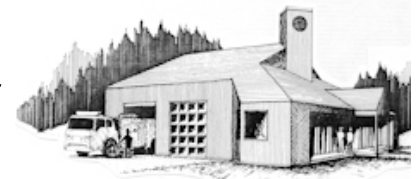




# North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighters



November 2024

*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 2024 Update

For over 50 years your volunteer firefighters have been serving and protecting your community. First as the Sea Ranch and Annapolis Fire Companies, and since 2016 together as the North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District, covering 172 sq miles of the northwest corner of Sonoma County for fire, medical, and hazardous condition needs.

The North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association (NSCVFA) supports the Fire Department by raising funds to maintain the North Fire Station (NFS) on Highway 1, and providing your 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 the VFA to provide financial support to the fire department and our community. With your support, in 2024 we have been able to once again make the \$21,512 annual loan payment for our newest rescue vehicle, Rescue 4433, and purchase a much needed \$140,000 Assistant Chief response vehicle that has quick-attack fire suppression ability carrying 150 gallons of water. Amazing what you can do with just 150 gallons of water.

Also in 2024 we were able to replace the asphalt and several underground culverts around the North Fire Station at an expense of \$113,000, and have paid for the completion of necessary biological, geological, and archeological studies before finalizing the plans for an expansion of the NFS. And we have the funds necessary for a new roof for the NFS in 2025 (\$60,000). Besides your mail and website donations, your participation at the 2024 Memorial Day Weekend Picnic allowed us to raise another \$14,000. And 640 community members had a great time! Also, your purchase of a VFA Christmas tree generates \$6,000 annually to provide continued education and career development for Redwood Coast Medical Services (RCMS) employees.

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 <http://nscvfa.org>. Thank you for your continued support.

Gratefully,

*North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association*



*NSC Fire 2024: Top Row: Loren Adrian, Goldie Pounds, Captain Phil Martin, Captain Red Miller. Bottom Row: Chief Bonnie Plakos, Captain Paul Plakos, Captain Pat Briant, Michael Verolini, Juan Monreal, Gregory Miller, Tim Olson, Abel Solis, Assistant Chief Chuck Breier, Malay Thaker, Skylar Martin. Not pictured: Releana Breier; Nick Morgan; Support members Eric Agnew, David Goheen, Richleigh Powers.*



**1973 - 2024**  
**PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY**  
**FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS**

## Maintaining Our Fleet

Without reliable wheels to move personnel, water and equipment to emergency incidents, we cannot provide an effective response so we work to replace vehicles before they fail. In 2024 we welcomed Engine 4458 to our fleet. E4458 is a "type 6" engine that has been custom designed for our needs on the coast. E4458 has a Ford F550 chassis and custom compartments built by Rosenbauer in South Dakota. It can respond to fires, medical aids, rescues, and accidents. It is four-wheel drive and is smaller and more agile than the larger engines used to fight structure fires, and can reach areas in our rural district that the larger engines cannot. E4458 is our "first-out" vehicle, the one that our CAL FIRE colleagues respond in to most incidents. It replaced aging rescue truck 4432. By replacing a rescue vehicle without firefighting capability with a "type 6" engine, we have increased our ability to respond to incidents involving fire.

All of the additional firefighting equipment and tools necessary to equip E4458 cost \$26,000 and were provided by the NSC Volunteer Firefighter Association, from community donations. Thank you for your support!

The department welcomed E4458 into service on August 12 with a traditional "push-in" ceremony; a video is available at <https://www.northsonomacoastfpd.org/engine-4458-2/>.

The department is also just putting into service a new Assistant Chief's truck, 4401, to replace the aging (1996) old one. New 4401 has a custom equipment box built on a Ford F350 chassis, and carries a "skid pump" and 150 gallons of water so that it can provide quick firefighting response as well as respond to medical aids and other emergency calls. The truck and its "upfitting" (additional of lights, sirens, radios...) was entirely paid for with donations to NSCVFA.

We are still awaiting arrival of a new "Type 3" engine, built by Boise Mobile Equipment (BME). This will be 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.



*Engine 4458, our new Type 6.*



*The team after E4458's push-in ceremony.*



*New Assistant Chief's truck 4401 (as of this writing it did not have its light bar and other upfitting yet.)*

## North Sonoma Coast District Update

The biggest news of the year related to the North Sonoma Coast Fire Protection District is the passage of Measure H in the March 2024 election. The anticipated annual revenue for NSCFPD from the measure is estimated to start out at about \$1.6 million a year. With that additional funding we are able to do the following:

- Increase our full-time career CAL FIRE staffing from 5 to 9, which will result in a minimum of 3 responders on duty 24x7 (and sometimes as many as 6). This is extremely important for our community, as the number of calls increases each year, and maintaining our volunteer base becomes more difficult. Full staffing will start in January of 2025.
- Hire paid staff to manage the administration of the District. We have gotten along well using all-volunteer staff, but that simply is not sustainable. The addition of paid staff will allow us to not only do what is required, but to expand our efforts to help the community in other ways, such as support citizens in their efforts at wildfire mitigation projects. We now have a full-time District Administrator, and a part-time Administrative Assistant, while we still have our volunteer command staff. A deeper bench!
- Proceed with our long-needed project to complete the North Fire Station, increasing our equipment storage capability, improving our training facility, and adding residential quarters so the station can support 24x7 crews. Finally after 51 years our department can build a fully-functional fire station of our own.

We are grateful that this measure will allow these improvements. Together with the existing property tax revenue and donations to NSCVFA we will be able to provide enhanced service as well as keep our equipment and apparatus fleet up-to-date and reliable.



## What's Next For The NFS?

The successful passage of Measure H has lit a fire under our plans to expand the North Fire Station. During 2024, local architect, Doug Thompson offered his services, initially pro bono, to spearhead the planning and design. Following the determination last year that an ESHA (environmentally sensitive habitat area) exists on our site, Doug has been working with an experienced local coastal planning company to locate the structures an acceptable distance from the ESHA. The latest plan is to separate the residential facility and the training center, add engine bays and reconfigure the interior of the existing NFS to include more workable district offices. Initial sketches have been produced and discussed with Sonoma County, TSRA DCEM, CAL FIRE and NSCFPD personnel. Soil evaluation for a second septic system to accommodate the anticipated additional usage of the station has been performed.

The long-awaited geotechnical survey will follow as soon as the new structures' locations are approved. All work to date has been funded by generous TSR member donations and attendance at the Memorial Day Picnic. We are still a few years away from construction, but the pace has definitely picked up.

In addition, we have been able to use the donation funds to repave our NFS driveways, which were crumbling, and replace our failing storm drain system. Fortunately our paving contractor noticed that some of our 40 year old metal culverts were rusted along their lower sides. Closer inspection revealed that about 25% of the circumference of all culverts was rusted out and stormwater was actually flowing under the drains.

The NFS roof also suffered greatly during the storms in the last two years, with asphalt shingles blowing off in many places. We plan to replace the roof in 2025. The fiber cement siding is also discoloring in a non-uniform manner, and restaining is in the works.

As with all structures in our harsh environment, the NFS needs regular maintenance, and we are grateful that the community's support allows us to do just that.

## We Help Everyone

In what was a most unusual call this past year, a local rancher located a heifer which had been missing for three weeks. Problem was that it was 80 feet down a cliff on a beach in a small cove; unhurt but very hard to get to. It had survived with some cliff vegetation, seaweed and groundwater runoff. NSCFD responded to perform a rescue with the high-angle expertise of our CAL FIRE colleagues. But first the heifer had to be rounded up on the beach, harnessed and hoisted. Easier said than done as the heifer was not interested in the crew who were lowered to the beach. She even began wading out into the surf, but thankfully changed her mind. The crew harnessed the 700 pound animal and the hoisting process was a success. Exhausted but alive and well, the heifer was reunited with her owner. Whew!!



*North Fire Station on Highway One.*



*The paving repair at the NFS uncovered some seriously degraded underground culverts! They have been replaced with much-improved versions.*





## New Recruit

We were happy to welcome new firefighter Tim Olson to the department in 2024. Tim has been a volunteer for the Inverness VFD for some years and we are grateful he has moved to the area and will continue his service with NSC.



The VFD trains regularly every other week, plus some additional special all-day or weekend trainings.

Did you know that over 65% of the firefighters in the U.S. are volunteer?

### 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, side by side with our CAL FIRE crew.

Becoming a firefighter is fun, challenging, often inconvenient, and very rewarding. We are always looking for motivated volunteers who are willing to help their friends and neighbors in times of need. Our members come from many backgrounds and careers. Prior experience in emergency services is not required—our CAL FIRE team will train you. Talk to any of our volunteers, call 707-785-2648 and talk to a CAL FIRE captain, or please visit <https://www.northsonomacoastfpd.org/join-us/>.



## 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: 290 in 2020; 329 in 2021; 351 in 2022; 476 in 2023; 362 in 2024 through the end of October.*
- *Types of calls in 2023: 42% medical, 30% hazardous conditions (due to 2023 bomb cyclone calls), 4% fire, 6% vehicle accidents, 4% alarms sounding, 2% smoke checks, 2% rescue, and 10% other.*
- *Call locations in 2023: 72% Sea Ranch, 18% Annapolis/Kashia/Stewarts Point, 9% Timber Cove/Fort Ross, 1% other.*

## Stay Informed, Be Prepared!

We have had a welcome break from significant local fires since 2020, but the winter storms of 2023 and 2024 brought us an entirely different type of disaster. Please maintain readiness for extended power outages, high winds, and blocked roads. Have 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 "Emergency Information".

## Mark your calendar for the 2025 Memorial Day Weekend Picnic



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

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 2025  
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  
(707) 785-2648 email: [info@northsonomacoastfpd.org](mailto:info@northsonomacoastfpd.org)

North Sonoma Coast Volunteer Firefighter Association  
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