuttering the doors due to the limited amount of revenue verses the demand. There are outside influences that exacerbate this issue and we are bound to a 62-year-old tax base. 62 years ago firefighting was cheap and easy. However, the combination of those two led to egregious firefighter fatalities.

The outcome of that is we have standards and expectations that address those issues, but cost the agencies dearly financially. That is our biggest struggle. It gets worse every year. Although a volunteer is wonderful asset we still have to outfit them and train them. We then need to provide the type and amount of equipment that will allow them to successfully meet the expectations of the community. Not a nice precipice to be on. Seal Rock Fire vows to keep volunteers as our mainstay force. We just need to furnish all the associated needs.

All that said the levy for a paid duty officer program is as essential for command and control of major incidents as well as unburdening the volunteers with more routine chores such as inspections and assisting the public on non-emergent requests for assistance.

• ISO Rating and what the rating means to the community:

The Insurance Service Office is a private business that rates the risks to a community for insurance companies. This is a fire risk specific process, and doesn’t consider any outer discipline, such as Law enforcement.

The rating process starts everyone on an even playing field of a rating of 10 on a scale of 1-10 (ten being the worst rating). ISO then looks at certain processes and capabilities such as:

Water supply (including fire hydrants),

communications,

training,

available responders,

equipment,

aid agreements.

Many fire service agencies build their service provision to maintain the lowest insurance rating, while others provide the service, and attempt to do their best to meet ISO needs. We fall into the later. As of our last rating, we have a 4-8 rating. I will explain.

A rating of four (4) is due to the proximity, (1000 feet), of a fire hydrant that has proven to produce the appropriated water value.

The rating of eight (8) is a structure that is further than 1000 feet, but less than five road miles from a fire station. It is at this juncture I need to add a bit of a struggle the fire service has with the 5 miles. Years ago, the five miles were measured in “air” miles, or in a straight line, from a station, to the value at risk. The fire service placed stations accordingly. Then at some point the value of the five miles were changed to road miles, and we found many of our coverage areas now out of the service range.

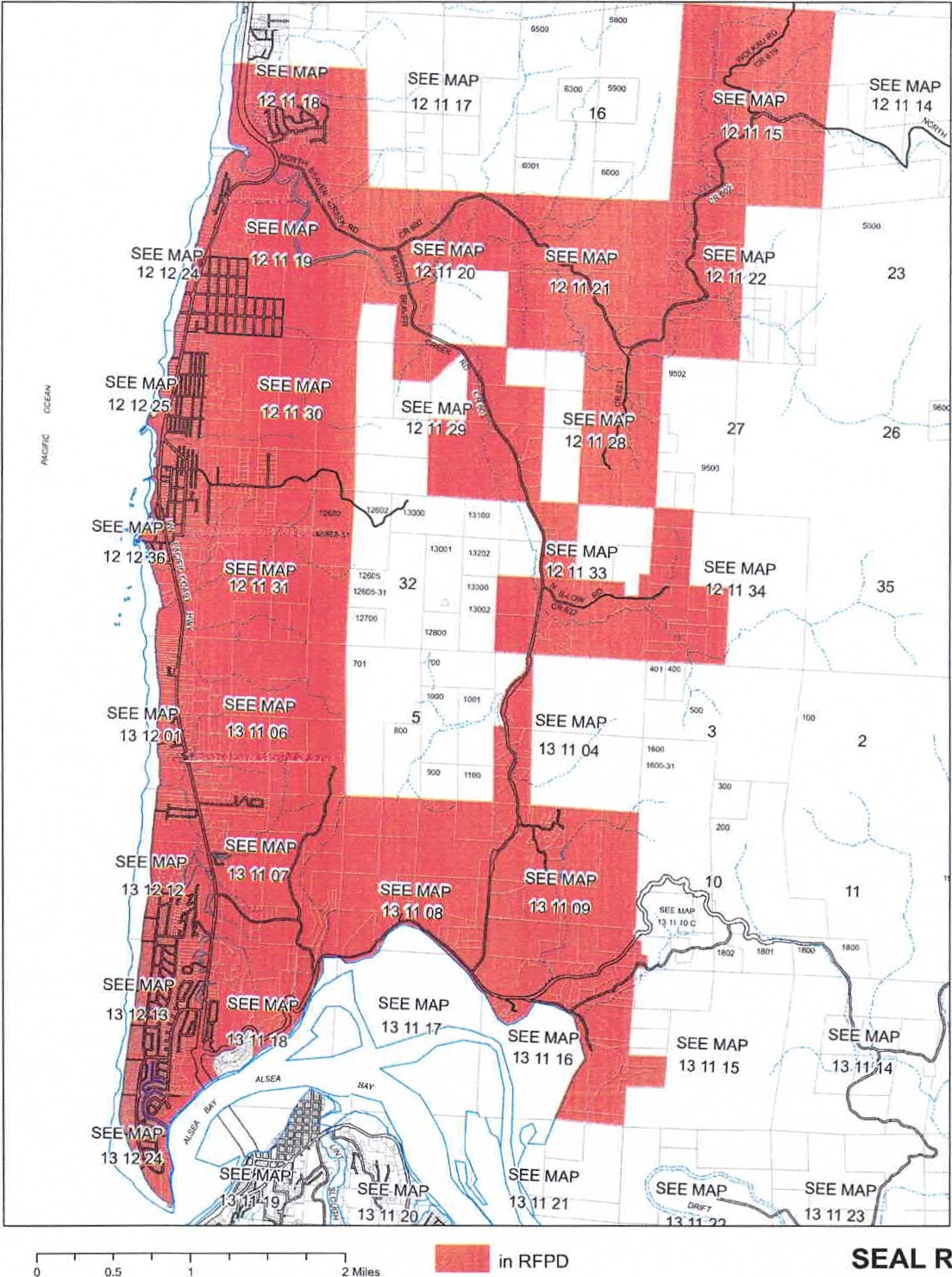
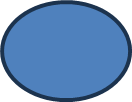
What all that means, is that any value at risk, that is farther than five road miles away, but are in the district, are valued at a rating of ten (10). Insurance for a class ten (10) structure is much more expensive than that of an eight (8).

Compounding our struggle to help in the rural areas are building codes. ISO doesn’t care about building codes, but if we wanted to build a modest structure that meets ISO needs it would cost millions and it is a very cumbersome process. The land use issue alone complicates the whole process, to the point it is unnerving. Any structure we would propose to build is considered an “essential service”. That label mandates a very expensive construction process.

In short, those issues make putting a station any where new is a daunting task both time wise and financially.

We do our best to help mitigate these obstacles. We have developed a program where our volunteers on the eastern fringe of the district can take a response vehicle home for a more expeditious response in these more distant locations.

Building a third station is a very impractical goal at this time, if we already had land somewhere it might be a bit easier but even at that it is a years long process, if we had the funds which we do not.



STN 62

STN 61