



NORTH ROUTT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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Spring 2022

Greetings to you and your family! We trust you are well, staying safe and looking forward to the end of winter and the transition into summer. The purpose of this letter is to share with you developments at the NRFPD as well as providing helpful information concerning activities in North Routt County.

EMERGENCY CALLS FOR SERVICE

DESCRIPTION	Yearly Call Volume by Incident Type								
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Structure Fires	3	8	2	5	3	3	1	2	1
EMS	29	34	45	43	45	30	56	46	7
MVA	17	18	12	11	10	9	13	15	3
Illegal Burn							15	11	0
Wildland Fires	5	6	8	15	15	1	8	11	0
Service Call	50	35	32	29	29	44	36	30	0
Rescues	9	6	8	2	7	5	4	8	3
False Alarms	<u>26</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>9</u>
Totals	139	128	153	132	143	120	172	148	23

through
March *

This year NRFPD staff have responded to several snowmobile accidents in the surrounding back country. They have been able to utilize our tracked UTV's to gain access to the injured parties and transport them out to either our ambulance or a Classic Air Medical helicopter for transport to nearby trauma care centers. Staff also responded to what started as a vehicle fire and which spread to and consumed the building it was stored in. A challenge in extinguishing this and most fires is having access to water year-round. Only 2 housing developments in the district have pressurized water sources, and for this incident our nearest source was the Bob Adams Airport. If you have an interest in developing a water source for the district to access please contact Chief Swinsick for details.(see dry hydrants comments below)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The terms of service of the Directors has been transitioning from expiring on even years to expiring on odd years as mandated by CO Department of Local Affairs. The process began in 2020 and will be completed 2023. During this transition, 4-year terms were shortened to 3 years to accommodate the change to odd year expirations. In 2020 Board Seats 2, 4 and 5 were changed to expire in 2023. This past winter Seats 1 and 3 were changed to expire in 2025. In 2023 and 2025, the length of service of the terms will return to 4 years.

Your present Board of Directors are:

Board Seat 1	Jim Standish	Term Expires 2025
Board Seat 2	Paul Slivon	Term Expires 2023
Board Seat 3	Steve Warnke	Term Expires 2025
Board Seat 4	Todd Zvorak	Term Expires 2023
Board Seat 5	Larry Williams	Term Expires 2023

BUDGET and FINANCIAL MATTERS

In December of 2021 the Board approved and adopted the 2022 Budget. The balanced budget reflects anticipated revenues and expenses of approximately \$692,267. Staff and volunteer related expenses represent approximately 65% of the budget. Incorporated in the budget are allowances for additional paid staff.

The external independent audit of the District's books and records for the year ending 2021 is underway and is expected to be completed mid-year, 2022. The audit is a requirement by the financial industry and the Special District regulations as we currently have bond debt. It is noteworthy that the debt will be paid in full in 2026.

EQUIPMENT and CAPITAL PLAN

Overall, the condition of the district's rolling stock (ambulances, engines, tenders, brush units) are in good shape. There are two exceptions - one a newly identified near term need and the other a longer-term need. In the short term the Board most recently discussed the need to replace one of its off-road search and rescue vehicles as the existing 2014 model (purchased used) is under powered & worn-out. This equipment is used during all seasons as it has removable tracks for use during winter/snow conditions. The unit is used for transporting staff to and from hard to access search and rescue sites and transporting fire fighters and equipment to wildfire sites. It is equipped to carry fire suppression equipment, staff and injured personnel. The search for a replacement unit has been completed and it is being upfitted so it can be in-service for the coming wildfire season. The unit was purchased with donated funding.

In 2023 the board will address the longer term need to either retrofit new pump drive line components (pump and transfer case) on engine 3-3 or consider a grant application for a new replacement engine. We estimate a retrofit would extend the life of the current engine by 10 years.

VOLUNTEERS AND PERSONNEL

2022 brings new challenges with staffing, and as you know our Volunteer Roster has been getting smaller. Most recently, we have been recruiting for both volunteers and paid staff to cover calls while volunteers are at work or in town during the week. We are proud to announce we have hired 3 full-time staff members that are certified NREMT's and that are currently working on getting other firefighting certifications. All three are local, 2 live in Steamboat and 1 is from our Volunteer roster.

Kathryn Vaitkus (nee Elkins) was born and raised in Routt County along with her two brothers. She is excited to be working for North Routt Fire as a full-time firefighter/EMT-B-I and looks forward to serving the community. Her husband is Linas Vaitkus and they have two beautiful daughters Anja who is 2 and Emilija who is 1. She has a bonus daughter Sofija who is 14. They have one dog a red heeler, two cats, two horses, and a beta fish that lives in a castle. During her free time, she enjoys skiing, biking, hiking, running, climbing and time with her girls.

Vladan Chase moved to Routt County in 1998. His family came for multiple reasons, including the skiing and the change of seasons. He was brought on full time by North Routt Fire Rescue at the beginning of January. Vladan is the last of 10 kids, though only five have the same mother and father. His oldest sibling is 67, and he is only 30, so the life stories and lessons within the Chase household are numerous. In his free time, Vladan is an avid hockey enthusiast. He still plays adult league, refs some as well, and hosts a podcast that explores the community of the rink through storytelling. If you see him around the village or the lake, feel free to stop by and say hello to the truckie, as he is always one for a good conversation.

Paul Rose was born and raised in Steamboat Springs. His parents have lived in the area for over 30 years, so they feel very rooted in this community. He has two younger sisters who are his best friends and three smaller dogs who keep everyone grounded. Paul worked as a Commercial Diver/Rescue Diver in California for a few years before returning to Steamboat to pursue his dreams of being a Firefighter/EMT. He enjoys spending his free time with his family and those who are important to him. His hobbies include walking his animals, camping, biking, beach days, surfing and scuba diving. He is proudly working for North Routt Fire Protection District as an EMT-B-I and is training for firefighting.

Even with the addition of the additional paid staff we are still in dire need of volunteers. If you are physically fit and have a few hours to spare, we would love to hear from you! Contact our office or ask any of our staff on how to volunteer!

BURN PERMITS – CAMPFIRE PERMITS

Through a joint effort of the Fire District, Routt County Environmental Health, and the State Air Pollution Control Division, we continue to follow the Routt County Open Burn Plan and can issue you a burn permit at **no cost!** In an effort to make all pile burning safer, piles must be burned with snow on the ground and are prohibited from burning after May 1st. Once the snow leaves the ground, we will be available to issue you residential campfire permits. Feel free to give us a call and we can go over all of the details.

WILDLAND FIRE PREPAREDNESS

Snowfall this season is below average, and while there is still snow on the ground, it is not too early to be thinking about WILDFIRES. There is a genuine concern that we are entering a drier summer and it is important for all of us to revisit the safeguards and steps that we as residents and property owners need to take to be prepared for the wildfire season. Remember to clear under growth around and near your structures to have a good clear defensible space around it. Additionally, have a "go kit" ready in the case of a mandated evacuation in the event of a wildfire near you. There is good information and recommendations located on the NRFPD website (<https://northrouttfire.colorado.gov/>) under the **Wildland Fire Safety** tab, as well as at the newly formed Routt County Mitigation Council website <http://routtwildfire.org>. Further, as we move into the Wildfire season, an excellent source for the statuses of wildfires is: <https://inciweb.nwccg.gov/> and www.facebook.com/RouttCountyOEM/

DRY HYDRANTS

Dry hydrants can be a great source of water in rural areas of our district. These can be water sourced from ponds or buried tanks near driveways etc. Insurance companies can offer better rates if a land owner has a developed accessible water source for fire suppression. We currently have an inventory of 16 Dry Hydrant locations throughout the district. Unfortunately several of them are not functional due to age or locations in waterways that have changed course. Part of our improvement plan is to refurbish these sites (if possible) and add new locations that are viable and accessible for fire apparatus. If you have a year-round water source and/or are interested in developing a dry hydrant on your property, please contact our office and we can provide a design requirement guide. Information may also be viewed at: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs143_026061.pdf

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Similar to our December dinner, we continue to pursue events at which we can provide an opportunity for the community to get together, socialize and at the same time support the NRFPD. In the interim, the District is always pleased to accept any and all donations which support our efforts to provide safety services to the residents and visitors of North Routt!

Our Facebook page (North Routt Fire Protection District) has important information and is updated continuously. Also, if you have not signed up for the Routt County weather/special warning system, please take some time and view the site for details on how to sign up and what notifications are available at:

<https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736727602#/login>

Enjoy this spring and summer in North Routt County and please stay safe!

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