



Date: **May 12, 2026**

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Author and title: James Blattler, Emergency Services Manager

Title: **Adopt Resolution 2026-20 for the 2026-2027 CAL FIRE Wildland Protection Agreement.**

Jen Callaway, Town Manager

Recommended Action: That Council (1) adopt Resolution 2026-20 authorizing the Town Manager to execute jointly with the Truckee Fire Protection District the Wildland Protection Agreement with CAL FIRE for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to provide wildland firefighting resources within the Town of Truckee in the amount up to \$939,528.37; and (2) authorize the Town Manager to execute a Notice of Intent for Continuation of Services with CAL FIRE beyond FY2026-2027.

Discussion:

Agreement Background

The Town of Truckee has contracted a Wildland Protection Agreement (WPA) with CAL FIRE since its incorporation in 1993. Maintaining a WPA with CAL FIRE has two notable benefits. First, for all areas covered under the agreement, CAL FIRE assumes all suppression responsibility, including costs, for wildland fires. The service agreement works similarly to an insurance policy, where the Town is shielded from the risk of a potentially significant financial burden that accompanies a destructive wildland fire. Secondly, through this agreement, all fires within the covered area receive automatic initial dispatch of CAL FIRE's wildland fire response, which includes specialized equipment such as fixed-wing and rotor-wing air resources, bulldozers, and hand crews. Being part of an initial dispatch can reduce response times dramatically, when minutes can often make a notable impact on firefighters' ability to control a newly started wildfire.

Beginning in FY2025-2026, CAL FIRE began requiring local agencies that maintain a WPA to provide written notice to CAL FIRE of its intent to extend or enter into a new agreement with CAL FIRE for fire protection services one year prior to the expiration of the Agreement. While this does not obligate the Town to enter into a new agreement for FY2027-2028, it does formalize the intent to initiate negotiations of a new agreement before the FY2026-2027 agreement expires. This is accomplished through a "Notice of Intent for Continuation of Services" written to the local CAL FIRE Unit Chief. A draft of this notice is included as Attachment 3.

Changes from Fiscal Year 2025-2026

The total cost of the WPA is based on two factors: (1) the per-acre cost, which is dictated by CAL FIRE, and (2) the total acreage covered under the agreement. The \$939,528.37 cost of the proposed FY2026-2027 WPA is a 1.09 percent increase over Fiscal Year 2025-2026, which is the result of a decrease in the annual rate and an increase in the total covered acreage, as explained below.

Rate (Per-Acre Cost):

The annual rate is dictated legislatively on an annual basis by CAL FIRE and is based on the 10-year rolling average of the State’s firefighting costs. The annual rate is comprised of both a coverage rate and an administrative fee. The 2026-2027 WPA rate-per-acre decreased by 4.10 percent from the FY 2025-2026, as broken down in the table below.

CAL FIRE WPA RATE CHANGES FY2025-2026 to FY2026-2027			
Fiscal Year	Coverage Rate (Per-Acre)	Administrative Fee	Total Cost (Per-Acre)
2025-2026	\$50.18	10.77%	\$55.58
2026-2027	\$47.55	12.10%	\$53.30
Changes	-5.24%	12.35%	-4.10%

Acreage:

Town staff, in consultation with local fire agencies, evaluate several considerations to develop the protection area covered under the WPA, including:

- Fire Hazard Severity Zones (Hazard Map)
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan (Risk Map)
- Local fire history
- Likely demand for specialized and extended fire suppression resources
- Property values at risk
- Prevalence of human activity
- Jurisdictional responsibilities
- Cost

When assessing any potential need for changes to the 2026-2027 coverage map, Town staff learned that United States Forest Service (USFS) land within the Town’s jurisdictional boundary is maintained as “Direct Protection Areas” of the USFS. This means that any fire originating on USFS land, even within the Town’s boundary, would be the responsibility of the USFS. This differs from State-owned land within the Town, which all became “LRA” when the Town incorporated in 1993.

Based on the USFS maintaining wildfire suppression responsibilities on its land, Town Staff recommends removing those previously covered areas from the WPA map and reallocating the covered acres to other locations (Attachment 4). This has resulted in the recommendation to cover all areas surrounding Donner Lake, and local responsibility areas south of Glenshire Drive between Highway 267 and the Glenshire-Devonshire Neighborhood, which primarily covers the Joerger Rd. and Butterfield Rd. areas of town, an area with a recent fire history. The removal of the USFS land from the WPA and the addition of previously excluded LRA areas have resulted in a net increase of 905 acres, or 5.41percent, with 17,626 total acres covered.

Priority:

<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Climate and Greenhouse Gas Reduction	<input type="checkbox"/> Housing
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Investment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Emergency and Wildfire Preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/> Core Service

Fiscal Impact:

The total cost of the proposed contract, as mapped, is \$939,528.37. This amount will be included in the proposed budget for FY2026-2027, being brought to Council for adoption in June 2026. Staff will be recommending that the total cost of the FY2026-2027 WPA be funded with remaining American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funding. For future years, staff will be recommending the use of Measure E funding towards the cost of maintaining this agreement.

Public Communication:

None beyond this staff report and a website posting regarding the proposed recommendation.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – Resolution 2026-20

Attachment 2 – Draft 2026-2027 Wildland Protection Agreement

Attachment 3 – Draft Notice of Intent for Continuation of Services

Attachment 4 – Proposed 2026-27 Coverage Map and Coverage Map for 2025-2026