

**WEST KLICKITAT REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY
RESOLUTION XXX**

RESOLUTION AMENDING RFA PLAN

WHEREAS, On September 30, 2024, the West Klickitat Authority was created and began operations as authorized under chapter 52.26 RCW;

WHEREAS, Section 4.c.1.d and e contained errors that require correction;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Governing Board hereby amends Section 4.c.1.d and 4.c.1.e of West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan are amended as follows:

- d. **WKRFA Annexations.** Pursuant to RCW 52.26.090(g), WKRFA shall have the authority to conduct annexations of unincorporated territory within reasonable proximity to WKRFA pursuant to the statutory authority and procedures set forth in Chapter 52.04.001 through RCW 52.04.051.
- e. **WKRFA Partial Mergers.** Pursuant to RCW 52.26.090(g), WKRFA shall have the authority to participate in the partial merger process under the authority and pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 52.06.090 and 52.06.100.

Adoption: Adopted by the Governing Board of West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority, at a special open public meeting of such Board on the _____ day of _____, 2025 the following Board Members being present and voting:

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

Approved on: 7/10/2023

Amended on 9/30/24

Amended on: XXXXX



Regional Fire Authority Plan

City of White Salmon and
Klickitat County Fire District #3



West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Acknowledgement	3
Vision Statement and Strategic Opportunity	5
Section 1: Background & Needs Statements	6
Section 2: Definitions	9
Section 3: Formation Authority	11
Section 4: Jurisdictional Boundaries.....	13
Section 5: Governance and Organizational Structure.....	15
Section 6: Funding and Finance	17
Section 7: Deployment; Operations and Emergency Management	21
Section 8: Administrative/Management/Personnel Components	24
Section 9: Hazard Prevention, Public Education Services.....	26

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Community Task Force Final Report	29
Appendix B – West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Chain of Command.....	38
Appendix C – City of White Salmon Resolution 1997-01-204.....	39
Appendix D – Amendments to the Plan.....	40

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Recognizing the challenges and opportunities that all fire jurisdictions are facing, the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3, through a working partnership of many years, agreed in the summer of 2022, to explore the different governance and delivery options available for operating and funding emergency services [fire; rescue; emergency medical]. The discussion grew momentum and in July of 2022, both elected Boards unanimously agreed --through a documented instrument called “The Fire Action Plan” – to seek counsel from a Greater White Salmon Community Task Force on the future and wisdom of providing emergency services from a regional approach. The West Klickitat Task Force met for several months and published a Final Report with a number of key recommendations which included a unanimous recommendation to amalgamate the current, separate fire agencies [Klickitat County Fire District #3 and the White Salmon Volunteer Fire Department] into a Regional Fire Authority as provided by RCW 52.26.

On behalf of the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3, and all, we want to thank everyone who participated in creating the future vision of our organization that will ultimately provide the citizens we serve and protect an enhanced opportunity to determine the level of service they desire.

Your efforts are recognized and very much appreciated.

CITY OF WHITE SALMON MAYOR

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

West Klickitat Community Task Force Members:

City of White Salmon	Fire District #3
Tao Berman	Melinda Heindel
Michelle Mayfield	Allison Hensey
Nate Reagan	Sandy Montag [alt]
	Lloyd Olson
	Chris Wiggins
	Eric Wilson

Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee Members:

BEN GIANT, *City Council*
JASON HARTMANN, *City Council*
JIM RANSIER, *City Council*
TOM MONTAG, *Fire Commissioner*
BOB CONNER, *Fire Commissioner*
CHUCK VIRTIS, *Fire Commissioner*

City of White Salmon and KCFD3 Leadership, Staff and Personnel:

MARLA KEETHLER, *Mayor*
TROY RAYBURN, *City Administrator*
BILL HUNSAKER, *WSVFD Fire Chief*
WES LONG, *KCFD#3 Fire Chief*
ROZ PLUMB, *KCFD#3 District Secretary*
JENNIFER MCLEAN, *Admin Assistant*

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

WEST KLICKITAT REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

VISION STATEMENT


West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority is a community partnership of the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3, providing effective and sustainable Fire, Rescue and EMS services that maximize the resources entrusted to us to serve the needs of a changing community.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

To strategically position the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3, in a regional partnership that provides the community with effective and sustainable Fire, Rescue and EMS services.

- Effective Fire and lifesaving EMS service is dependent on three components:
 - **Fire/Hazard/Injury Prevention**
 - Safe buildings reduce fire risk, life loss, and reduce the long-term cost of emergency response;
 - Fuel reductions and other defensive programs reduce the risk of runaway wildland fires;
 - **Public Education**
 - Perfect emergency response is not possible, the public must be empowered to reduce their own risk and provide time critical actions prior to arrival of firefighters.
 - **Emergency Response**
 - Perfect prevention does not exist, emergency responders must arrive prior to flashover in fire, and brain death in non-breathing patients.
- The three legs of the Fire Service delivery system: *fire prevention, public education, and emergency response*, can only be sustained with adequate funding.
 - Level of Service performance objectives provide the measure of adequate service.
 - Prevention, Education and Response resources must be balanced to meet the Level of Service objective and assure the most service;
 - Adequate funding of the fire service delivery system is evidenced by its ability to meet level of service performance objectives.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 1	BACKGROUND & NEEDS STATEMENTS	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	

THE FEASIBILITY OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PARTNERSHIPS

During the past three decades, fire protection in America has undergone a process of remarkable transformation. Change began in the early 1970's, roughly corresponding with the publication of *America Burning* by The National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control. Fire departments across the nation began to assume a greater role in the protection of citizens from many more hazards than in the past—quickly expanding from fire suppression to greater emphasis on fire prevention, emergency medical service, ambulance transport, hazardous materials, specialized operations, natural disasters, and (in the recent past) Homeland Security. *This was the dawning of the “ALL RISKS” first responder doctrine in the Fire Service in America.*

The process of change continues today, although some fire agencies feel that the progress made is not in the spirit of 1973's *America Burning*. While many goals of *America Burning* (and of the *Fire Prevention and Control Act* of 1974 that followed) have not materialized, the responsibilities, scope of service, and emergency incidents of community fire departments continue to increase. Urban and suburban expansion have reached unprecedented levels across America, yet laws that limit the funding of public services increasingly restrict emergency services in those same communities. Nearly all such tax limit laws trace their roots to California's Proposition 13, passed by voters in that state in 1978.

Well before the date of *America Burning* and the California tax revolt, private sector businesses recognized the benefit of merger and collaboration as a means to increase efficiency. For years, critics have advised the government to *reinvent itself* and to administer programs more like a business. An increasing number of executive fire officials and policymakers now recognize the moral imperative to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of emergency service resources through a process of strategic cooperation.

Consequently, what was once relatively uncommon in the fire protection industry has become more widespread as fire department leaders react to internal forces promoting maximization of resources and the external drivers (i.e., expanding scope of service, increased populations, rapid community development, and limited capital).

More and more, local fire agencies partner with other jurisdictions to eliminate service duplication and to focus resources on providing essential services. Such strategic alliances between fire protection agencies began in areas experiencing rapid economic development, primarily surrounding burgeoning West Coast cities like Los Angeles, San Diego, Denver, Seattle, Salt Lake

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

City, and Portland. Now, as the economic development that so characterized large metropolitan centers during the last two decades spreads and external forces act to limit the ability of the once isolated surrounding communities to unilaterally react to the change; the *strategic partnership* of emergency service organizations becomes an alternative more frequently considered by policymakers.

There are over 350 fire protection districts and regional fire authorities and 270 cities and towns in the State of Washington today. In the past ten years, the State of Washington has experienced:

- A remarkable increase in the number of cooperative efforts, consolidations, and fire protection district mergers.
- An increase in the number of cities and fire protection districts developing and improving cooperative services, consolidations and/or mergers and inter-local contractual agreements for emergency services. Examples are: City of Sumner and East Pierce Fire & Rescue; Cities of Auburn, Algona, and Pacific; and Lewis County Fire Protection District #12 and the City of Centralia; Clark County 11, 12 and the City of Woodland.
- A consistent pace of cities that have annexed into fire protection districts such as City of Battleground into Clark County Fire District 3.
- Legislative authorization to form Regional Fire Protection Services Authorities (RFA's).

Many factors have led to the increase in these cooperative agreements, mergers, or annexations. These factors include:

- Recent committee studies and state legislation encouraging or providing incentives for cooperative services.
- State and federal grant criteria requires or allows for higher scoring for entities with cooperative or consolidated services.
- Tax limitation initiatives and referendums have reduced the revenue available to many counties, cities, towns, and special purpose districts, thereby increasing the need to consolidate activities to achieve efficiencies and reduce operating costs.
- The cost of emergency operations; the cost of purchasing emergency apparatus and equipment; the cost of constructing fire station facilities; and the cost of fire suppression equipment, emergency medical and rescue equipment, and clothing have significantly increased.

It was in a climate of ongoing regional change and continued challenges to a sustainable level of service in the current governance model (Interlocal Agreement --ILA) that the Klickitat Fire District #3 and the City of White Salmon City Council selected, commissioned and facilitated the **West Klickitat Community Task Force** with the sole mission of reviewing and analyzing the


West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

respective fire departments data, history, strengths, short-falls and gaps in service to the community. The resultant *conclusions, findings* and *recommendations* of the West Klickitat Task Force were memorialized in a **Task Force Final Report** (included in part as **Appendix A**). Based on this background, the *findings* and *recommendations* of the Task Force identified as the primary and pivotal recommendation for achieving a sustainable level of service to be ***regionalizing emergency services by forming a Regional Fire Authority***.

Based on this background the Task Force has identified the following conclusions for the formation of the West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority:

1. The ability to respond to emergency situations by the respective fire agencies for fire protection, rescue and emergency medical services has not kept up or progressed with the community's needs; community changes and growth; cultural shifts; increased demands and diversity for emergency services and special service demands.
2. Providing a fire protection, rescue and emergency medical service system requires a collaborative partnership and responsibility among local and regional governments and the private sector. Vital elements of that collaborative effort must be a focus on levels of service and a dedicated and sustainable funding mechanism to meet those demands and standards.
3. There are efficiencies to be gained by regional fire protection, rescue, and emergency medical service delivery, while maintaining the balance of local control between the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3.
4. Timely development of significant projects can best be achieved through enhanced funding options for regional fire protection, emergency services, specialized rescue, hazardous material mitigation, using already existing taxing authority to address fire protection and emergency service needs, with new authority to address critical fire protection projects and emergency services.
5. The City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3 have had a cooperative partnership, striving to provide the highest level of fire and emergency services to our citizens within the confines of available resources, the creation of an RFA will continue this partnership on a permanent basis with a stable governance and financial system.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 2	DEFINITIONS	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	The DEFINITIONS section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.	
	<i>Revised</i>		

DEFINITIONS

The definitions in this section apply throughout this **WKRFA Plan**, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

1. "**Board**" or "**Governance Board**" or "**Governing Board**" means the Governance body of the West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority as defined in Section 5 of this document.
2. "**City**" means the City of White Salmon.
3. "**Effective Date**" means September 30th, 2024 with full operations beginning on January 1st, 2025, pending approval of the WKRFA Plan by voters of the Participating Jurisdictions.
4. "**Klickitat Fire District #3**" or "**KCFD#3**" means Klickitat County Fire District #3—the jurisdiction which provides emergency service around the greater City of White Salmon community and other communities.
5. "**Participating Jurisdictions**" means the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3.
6. "**West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority**" or "**WKRFA**" means the Regional Fire Authority defined in this plan whose boundaries are coextensive with the City and KCFD#3.
7. "**RCW**" means Revised Code of Washington.
8. "**Regional Fire Protection Service Authority**" or "**Regional Fire Authority**" or "**RFA**" means a regional fire protection service authority formed pursuant to chapter 52.26 RCW. An RFA is a municipal corporation, an independent taxing authority within the meaning of Article VII, Section 1 of the state Constitution, and a taxing district within the meaning of Article VII, Section 2 of the state Constitution.
9. "**Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee**" or "**Planning Committee**" means the advisory committee created under RCW 52.26.030 to create and propose to the City of White Salmon elected officials and KCFD#3 Board of Fire Commissioners the Regional Fire Authority Plan.


West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

10. "*West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan*," "*WKRFA Plan*" or "*Plan*" means a regional fire authority plan, in accordance with RCW 52.26.040(3)(b), for the development and financing of the RFA, including, but not limited to, specific capital projects, fire operations and emergency service operations, and the preservation and maintenance of existing or future facilities and services.

WKRFA SECTION 2 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **DEFINITIONS** section of the **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment or revision only by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 3	FORMATION AUTHORITY	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	The FORMATION AUTHORITY section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment or revision by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. Authority for the formation of a Regional Fire Authority by the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3 (Participating Jurisdictions) is authorized by Chapter 52.26 RCW.

B. PLANNING COMMITTEE.

1. Authority to form and operate a Planning Committee is authorized by Chapter 52.26.030 and 52.26.040 RCW.
2. The Planning Committee included three (3) members of the White Salmon City Council and three (3) Commissioners of Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3.
3. The mission and goal of the Planning Committee was to develop and present to the elected officials of each participating jurisdiction the **WEST KLICKITAT REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY PLAN [WKRFA Plan]**.
4. Upon development, approval, and adoption of the **WKRFA Plan** by the Planning Committee, the **WKRFA Plan** shall be presented to each participating jurisdiction's elected legislative body for approval and adoption by resolution for placement of the **WKRFA Plan** on the ballot for consideration by a vote of the people within the boundaries of the proposed RFA.
5. Upon approval of the **WKRFA Plan** by the elected legislative body of each participating jurisdiction, the Participating Jurisdictions shall draft a joint ballot title, give notice as required by law for ballot measures, and perform other duties as required to put the **WKRFA Plan** before the voters of the Participating Jurisdictions for approval or rejection as a single ballot measure.

C. WKRFA PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.

1. The current independent agencies shall remain in effect until the Effective Date and no current activity or operation will change prior to the Effective Date.


West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

2. Should the **WKRFA Plan** be approved by 50% of the voters of the Participating Jurisdictions, the **West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority** shall be formed on the Effective Date, in accordance with RCW 52.26.070 and all fire and emergency medical service operations provided by the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District #3 shall be assumed by the WKRFA.
3. If the Plan is not approved by 50% of the voters, then operations relating to the services set forth herein shall remain unchanged.
4. Upon voter approval of the **WKRFA Plan**, the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire Protection District #3 shall continue to exist as Washington State Municipal Corporations. The exclusive purpose of the continued existence of Klickitat County Fire District #3 shall be to levy and collect taxes and/or other fire protection district revenue to be transferred to the **WKRFA** until such time as the **WKRFA** collects its own revenues; to provide representation to the newly formed WKRFA Governance Board; and to certify taxes in Fire District #3 until the debt service is satisfied for the General Obligation Bond.
5. The transfer of the powers, duties, functions, and personnel of the Participating Jurisdictions shall not affect the validity of any act performed before the creation of the **WKRFA**.
6. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of the WKRFA Plan is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of the WKRFA Plan.

WKRFA SECTION 3 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **FORMATION AUTHORITY** section of the **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment or revision by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 4	JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	The JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment or revision by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.	
	<i>Revised</i>	<u>04/17/2025</u>	

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The jurisdictional boundaries of the **WKRFA** at formation shall be defined pursuant to RCW 52.26.020(2), and any alterations shall be made only in accordance with, the **WKRFA Plan**, chapter 52.26 RCW or other applicable state law, as it may be amended from time to time.

B. JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES ON DATE OF FORMATION.

1. On the Effective Date, the jurisdictional boundaries of the **WKRFA** shall be the legal boundaries of the Participating Jurisdictions.

C. CHANGES IN JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES AFTER FORMATION OF WKRFA.

1. *Boundary Changes that do not require a WKRFA Plan amendment.*
 - a. **City annexations of areas included within the boundaries of KCFD#3.** Such annexations will not affect the WKRFA since the areas will already be within the WKRFA boundaries. Pursuant to RCW 52.26.290 there will be no required asset or employee transfers between the fire protection district and the city.
 - b. **City annexations of areas not included within KCFD#3.** On the Effective Date of such annexation, the territory annexed shall automatically be included within the boundaries of the **WKRFA** pursuant to RCW 52.26.290. The territory added to the **WKRFA** by such annexation shall be subject to the taxation, charges, and bonded indebtedness (if approved as part of the annexation process) of the **WKRFA**. Any transfer of assets or employees that occurs as a result of annexation shall be between the transferring entity and the **WKRFA**.
 - c. **Annexation of a portion of KCFD#3 by a city that is not a participating jurisdiction in the WKRFA.** On the Effective Date of such annexation, the territory

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

annexed shall automatically be removed from the boundaries of the **WKRFA**. In this situation the **WKRFA** shall not be obligated to transfer employees or assets of **WKRFA**, and the annexing city shall be restricted solely to assets and employees of the fire district, if any.

- d. **WKRFA Annexations.** Pursuant to RCW 52.26.090(g), WKRFA shall have the authority to conduct annexations of unincorporated territory adjacent to WKRFA pursuant to the statutory authority and procedures set forth in Chapter 52.04.001 through RCW 52.04.051.
- e. **WKRFA Partial Mergers.** Pursuant to RCW 52.26.090(g), WKRFA shall have the authority to participate in the partial merger process under the authority and pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 52.06.090 and 52.06.100.


2. *Boundary Changes that require a WKRFA Plan Amendment.*

- a. **Annexations of Adjacent Fire Protection Jurisdictions.** The boundaries of the WKRFA may be expanded to include adjacent fire protection jurisdictions through the Plan Amendment and annexation procedures set forth at RCW 52.26.300.

WKRFA SECTION 4 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **JURISDICTIONAL BOUNDARIES** section of the **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment or revision by a majority vote of the **WKRFA** Governance Board.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 5	GOVERNANCE and ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE	
	<i>Draft</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	<p>The GOVERNANCE and ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment or revision by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board after two years.</p>	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The authority to provide *governance* for the Regional Fire Authority is provided by RCW 52.26.080 and RCW 52.26.090.

B. GOVERNING BOARD STRUCTURE AND OPERATION.


1. **Effective Date.** As provided by RCW 52.26.080, the **WKRFA Governing Board** shall be established and have authority as of the Effective Date.
2. **Authority:** The **WKRFA Governing Board** shall have all authority as outlined in RCW 52.26.090 and shall implement the necessary instruments to form, govern and operate the **WKRFA** in accordance with RCW 52.26.080
3. **Governing Board:** The **WKRFA Governing Board** shall be populated by the three (3) sitting Fire Commissioners of Klickitat County Fire District #3 and three (3) sitting City Council members from the City of White Salmon.
4. **Governing Rules.** The elected **WKRFA Governing Board** shall develop and adopt governance policies and rules for the **WKRFA Governing Board** to conduct business beginning September 30, 2024 in accordance with RCW 52.26.080.
5. **Authority.** The **WKRFA Governing Board** shall have all the power and authority granted governing boards under Washington State law and shall include the power and authority to make any decisions appropriate for the **WKRFA** and for matters related to Title 52 RCW.
6. **Compensation of Governing Board.** Commissioners of the Governing Board will receive compensation in the same manner and under the same conditions as provided by law for commissioners of a fire protection district organized under Title 52 RCW.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

WKRFA SECTION 5 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **GOVERNANCE and ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE** section of the **Plan** may be amended after two years by a majority vote of the **WKRFA Governance Board**.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 6	FUNDING and FINANCE	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	<p>The FUNDING and FINANCE section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment by the WKRFA Governing Board except when voter approval is required by statute.</p>	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The authority to levy taxes and provide funding for the **WKRFA** is provided by chapters RCW 52.26, RCW 84.52 and RCW 84.55 as such statutes may be amended from time to time.

B. WKRFA REVENUES:

1. The **WKRFA** shall be authorized to levy and collect taxes in accordance with RCW 52.26.050 (1) (b) subject to the following restrictions:

a. The **WKRFA** shall be authorized to levy **a maximum ad valorem property tax levy rate of \$1.00 per thousand of assessed valuation** [with a full-time employee], unless the **WKRFA** voters approve a levy lid lift pursuant to RCW 84.55.050. The **WKRFA** shall be initially funded beginning in fiscal year 2025 by an authorized *ad valorem property tax* of \$0.76 per thousand of assessed valuation. A minimum of 10% of the *ad valorem tax* shall be dedicated to Capital Improvement Funds for Apparatus Replacement; Equipment Replacement [threshold of \$5,000] and a Facility Component Replacement fund.

b. The **WKRFA Governance Board** shall adopt an annual budget and set its levy amount at a rate each year in accordance with state law and the adopted budget policies of the **WKRFA**. Any subsequent tax levies shall be limited by the limit factor under RCW 84.55.0101.

2. Within the first year of operations, the **WKRFA Governing Board** shall develop and adopt long-range budget forecasts, projections and assignments based upon adopted replacement fund matrices and level of service requirements as recommended by the **West Klickitat Task Force Final Report**.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

3. To the extent permitted by law, the **WKRFA Governance Board** shall have the authority to pursue and contract with agencies and entities exempt from property taxes in accordance with RCW 52.30.020 and related statutes.
4. The **WKRFA Governing Board** shall have the authority to pursue, subject to any applicable statutory voter approval requirements and **WKRFA Plan** Amendment, if required, all additional revenue sources authorized by law including but not limited to revenue sources specifically identified in Title 52 RCW and Title 84 RCW that are not otherwise addressed in chapter 52.26 RCW.

C. OPERATIONAL FINANCING AND WKRFA FUNDS.

1. The operational and administrative WKRFA budget for the remaining three months of 2024 shall be funded by the designated budget funds of the Participating Jurisdictions authorized for 2024.
2. The operational and administrative budget for fiscal year 2025 for the newly formed **WKRFA** shall be established by the **Governing Board** in 2024 after certification of the ballot measure and submitted according to the Klickitat County Treasurer's schedule.
3. The funding of the **WKRFA** operations and administration for fiscal year 2025 (January 1st, 2025 – May 15th 2025) shall be furnished by the respective reserve/replacement funds which will be transferred by the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District #3 in accordance with Section 6 (F) of this **Plan**. Said "replacement fund" monies transferred over to the **WKRFA** on the Effective Date shall be used for the first five months of WKRFA operations but shall be refunded to the respective **WKRFA** replacement funds as 2024 property taxes are collected.
4. Future District Expenses. All future costs incurred by the District on and after the Effective Date shall be the responsibility of the RFA

E. DEBT.

1. The City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District #3 shall each retain its respective General Obligation bonded indebtedness existing on the Effective Date and each shall continue to impose its individual voter-approved special levies until such debt is fully redeemed or defeased.
2. All other instruments of debt, financial liability or deferred payments owed by Klickitat Fire District #3 or the City of White Salmon fire department shall be transferred to the **WKRFA** on the Effective Date.

F. TRANSFER OF ASSETS.

1. On the Effective Date, Klickitat Fire District #3 shall immediately transfer all remaining and future financial assets to the **WKRFA**.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

2. On the Effective Date, the City of White Salmon shall immediately transfer any remaining fire department equipment replacement financial assets to the **WKRFA**.
3. At such time as property taxes adequately fund the approved operational and administrative budget of the **WKRFA**, the Participating Jurisdictions fund transfers shall be temporarily used for operations until such time as the **WKRFA** tax levy is collected in 2025.
4. Except as otherwise provided in this **WKRFA Plan**, on the Effective Date, all reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files, papers, or written material in the possession of the participating fire protection jurisdictions pertaining to fire protection and emergency services powers, functions and duties shall be transferred to the **WKRFA**.
5. On the Effective Date, all real property and personal property including cabinets, furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible property used by the Participating Jurisdictions in carrying out the fire protection and emergency services powers, functions, and duties shall be transferred to the **WKRFA**. City water systems including fire hydrants and related appurtenances shall not be transferred and shall remain City property. All funds, credits, or other assets held by the Participating Jurisdictions in connection with the fire protection and emergency services powers, functions, and duties shall be transferred and credited to **WKRFA**.
6. On the Effective Date, ownership of all KCFD#3 fire stations shall be transferred to the **WKRFA**. The bonds issued for the original acquisition and construction of the KCFD#3 fire station shall not be assumed by the **WKRFA**, but shall remain obligations of, and shall continue to be repaid by KCFD#3 taxpayers, until they are fully repaid in 2038.
7. White Salmon fire station facilities:
 - a. The White Salmon fire station, at 119 NE Church Avenue, occupies the top floor in a multi-level, dual purpose, dual funded facility—shared with the City of White Salmon Public Works Department which occupies and operates from the lower level. [See **Appendix C**]
 - b. On the Effective Date, the entire upper floor of the White Salmon Fire Station shall be leased to the **WKRFA** by the City of White Salmon at no additional consideration.
 - c. The current areas of the upper floor [fire station] under current use as the City of White Salmon City Council Chambers shall remain in its current configuration for use by the City of White Salmon until such time that the City of White Salmon and the **WKRFA** Governance Board develop and approve a transition plan to relocate the City Council Chambers to another location to allow for expansion of **WKRFA** to meet its operational needs.
 - d. The City of White Salmon shall retain ownership of all furnishings, equipment, and AV amenities located in the Council Chambers of the fire station which will transition to a new Council Chambers per the transition agreement.
 - e. The **WKRFA** shall assume minor repair and maintenance costs for the fire station portion of the facility commencing on the Effective Date. The City of White Salmon, as the leaser, shall remain responsible for major component repair or replacement. The definition of major and minor repairs shall be negotiated between the participating jurisdictions beginning on the Effective Date.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

- f. Utility costs for the fire station portion shall be negotiated between the participating jurisdictions beginning on the Effective Date. The WKRFA Executive Staff and City of White Salmon Executive Staff shall formulate a shared formula based upon occupation times and use by both jurisdictions.


Both Participating Jurisdictions agree to approving a Council Chambers “transition plan and timeline” during the first year of WKRFA operations.

8. Except as otherwise provided in this **WKRFA Plan**, any appropriations made to the participating jurisdictions for carrying out the fire protection and emergency services powers, functions, and duties shall be transferred and credited to the **WKRFA**.
9. The respective volunteer associations shall remain autonomous until such time, at the agreement of both volunteer groups, they merge into a single, non-profit volunteer association.
10. Except as otherwise provided in this West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan, whenever any question arises as to the transfer of any personnel, funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment, or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the WKRFA Governing Board of the participating fire protection jurisdiction shall make a determination as to the proper allocation.

WKRFA SECTION 6 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **FUNDING AND FINANCE** section of the **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment or revision by the Governing Board except when voter approval is required by statute.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 7	DEPLOYMENT; OPERATIONS, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT SERVICES	
	<i>Adopted</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	The DEPLOYMENT/ OPERATIONS and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT section of The WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board .	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The authority for the **WKRFA** to operate and establish LEVELS OF SERVICE components of the **WKRFA Plan** is provided in RCW 52.26.040, .090 and chapter 52.33 RCW.

B. EMERGENCY SERVICES AND SERVICE LEVELS:

1. On the Effective Date, **WKRFA** shall be organized and managed administratively and operationally with the leadership as shown in **Appendix B** of this plan.
2. All current operational and service delivery aspects of Klickitat County Fire District #3 and the White Salmon Volunteer Fire Department shall be transferred to the **WKRFA** on the Effective Date unless otherwise stated in this **WKRFA Plan**. **WKRFA** shall continue to provide all emergency services in the manner and at the levels of service currently provided.
3. Current staffing models, standards of coverage, deployment standards, field operations, command staffing, and operational policies and procedures shall be transferred and continued at the current level of service on the Effective Date.
4. In recognition for the efforts and recommendations of the West Klickitat Task Force, the Final Report of the Task Force has been provided in **Appendix A** which includes recommendations for emergency services, levels of service and desired response performance goals.
5. This **WKRFA Plan** requires that **WKRFA** undertake an organizational Master and Deployment Plan exercise in 2025 to adopt more specific targets for services, service levels and delivery models based upon the ‘all risks’ recommendation of the West Klickitat Task Force. As a result of that exercise, the Governance Board shall formally adopt, by resolution, service delivery plans, standards of coverage and deployment models.
6. As recommended by the West Klickitat Task Force, the **WKRFA** shall, as a high priority, engage immediately in 2025 to fill staffing positions to ramp up a rigorous and perpetual “community-based volunteer recruiting, training, maintaining and retaining” program to

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

increase and maintain levels of response and support staffing defined in the 2025 Master and Deployment plans. Said program shall include well-defined and executed training standards for all levels of the volunteer program supported by training and certification programs provided at the local level.

7. All current automatic aid and mutual aid agreements, and any other contractual services agreements, documents, or memorandums currently in place with the participating jurisdictions, shall be transferred over on to **WKRFA** on the Effective Date to provide continuous, seamless readiness and emergency services coverage.
8. On the Effective Date, **WKRFA** shall implement advanced record management systems [RMS] for incident response, training and all activities relating to operational and support services of the **WKRFA**. The RMS shall record, process, and regularly report its incident activity and response performance data collectively as an RFA *and* individually between the rural and the city. The **WKRFA** will annually compile and generate an annual report that will be available to the public and provided to the City of White Salmon.
9. As a component of the 2025 **WKRFA** Master and Deployment Plan, considerations and contingencies shall be incorporated to develop an alternate, subordinate EMS response and transport delivery service to supplement the current EMS District system.
10. On the Effective Date, emergency management services within the boundaries of the **WKRFA** shall be provided as follows:
 - a. Within the City. The City of White Salmon contracts for emergency management services from Klickitat County. **WKRFA** will actively participate with emergency management services with the County for the City pursuant to an inter-local agreement to be negotiated after the Effective Date.
 - b. Within unincorporated Klickitat County. Klickitat County shall remain the provider of emergency management services, however, **WKRFA** shall coordinate, liaison and facilitate joint planning and mitigation efforts between City emergency management planning and operations efforts and Klickitat County emergency management planning and operations.

C. SUPPORT SERVICES.


1. All current aspects, provisions, levels of service of Klickitat Fire District #3 and the City of White Salmon Support Services programs shall be transferred over to the **WKRFA** on the Effective Date.
2. As a part of the **WKRFA Master and Deployment Plan**, the **WKRFA** shall develop and adopt a new Internal Support Services Plan to maintain a state of readiness and ensure a full scope of services and support to the responders, staff, and internal customers of **WKRFA**.

D. WKRFA SECTION 7 OPERATIONS AND DEPLOYMENT PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

The **DEPLOYMENT/OPERATIONS, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT and SUPPORT SERVICES** section of The **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the **WKRFA Governance Board**.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 8	ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGEMENT/ PERSONNEL COMPONENTS	
	<i>Draft</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	The ADMINISTRATIVE, MANAGEMENT and PERSONNEL COMPONENTS section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board .	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The authority for the **WKRFA** to establish and provide Administrative, Management and Personnel components is provided in RCW 52.26.040 and RCW 52.26.100.

B. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING.

1. On the effective date, the **WKRFA** shall be organized as provided in **Appendix B** of the **WKRFA Plan** until such time --in the first year of operations --the **WKRFA Master and Deployment Plan** determines an updated hierarchy.
2. On the Effective Date, the Fire Chief of Klickitat County Fire District #3 shall serve as the Fire Chief of the **WKRFA**. The Fire Chief shall at all times be appointed and serve at the pleasure of the **WKRFA Governance Board**.
3. The existing staff and volunteers of Klickitat Fire District #3 shall transfer to the **WKRFA** to fulfill assigned duties as outlined in the organizational structure in **Appendix B**
4. The existing staff and volunteers of the White Salmon Volunteer Fire Department shall transfer to the **WKRFA** to fulfill assigned duties as outlined in the organizational structure in **Appendix B**.
5. All current Volunteers shall be transferred on the Effective Date at their current rank, grade, and seniority. The administrative staff of Klickitat County Fire District #3 shall transfer over to become the **WKRFA** administrative staff.
6. All current administrative and business functions, agreements, documents, operations, and policies and procedures from the participating jurisdictions shall transfer over to the **WKRFA** in accordance with Section 7.
7. The current Klickitat County Fire District #3 Fire District Secretary shall be appointed and assume full duties as the **WKRFA Administrative Manager** on the Effective Date.


West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

8. Unless otherwise noted in the **WKRFA Plan**, the transfer of authority and the administration and management of the **WKRFA** shall be seamless and shall initially model the current administrative and management components of Klickitat Fire District #3.

WKRFA SECTION 8 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGEMENT/PERSONNEL COMPONENTS** section of The **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the **WKRFA Governance Board**.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

	SECTION 9	HAZARD PREVENTION, PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES	
	<i>DRAFT</i>	June 2023	
	<i>Revision</i>	<p>The HAZARD PREVENTION, PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES section of the WKRFA Plan is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the WKRFA Governance Board.</p>	
	<i>Revised</i>		

A. STATUTORY REFERENCE.

1. The authority for the **West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority** to provide Fire/Hazard Prevention, Public Education and Fire Investigation components is provided in RCW 52.26.040, RCW 52.26.090(2), RCW 52.12.031 (3),(6) and (7)

B. SERVICES PROVIDED.

1. Klickitat County and the City of White Salmon shall continue to maintain their authority to adopt and enforce fire and life safety codes per RCW and shall continue to provide prevention and investigation services in the unincorporated portions of **WKRFA** and within the city limits of White Salmon under that authority.
2. The City shall maintain the authority to provide code enforcement activities for non-compliant properties and other fire prevention/safety requirements.
3. The **WKRFA** shall provide fire/hazard prevention and *public safety education services* in the same manner and at the same level as the current Klickitat Fire District #3 with enhancements in public outreach, public programs and public participation as recommended by the **West Klickitat Task Force Final Report**.
4. The City of White Salmon and the WKRFA may enter into a post RFA interlocal agreement for fire prevention inspection/notification services, pre-construction plan reviews and other fire/hazard safety activities within the city limits of White Salmon.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

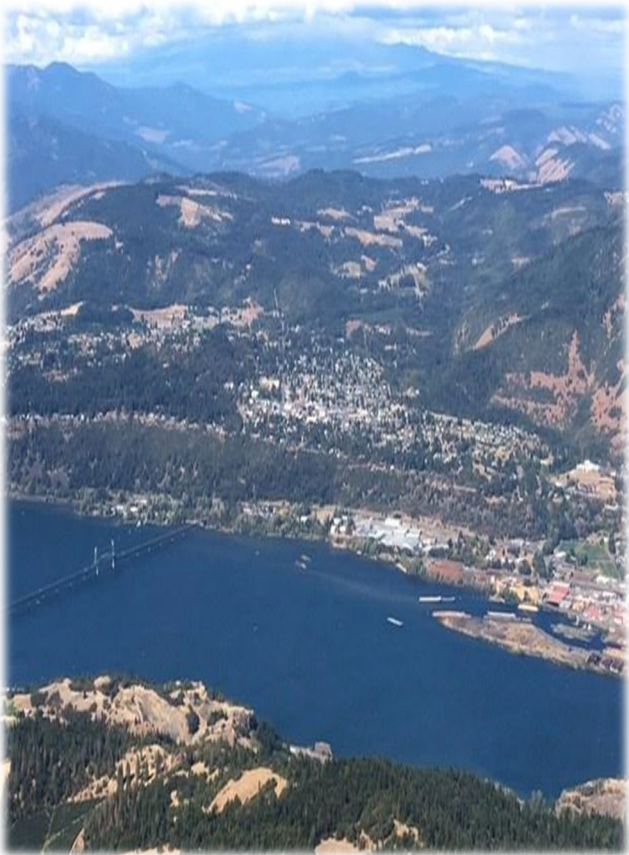
5. The **WKRFA** shall work to comply with and maintain the current City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District #3 Fire Rating with the Washington Survey and Rating Bureau.

WKRFA SECTION 9 PLAN REVISION DISPOSITION:

The **HAZARD PREVENTION, PUBLIC EDUCATION SERVICES** section of The **WKRFA Plan** is subject to amendment by a majority vote of the **WKRFA Governance Board**.

Appendices

APPENDIX A



REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY PLAN

City of White Salmon and Klickitat
County Fire District #3

Winter 2022/23
Report to the West Klickitat County Fire District 3 Fire Commissioners and White Salmon City Council
FINAL DRAFT February 20, 2023

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. COMMUNITY TASK FORCE OVERVIEW

First, to the volunteer firefighters of the White Salmon Fire Department and Klickitat County Fire District 3:

Being part of this task force has given us a deeper appreciation for how essential your commitment and service is and has been to the safety and well-being of our communities.

Please accept our ongoing and heartfelt thanks.

BACKGROUND

Many cities and fire districts are seeking strategies for more efficient and effective *emergency service delivery models*. Communities continue to grow and create an increasing diversity of demands to be addressed by emergency services. Changes in demographics, wildfire risk, increased recreational activities and other emergency service demands are challenging the current methods and models that Volunteer Fire Departments have utilized for decades.

The Elected representatives of the City of White Salmon and Klickitat County Fire District 3, along with fire department leadership, have recognized these challenges. In mid-2022, they jointly developed and approved a *Fire Action Plan* focused on improving the current level of emergency services in the region and beginning a discussion about the potential benefits of delivering emergency services through a regional model. They hired *mHc Associates*, a Washington State Emergency Services Consulting firm, to assist them with convening and facilitating a citizen task force with members from both the city and the district. The volunteer West Klickitat Fire Districts Task Force met between October 2022 - February 2023 to understand the challenges and opportunities for improved emergency services in the greater White Salmon region, and to provide independent research, analysis, and recommendations on improving regional emergency capabilities and services. This effort builds on the recommendations of a Klickitat County Fire District 3 citizen task force convened in 2013.

The fundamental questions the City and Fire District asked the Task Force to address were:

1. Are the current levels of services being provided meeting community expectations?
2. Are there advantages to addressing current emergency service needs on a regional basis for the greater White Salmon community?

What follows are the Task Force's responses to these two questions.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

B. FINDINGS

QUESTION 1:

Are the current levels of services being provided meeting community expectations?

The Task Force has concluded that the current levels of preparedness and services are not sufficient to meet current expectations and future community needs.

Background:

The Chief Fire Officers in both Fire District 3 (KCFD3) and White Salmon (WSFD) are professionals, either full or part-time, and there is part-time professional administrative support for each organization.¹ All other needs in both the fire district and department are served by volunteers from the community, as in most small towns and rural areas. Our community is fortunate to have fellow citizens volunteering their time to train and assist in times of distress and emergency.

Effective response to an emergency event is based on the number of responders and the training of those responding. The training and number relate directly to the safety of the community and the volunteers. At current levels of volunteers, there are not enough people to show up to each emergency, and the loss of only a few volunteers would significantly affect response safety and effectiveness. Neither participating entity has adopted training standards for any position, nor training attendance requirements for safe and effective participation in emergency events. Current training levels for volunteers do not meet state requirements and are not sufficient to provide consistently safe responses for our volunteers or to the many different kinds of emergencies that can occur in our community.

Following are findings identified by the task force:

- A. **Volunteer Recruitment, Training and Retention** – There are currently not enough well-trained volunteers in the KCFD3 and WSFD to ensure adequate emergency response. Training is what turns our volunteer emergency service responders from altruistic, well-meaning individuals into an effective emergency response team. This will require a staffing commitment to a dedicated, skilled, proactive, and consistent recruiting and training program. We believe this training program should be organized based on volunteers' ease of participation and structured to promote certifications and state standards.

¹ Fire District 3 has a full-time professional Fire Chief, and two half-time office staff. The White Salmon Fire District has a part-time professional Fire Chief and relies on the City for administrative services.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

- B. **Leadership** – Currently both departments see strong leadership in the Chief Officer position. There is leadership within the volunteer staff, but it is limited by the need to recruit, train, and retain volunteers to fill those middle leadership positions over the long-term. Volunteer leadership is a critical component to group and individual training as well as mentorship. Training should focus on the development of volunteer leaders with certification benchmarks and training requirements.
- C. **Threats** - The fire threat in the community has increased exponentially. With a rising population, residential growth into wild land areas, and longer, more severe fire seasons we're on the precipice of a real problem. Over 70% of all fires occurring in the United States are "human caused"². Rural emergency response is statistically the most hazardous to responders. The threats go beyond preventing and fighting fires. The majority of emergency calls are medical in nature. With an aging population, these calls will increase in the future. For all of these threats, our responders need to have the tools, training and an "effective response force" to be safe and return to their families at the end of the day.
- D. **Data & Reporting to Track Performance and Continuously Improve** - Washington law requires every rural fire district to have a written policy with service delivery goals, including response times, and strive to meet their performance goals at least 80% of the time. They are also required to report annually on their performance.³ Currently neither fire department has fully addressed these requirements. A well-run organization can document its performance with data, which would allow accountability to the community and inform ongoing improvement in fire and emergency response. Currently, neither WSFD or KCFD3 appears to track performance data in a form that meaningfully enables an assessment of performance.
- E. **Community Education & Engagement** - It is recognized that this is a rural community with all the challenges that presents for our first responders. Training and participating in community-wide hazard prevention programs and enabling the community to better help themselves is an essential part of creating a community that is strong, connected, and resilient.

² National Fire Protection Association

³ RCW 52.33.030 and 52.33.040

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

- F. **Improving Coordination & Coverage with Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** – There appear to be significant gaps in the county-wide EMS system coverage, with times in which there is no ambulance available to respond to emergencies in the West Klickitat County area. There appears to be little to no communication or coordination with WSFD or KCFD3 when this occurs. The Klickitat County EMS system had over 6 days with no EMS units available in our community in 2022. Better coordination between the fire district, department and county EMS services is essential to provide coverage when an ambulance is needed.

QUESTION 2:

Are there advantages to addressing current emergency services on a regional basis for the greater WS community?

Yes, the broader community of White Salmon and Klickitat Fire District 3 would benefit from approaching emergency services through a regional approach.

Background:

Currently, Klickitat Fire District 3 and the White Salmon and Bingen fire departments all serve the same regional community, but each have their own fire chief, facilities, equipment, volunteers, administration, and programs. They are funded separately. But, by agreement, they each respond to the same emergencies for mutual aid. In the past, they have coordinated and collaborated on training and equipment, but inconsistently. While they serve the same community, there is a lack of system-wide coordinated planning, volunteer recruitment and training, equipment purchases and administration. This leads to a duplication of efforts and investments, and a missed opportunity to respond to emergencies most effectively and efficiently.

Between the fire district and department, there are different funding sources and structures, leading to inconsistent fire and emergency response funding for the region. This makes it difficult to plan for the future, and offer the most consistent, effective response. The White Salmon Fire Department is funded through the annual city budget from its General Fund in varying annual amounts. Klickitat Fire District 3 covers a large area outside of and surrounding the city limits and is funded through a levy included in property taxes. This provides a consistent annual budget, but one that is unable to keep up with inflation due to a 1% limit on annual increases. We believe a single, regional fire district (called a Regional Fire Authority)⁴ with unified leadership, training and recruiting programs, volunteers, facilities and equipment would better serve our community by providing the most coordinated planning and response and eliminating redundancies. This would also enable consistent, reliable funding through a single funding source for the region through property taxes.

⁴ RCW 52.26

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

Following are findings identified by the task force that can be met through a regional approach:

- A. **Consistent Funding for Regional Fire & Emergency Response** - Funding approaches are fundamentally different between the White Salmon Fire Department and Klickitat Fire District 3. A Regional Fire Authority would provide consistent annual funding needed to set up and establish a rigorous long-term budget to include the programs essential to running an effective community-focused Volunteer Fire District for the region.

- B. **Knowledgeable, Accountable Fire Commission Leadership** - Currently, the White Salmon City Council oversees the White Salmon Fire Department, while the Klickitat Fire District 3 Commission oversees its operations. A city council has many competing areas of focus, and, understandably, does not necessarily have expertise in fire and emergency services. A Regional Fire Authority (RFA) is governed by an elected commission, which is focused only on providing excellent fire and emergency services for the community and is accountable to the voters for achieving that goal.

- C. **Long-Term Budgeting** – Inclusion of essential programs into a yearly and long-term budget, based on reliable, stable annual funding enables a district to build effective long-term programs and plan for the future. Specifically, a stable funding source and long-term budgeting would enable the district to provide more effective resources for volunteer recruitment, a robust training program, leadership development and community education. Additionally, funding for large capital purchases can be included in long-term budgets to limit the risk of operational funding going to capital expenditures.

- D. **Eliminate Redundancies and Improve Capabilities** – Currently WSFD and KCFD3 have rolling equipment that is redundant and could be converted to equipment that would provide additional capability to the department. Back-up equipment needs can also be simplified, and equipment standards and needs can be applied and sourced across a single RFA.

- E. **Simplify Reciprocal Agreements** – Between each department there are agreements that outline how chain of command, equipment and leadership is addressed in emergency responses with both departments. These become unnecessary and simplify the complex task of an emergency response by enabling one unified response plan.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

C. COMMUNITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are the Task Force's recommendations to improve emergency services for this community. These recommendations include the creation of a Regional Fire Authority to enable more coordinated, effective regional response and avoid duplication of equipment and programs.

- A. **Create a Regional Fire Authority under RCW 52.26** - Create a Regional Fire Authority (RFA) serving the current areas of WSFD and KCFD3. This should be a new district to take over the tasks of the two above mentioned jurisdictions. Formation of this RFA should simplify the inclusion of additional neighboring departments in the future, should this become desirable.
- B. **Create a Consistent Funding Source for the RFA** - Create a stable, consistent funding source for the Regional Fire Authority through a single property tax levy sufficient to meet the needs identified to provide improved fire and emergency services to the community in the future.
- C. **Create Annual and Long-Term Budgets to Meet Identified Needs** - Create an annual and long-term budget for the new Regional Fire Authority that includes elements to build a strong volunteer department. This should include:
 1. Volunteer Recruitment Program
 2. Volunteer Training Program
 3. Leadership Development Program
 4. Community Education and Engagement Program
 5. Future Equipment and Facility Needs
- D. **Recruit, Train and Retain an Excellent Corps of Volunteers** – Volunteers are the life blood of rural emergency response. The reasons to volunteer are many and varied, and good recruitment and efforts to support and retain volunteers is essential. To that end we recommend studying implementation of the following efforts.

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

1. High School education/training “Cadet” program – participants in the full curriculum of the program would graduate with fire certifications in addition to participating with the Fire District. (See Lyle Fire Department program)
 2. Training – Training program focused on volunteer needs and availability. Targeted to advance each volunteers’ interests and additional certifications, and to ensure the skills and emergency response within the RFA meet the needs of the community and volunteer safety.
 3. Leadership – Advanced training and leadership requirements and opportunities for those interested. Should include tuition and travel.
 4. Compensation – Volunteer compensation needs to be consistent with the effort and expenses of volunteers.
 5. Community Engagement – Starts and stops with the volunteers. Publicly visible, inviting, knowledgeable, and educated community engagement improves local emergency prevention and response.
- E. **Create Performance Goals, Publicly Track Data & Report Annually** – Create performance goals, and a system to meaningfully track, measure and document emergency response in the RFA. Annually report on performance transparently and publicly with a plan for continuous improvement. In addition, an effort should be made to align the reporting standards amongst other coordinated agencies such as Klickitat EMS, Bingen Fire & Lyle Fire for a more complete view of all emergency services rendered.
- F. **Coordination & Coverage with Emergency Medical Services (EMS)** – Given the significant gaps in the county-wide EMS system coverage, the RFA should negotiate a reciprocal agreement with the county to coordinate EMS resources and dispatch for improved coverage. It should also consider how to best provide its own ambulance service, given that Fire District 3 has an underused ambulance in its fleet.
- G. **Offset White Salmon Resident Property Taxes** - When a new Regional Fire Authority is created, the City funding that has been provided for the White Salmon Fire Department in the past will no longer be spent on the fire department. However, City residents will have a new line item in their property taxes to pay for the Regional Fire Authority. Therefore, we recommend that the City of White Salmon reduce resident property taxes for the City by at least half

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

to partially offset the increase in resident property taxes to pay for the new Regional Fire Authority.

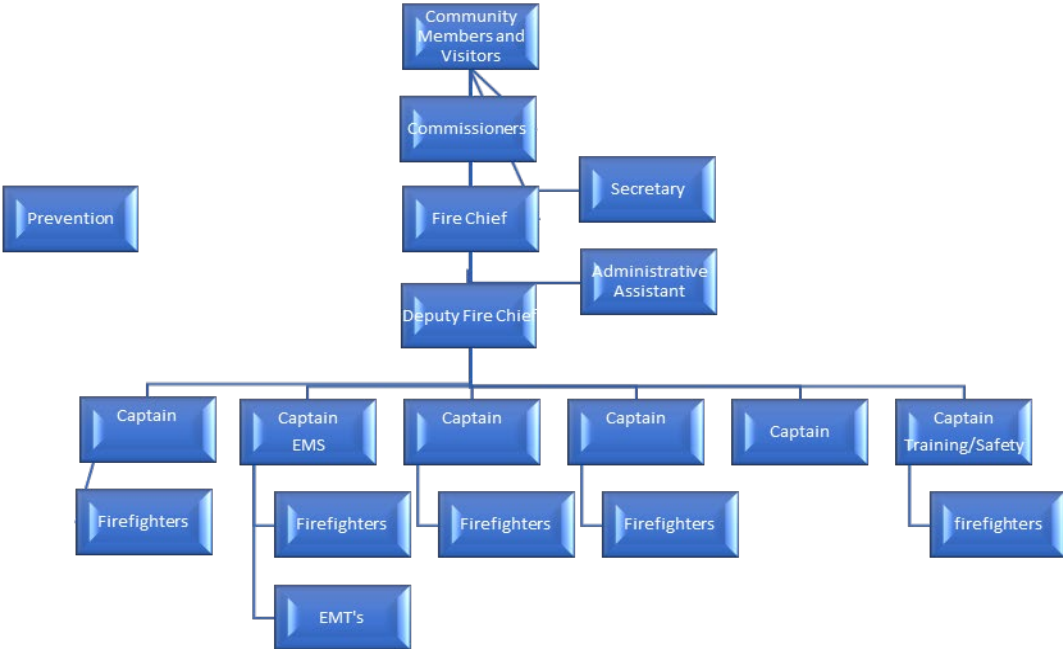
H. **Provide Community Education and Engagement** – The Regional Fire Authority should be responsible for taking the lead on education and engagement with the community on several fronts.

1. Wildfire risks and prevention
2. Emergency response expectations
3. CPR/First aid

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

APPENDIX B

WKRFA Chain of Command



West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

APPENDIX C

RESOLUTION 1997-1-204

WHEREAS, the City of White Salmon is interested in obtaining short term financing for construction of a facility for the Public Works Department/City Shop;

WHEREAS, White Salmon voters have recently approved general obligation bonds to provide the financing mechanism for a Fire Hall and Fire Truck;

WHEREAS, the Fire Hall and Public Works Department/City Shop will be housed in one structure;

WHEREAS, the White Salmon City Council has determined that the public interest will be served by constructing the Public Works Department/City Shop simultaneously with the construction of the Fire Hall.

NOW, THEREFORE, the White Salmon City Council resolves as follows:

The mayor of the City of White Salmon is authorized to sign a Promissory Note on behalf of the City of White Salmon in the approximate amount of \$200,000 for a term not to exceed 66 months, at an interest rate not to exceed 5.5 percent per annum.


The mayor is authorized to pledge water and sewer revenues of the City of White Salmon as collateral for the loan.

APPROVED by the White Salmon City Council this 22nd day of January, 1997.

CITY OF WHITE SALMON


Roger Holen, Mayor

Attest:


Kelly Ingraham, CPA
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved as to form:


Deborah M. Phillips, P.C.
White Salmon City Attorney

West Klickitat Regional Fire Authority Plan

Appendix D

Amendment Log

Date	Section	Summary
07/10/2023	WKRFA Plan	The WKRFA Plan was approved
09/30/2024	6.C.4	Paragraph added to address the need to fund ongoing costs of KCFD3.
XX	4.C.1.d	Annexation of unincorporated property -Authority given to WKRFA.
	4.C.1.e	Partial Mergers- Authority given to WKRFA
xx	Formatting	General formatting of the document was corrected to account for the above amendments and addition of this amendment page. Also, page numbering, headers and font changes. No change to wording.