

## **6 CIRCULATION, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES**

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### **6.1 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION**

This chapter of the General Plan describes the existing conditions, opportunities and constraints associated with meeting the future transportation and circulation needs of the County. One important factor in mountain counties is the influence of topography on the physical layout of transportation system and, therefore, on transportation planning decisions. In Mariposa County, the mountainous regions in the eastern portion of the county may have significantly different transportation issues than the foothills area in the western portion of the county.

The circulation element considers all modes of transportation including auto, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and air travel. The General Plan should serve as a guide for integrating the various travel modes into a comprehensive transportation system.

#### **6.1.01 AUTOMOBILE/ROADWAY NETWORK**

The existing roadway network serving Mariposa County is made up of State, County, and private facilities. The State Routes typically provide for regional and sub-regional trips into, out of, and within the county. The State Routes also serve as major arterials facilitating the movement of local traffic within and between the population centers of Mariposa County, and may provide direct property access. County roadways provide both direct properties accesses connecting private roadways to the State Routes and local circulation within the County. Private roads may serve a single parcel or clusters of parcels. While most private roads connect to County facilities, some private roads connect directly to State facilities.

The State and County roads are generally two-lane roadways with turning lanes provided at some intersections. The State Routes have three lanes in some areas to allow for passing or two-way left-turn movements. Private roadways may be either one- or two-lane facilities depending on the number of parcels served by the road. There are no traffic signals within Mariposa County; therefore, all intersections are either stop sign controlled or uncontrolled.

#### **STATE HIGHWAYS**

Figure 6-1 shows the location of the five State Routes that serve Mariposa County. Table 6-1 summarizes the last five years of traffic volume data (average annual daily traffic) from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

Table 6-1: Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) Volumes on State Highways

Mile Post	Description	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
<b>Route 41</b>						
4.92	FISH CAMP, ENTRANCE TO YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK		2,250			
<b>Route 49</b>						
6.10	TRIANGLE ROAD		4,250	4250		–
9.74	WOODLAND/HIRSCH ROADS	4100	4,025	4025	4025	4025
12.55	BOOTJACK ROAD	5500	5,450	5450	5450	5250
16.70	MORMON BAR, BEN HUR ROAD	7650	7,550	7550	7550	7350
18.50	MARIPOSA, SOUTH JCT. RTE. 140	8300	8,200	8200	8200	8000
18.51	JOE HOWARD ROAD	6400	6,250	6250	6253	6250
20.51	WHITLOCK ROAD	4650	4550	4550	4550	4550
22.99	MOUNT BULLION, CATHAY WAY (MOUNT BULLION CUTOFF)	2400	2350	2325	2325	2325
29.45	BEAR VALLEY, BEAR VALLEY ROAD	1400	1350	1350	1350	1350
44.67	COULTERVILLE, JCT. RTE. 132 WEST	670	670	670	670	670
48.84	MARIPOSA COUNTY-TUOLUMNE COUNTY	830	825	825	825	825
<b>Route 120</b>						
43.09	BUCK MEADOWS					
43.75	MARIPOSA-TUOLUMNE COUNTY LINE	2200	2100	2100	1850	1850
47.25	CHERRY VALLEY ROAD	2250	2150	2150	1900	1900
56.51	YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK (WEST BOUNDARY)	2400	2300	2300	2050	2050
<b>Route 132</b>						
4.02	BONDS FLAT ROAD					
5.96	LAS PALMAS WAY	2750	2750	2750	2750	2750
6.32	MERCED FALLS ROAD	2750	2750	2750	2750	2750
7.58	LOZANO STREET/SAN PEDRO BAR	2750	2750	2700	2750	2700
7.64	TUOLUMNE COUNTY-MARIPOSA COUNTY LINE	2100	2100	2100	2100	2100
18.75	COULTERVILLE, JCT. RTE. 49		1600	1600	1600	1600
<b>Route 140</b>						
9.50	HORNITOS ROAD		4900			
21.22	MARIPOSA, SOUTH JCT. RTE. 49	4825	4725	4725	4625	4500
21.38	MARIPOSA, SIXTH STREET	11100	10900	10900	10700	10200
22.00	MARIPOSA, NORTH JCT. RTE. 49	9100	9000	9000	8800	8400
26.29	TRIANGLE ROAD	5200	5100		4575	4475
28.95	OAK ROAD	3675	3575	3575	3575	3250
29.70	COLORADO ROAD	3050	2975	2975	2975	2350
34.07	BRICE BURG STATION	2350	2275	2275	2275	2050
48.17	FORESTA ROAD	2050	1950	1950	1950	1750
50.32	EL PORTAL ROAD	1700	1650	1650	1650	1450
51.80	YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY; EL PORTAL, EAST	2350	2300	2300		2075

**Source:** Caltrans Annual Traffic Volume Reports

**Figure 6-1: Major Transportation Routes**

**Do to the size of this image; Figure 6-1 has been created as a separate file**

The State Routes are:

- State Route 140 – This is the major east-west route through the county and is approximately 52 miles in length. It extends from the Merced County line in the west to Yosemite Valley in the east passing through the communities of Catheys Valley, Mariposa, and El Portal. In terms of regional travel, State Route 140 provides a connection to State Route 99 in the Central Valley. In terms of sub-regional and local travel, State Route 140 and State Route 49 are an integral part of the transportation system for the central portion of the County. The section of State Route 140 from the junction of State Route 49 in the Town on Mariposa to the Yosemite National Park entrance is officially designated as a State Scenic Highway.
- State Route 49 – This is the major north-south route through the western half of the county and is approximately 49 miles in length. State Route 49 is known as the Golden Chain Highway and travels along the western slope of the Sierra Nevada connecting Mother Lode communities from Oakhurst to Nevada City. Within Mariposa County, this route extends from the Madera County line in the south to the Tuolumne County line in the north. State Route 49 provides a critical link between the northern and southern areas of the County. Between the communities of Bear Valley and Coulterville, there is a section with steep grades in order to cross the Merced River. This section of the roadway significantly increases the travel time between the northern and southern regions of the County. Between Bear Valley and the southern County Line, State Route 49 is an important part of the sub-regional and local roadway network. The section of State Route 49 within Mariposa County is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway.
- State Route 41 – This is a major north-south route located in the eastern portion of the County that extends from the Madera County line to the Yosemite Valley. State Route 41 connects to State route 49 in Oakhurst and to State Route 140 in Yosemite Valley. State Route 41 is one of three highways serving Yosemite National Park and also provides access to the Mariposa County communities of Fish Camp and Yosemite West. Approximately five miles of State Route 41 are maintained by the California Department of Transportation between the Madera County line and the south entrance to Yosemite National Park. The section of State Route 41 from Route 49 in Oakhurst to Yosemite National Park is eligible for designation as a State Scenic Highway.
- State Route 120 – While only small sections of State Route 120 are within Mariposa County, this highway serves as an important east-west route for residents in the northern portion of Mariposa County and provides regional access to Yosemite National Park. One section of State Route 120 passes through Mariposa County at Buck Meadows. The other section of State Route 120 within Mariposa County extends from the Tuolumne County line to its junction with State Route 140 in Yosemite Valley.
- State Route 132 – This is a major east-west route located in northwest corner of Mariposa County. State Route 132 extends from the Tuolumne County line in the west to the junction with State Route 49 in Coulterville and is approximately 19 miles in length. (Due to the shape of the Mariposa/Tuolumne county line, approximately four miles of this section is actually in Tuolumne County.) State Route 132 serves the communities of Lake Don Pedro and Coulterville as well as the recreational areas around Lake McClure. At Coulterville, State Route 132 connects

with County Route 132 that extends to the east and north to connect with State Route 120 passing through the community of Greeley Hills.

- Based on the traffic volume data in Table 6-1, the roadways are operating below capacity under average day conditions. However, during the peak tourist seasons of spring and summer, periods of heavy traffic congestion occur along State Route 140 particularly within the Town of Mariposa causing delays to both local and regional traffic. In addition, traffic along the State Routes may experience delays due to slow moving vehicles on steep grades.

## COUNTY ROADWAYS

Mariposa County maintains approximately 660 miles of rural roadways. Approximately 70 percent (460 miles) of the county roadways are paved. The Mariposa County Road Improvement and Circulation Policy lists six roadway classes or functional classifications: Local Residential Roadways, Local Commercial Streets, Local Industrial Streets, Minor Collectors, Major Collectors, and Arterial Streets. Approximately 65 percent of County roads (in miles) are classed as major or minor collectors. The remaining 35 percent of the miles are classed as local streets.

Figure 6-1 shows the location of the major and minor collectors along with the State Routes. Table 6-1 summarizes the available daily traffic counts for the county facilities. The county has an ongoing count program that tallies approximately 75 to 100 locations annually. Major and minor collectors are counted once every three years. **Table 6-2** lists the count locations from highest to lowest traffic volumes for facilities with 500 or more daily trips.

The county roads that are designated as major collectors are:

- Bear Valley Road
- Ben Hur Road
- Chowchilla Mountain Road
- Darrah Road
- Greeley Hill Road (includes Main Street)
- Harris Cutoff Road
- Hornitos Road
- La Paloma Road
- Merced Falls Road
- Mt. Bullion Cutoff
- Smith Station Road
- Summit Road
- Triangle Road
- E. Westfall Road

**Table 6-2: Daily Traffic Volumes on Mariposa County Roadways**

Roadway and Cross-Street	Highest	2005	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
BEN HUR @ 49	1,383		1,216		-	-	1,383
BEN HUR S @ SILVER BAR	558		558		523	-	517
BULLION @ 5TH/6TH	76			776	-	-	-
BULLION N @ 8TH	854		854		-	618	-
CHOWCHILLA MTN @ 49	1,186			389	-	1,186	-
COAKLEY CIRCLE @ 140	1,073		1,073		-	-	-
COAKLEY CIRCLE @ POST OFFICE	1945			1945	-	-	-
COLE @ DARRAH	1121	1121			-	-	722

Table 6-2: Daily Traffic Volumes on Mariposa County Roadways

Roadway and Cross-Street	Highest	2005	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
COLORADO @ 140	421			421	-	-	-
DARRAH @ 49	3,679	3,679			-	-	2,975
DARRAH @ TRIANGLE	1,148	1,148	1,080		-	-	1,304
DARRAH N @ COLE	1,926	1,926			-	-	1,620
DARRAH S @ SHERROD	1,612	1,543			-	-	1,612
EIGHTH E @ 140	1,254		2,141		-	1,254	-
EIGHTH E @ JONES, AUG	1,143			941	-	1,143	-
FISKE @ GREELEY						-	-
FORTY-NINER MAIN DW					-	-	-
GREELEY @ 49	828				828	-	-
GREELEY @ DOGTOWN	940				940	-	-
GREELEY @ FISKE	1,395				1,395	-	-
GREELEY @ PRIEST- COULTERVILLE	1,035				-	-	-
GREELEY WEST @ SMITH STATION	539			88	539	-	-
HARRIS CUTOFF E @ CHOWCHILLA MTN RD	1,137		863		-	1,137	-
HAYWARD @ 132	511				511	-	-
HIDALGO @ 132	547				547	-	-
HIRSCH @ 49	1,019			865	-	-	1,019
HOLTZEL @ GREELEY	791				791	-	-
HORNITOS @ 140	823		823		634	-	-
HOSPITAL @ SMITH	1,276			1,276	-	-	-
INDIAN PEAK @ 49	803			855	-	-	803
INDIAN PEAK S @ SEBASTOPOL	775			750	-	-	775
JERSEYDALE @ TRIANGLE	502	513	530	570	-	-	502
JESSIE @ 9TH	899				-	899	-
JESSIE S @ 12TH	1,704			1,704	-	-	-
JOE HOWARD @ 49					-	-	-
JOE HOWARD @ COAKLEY CIRCLE	1,366			1,336	-	-	-
JONES @ 140	1,167			1,167	-	-	-
MARSHAL @ OLD HIGHWAY	478			478	-	-	-
MEADOW LANE E @ TRIANGLE	664	638	637		-	664	-
MEADOW LANE W @ MAIN GATE	695	695	685		-	689	-
MERCED FALLS @ 49 GAP	513				513	-	-
MT BULLION CUT-OFF @ 140	567			567	-	-	541
MT BULLION CUT-OFF @ 49	756			582	-	-	756
MT BULLION CUT-OFF PAST CHURCH	586			497	-	-	586
OLD HIGHWAY @ 49	978		978		-	-	-

Table 6-2: Daily Traffic Volumes on Mariposa County Roadways

Roadway and Cross-Street	Highest	2005	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
OLD HIGHWAY E. @ MARSHAL	1,016			1,016	-	-	-
OLD HIGHWAY W. @ MARSHAL	592			592	-	-	-
RANCHITO @ MERCED FALLS	503				503	-	-
SILVA @ 49	1,011		1,011		-	916	-
SMITH N @ 140	1,578			1,578	-	-	-
SMITH N @ 49	1,062			1,062	-	-	-
SMITH STATION @ TUO COUNTY	576			442	316	576	-
TENTH @ JESSIE	2,019			2,019	-	-	-
THIRD @ 49	898		898		-	840	-
TIP TOP @ TRIANGLE	521		357		-	521	-
TIP TOP NW @ WASS	683		602		-	683	-
TIPTOP @ 49	513		445		-	513	-
TRIANGLE @ 140	1,112				-	1,112	-
TRIANGLE @ 49	760		755		-	760	-
TRIANGLE E @ DARRAH	1,399	1194	1,399		-	1,132	-
TRIANGLE E @ MEADOW LANE	973		973		-	865	-
TRIANGLE N @ TIPTOP	1,011		1,011		-	986	-
TRIANGLE S @ TIPTOP	783		764		-	783	-
TRIANGLE W @ E WESTFALL	963		879		-	963	-
TWELFTH N @ 140	1,024		915		-	1,024	-
TWELFTH S @ 140	887		904		-	887	-
USONA @ 49	541		522		-	541	-
WAWONA N (Mid September)	838			800	-	-	-
WHITLOCK @ 140	869		869		-	744	-
WOODLAND @ 49	2,032			2,032	-	-	1,374
WOODLAND @ BROOKS	999				-	-	999
YAQUI @ HIGHWAY 140	739		739		-	649	-

## 6.1.02 TRANSIT

Three transit systems provide general transit service to residents of Mariposa County. These systems range from regional operations serving inter- and intra-county patrons to demand responsive (door-to-door) operations tailored to meet local trip making needs. In addition, the Mariposa County Unified School District provides an important element of transit service to county residents. Finally, tour buses move thousands of tourists to and from Yosemite (via State Routes 140, 41, and 120) and through Gold Country (via State Route 49) each year.

## VIA/YARTS – REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL

The VIA Yosemite Connection Highway 140 service has been in operation since 1992. The buses operate on Highway 140 between the City of Merced and Yosemite Valley. The schedule varies depending on the seasons with fewer trips during the winter months and increased service during peak tourist months. While the service is designed for long regional trips and to provide connecting services to other transit modes (Greyhound and AMTRAK service in Merced), the fare structure allows for trips between any of the designated bus stops. Current fares range from as low as \$1.00 (between adjacent stops) to \$20.00 (Merced to Yosemite Valley). In Fiscal Year 2003-2004, VIA served approximately 47,300 passengers.<sup>3</sup> The privately owned service, which operates seven-days a week, is subsidized by Mariposa County. The service is operated under an interline agreement with AMTRAK to provide service to Yosemite on a daily basis. The majority of the service utilizes large over-the-road coaches. The VIA Yosemite Connection is one of two intercounty transit services providing access to Yosemite National Park.

Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS) is the other transit service that provides intercounty transit services to Yosemite National Park. YARTS is designed to provide an alternative mode of transportation to both Yosemite Park visitors and employees. YARTS operates service along two corridors that utilize State Route 140 and State Route 120.

- State Route 140 – This service operates between the City of Merced and the Yosemite Valley along State Route 140. Within Mariposa County, this service includes stops in Catheys Valley, Mariposa, Midpines, and El Portal.
- State Route 120 West – This service operates between Coulterville and the Yosemite Valley along County Route 132, State Route 120 and Big Oak Flats Road. This route includes stops in Coulterville, Greeley Hills, Buck Meadows, Big Oak Flats, and Crane Flats.
- State Route 120 East – This route provides service between Mammoth Lake and the Yosemite Valley along Big Oak Flats Road, and State Route 120. This route does not provide any significant service to Mariposa County residents since it operates within Yosemite National Park and Mono County.

YARTS service began on May 19, 2000 as a part of a two-year test program for expanding the use of transit to access Yosemite National Park. In February 2001, a decision was made to discontinue the test period and formally establish the service on a permanent basis. Based on this decision to continue YARTS, there has been a consolidation of the YARTS and VIA services since the same operator provides both services.

## MARIPOSA TRANSIT – SUB-REGIONAL AND LOCAL

Mariposa Transit is a dial-a-ride, door-to-door service with designated routes. While there are scheduled routes by day of week and hours of operation, passengers must call the Mariposa Transit office to arrange a ride. The service is essentially a “lifeline” service providing most residents with one day of service each week for both local and regional travel. Mariposa Transit operates and maintains their own bus equipment, which includes vehicles equipped for wheelchair access. The service is divided into two service areas: northside and southside.

<sup>3</sup> Transit Development Plan Update, Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, December 1997.



- Northside Service – Local service is provided on a Monday-Wednesday-Friday basis between the north side communities of Coulterville, Greeley Hill and Groveland. Local service fares range from \$1.00 to \$3.00 depending on the trip length. On Tuesdays, Mariposa Transit operates service between the northside communities and the town of Sonora. This service departs the north side area at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 5:00 p.m.
- Southside Service – The service area on the south side varies. Depending on the day of week, the service area extends east to El Portal, south to Usona, west to Merced, and north to Bear Valley/Hornitos. Southside service fares range from \$1.00 to \$3.00 depending on trip length.

In addition to operating the local dial-a-ride transit service, Mariposa Transit also operates the Meditran Medical Dial-a-Ride system. The Medical Dial-a-Ride system provides service from locations in Mariposa County to medical offices in northern and central California. While many of these trips are destined to the City of Merced, trips are also made to medical facilities in Fresno, Sacramento, and the San Francisco Bay Area (often to Veteran’s hospitals located in Palo Alto and Menlo Park). There is a minimum charge for this service.

## **MARIPOSA COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT - SCHOOL BUSES**

The Mariposa County Unified School District currently operates 31 bus routes throughout the county serving approximately 1600 out of 2400 students on a daily basis during the school year. The District primarily utilizes vehicles that can carry between seventy and ninety passengers. These routes operate on paved roadways.

## **TOUR AND CHARTER BUSES**

In 1998, it was estimated that an average of 63 tour/charter buses enter Yosemite National Park<sup>4</sup> each day. During a peak month, as many as 76 tour buses enter the park on a daily basis. While the majority of tour/charter buses make at least one stop in Yosemite Valley, these buses also may make several stops within the park and in Mariposa County communities. Some local businesses do provide bus-parking areas to accommodate this tourist traffic. While tour buses tend to reduce the number of automobiles accessing the park, they can negatively impact roadway pavement/structural sections and cause delays on steep grades and winding roads.

## **PEDESTRIANS/BICYCLES**

There is no existing countywide pedestrian and bicycle system. Within the local communities of the County, pedestrian and bicycle facilities tend to be inconsistent in quality and often lack continuity. For example, in the Town of Mariposa along State Route 49/140, there are formal sidewalks that connect to parking lots without sidewalks and areas with no sidewalks. In many areas pedestrians must walk on the shoulder of the roadway. While there are some limited bicycle paths within the county (notably along portions of the Merced River near Foresta), there are no dedicated bicycle lanes.

## **AIRPORT**

The Mariposa-Yosemite Airport is located in west-central Mariposa County, approximately four miles northwest of the Town of Mariposa. The airport is located on about 115 acres of

<sup>4</sup> Final Yosemite Valley Plan/Supplement EIS, National Park Service, November 2000.

land at an elevation of 2,252 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The airport is classified as General Aviation – Basic Utility Airport in the National Plan of Integrated Airport System (NPIAS).

The airport has a single runway that is 3,310 feet long and 60 feet wide. The airport has 28 T-hangars, 17 box hangars, and 49 tie-downs. During the summer, the Mariposa-Yosemite Airport is the central position in California for helicopters fighting fires in the southwest region.

The airport has a market area that includes Mariposa County, Yosemite Park, and eastern Madera County. While there is no scheduled air service at the airport, most of the operations support private owners and tourism. There are 52 aircraft based at the airport. The Mariposa-Yosemite Airport is used as a back-up landing site for airfreight destined to Fresno when there is poor visibility due to fog in the Central Valley.

## **6.2 PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Public services provide for the maintenance of peace and safety, enforce justice, educate, care for, and enhance the living quality of a community. Government services, law enforcement, schools, hospitals, fire departments, libraries, and others are considered public services because they are maintained by public funding to protect, revitalize, and maintain the community as a whole. These services are financed by the public through taxes, grants, and other federal, state, and local programs. Mariposa County is unique in that its lands are not solely under the jurisdiction of the County. Since much of the County is federally owned, public services may be operated solely by the federal government in some areas, while other areas offer a mix of federal, state, and local services. Also included in this chapter are the providers of telephone and natural gas services for the county.

### **6.2.01 GOVERNMENT**

None of the communities in Mariposa County are incorporated. There are several local government systems, including the Mariposa County Public Utilities District, the Mariposa County Unified School District, and the John C. Fremont Hospital District. The County Board of Supervisors consists of five members who meet weekly to discuss issues in the County. In addition to the Board of Supervisors, there are subcommittees and commissions that focus on specific issues such as planning, and present cases to the Board of Supervisors. Individual towns within the County area able to create localized town, community, or area plans to provide further direction aimed at the needs of the individual community. The Board of Supervisors must approve these plans.

Most County offices are located in the town of Mariposa and are centered around the Courthouse on Bullion Street. These offices include but are not limited to, the Planning Department, the Environmental Health Division, Building Department, Health Department, and Housing Authority. The County Welfare Office, Public Works Department and Parks and Recreation Departments are exceptions. The Welfare Office is located on Highway 49 North, the Public Works Department is located on the corner of Highway 49 South and Ben Hur Road and Parks and Recreation is located on County Park Road. In addition, the Mariposa County Resource Conservation District, located at the Fairgrounds, provides information and assistance in erosion control, water distribution, and land capability improvements. Each of

the communities within the County may have additional service districts such as Parking or Lighting Districts, which maintain area parking and street lighting facilities.

In addition, there are small state government branch offices (California Highway Patrol, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, etc.) within the County. These offices consist of small staff and serve the local jurisdiction. Since much of the County land is owned by the federal government (BLM, Forest Service, National Park Service), there are federal government offices that support and enforce federal laws and provide federally funded public services on their jurisdictional lands. These federal government offices do not have jurisdiction over lands that are not under federal regulation.

## **SNOW REMOVAL**

The Mariposa County Road Division of the Mariposa Public Works Department is responsible for snow removal on County roads. Snow removal is financed by the county road fund and by those communities who utilize snow removal services. County snow removal equipment is augmented by privately owned and operated equipment that is contracted by the County. Roads and roadway infrastructure are discussed in more detail in Section 15, Transportation.

## **6.2.02 MEDICAL SERVICES**

### **JOHN C. FREMONT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT**

John C. Fremont Healthcare District (JCFHD) is located in the town of Mariposa and provides medical services for the entire county. JCFHD is the only full-service hospital located in Mariposa County and serves all Mariposa County residents, as well as some Madera County residents. JCFHD also provides 24-hour emergency services. The 40,628 square-foot facility was opened in 1952 after the formation of the John C. Fremont Healthcare District in 1951. The hospital is licensed for 18 general acute-care beds, 16 skilled nursing beds, and 24 long-term care beds. In 1992, JCFHD embarked on a strategic plan to upgrade and expand facilities to meet the needs of a growing resident and visitor population. The emergency department was expanded and relocated. The x-ray and radiology department and the surgery and recovery department were renovated and new equipment was purchased. A brand new building was built to house the 95/210 rural health clinic, full service laboratory and respiratory departments. Many of the out buildings, which now house administration, billing, home health and hospice, personnel/board clerk, and the physician's quarters were renovated. Our latest achievement was on July 1, 2001 when JCFHD was approved to participate in the Critical Access Hospital program.

JCFHD offers the following services: 24-hour emergency care, an acute-care hospital, cardiopulmonary, clinical laboratory, outpatient surgery, a skilled nursing facility, social services, mammography, ultrasound studies, x-ray; home health care, and hospice; and operates a rural health clinic. A full time doctor, three physician assistants and support staff are maintained in the rural health clinic. In addition, there are specialty clinics staffed by approximately 20 doctors from Mariposa, Fresno, Merced, Modesto and San Francisco who specialize in specific fields including: audiology, cardiology, endocrinology, family practice dermatology, gastroenterology, marriage and family therapy, neurology, obstetrics, orthopedics, pediatrics, podiatry, psychiatry, radiology, rheumatology, surgery, urology, and diet. In addition there is an education department offering classes to the community such as

CPR, First Aid, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program and some prerequisites for the Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN) program.

JCFHD has a capacity for approximately 1,600 patient visits per month and receives between 1,200 and 1,400 at present. JCFHD currently meets all of the standards required of a District Hospital and is surveyed annually by the Department of Health Services. JCFHD is also a federally qualified rural health clinic. The John C. Fremont Healthcare District is one of four community health providers in Mariposa County; they refer patients out of the County if particular specialists are not available. Current services are adequate; and with regular equipment updates funded through grants, the hospital can continue to provide adequate care.

JCFHD would like to maintain home health and hospice services in Coulterville to better meet the needs of residents in the northwest portion of the County. Previous attempts to maintain these services in Coulterville were unsuccessful. JCFHD is currently evaluating options to provide local health services to residents of Coulterville and surrounding areas, which include a home health nurse and hospice services.

JCFHD is in the process of making a number of other improvements to services and facilities, including:

- Equipment upgrades, such as a recently acquired mammogram machine, pulmonary function testing equipment, a CT Scanning device, an ultrasound machine and stress treadmill;
- Nighthawk Radiology service whereby doctors (radiologist) in Australia provide readings of x-rays, and CT Scans during the night, allowing for 24-hour coverage; and

In addition to providing health services to county residents and visitors, JCFHD is a major employer and economic asset to the County. JCFHD employs approximately 164 people, of whom approximately 106 are regular full-time employees, approximately 36 are regular part-time employees, and approximately 22 are per diem employees. JCFHD generates an annual payroll of over \$4 million on revenue of approximately \$12 million. The majority of JCFHD staff lives in Mariposa County. JCFHD uses local business and service suppliers as much as possible (Personal communication, Ms. Kim Brownell, Administrative Assistant, John C. Fremont Healthcare District, October 25, 2002).

## **MARIPOSA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

The Mariposa County Health Department serves County employees and residents by providing Public Health and preventive. Health services provided include maternal and child health (MCH); family planning and pregnancy testing; a WIC hemoglobin, height, and weight program; prenatal outreach and education; California children's service (CCS); emergency medical services (EMS); rabies testing; HIV testing; sexually transmitted disease (STD) testing and treatment; tobacco cessation and education; TB skin testing; pre-employment exams for County employees; child health and disability Prevention (CHDP); and travel consultation shot program. In addition, the Mariposa County Health Department provides environmental health services, including water/wastewater programs, hazardous materials and hazardous waste storage and disposal programs, a solid waste enforcement program, Air Pollution Control District services, food facility and public swimming pool programs, emergency response, and consultation on a variety of housing-related issues. Professional staff at the facility includes two full-time public health nurses, and three part-

time public health nurses (County employees), one nurse family practitioner, and one part-time Health Officer (a medical doctor specialist in Public Health), who oversees all Health Department Services. (Sources; Charles B. Mosher, MD, MPH, Health Officer; 2005).

## **OTHER HEALTH SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Mariposa Family Medicine, located in Mariposa, provides a full service medical office, including Family Practice and Ob/Gyn services, and a laboratory (currently contracted by Unilab), operating hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The professional staff includes two part-time medical doctors, two family nurse practitioners, and two physician's assistants (Personal communication, Ms. Kathy Azevedo, September 23, 2002).

The Mariposa Indian Health Clinic in Mariposa is a satellite clinic (the main office is located in Tuolumne, California) that provides outpatient medical services including dental and primary care. The medical clinic is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Full-time staff at the clinic includes one medical assistant (MA), one certified nursing assistant (CNA), one licensed vocational nurse (LVN) and one medical receptionist. Part-time staff the the clinic includes one physician's assistant (PA) and one registered nurse (RN). The dental clinic is open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Staff includes one dentist (DDS), two registered dental assistants, and two dental assistants. Part-time personnel include a supervising MD who visits the clinic once a week, a physician who visits once a month, and a hygienist who visits twice a week (Personal communication, Ms. Frannie Gann, June 28, 2005).

Other medical facilities are located in Oakhurst, Yosemite Valley, and Fresno. Although the Mariposa Fire Department maintains oxygen equipment and has volunteers trained in first aid and CPR, Mercy Ambulance provides primary ambulance service. Mercy Ambulance provides paramedic, advance life support, critical care transport services, and 911 service to all portions of Mariposa County, with the exception of Fish Camp and Yosemite, which are served by Sierra Ambulance and the National Park Service respectively. Mercy Ambulance operates five advance life support ambulances and has a staff of 35 employees, including EMTs, paramedics, and registered nurses. More units are in operation than in demand due to the large service area. Units are placed throughout the County in order to serve residents with an adequate response time. The average number of daily emergency response is approximately four to five. A majority of the emergency calls originate in the southern portions of the County. Mercy Ambulance is contracted by Mariposa County to provide services. Therefore, expansion of services is dependent on contract amendments and future funding (Personal communication, Jesse Figueroa, Mercy Ambulance, December 5, 2002).

Sierra Ambulance from Madera County is the primary ambulance service for Fish Camp due to proximity (Personal communication, Sheri Hershberger, Sierra Ambulance, September 17, 2002). Mountain Valley Emergency Medical Services Agency (a County Regulatory Agency) provides training, administrative support, regulation, and planning for emergency service to Mariposa County, as well as Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, and Stanislaus Counties; however, they do not provide actual medical service (Personal communication, Rick Jones, Mountain Valley Emergency Medical Services Agency, September 19, 2002).

The National Park Service contracts with Doctors Medical Center for medical services within Yosemite National Park. The Yosemite Medical Clinic is able to treat minor injuries, medical conditions, and first aid for incidents occurring within the park and El Portal area and

handles approximately 9,000 cases each year. The clinic provides health screening, physical therapy, medical training, and worker’s compensation treatment for park employees. There are 17 full-time and 15 part-time employees at the clinic. A dental clinic is located within the medical clinic, but operates independently. The dental clinic has three full-time staff to meet the needs of the park employees and local residents (Personal communication, Dennis Nelson, Doctors Medical Center, September 19, 2002; Yosemite Valley Plan, 3-153).

## **6.2.03 SCHOOLS**

### **MARIPOSA COUNTY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The Mariposa County Unified School District provides K–12 educational services for children in Mariposa County. The following elementary and middle schools are under the jurisdiction of the school district: Catheys Valley Elementary, Jessie Benton Fremont School, Coulterville-Greeley Elementary, El Portal Elementary, Lake Don Pedro Elementary, Mariposa Elementary, Mariposa Middle School, Woodland Elementary, and Yosemite Valley School. The four district high schools are Coulterville High School, Mariposa County High School, Spring Hill High School, and Yosemite Park High School. Service needs are determined through monitoring housing development and home statistics. Enrollment projections are made in February, and facilities and staffing are adjusted accordingly at that time.

### **CENTRAL MARIPOSA COUNTY AREA**

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The central Mariposa County area includes Mariposa County High School, Spring Hill High School, Mariposa Middle School, Mariposa Elementary School, and Woodland Elementary School. Mariposa High School and Mariposa Elementary School are located within the town of Mariposa, while the Middle School, Spring Hill High School, and Woodland Elementary School are located in the outlying areas.

Mariposa High School has approximately 721 students in grades 9 through 12 and is operating over capacity (capacity is 640 students). All 38 classrooms are currently in use and are complemented by a gym, library, media center, auditorium, kitchen, two computer labs, and an office complex. There are 39 teachers and 24 support staff. Classrooms for both the high school and Mariposa Elementary School share the same campus.

Spring Hill High School is an alternative education, continuation high school serving students from throughout the county. Capacity is 45, and there are 55 students currently enrolled at the school. All nine classrooms are in use, and there is an office complex, a computer lab, and a gym. There are 11 teachers and 4 support staff at the school. Enrollment at the school is capped so there are no plans for expansion. Programs offered at the school include Continuation High School, Opportunity High School, Opportunity Elementary School, Home and Hospital, and Mariposa County Independent Learning Center.

Mariposa Middle School has an enrollment of approximately 315 students in grades 7 and 8. The school is operating near full capacity (capacity is 375 students). Mariposa Middle School consists of 19 classrooms, an office complex, library, a computer lab, and a kitchen. It has a staff of 16 teachers and 12 support staff. Current plans for expansion include a multipurpose room. Mariposa Middle School offers a full range of programs for its seventh and eighth graders including the Los Robles After School Academy in which 2 teachers and 64 students participate.

Mariposa Elementary School serves children in the Bear Valley, Bootjack, Bridgeport, Mt. Bullion, and other nearby areas and houses 356 students in grades K–6. Mariposa Elementary School is currently operating at capacity. The school consists of 19 classrooms, a library-media room, computer lab, office complex and staff room. There are 21 teachers and 25 support staff. Two teachers and 66 students participate in the after school intervention program. Head Start, Special Day Class Pre-school, Intermediate Special Day Class, and 17 classrooms serving grades Kindergarten through sixth grade share a campus with the high school. Current plans for expansion at Mariposa Elementary School include a multipurpose room.

Woodland Elementary School serves students from Bootjack, Chowchilla Mountain and other nearby areas and has grown from a one-room schoolhouse to 26 classrooms and nearly 411 students. Woodland has a capacity of 510 students. In addition to the 32 classrooms, there is science/computer room, band room, office complex, and library-media center. There are 22 teachers and 18 support staff at the school. 15 teachers and 73 students participate in the after school intervention program. Expansion plans include a multipurpose room.

#### FOOTHILL AREA

Schools located in the Foothill area include Catheys Valley Elementary School and Jessie Benton Fremont School. Catheys Valley Elementary School has approximately 83 students in grades K–6. Capacity at the school is 118 students, and all classrooms are currently being used. In addition to classrooms, there is a combination office and library, and there are plans to construct a multi-purpose room. The school has 4 teachers and 6 support staff. 2 teachers and 18 students participate in an after school intervention program.

Jessie Benton Fremont School has only 7 students enrolled in grades 7–12, with a capacity of 15. This school is located near Hornitos and consists of one classroom and an office. 1 teacher and 2 support staff operate the school. Since the school's enrollment depends on the number of students referred through expulsion and other disciplinary measures, it is difficult to predict need and future capacity.

#### NORTHSIDE AREA

Schools located in the Northside area include Coulterville-Greeley Elementary School (K–8), Coulterville High School, and Lake Don Pedro Elementary School. Coulterville Greeley Elementary School has an enrollment of 99 students with a capacity of 280 students. This school serves the Coulterville and Greeley Hill areas of the county. The school consists of classrooms, an office, and a library and is staffed by 6 teachers and 8 support staff. 4 teachers and 36 students participate in the after school intervention program. Enrollment is currently declining in this area, so there are no plans for expansion.

Coulterville High School is located in the town of Coulterville and serves the students of Coulterville and Greeley Hill. The school's capacity is 75 students; however, only 7 are currently enrolled at the school. Since enrollment is small, only 2 of the 3 classrooms are currently utilized. There are 3 teachers and 2 support staff at the school. Like the elementary school, enrollment is currently declining.

Lake Don Pedro Elementary School serves the communities of Don Pedro and La Grange. The school's capacity is 280, and its current enrollment is 222 students. The school utilizes all 10 of its classrooms and is equipped with a lunchroom, library, and computer lab. This

school is staffed by 12 teachers and 11 support staff. 6 teachers and 33 students participate in the after school intervention program.

## YOSEMITE AREA

Finally, the Yosemite area includes Yosemite Valley School, which is located within Yosemite National Park, El Portal Elementary School, and Yosemite Park High School, which are located in the town of El Portal. County residents living near the county borders may utilize schools in their bordering counties or towns. Many Park employee children are bussed to Mariposa for middle school and high school. Yosemite Valley School provides education for grades Kindergarten through eighth grade. Current enrollment is approximately 39 students, which has decreased due to the downsizing of Park concessionaires' middle management staff following the 1997 flood. Capacity of Yosemite Valley School is approximately 100 students. All 4 classrooms are currently in use, and the school contains a library, office complex, multipurpose room and kitchen, and a teacher lounge. The school is staffed by 3 teachers and 4 support staff. 3 teachers and 11 students participate in the after school program.

El Portal Elementary School consists of grades Kindergarten through sixth and has a current enrollment of approximately 57 students, although the school has a capacity for 85 students. Since enrollment is low compared to the capacity, only 3 of the 6 classrooms are currently utilized. In addition to classrooms, the school is equipped with a combination gym/auditorium/kitchen, computer lab, and one office complex. The school is staffed by 3 teachers and 8 support personnel. 1 teacher and 16 students participate in the after school intervention program. Since enrollment is declining in the area, there are no plans for expansion.

Yosemite Park High School serves the students of El Portal and Yosemite Valley who are not interested in traveling to Mariposa daily. With a capacity of 12 students, 6 students are currently enrolled. There is one classroom with a kitchen, along with office space. 2 teachers and 2 support staff are at the school.

## HONORS AND SERVICES

The Mariposa County Unified School District has won a number of honors in recent years, such as distinguished school honors for Mariposa County High School, Woodland Elementary School, Coulterville-Greeley Elementary School, and Yosemite Park Elementary School. Mariposa Middle School is a Sustained Distinguished School. In addition, there have been numerous Teacher of the Year Awards, California School Boards Association Golden Bell winner and other honors.

The district web site ([www.mariposa.k12.ca.us](http://www.mariposa.k12.ca.us)) contains educational information for students, staff, and community and provides links to various information sources.

The district offers bus transportation for students. This transportation covers a 1,450-square-mile area, with buses traveling three quarter of a million miles a year at an annual cost of \$2,318,634. These buses travel exorbitant distances and do so with an exemplary safety record. (Personal communication, Judy Eppler, Mariposa County Unified School District, September 26, 2002).



## **BASS LAKE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Wawona Elementary School is operated by the Bass Lake Union School District in Madera County in cooperation with Mariposa County. Wawona Elementary School serves kindergarten through sixth grade.

### **6.2.04 LIBRARIES**

Mariposa County operates five libraries. The Mariposa County Library main branch is located at 4978 10<sup>th</sup> Street in the town of Mariposa. This main library is open between 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, between 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday, and between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. Anyone may use library materials on library premises. Residents of Mariposa County and residents with a borrower's card from their own California library may borrow materials. The libraries operate an interlibrary loan program so that materials can be shared. The Mariposa Library collection consists of approximately 32,432 volumes and 88 periodical subscriptions, in addition to the microfiche catalog, videos, and talking books. The library is equipped with a photocopy machine, microfilm reader, microfiche reader, and computers with free public Internet access.

The four Mariposa County library branches include the El Portal Branch located in the El Portal Elementary School, the Red Cloud Branch located in Unit A of the complex at Fiske and J20 in Greeley Hill (Coulterville), the Bassett Memorial (Wawona) Branch located on the corner of W. Bruce and Chilnualna Falls, and the Yosemite Branch located in the Girls Club Building. Library hours (subject to change with seasons) and fee schedules are shown in Table 6-3 and Table 6-4

Major funding for the libraries comes from the County. In addition to this funding, the Librarian has written grants within the last three years, resulting in \$114,000 in grant money. The Friends of the Library also hold three fundraisers to support library services and materials. Donations are made periodically, but are not a steady source of income to support library personnel and operations. In fiscal year 1999–2000, the library employed 18 people and had an operating income of \$313,827. During that fiscal year, the library's total book collection was 41,545. Library materials include books, government documents, microfilm and microforms, audio materials, video materials, periodicals, and other materials. Internet access is available. Current complaints regarding library operations focus on operating hours and budget. Patrons complain that the libraries are not open long enough and that new materials or facilities are needed, particularly in Catheys Valley (Personal communication, Jacque Meriam, Mariposa County Librarian, September 23, 2002).

**Table 6-3: Library Service Hours**

<b>Library</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Hours</b>
Mariposa Main Branch	Monday	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
	Tuesday/Thursday	9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
	Wednesday/Friday	9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
	Saturday	10:00 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.
El Portal Library	Monday	10:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
	Thursday	10:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
	Summer (June-July-Aug)	Sunday/Monday 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Red Cloud Library	Tuesday	11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Wednesday/Friday/Saturday	12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Bassett Memorial Library at Wawona	Wednesday/Thursday/Friday	12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
	Summer (June-July-Aug)	
	Saturday	10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Monday/Friday	1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
	Saturday	12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
	Yosemite Library	
Yosemite Library	Monday	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
	Tuesday	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
	Wednesday	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
	Thursday	3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Source:** Mariposa County Library, May 12, 2005.

**Table 6-4: Library Fees and Fines**

<b>Fees</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Lost/Damaged Video, CD or DVD Case	\$5.00
Damaged/Cracked Video Cassette	\$8.00
Lost/Damaged Audiocassette Case	\$5.00
Lost/Damaged Book/Tap Bag	\$5.00
Lost/Damaged Audio Tape (if the tape can be replaced)	\$6.00
Lost/Damaged Magazine (regardless of cover price)	\$3.00
Damaged or Lost Bar Code	\$1.00
Damaged Book Jacket	\$2.00
Photo Copies	\$0.10
Printer Copies	\$0.10
Microfiche Reader: 8.5 x 11"/11 x 17"	\$0.25/\$0.50
Library Card Replacement (first card is free)	\$2.00
Floppy Disc	\$1.00
Obituary Lookup for Nonresident Request	\$25.00
Book, Magazines, Audiocassettes, CD	\$0.25 Daily \$4.00 Maximum
New Books	\$0.50 Daily \$5.00 Maximum
Videos	\$0.50 Daily \$5.00 Maximum
Hold Fees within San Joaquin Valley Library System	No Charge
Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Request per Item (Or charge set by the lending library.)	\$1.25

**Source:** Mariposa County Library, May 12, 2005 .

## **6.2.05 FIRE PROTECTION**

Fire protection response is based on the type of fire and its location within the County. The California Department of Forestry (CDF) is the responsible agency for all wildland fires within the State Responsibility Areas (SRA), which is all nonfederal land within Mariposa County. The County Fire Department is the primary response for structural fires. Both departments will provide service when any fire requires additional assistance or is located in an area where one department may be able to provide a faster response. There is a mutual aid agreement in place between CDF and the U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and the U.S.D.A. Forest Service. The National Park Service is the primary service provider for both structural and wildland fires in Yosemite National Park. Mariposa County reimburses Yosemite National Park \$44,000 annually for the emergency medical and fire protection services the park provides on county land within the park. The causes and risks associated with wildfires are discussed in more detail in the Hazards and Safety Section. The Sierra National Forest and the Stanislaus National Forest provide wildfire protection on National Forest lands.

## CDF

CDF provides resource protection for 495,374 acres of private and federal lands in Mariposa County. Most of the CDF-protected federal land is under BLM jurisdiction. The California Public Resources Code Section 713 mandates the CDF's responsibilities:

The department is responsible for the fire protection, fire prevention, maintenance, and enhancement of the state's forest, range, and brushland resources; contract fire protection; associated emergency services; and assistance in civil disasters or other non-fire emergencies. Department programs, as made specific in Division 4 (commencing with Section 4001), are closely related and interdependent. The Department shall coordinate programs of fire protection, fire prevention, pest control, and forest and range maintenance and enhancement.

Mariposa County contracts with CDF to provide emergency dispatch services for the County's Fire Department, the Mariposa Public Utility District (MPUD), and the County's emergency medical service (EMS) provider. CDF stations are staffed twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week during the declared fire season for immediate response. This includes structure fires and medical aids in addition to its statutory wildland fire responsibilities.



*Hunters Fire*  
Source: Mogavero Notestine, 2001

CDF operates five fire stations located in Mariposa, Coulterville, Catheys Valley, Hornitos, and Usona; a conservation camp in cooperation with the California Youth Authority; and an administrative office and dispatch center in Mariposa County. The Mariposa and Coulterville stations house two fire engines and a bulldozer, with on-duty crews of seven to eight people during the fire season. Stations in Catheys Valley, Hornitos, and Usona house a single engine and crews of three to four persons. The Mariposa Fire Station also houses the administrative office and dispatch center. The conservation camp houses 100 wards of the California Youth Authority that staff five fire crews. There are also two fire lookouts, Williams Peak and Penon Blanco, which are no longer staffed. The Coulterville and Usona Fire Stations are currently being replaced and will be between 4,000 and 4,500 square feet in total size. CDF is funded by the State of California for its SRA wildland responsibilities but also has contracts with local governments. Madera County, Madera City, Merced County, and Mariposa County all fund some of the CDF dispatch positions. In addition, Mariposa County is party to the off-season staffing of CDF's Blanchard Forest Fire Station under an Amador County contract for responses into the Lake Don Pedro subdivision area. Plans for major replacements and repairs to existing facilities are listed in Table 6-5 (Personal communication, Stanley F. Craig, Unit Chief, CDF Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit, October 3, 2002).

**Table 6-5: CDF Plans for Replacements and Repairs to Existing Facilities**

Fiscal Year	Action
2002–2003	Replace Usona Forest Fire Station
2003–2004	Replace Mariposa Administrative Building Replace Mariposa Unit Shop Replace Mariposa Forest Fire Station Replace Mt. Bullion utilities Replace Mt. Bullion access road
2004–2005	Replace Hornitos Forest Fire Station
2005–2006	Replace Coulterville bulldozer shed
2006–2007	Construct unit training facility (this will likely be in Madera County)
2007–2008	Replace Catheys Valley Forest Fire Station
2008–2009	Replace Mt. Bullion school and classroom facility Replace Mt. Bullion mess hall/kitchen

**Source:** Stanley F. Craig, Unit Chief, CDF Madera-Mariposa-Merced Unit, October 3, 2002.

### MARIPOSA PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT FIRE DEPARTMENT

MPUD has provided fire protection service to the historic district in the town area of Mariposa since 1947. The Fire Chief, appointed by the District Board of Directors, oversees a group of paid call fire fighters, who are paid for emergency response within the district, drills, and equipment maintenance. The fire station is located in the MPUD office building. Fire hydrants are located throughout the town of Mariposa and are connected to the MPUD water system. (Mariposa Town Planning Area Specific Plan). The MPUD Fire Department receives and provides mutual and automatic aid to and from the Mariposa County Fire Department and CDF.

Primary equipment includes a 1986 Westates 1,250 gallon per minute (gpm) pumper housed at the District office on 7<sup>th</sup> Street; a 1967 Van Pelt 1,000 gpm pumper and a 1975 Seagrave 1,500 gpm pumper with a 50-foot ladder/snorkel build-up housed at the MPUD fire station at Smith Road and Highway 49 North. In addition, MPUD owns and operates a self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) filling station, which services the SCBA air bottles for MPUD, Mariposa County Fire Department, Mariposa County Sheriff’s Office, and CDF.

To ensure service levels are maintained, the MPUD Board of Directors adopted a fire protection ordinance that provides minimum fire protection requirements and water system improvements for future development in the district. Currently, the fire rating (ISO) is class “5”.

### MARIPOSA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Mariposa County Fire Department is an all risk agency, responding to all fires and requests for public assistance, including emergency medical and hazmat incidents. The fire prevention services offered by the Mariposa County Fire Department include public education, fire prevention, investigation, and hazard fuel risk reduction in coordination with the Mariposa County Fire Safety Council, CDF, Forest Service, Park Service, and BLM. The County Fire Chief, one Deputy Chief, and four Battalion Chiefs command the Department. There are approximately 165 trained and certified fire fighters assigned to engine companies, and each has at least the minimum training necessary to respond to both structural and

**Figure 6-2: Mariposa Public Utility District Boundaries**

**Do to the size of this image; Figure 6-2 has been created as a separate file**

wildfires, and emergency medical situations. The Department offers training and actively recruits through the Mariposa County High School Fire Technology Program, which trains students for future jobs with the Department once they have completed high school. In addition, Station Captains participate in the California State Fire Officer training series, which offers three classes per year for three years. Candidates may also participate in the National Fire Academy training program. In an ISO survey conducted in December 2000, the Department attained the maximum points for command company officer and firefighter training.

## EQUIPMENT

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The Department operates a fleet of 22 Type II structure engines (four engines are in reserve), four Type III (wildland) engines, five Type IV Patrol, two heavy rescue units, one medical squad, seven water tenders, and five administrative vehicles. Fifteen engines were replaced during the first quarter of 2001 to reduce fleet age and to standardize equipment. However, fleet replacement will be necessary in the coming years. In addition to the emergency vehicles, the Department, during the first quarter of 2001, acquired and refurbished 80 newer-generation breathing apparatus (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus - SCBA) to augment their existing supply. Each engine contains four SBCA and water tenders carry one SBCA.

## VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANIES

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There are local volunteer fire companies in most of the Town Planning Areas (TPAs) under the command of the Mariposa County Fire Department. The Department directly operates 12 fire stations, with plans for two more within the next 2 years. Some TPAs rely on adjacent towns for primary structural fire response while others have their own volunteer units. CDF provides primary dispatch and wildfire response in all of the TPAs.

Table 6-6 lists each TPA and the units that provide fire protection services within the TPA. Although most TPAs rely on their volunteer fire company for structural fires and CDF for dispatch and wildfire services, there are some TPAs with additional agreements or facilities. The Fish Camp Volunteer Fire Company, under the County Fire Department, provides fire protection service to the Fish Camp area. CDF, USFS, and National Park Service provide additional assistance and equipment. Structural and wildfires are the responsibility of the CDF and USFS in Kinsley, except in the winter when the Greeley Hill Volunteer Fire company is responsible for structural fires, with the USFS serving as backup. Each TPA is listed in

Table 6-6, showing which fire protection agency or department provides services.

The Department serves five basic service areas based on geographic location. The northwest fire response service area includes the Coulterville, Greeley Hill, and Blanchard Tuolumne County (Lake Don Pedro) Fire Stations. Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings vary from five to 10 depending on location with those outside hydrant areas in Coulterville and Lake Don Pedro at ISO 9, those within five miles of the Greeley Hill Station at ISO 8, and up to ten miles at ISO 9, while areas beyond that point have an ISO 10 rating. The northeast fire response service area includes the El Portal and the planned Yosemite West (not yet constructed) Fire Stations. Areas in El Portal outside the hydrant areas carry and ISO 9 rating, and since the Yosemite West station is not yet constructed, extended response times exist in that area.

**Table 6-6: TPA Fire Protection Services**

Town Planning Areas	Structural Fire	Wildfire/Dispatcher
Bootjack	Lushmeadows and Mormon Bar VFC	CDF
Mariposa	Mariposa Public Utility District FD	CDF
Fish Camp	Fish Camp VFC with assistance from CDF, USFS, and National Park Service	CDF, USFS, and National Park Service
Kinsley	CDF and USFS Winter: Greeley Hill VFC	CDF and USFS
Don Pedro	Coulterville VFC with assistance provided by the Don Pedro VFC of Tuolumne County through a mutual aid agreement.	CDF
White Rock	Mormon Bar or Catheys Valley VFC	CDF
Bridgeport	Bridgeport VFC with assistance from the Mormon Bar and Catheys Valley VFC	CDF
Chowchilla	Lushmeadows and Ponderosa Basin VFC	CDF
Coulterville	Coulterville VFC (2 units)	CDF
Catheys Valley	Catheys Valley VFC	CDF
Greeley Hill	Greeley Hill VFC	CDF
Hunters Valley	Hunters Valley VFC	CDF
Midpines	Midpines VFC	CDF
Ponderosa Basin	Ponderosa Basin VFC	CDF
Bear Valley and Mt. Bullion	Airport/Mt. Bullion VFC	CDF

VFC = Volunteer Fire Companies

**Source:** TPAs, Specific Plans, and General Plan for Mariposa County.

The southwest fire response service area consists of the Hunters Valley, Catheys Valley, Airport-Mt. Bullion, and the future Bridgeport Fire Stations. Except for the area within five miles of the Catheys Valley Fire Station (ISO 8) all other areas have an ISO 9 rating. There is a fire station in Hornitos, but this station has been inoperable for ten years. Perceived growth in the Hornitos area may result in re-establishment of this station.

The central fire response service area consists of the Midpines, Mormon Bar, Bootjack, Lushmeadows, and Ponderosa Basin Fire Stations. This area is most adequately covered by fire protection, with a station located approximately every 6 miles. This area is classed ISO Rural Dwelling 8 due to strategically placed water tenders in the area. Over 70 percent of service calls originate in the central area.

Finally, the southeast fire response service area consists of the Fish Camp Fire Station. This is the most isolated service area from additional resources and weather often limits access in the winter. The following outlines each fire station and their ratings:



- Coulterville FS 26** The town is a registered historical area and many structures are closely spaced making fire spread easy. The town has 20 hydrants and an ISO rating of 6. However, the existing station does not meet the essential services requirements and should be replaced by a new facility.
- Greeley Hill FS 31** This is a well-spaced, primarily residential community with high fuel loading and poor road access. The current fire station does not adequately meet the essential services requirements for public safety and should be replaced. In 1987, a fire burned 100,000 acres of timber near the community.
- Blanchard Tuolumne County (Lake Don Pedro) FS 64** Most structures in this subdivision are spaced apart and are well located with respect to wildfire hazard areas. The subdivision is bisected by Mariposa and Tuolumne Counties and each provides payment to CDF for a single person staffed station at Blanchard. The subdivision has a hydrant system with an ISO rating of Residential 5.
- El Portal FS 34** This community consists of older homes located on the northern incline of a canyon with poor access roads. However, the hydrant system carries an ISO rating of 5. The area receives assistance from a Yosemite National Park Fire Department station with two engines. Mariposa County contracts this service.
- Yosemite West FS 35 (Future Facility)** Although the Yosemite West community has a hydrant system, there is presently no fire station to serve the area. A fire station will be constructed within the next two years.
- Hunters Valley FS 36** This is a completely residential community located in an area with narrow roads and moderate fuel loading. In 2000, a fire burned 8,000 acres in the area, which actually served to improve the range. Although the station holds two vehicles and has a rest room and training facility that adequately serve the area, it does not meet the essential services requirement for public safety facilities and should be retrofitted. Residences within 10 miles of the station have an ISO 9 rating.
- Catheys Valley FS 23** There are residences and a central commercial area in Catheys Valley. Residences are located in an oak woodland area with moderate fuel loading and somewhat poor road access. Structures within five and ten miles of the fire station have an ISO rating of 8 and 9 respectively. The fire station holds a training room, restrooms, two engines, and a water tender, but is considered inadequate to service the area. In 2002 the station added a medical rescue vehicle.

- Airport - Mt. Bullion FS 25** This station serves the Mt. Bullion/Bear Valley area where homes are located in areas with narrow roads and high fuel loading. There is a lack of fire suppression water in this area, and so it is classed ISO 9. The station is considered inadequate. It currently contains one engine, training room, and rest room, but should be equipped with an additional engine and medical rescue vehicle to adequately serve the needs of this community.
- Bridgeport FS 28 (Future Facility)** This is a growing residential area with narrow roads and significant fuel loading. The construction is pending of a three bay fire station with a training room and rest rooms.
- Midpines FS 21** Midpines is an area of extreme risk for wildfire. The fire station does adequately provide fire protection for the area and has now has a fast attack/medical response unit. The station should be replaced with a larger, five bay facility with a training room, restrooms, two engines, and a water tender. This station will become an interagency station with Forest service.
- Mormon Bar FS 27** Mormon Bar is an area of extreme risk for wildfire. The fire station does adequately provide fire protection for the area and should be replaced with a larger, four bay facility with a training room and restrooms. The station is currently equipped with two engines, but should also have a fast attack/medical response unit.
- Bootjack FS 37** Bootjack is an area known for frequent and intense wildfires. The fire station houses two engines, a water tender, and a fast attack/medical vehicle, but the station needs to be retrofitted to meet essential services status.
- Lushmeadows FS 29** Lushmeadows in an area known for frequent and intense wildfires. The fire station houses two engines and a water tender, but may need a fast attack/medical response unit and retrofitting to meet essential services status.
- Ponderosa Basin FS 32** Ponderosa Basin has significant fuel loading and is regularly threatened by wildfires. The hydrant system is rated ISO 5. This is a newly constructed fire station and meets the essential service requirements for public safety facilities. The station now has a fast attack/medical rescue unit serving the community.

**Fish Camp FS 33**

Fish Camp is located in an area with significant fuel loading and narrow roads. The station has placed a fast attack/medical vehicle in service. Unlike other areas in the County, the volunteer company is staffed by hotel employees and not community residents, which can result in seasonal variances in the number of volunteer staff available. There is adequate equipment to service residences, but not commercial interests. Therefore, any additional commercial development should assist the department with staffing issues to preserve the protection system at the current rating. The station does not adequately meet the needs of the community and should be replaced with a larger five bay facility with a training room, dormitory, and restrooms.

**Source:** Chief Blaine Schultz, Mariposa County Fire Department, October 2, 2002.

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE YOSEMITE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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The Yosemite Fire Department provides wildland and structural fire protection, and responds to hazardous material spills, emergency medical calls, searches, rescues, public service, and motor vehicle accidents. The Yosemite Fire Department provides these services to Yosemite Valley, Wawona, El Portal and other areas of Mariposa County. Mutual/automatic aid agreements exist between the Yosemite Fire Department and the Sierra and Stanislaus National Forests and the National Park Service is signatory to the Five Party Agreement - a cooperative agreement for local government fire suppression - and the Four Party Agreement - a master mutual aid agreement. The Yosemite Fire Department entered into a Memorandum of Agreement for structural fire protection services with Mariposa County, although an automatic aid agreement with the County has not yet been established.

The National Park Service operates four fire stations in three towns in the County. The Wawona Fire Station occupies 2,300 square feet and houses a 1984 Type I Structural Fire Engine being replaced in 2003 with a 2003 Type I engine with “jaws of life”, and a Type III 1991 Wildland Fire Engine Being replaced in 2003 with a 2003 Type III engine. The station is staffed by five personnel seven days a week, from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. between the months of June and October. Outside these periods, personnel operate on an as needed basis. The El Portal Structural Fire Station occupies 2,400 square feet and houses a 1991 Type I Structural Fire Engine, a rescue truck equipped with the jaws of life, and a Type II Structural Fire Engine owned by Mariposa County. There is also a Wildland Fire Station in El Portal that is owned by the US Forest Service and operated by the National Park Service. The El Portal Wildland Fire Station occupies 2,300 square feet and houses a 1991 Type III Wildland Fire Engine Being replaced in 2003 with a 2003 Type III engine and an ambulance. This station is staffed with five personnel, seven days a week, from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., between the months of June and October. Outside these periods, the station operates as a paid-call/volunteer department, responding to calls as needed.

The fourth station, the Yosemite Valley Fire Station, is located in Yosemite Valley and occupies 1,500 square feet with a 1996 Type I Structural Fire Engine equipped with the jaws of life, a 1991 Type III Wildland Fire Engine, and a 1986 Type I Fire Engine has been replaced with a 2002 Type II engine. Like the other stations, the Yosemite Valley Station operates seven days a week between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., June through October. However, this station is only staffed by four personnel. These personnel also

operate on an as needed basis outside their regular working hours. However, the National Park Service notes that none of these fire stations are adequate. They are all over 50 years old and cannot be modified to accommodate modern fire apparatus due to the construction type of the buildings. Although all of these stations need to be replaced, the National Park Service has not established any plans to alter current operations.

An analysis of the number of past fires and the values at risk determines staffing and equipment needs for wildland fire response. This analysis is conducted at the national level for all parks receiving wildland fire protection funding. However, an in-depth analysis of staffing and equipment needs for structural fires has not been completed, and needs are currently based on the demands of similarly sized operations. The National Park Service has minimal standards for service, and therefore, current operations meet the existing standards. Wawona and Yosemite Valley have ISO ratings of 6, while El Portal recently obtained a 6.5. The National Park Service has adopted, but not implemented, more stringent standards prescribed by the National Fire Protection Association. If Congress does not approve additional fire protection funding for new equipment and personnel, the Park Service will not be able to meet these stringent standards.

Yosemite Valley and El Portal are prioritized for funding, but full-time staffing is unlikely. The Yosemite Fire Department would like to continue interagency cooperation with Mariposa County and would like to develop a more formal joint planning process to establish short- and long-term goals common to both agencies (Personal communication, Mr. Bob Reece, Yosemite Fire Department Battalion Chief, April 05, 2002, and Mr. Deron Mills, Yosemite Fire Department Battalion Chief, September 27, 2002).

## **STANISLAUS NATIONAL FOREST FIRE PROTECTION SERVICE**

The Stanislaus National Forest responds to wildfires within their Direct Protection Area (DPA) or as a mutual aid resource to cooperating agencies. Services include response to wildfire and structural fires, hazardous materials spills, medical emergencies, vehicle accidents, and law enforcement incidents within their zone of influence or as needed through mutual aid agreements. Mutual aid agreements are held with the California Department of Forestry, Yosemite National Park, and Mariposa County (agreement in progress).

Stanislaus National Forest operates two fire stations in the County. Both the Kinsley Fire Station and McDiarmid Fire Station each house a Type III Engine during the fire season and each station is staffed by five personnel seven days per week. These stations include barracks, an office, and a garage. A joint agency wildland and structural fire protection station will be located at Carlon in the future, if agreements can be established between CDF, Mariposa County, Yosemite National Park, the Forest Service, and land owners.

Service demands are calculated using the National Fire Management Analysis System (NFMAS), which takes values at risk, resource needs, budgets, environmental conditions, and other resources into consideration. In addition, the NFMAS calculates a "Most Efficient Level" (MEL) to determine how needs can be best met through the available budget. These systems are used in place of the ISO rating system. Stanislaus National Forest fire protection services meet the standards required by the Forest Service for all operations (Personal communication, Jon Payne, Stanislaus National Forest District Fire Management Officer, December 9, 2002).