



MONTEZUMA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

21 N 4th Street, Rio Vista, CA 94571

OCTOBER 13, 2021

MONTEZUMA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT RESPONSE

OVERVIEW

The report displays that there was much time and research involved by Jury members as they studied the status of fire danger /fire protection in Solano County. It is clear they are sincerely concerned about the future status of this subject. For that I am appreciative.

Awkwardly, in this report there are details which are not accurate as pertaining to the FPDs. To be fair, there was a considerable amount of information given to the Jury; it is easy to understand how details can become intermixed. I will not burden this response letter with correction of all details where I find inaccuracies; I believe that is better left for a more specific dialogue. Instead, I would like to convey general overviews on the few broader subjects which the report covers.

Specifically

1. The report's **Finding 1** - I agree that the recommendation of additional funding is appropriate. I would not agree, however, to the county spending the amount of money that would be needed to staff and equip the FPDs to the level suggested throughout the report. The report's assumption is that the county should be equipped and staffed to handle a grand-scale event. That idea is not appropriate or reasonable. A more prudent use of funds is to equip and staff for what the steady needs are. In the event of a fire on a larger scale additional resources become available to assist; having multi-department aid agreements in place is how fire departments are set up to do this.
2. The report's **Finding 3** and the accompanying recommendation assert that there have recently been additional burdens placed on fire protection or changes to the county's fire risk. I respectfully disagree. The bulk of the county has mostly remained unchanged; ergo, the natural environmental circumstances have been present for eons of time.
3. I concur with the Civil Grand Jury's **Comment** that "Solano County has not accepted responsibility for protecting outlying areas...". I believe this has occurred due to lack of

communication between district fire chiefs and county supervisors; not because of intentional malevolence.

Thank you to Jury members for their encouragement to the county to allocate funding to the FPDs. I would also like for them to know that no amount of finances will change circumstances immediately. Funding will not completely expedite the hiring process nor the equipment acquisition process since regulatory requirements are the driving force for these.

In your service,

Chief Michael O'Connor