

Strawberry Property Owners Association



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February 17, 2010

Mr. Robert Rutherford
Strawberry Fire Protection District Board Member
PO Box 7
Pinecrest, CA 95375

Dear Mr. Rutherford:

Two articles recently published in the Union Democrat concerning the fire at the Strawberry Store expressed concern with the lack of response to the fire by the Strawberry Volunteer Fire Department [SVFD] and stated that the Strawberry property owners were not receiving the protection they either expected or deserved to any fires that occurred in the community. On behalf of the Strawberry Property Owners Association [SPOA] Board of Directors representing the Strawberry property owners, we feel compelled to bring this matter to your board's attention.

SPOA recognizes that the Strawberry Volunteer Fire Department technically is not a "first responder" to fires that take place in the greater Strawberry Community. As a volunteer fire department, we understand that they will respond as they can given whatever personnel may be available during a fire. We are very fortunate that when fires do occur in Strawberry we have the collective response from the Pinecrest Permitees/Tuolumne County Fire Department, the U.S. Forest Service, Cal Fire, and the Mi Wuk Fire Department to provide the fire protection all Strawberry property owners expect and rely upon.

We believe it is the responsibility of the Strawberry Fire Protection District Board to oversee the expenditure of funds collected for fire protection and suppression, and to provide the Strawberry Volunteers with oversight and direction so that the service is at the level all property owners expect.

For these reasons, and without taking a position on any particular proposal, SPOA believes it is time to reexamine the efficacy of SVFD and explore what choices, either for improvement or alternative service, are available to the community to ensure the high level of fire protection to which the residents of Strawberry are entitled. Therefore, SPOA requests the Fire District Board place the following item on the March Board agenda so that the discussion may commence officially:

Whether the Fire District Board should consider alternatives to the current structure of the means by which fire protection services are provided in Strawberry, and, if so, what alternatives are available and practicable.

SPOA and its over 300 association members are very concerned about the current level of fire protection provided by the Strawberry Volunteer Fire Department and we request you take the steps that are needed to review this critical situation.

Sincerely,

Michael Jackson
President, Strawberry Property Owners Association
Cc: *Strawberry Fire Protection District Board of Directors*

