



North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighters



November 2023

Holiday greetings from North Sonoma Coast Fire, the combined team of volunteer firefighters and CAL FIRE staff who respond to local emergencies. We want to keep our community informed of our activity and needs, and to thank all of you. We love what we do, and we could not do it without your continued support. Donations to the NSCVFA are deductible as provided for in IRS section 170. The NSCVFA is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) DBA of the TSRVFD EIN# 94-2197071. Checks may be made out to NSCVFA. Thank you for your support!

Volunteer Firefighter Association 2023 Update

For 50 years your volunteer firefighters have been serving and protecting your community! First as the Annapolis and Sea Ranch Volunteer Fire Companies, and since 2016 together as the North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District.

The North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association (NSCVFA) supports the North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Fire Department by raising funds to maintain the North Fire Station on Highway 1, and to provide our volunteer firefighters with much needed gear, vehicles and equipment.

Your generous donations via mail or our website, and attendance at the Memorial Day Weekend Picnic, allow us to provide financial support to the North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Fire Department and our community. With

your support we have thus far been able to make all of the payments (total \$150,000!) on the department's newest rescue vehicle, Rescue 4432. The VFA intends to continue to pay off the entire cost of \$215,000. Moreover, with your purchase of a VFA Christmas tree we are able to provide \$6,000 annually towards continued education and career development for Redwood Coast Medical Services (RCMS) employees.

The community once again got together in 2023 for our annual Memorial Day Weekend Picnic! We had a record turnout of 682 attendees for this wonderful volunteer effort. Your attendance raised \$14,000 for the VFA.

The Volunteer Firefighters Association has committed to pay \$140,000 in 2024 for a much needed new Assistant Chief response vehicle for your Fire District. This vehicle will have the ability to quick-attack a fire with a few hundred gallons of water. The VFA has also committed \$25,000 of your donations to outfit the new Type 6 vehicle also to arrive in 2024. An article on page 3 addresses the district's most recently added off-road vehicle. Those committed amounts are only possible because of your donations.

Donations to the NSCVFA are tax deductible as provided for in IRS section 170. The NSCVFA is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) DBA of the TSRVFD EIN# 94-2197071. Checks may be made out to NSCVFA, or PayPal via our website NSCVFA.org. Thank you for your continued support. Onward to the next 50 years!

Gratefully,

North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association



North Sonoma Coast Fire 2023: Top Row: Captain Paul Plakos, Captain Phil Martin, CAL FIRE Captain Red Miller, Loren Adrian, Steve Smith. Bottom Row: Chief Bonnie Plakos, Assistant Chief Chuck Breier, Gregory Miller, Michael Verolini, Malay Thaker, Abel Solis, Goldie Pounds, Peter Gifford, CAL FIRE FAE Diane Mibach, CAL FIRE Captain Pat Briant. Not pictured: Skylar Martin, Releana Breier; Nick Morgan; Support members Eric Agnew, David Goheen, Shelley Spear, Randy Burke, Richleigh Powers.



Who and What is Your Fire Department?

When you live in a rural area it is quite common to depend on a volunteer fire department for your fire department needs. In fact, in the U.S. 65% of firefighters are volunteers! Those living in a more urban environment don't realize the coverage provided by rural area volunteers who respond around the clock. We are very fortunate to have a hybrid type of Fire Department. North Sonoma Coast Fire is made up of volunteers and career CAL FIRE personnel. Here is a snapshot of your local fire department:

- A combination of Volunteers (14) and CAL FIRE (2); respond 24x7. Average age of volunteers is 59.
- We cover 172 square miles

Equipment:

- 3 large (Type 1 or Type 2) Fire Engines
- 2 Water Tenders (tankers)
- 1 Type 6 Engine (with 4wd)
- 2 Rescue Trucks
- 3 Utility Trucks (Chief, Asst Chief, Pick-Up)
- 1 UTV "Side by Side" w/ Stokes Basket Insert
- 2 20kW towable generators, one with a light tower

Stations:

- North Fire Station (Hwy 1 next to Chapel)
- CAL FIRE "South" Fire Station (corner of Annapolis Rd and Verdant View)
- Annapolis Station (on County Yard property)

Plus an equipment shed in Annapolis area for our Type 6 engine.



Let There Be Light (and Power)

As you can imagine, emergencies happen at all hours of the day and night, and in all types of weather (as demonstrated clearly to us in January of 2023!). Safety is a major concern for your firefighters, and having sufficient power and being able to see what we are doing is very important.

In 2023 your Fire Department applied for, and received, a \$60,000 Tourism Impact grant from Sonoma County towards two 20kW generator trailers, one with a light tower. Although we'll use these trailers throughout the year, these pieces of equipment will be especially useful during our stormy seasons, and during Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) during fire season.

See <https://www.northsonomacoastfpd.org/portable-emergency-power/> for more information.





Our Newest Apparatus

It's important to keep in mind that our fire district is 172 square miles! Our large rural area can be difficult to navigate. With your donations, in 2023 we were able to purchase an off-road or "UTV" vehicle, trailer and storage shed. UTV 4441 has been upfitted with all the necessary emergency vehicle features like scene lighting, siren/p.a. system and protective equipment. In addition, Chris Aitchison from local CNA Metalworks was able to fabricate an entire bracket system to securely hold a patient litter (Stokes Basket). UTV 4441 is a terrific piece of equipment for rescue situations from beaches to mountainous forested areas that have little or no access for larger apparatus. It will also be used for shuttling personnel and fire suppression equipment into our district's remote areas. 4441 has already been in service, assisting with a search for a lost hiker and shuttling equipment at a wildfire training exercise. Read more at <https://www.northsonomacoastfpd.org/utv-4441/>.



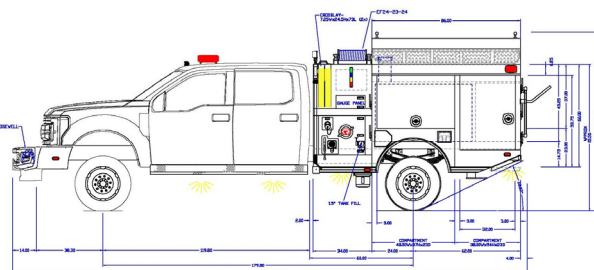
Maintaining Our Fleet

Without reliable wheels to move personnel, water and equipment to emergency incidents, we cannot provide an effective response. Therefore, we work hard to replace apparatus when needed and before it fails. In 2022, plans were completed and orders placed for three vehicles to arrive in the coming years.

First, in the summer of 2024 we should take delivery of a new Type 6 "mini-pumper" that will provide both rescue and firefighting capability. It is being built by Rosenbauer in South Dakota, and is a customized design intended to specifically meet the needs of response on the coast and our rural areas. The cost is \$355,451. This truck will replace Rescue 4432, a 22-year-old vehicle that has rescue but not firefighting capability. So, we will increase by one the number of vehicles that can help with firefighting efforts, and Rescue 4432 will be retired.

We have placed an order for a new "Type 3" engine, built by Boise Mobile Equipment (BME). We have ordered an engine identical to the ones being produced for CAL FIRE. By "tagging on" to CAL FIRE's already-negotiated contract with BME we were able to save some expense, although the price is still a steep \$447,762. A "Type 3" engine is the standard wildland firefighting engine type in the state; most of the CAL FIRE engines that you see on the road are Type 3's. Estimated delivery has stretched into 2025. This engine is slated to replace Engine 4471, which will be 24 years old by then.

Our last vehicle update in the works is a replacement for 4401, the Assistant Chief's vehicle and rescue truck. The current 4401 was built in 1996 and while still functioning it is time to plan a successor. The replacement will be a Ford F350 chassis with custom gear boxes. The total cost of the vehicle and its "upfitting" should be around \$140,000. This truck will be paid for in its entirety by the Volunteer Firefighter Association, meaning, by your donations. As always we thank you for your support, and want you to know that we put all donations to very good use!



Schematic of the Type 6 engine coming soon.



Our new Type 3 engine will look very much like this.

What's Next for the North Station?

Our last two newsletters have summarized the slow but steady progress towards fulfilling the County and TSRA requirements to permit the expansion of the North Fire Station. We propose to extend the existing building with two additional engine bays to accommodate our expanding fleet, and to add an approximately 4,000 square foot detached firefighter residential facility, district offices and training room.

In 2023 we completed the Biological/Environmental Survey and the Topographical Survey, both paid for by your generous donations. Part of the former survey was to perform a wetland delineation. An inconspicuous wetland swale was determined to exist bisecting our 4 acre property. Consequently, our detached building footprint needs to

be moved an acceptable distance from the swale. With the swale now recorded on the topographical survey our next task is to determine a new footprint location with our architect, Don Jacobs, and then perform the final study, the Geological Survey, in the most appropriate location. The geological study will confirm the foundation conditions required and allow Don to get started on preliminary structural and architectural drawings. That will be when our main driver, funding, will require our serious attention.



North Fire Station, ready for delivery of Christmas Trees.

Upcoming Ballot Measure

There will be a ballot measure on the March 2024 election ballot regarding support for emergency services in Sonoma County. See <https://www.northsonomacoastfpd.org/march-2024-ballot-measure/> for more information.

You Can Become a Volunteer Firefighter

Your volunteer fire department needs you! The number of emergency calls is increasing each year; the number of volunteers on the department is dropping. Some of our long-time volunteers are aging out. We need new recruits to be able to effectively respond to emergencies in our community.

Becoming a firefighter is fun, challenging, often inconvenient, and very rewarding. We are always looking for motivated volunteers who don't mind being awakened in the middle of the night to help their friends and neighbors. Our members come from many backgrounds and careers. Prior experience in emergency services is not required—we'll train you. Please see <http://nscfpd.org>, or call 707-785-2648 for information.



North Sonoma Coast Fire Christmas Tree Sale



Please visit <https://tsrvfd.org/christmas-tree-sale/> for up-to-date information on this year's Christmas Tree Sale and to reserve your tree!

NSC Incident Statistics

- *Numbers of calls: 318 in 2019; 290 in 2020; 329 in 2021; 351 in 2022; 414 in 2023 calls through the end of October. 128 calls in January 2023 alone, mainly due to January storms.*
- *Types of calls in 2022: 59% medical, 8% hazardous conditions, 7% fire, 7% vehicle accidents, 5% alarms sounding, 4% smoke checks, 2% rescue, and 8% other.*
- *Call locations in 2022: 68% Sea Ranch, 20% Annapolis/Kashia/Stewarts Point, 10% Timber Cove/Fort Ross, 2% other.*

Stay Informed, Be Prepared!

We had a welcome break from fires in 2023, but the January storms brought us an entirely different type of disaster. Please maintain readiness, not just for wildfire but for extended power outages, high winds, and blocked roads. Have a good stock of emergency supplies. Sign up for all available notification systems. Take advantage of the damp winter/spring to prepare your home to be defensible against wildfire. For information about notification systems, evacuation zones and more please visit our website at <http://nscfpd.org> and look for the "Emergency Information" link.

Mark your calendar for the 2024 Memorial Day Weekend Picnic



**Burgers, Hot Dogs, Hot
Links, Slaw, Beans,
Drinks, Desserts
Kids Games
Smokey Bear!**

**SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2024
AT ONE-EYED JACK'S
NOON—3:00**

North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District <http://nscfpd.org>
PO Box 386, The Sea Ranch, CA 95497

North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association
PO Box 65, The Sea Ranch, CA 95497
(707) 785-2970 email: info@tsrvfd.org <http://nscvfa.org>

Photo credits: Red Miller and Bonnie Plakos