HISTORY

The June Lake Fire Protection District was formed in July 1939 to provide the means to install a water system for domestic use and fire protection. The district only included the village area. Pine Cliff, June Lake Junction, and everything from just passed Gull Lake down canyon were subscription areas where property owners paid a fee or were billed for services. In the early 60's the June Lake Public Utility District took over the water system

In 1994 Pine Cliff, the Junction and down canyon were annexed into the fire district, making it approximately 8.5 square miles starting at the junction and going around the loop to just below Silver Lake.

The Fire District has an Insurance Services Organization rating of 4 on a scale of 1-10 1 being the best and 10 being no fire department at all. This is an excellent rating for a community the size and terrain of June Lake. Mammoth that has full time paid personnel is rated a 3.

EQUIPMENT

The fire department has 3 structure engines, one of which is a 65' telesquirt with a boom mounted ladder, one urban wild land interface engine, one brush truck, one rescue, one water tender and 3 utility pick up trucks 2 of which are first response chief officer vehicles.

The vehicles are housed in our main station next to the balanced rock on 158. We are in the process of building a second fire station down canyon at the top of fish hatchery hill across from Iowa street. We will house several of our pieces of equipment there and split the volunteers geographically to respond to each station.

STRUCTURE

The department is made up of a chief, an assistant chief/training officer, two captains, two engineers, 7 badged firefighters, of these 6 work out of town, and 8 trainees, historically keeping 50 percent of these. Firefighters are alerted to respond to the fire station by means of voice pagers and an alert siren activated and dispatched by the sheriffs' dispatch in Bridgeport. We get between 50 and 65 calls per year. The department trains every Thursday night from 7:00 to 10:00. We train not only for structure firefighting but for medical, wild land firefighting, hazardous materials, vehicle extrication, over the side rescue, ice rescue and various other trainings. A volunteer takes about 6 months to train to basic firefighter status. At the moment the department is doing pretty well volunteer wise but we have seen fluctuations from a low 10 years ago of 9 to as many as 31 in 1987. All of the officers and engineers work in town and all but one of the badged firefighters work out of town. I have just finished our Local Agency Formation Commission survey that was last done in 1987 and that report stated that we had 31 volunteers on the department and lists the types of businesses we had in town then that we no longer have.

The affordable housing problems and a lack of jobs in June Lake are the reason for our declining firefighter numbers. Second homeowners can not be firefighters because of the required training and on call status. Outside of Jerry full time retired residents don't generally join. We have had quite a few people that have been in town for several years join but they found that they just don't have time for the department because they have to work either extended hours or more than one job to stay in June Lake.

AREA

June Lake has what is referred to in the fire business as an urban wild land interface. This means that we have buildings interspersed in vegetated areas, some light as in the village area and some heavy like in the down canyon tracts.

The majority of buildings in the loop are of wood framed construction, with a height limit of 35. I have been working with the Mono County Community Development Department to pass an ordinance that will require anything over 55' to be deemed as a high rise, the state code is 75'. If the development does get approval for 60' buildings they will have to be built of fire resistive materials, as in concrete and steel, have fire equipment caches on each floor and standpipes to provide water on each floor. All new construction excluding residential will be required to have fire sprinklers. If they are only allowed 35' they can be built of wood frame construction, and at 10 units per acre will cover a much larger area of ground which is a much greater impact to the fire department than fire resistive in a more concentrated area.

WATER

The Fire District has 115 hydrants that are served by the PUD's water system and in just about the whole district are about every 500' giving the community excellent coverage. Fire flow requirements for a hydrant is 1500 gallons a minute for 2 hours, which equates to 180,000 gallons so any new development will have to either tie into the existing water system or have their own tank with capacity for fire flow. The new west village water tank markedly improved the fire flow capacity of the highlands area.

CONCLUSION

The June Lake Fire Protection District Board of Directors, who meet monthly, have been proactive and the equipment needs have been ahead of development. The new down canyon station has been designed for build out needs. They are planning on acquiring new engines in the near future.