

2023 Proposed Valley Countywide EMS District – Election Petition FAQs

- **The Current EMS District was formed in 2009.**
 - Provides 1.2 million in tax revenue.
 - Created to maintain a volunteer ambulance service.
 - The current levy rate is 12 hundredths percent (.00012), equating to \$12 per hundred thousand in valuation. For example, a home that is valued at \$500k pays \$60.00 per year or \$5 per month.
 - Valley County Commissioners contract annually with Cascade, Donnelly, & McCall Fire Districts to provide for one ambulance basic life support (BLS) with one emergency medical technician (EMT) for \$418k per year (1/3 of 1.2 million).
 - One adequately staffed Paramedic Level (advanced life support (ALS)) ambulance costs \$1.1 million to operate, \$682k more than provided for each district.
 - The fire districts cannot sustain the subsidy, grow as volume indicates, and maintain adequate fire protection services at the current levy rate.
 - The current district is overseen by the board of county commissioners, which meets annually.
- **In 2020, the Idaho state legislature passed new Ambulance District provisions.**
 - The legislation was crafted to call all residents within the district to financially support the services and make decisions about how the districts are governed.
 - The new levy rate could be set at four-hundredths percent (.0004), equating to \$40 per hundred thousand in valuation. For example, a home that is valued at \$500k would pay \$200.00 per year or \$17 per month.
 - The new ambulance district could collect approximately \$4.1 million and could pay to adequately staff four ALS ambulances in Valley County.
 - Three elected commissioners who meet monthly will oversee the new ambulance district.
 - On May 17, 2022, Riggins voters approved the same type of ambulance district (76% in favor) with a levy of four-hundredths percent (.0004), equating to \$40 per hundred thousand in valuation.
- **What is the benefit of the fire districts providing Ambulance Services for the County?**
 - It is more cost-effective. Like contracting with a private company to provide a service, the county does not have to maintain buildings, provide overhead for management, house employees, ambulance, supplies, etc.
 - The fire districts have surge capacity. If the county ran three ambulances, the costs would be the same per ambulance. Still, it is unlikely that they can staff any additional ambulances. Currently, each fire district staffs an ambulance but also has a reserve ambulance too; a total of six in the county. If there are multiple calls, the fire districts can staff the second ambulances with personnel from engine crews.
- **Why does it cost 1.1 million dollars to staff an ambulance?**
 - Ambulances are staffed with two people, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, or 8,760 hours. That model takes at least six people, seven if you factor in time off, sick leave, etc. If the two people get paid \$30 per hour, \$60 per hour combined, that is $\$60 \times 8,760 = \$526k$, just in wages. After adding up benefits (medical, dental, vision, annual physicals, vacation time, workers comp, and retirement) - \$300k; supplies and medications - \$30k; money to replace each \$300k ambulance - \$98k; training costs - \$10k; medical director costs – \$7k; billing costs - \$18k; overtime for covering vacation and sick - \$80k; you can see how quickly the costs add up to \$1.07 million.
 - The fire districts do not factor administrative costs, ambulance bay rent, second ambulance staffing, or the fire equipment on the ambulances into the total costs of providing ambulances.

- Why don't the fire districts account for all costs? There is a benefit to the fire districts by providing ambulance services. It gives the fire districts more people to respond to fires, car accidents, and rescues. The ambulance services benefit by having cross-trained staff and surge capacity. The model saves taxpayers money, and it provides a more robust service.
- **What does the future of EMS service demand look like in Valley County?**
 - In 2020, Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) finished an EMS services delivery study for Valley County. ESCI projected a 58% average increase in ambulance demand by 2030 in Valley County: 53% in Cascade, 42% in Donnelly, and 80% in McCall (ESCI p. 159, fig. 157).
 - The increase in demand is attributed to the past ten-year growth rate of 19.1 % over the previous ten years (Projected Growth – Master Facilities Plan) an estimated population increase of 22% by 2030, and an increase in the elderly population of 55% (ESCI pp. 156- 157).

Figure 157: EMS Service Demand Projections by Fire District (2020–2030)

Fire District	% Change
Cascade RFPD	+ 53%
Donnelly RFPD	+ 42%
McCall FPD	+ 80%

Sources and Information

Government Reports

Projected Growth -Master Facilities Plan Valley County

<https://www.co.valley.id.us/news/post/690/#:~:text=Based%20on%20historical%20growth%2C%20projections,estimate%202022%20population%20is%2012%2C661>

Volunteer Providers of EMS: Idaho Office of Performance Evaluations, Idaho Legislature

<https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/OPE/Reports/r2108.pdf>

Valley County EMS Services Delivery Study – ESCI

<https://www.mccallfire.com/files/6ee7098a4/2020+Valley+County+EMS+Study+FINAL.pdf>

News Articles

'Huge safety concern': Valley Co. feels EMS stress with limited funding

<https://boisedev.com/news/2023/03/20/valley-co-ems-funding/>

EMS in Idaho is Broken

<https://www.eastidahonews.com/2023/02/ems-in-idaho-is-broken-lawmakers-move-to-reform-underfunded-emergency-services/>

Salmon River Ambulance District formally established

https://www.idahocountyfreepress.com/news/salmon-river-ambulance-district-formally-established/article_54434e28-12c8-11ed-ab86-23d4d78a58a1.html