

**DOCKETED**

<b>Docket Number:</b>	23-OPT-01
<b>Project Title:</b>	Fountain Wind Project
<b>TN #:</b>	254837
<b>Document Title:</b>	ROC with Shasta County Fire Chief
<b>Description:</b>	record of conversation
<b>Filer:</b>	Lon Payne
<b>Organization:</b>	California Energy Commission
<b>Submitter Role:</b>	Commission Staff
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Siting, Transmission  
and Environmental  
Protection Division

FILE: n/a

PROJECT TITLE: Fountain Wind Project

Docket: 23-OPT-01

TECHNICAL AREA(s): Worker Safety/Fire Protection

☒ Telephone

☐ Email

☐ Meeting Location:

NAME(s): Alvin Greenberg, Ph.D.

DATE: 01/25/2025

TIME: 10:00 am to  
10:40 am

WITH: Shasta County Fire Chief Sean O'Hara

SUBJECT: Fire/EMS/Rescue Ability and Potential Impacts/Mitigation

### COMMENTS:

Chief O'Hara and I spoke for 40 minutes and went over the following subjects which were included in an email I sent to him on January 17, 2024, regarding potential impacts due to the possible construction and operation of the Fountain Wind Project. Note that all answers to questions came from Chief O'Hara.

**1.** If the project were to be approved and built, is your current full-time and volunteer firefighter staffing at the stations that would respond to this Project up to your standards?

**Answer:** This is a 2-part answer. If only structures were involved (including turbines), the answer is **NO** because the County Stations would respond from one or two stations and they are understaffed.

If it's a structure and wildland fire during the normal fire season, **YES** because the CalFire stations would respond and they are fully staffed and equipped during the 9-month fire season. This would include 6 stations, each with 5 paid staff and 1 or 2 volunteers and a full complement of equipment including dozers, water tenders, and aircraft.

a. Which station(s) would respond?

**Answer:** Structure only, Stations 71 (Montgomery Creek) and 30 (Oak Run). Structure + Wildland, Stations 74, 75, 14, 19, 34, & 35.

b. What would be the estimated response times for fire, EMS, and rescue?

**Answer:** Between 15 and 30 minutes depending on the station first responding; ~15 minutes from Station 75 and 30 minutes from Station 74.



**2.** Which of all your stations would respond first to a hazmat spill or a rescue (including high angle rescue)?

**Answer:** High angle rescue would not be provided. HazMat response is from a 6-County regional group, the Shasta Cascade Regional Hazardous Materials Team (SCRHMT) serving Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Modoc, Trinity, and Siskiyou counties. The response time would be 1-2 hours.

**3.** If full staffing was achieved, would the existing physical infrastructure be adequate for your needs?

**Answer: NO**, full county fire paid staffing would need capital improvements to house these additional staff; estimated cost is \$5-8M for one new fire station (less costly than renovating or expanding an old existing station) and staffing costs for one station would be \$1.7M per year. Two new paid-staff stations would be needed.

**4.** What complement of engines, trucks, water tenders, EMS vehicles, Chief's trucks/cars exist at the responding stations? Your back-up stations? Automatic Aid or Mutual Aid from other departments for response or in-fill?

**Answer:** Currently, all stations are adequately equipped with vehicles, including mutual aid and automatic aid fire jurisdictions.

**5.** What is the source of water for your tenders and engines?

**Answer:** Once empty when out on a call, tenders and engines would be refilled from natural sources such as creeks, ponds, lakes, and rivers.

a. Is a supplemental source needed in order to adequately serve this Project if built?

**Answer: YES**

**6.** I am sure you are aware that the Applicant's initial proposed water source (for firefighting and other uses) is no longer available and the use of groundwater may be problematic.

a. Do you feel that Fountain Wind's proposal for having two 10,000-gal water "dip" tanks for firefighting – one on-site the other off-site on the north site of Hwy-299 - is adequate?

**Answer: NO**, because the proposed provision of two dip tanks would only be used by helicopters. The site must have a dedicated fire water source and flow requirement dependent upon the number of structures and the level of any human occupancy in these structures, as per the California Fire Code. Water tanks on the site may be necessary or Chief O'Hara could not support this project.

**7.** Do you have familiarity with the fire detection and suppression systems on the proposed turbines? Are you aware of any success or failure rates of fire suppression by these types of turbines?

**Answer: NO** to both, however, Chief O'Hara did discuss with the Applicant his concern that if a photo-activation fire detection method is used in the turbines, a near-to-moderate distant (even 30 miles distant) wildland fire could result in particulates in the air at this project's



location and activate all the fire suppression systems of all turbines. This would be unacceptable as the fire suppression systems would then be non-functionable in the event of a turbine fire. The system would have to be shut down in this case. Chief O'Hara mentioned that the Applicant was researching this matter and will respond back to him.

**8.** Turning to the existing Hatchet Wind Project, have you had any calls to respond to a fire, hazmat spill, or rescue at that location?

**Answer:** Chief O'Hara could not recall any except perhaps an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) call.

a. If so, let's discuss the circumstances.

**9.** Have any of the wildfires in your jurisdiction threatened the Hatchet Ridge Wind Project?

**Answer: NO.** There have been fires in the "area" and the department has used the fire roads built by the project to get closer to those fires but no fires have threatened the Hatchet Ridge Wind Project.

a. If so, let's discuss the nature of that threat and what resources you used to address that threat.

**10.** As staff, I am required to propose mitigation if I identify an impact that requires mitigation. Given your experience and position, I am asking for your frank assessment of what impacts to your ability to respond to emergencies might be presented by the construction and operation of this Project. Please offer your assessment on all impacts *and potential impacts*, including draw-down of equipment and staff.

**Answer:** Full staffing at one or two stations is needed. (See discussion in above question #3.)

**11.** I am also required to assess the "cumulative impact" of adding this Project to others that have either been approved or are in the planning stage. I have identified four energy-related projects plus the one existing project (Hatchet Ridge) that could possibly cause a cumulative impact to your Department. These four other projects are:

- \* The Anderson River Battery Energy Storage System
- \* The Crossroads 2 Battery Energy Storage System near Montgomery Creek
- \* The Meadow Ridge-2 solar PV and battery energy storage system somewhere near Round Mountain
- \* The Burney-Hat Creek bio energy gasification project somewhere near Burney

a. Do you have any comments from your professional perspective on the above proposed projects individually, or in combination with the proposed Fountain Wind project?

**Answer:** Chief O'Hara was aware of these projects and stated that generally, as the County grows, fire/EMS/rescue services will have to grow to meet the needs of these and other types of growth.

b. Specifically, do you have any concerns with battery energy storage facilities, or a facility that would combine battery energy storage + wind generation?



**Answer:** The fire department has no experience with battery energy storage facilities and thus might need training.

- c. Does your command region have any experience with responding to battery energy storage systems, solar PV generating systems, or gasification projects?

**Answer:** The fire department has no experience with these facilities and thus might need training.

One additional issue was discussed, that being the Shasta County Government budget for FY 2023-24 showing only 3 Full-time Equivalents (FTE) for the Fire Department. I asked what this meant and Chief O'Hara explained that the contract with CalFire is not considered a County FTE and that the three positions are for a Fire Marshall, an Inspector, and a Parts Storekeeper.

<p><b>cc:</b> Leonidas Payne, Project Manager</p>	<p><b>Signed:</b></p> <p><u>AG</u></p> <p><b>Name:</b> Alvin Greenberg, Ph.D., Worker Safety/Fire Protection staff for this project</p>
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