

Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District

20975 Geyserville Avenue • PO Box 217 • Geyserville • California • 95441 • (707) 857-4373 • geyservillefire.com

SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING JANUARY 27, 2020 AT 4:00 PM

Pursuant to the Governor of California's Executive Order N-29-20 dated March 17, 2020, and to maximize public safety, this meeting will occur via Zoom.

Video: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82734718917?pwd=aTl2NnpyNzF6U1NGTUd5MEYvUWJIQT09

Telephone: 669 900 6833 Meeting ID: 827 3471 8917

Passcode: 762477

1. OPENING GREETING:

- a. Meeting Called to Order by President Paul Bernier
- b. Pledge of Allegiance
- c. Roll Call: Rob Stewart [] Fred Peterson [] Tatsuo Okaya [] Paul Bernier [] Scott Newman []
- d. Approval of the Agenda
- 2. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION:** The public is welcomed and encouraged to address the Board at this time on matters not on the Agenda. Please be advised that pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2, the Board is not permitted to take action on any matter not on the Agenda unless it determines that an emergency exists or the need to take action arose after the posting of the Agenda. This period will be limited to thirty minutes and individual speakers will be limited to five minutes.
- 3. **STRATEGIC PLANNING:** Board discussion of strategic planning topics.

If the Strategic Planning discussion ends prior to 7 PM, there will be a break until 7 PM, at which time the meeting will reopen. Zoom will not be available during the break.

- 4. **SPECIAL TAX PUBLIC HEARING:** (at 7 PM) Consideration of formation of special tax zone and levy of a special tax for an area including the Vineyard Valley View Property Owners Association and selected adjoining parcels.
- 5. **GOOD OF THE ORDER:** This time is set aside for comments from the Board members and the public regarding general interest such as special events, parties, announcements, fundraisers, etc.
- 6. **ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING:** Discussion and schedule of the next regular meeting to be held on February 19, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

The District does not transcribe its proceedings. Anyone who desires a verbatim record of this meeting should arrange for attendance by a court reporter or for other acceptable means of recordation. The public is allowed to use any form of audio or video recording, absent a reasonable finding by the Board that this action will disrupt proceedings. Such arrangements will be at the sole expense of the individual requesting the recordation. Questions about this agenda – call the Fire District's Office at 707/857-4373.

Strategic Planning Notes

PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS:

Owing to recent history, a priority as a rural Fire District would be to mitigate the devastating effects of wildland fires. This can only be accomplished by continuing with fuels reduction and ensuring that all available resources are prepared to meet the challenge. To that effect,

- 1. Expand the fuels crews, both in numbers and days of operation. Provide them with additional training for deployment during wildland fires.
- 2. Identify private local resources willing to volunteer for both fuel reduction projects and assistance during fires.
- 3. Continue to recruit residents and property owners for COPE teams.
- 4. Develop fee schedules to enable fuels crews to be hired for reductions on privately held properties.
- 5. Continue working with other local agencies to advance the use of control burns as a mitigation tool.
- 6. Push forward CWPPs to encourage community involvement and pinpoint areas where fuels reduction projects can be more rapidly accomplished.
- 7. Continue to identify and create water sources for rural fire fighting.
- 8. Make ready facilities for quick response teams during Red Flag Warnings and road closures during flood conditions.

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- 1. See that ALL District members, be they Volunteers or paid, firefighters or admin, are aware that they represent the District. As such, they need to portray a common and unified message to the public, conveying our mission and endeavoring to gain their trust and faith.
- 2. Members must take every opportunity to engage with our community partners whenever possible. This list includes organizations such as COPE, CERT, Valley Associations, Farm Bureau, Winegrowers, etc, as well as our elected county and state officials, and local fire agencies.
- 3. The new and improved NSCFPD Website needs to be up and running and feature ways to be more user friendly and informative. Regular updates are a must, and the opportunity to combat misinformation must be utilized.
- 4. Present training opportunities for persons interested in volunteering time for activities other than firefighting.
- 5. Form a team to guide and direct new and existing COPE groups.
- 6. Recognition to community members who go above and beyond doing for and benefiting the District.

BUDGET AND REVENUE:

Because of recent fires and the pandemic, grant monies have all but disappeared. Other sources of revenue therefore become even more critical if we are to continue to expand services.

- 1. Favorable Tax Exchange Agreements are absolutely essential now that our SOI has been recognized by LAFCO. We must convince the BOS to grant 100% of the tax monies along to the District with our annexations. Pressure to finish the Municipal Services Review must be applied.
- 2. Monies spent on Strike Team pay and overtime to fight last season's fires must be reimbursed.

- 3. Funding sources for fuels mitigation projects need to be pursued.
- 4. Settlement funds through PG&E claims are perhaps pending.
- 5. Are funds from County of Sonoma going to continue into the future?
- 6. Likewise Casino Mitigation Fees?
- 7. Explore the possibility of TOTs district-wide.
- 8. Is there a future in locally mandated taxes by community vis-a-vis the Vineyard Association? What is the cost/benefit ratio?
- 9. Fundraisers and Donations to continue for the Association. What can the District request of the 501C-3?

DRAFT

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-___

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT AUTHORIZING DISTRICT STAFF TO ALL NECESSARY ACTION FOR PLACING A SPECIAL TAX ON THE MAY 4, 2021 MAILED BALLOT FOR CONSIDERATION BY A DISTRICT VOTER IN A DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ZONE

WHEREAS, the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District ("District") is governed by provisions of the Fire Protection District Law of 1987 (Health & Safety Code Section 13800 et seq.), which includes Health and Safety Code Section 13911 and, by incorporation, Government Code Sections 50075, 50076 and 50077, which collectively provide authority for the imposition of a special tax by qualified electors and a concurrent increase in the District appropriations limit consistent with Cal. Const. Art. XIIIB; and,

WHEREAS, the District has established a Vegetation Management Program to reduce wildland fuel loads through tree and brush thinning and through other treatments, all intended to reduce the occurrence and intensity of wildfires; and,

WHEREAS, the District has determined that additional local tax revenue is necessary to fund its Vegetation Management Program that protect District residents and property owners; and,

WHEREAS, the District has received a request from the Vineyard Valley View Property Owners, representing property owners in the Association and selected adjoining parcels, to impose a special tax to pay for vegetation management services needed to protect these collected parcels; and,

WHEREAS, the District proposes to place a ballot measure on a May 4, 2021 special election mailed ballot for consideration by the voters, which if passed, would implement an annual special tax within a District Special Tax Zone to provide additional funding to the District for fire prevention through vegetation management for a period of eight (8) years; and,

WHEREAS, additional revenue is intended to be allocated exclusively towards vegetation management within or benefitting the described special tax zone.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District hereby resolves as follows:

1. All prior actions taken by the District to explore the possibility placing a special tax on a mailed ballot for consideration by the voters in a special tax zone for funding vegetation management services benefitting the proposed special tax zone are hereby ratified.

- 2. District Staff is hereby directed to take all necessary and incidental actions for placing on a May 4, 2021 special election ballot a Measure authorizing the levy and collection of a special tax for funding vegetation management services.
- 3. Staff of Sonoma County is hereby requested and authorized to take all necessary actions for placing the proposed Measure on a May 4, 2021 mailed special election ballot. The District shall be responsible for payment of any fees or costs incurred by Sonoma County connected with placing this matter on a mailed special election ballot.
- 4. The purpose of the proposed Ballot Measure is to authorize an annual special tax on parcels of real property within the proposed special tax zone to provide revenue for the District in performing vegetation management services for the benefit of the property owners in the special tax zone.
- 5. The formation of the special tax zone and the provisions and administration of the special tax are detailed in the Special Tax Ordinance to be adopted by the Board.
- 6. The full text of the Measure shall be as follows:

NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX TO FUND FIRE PREVENTION VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District community faces a continuing significant threat from wildfire and needs to take steps to enhance fire prevention efforts. To ensure essential fire prevention vegetation management to our community, the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District proposes to levy a special tax of on each taxable parcel of land within the described special tax zone of the District for a period of eight (8) years.

The revenue available to the District from its allocated share of property taxes and existing District funding measures is inadequate to meet the cost of continuing to provide fire prevention vegetation management services pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 13862. The District must establish a stable source of revenue to assist in meeting the associated expenses of providing such services and exercising the other rights and powers provided to the District.

The estimated \$50,000 revenue from this special tax will provide the District with funding to use in delivering and maintaining ongoing essential fire prevention vegetation management services to the community within the designated special tax zone. Pursuant to Government Code Section 50075.1, the proceeds of the special tax shall be used only for the purposes stated above.

The District will prepare an annual report, to be filed with its Board of Directors, which shall include the amount of special tax revenues collected and expended each year, and which shall otherwise comply with Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 50075) of Chapter 1 of Part I of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Government Code.

The special tax shall be collected in the same manner and subject to the same penalty as other charges and taxes collected by or on behalf of the District by the County of Sonoma. The Sonoma County Tax Collector may deduct reasonable administrative costs incurred in collecting the special tax.

The District's appropriation limit will be increased by the amount of this voter-approved special tax zone parcel tax.

If approved by the voters, the special tax shall be effective for the District's 2021-22 fiscal year and will be levied annually from and after the date of this election for eight (8) years.

7. The Ballot Statement for the Measure shall read as follows:

MEASURE: FUNDING VEGETATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES MEASURE FOR NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ZONE 1 To assure reduction of wildfire risk, preserve public safety and ensure essential fire prevention services are provided to our community, shall the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District Ordinance No. be adopted imposing a special tax, including \$400 per occupied residential parcel and \$50 per vacant parcel for an eight year period commencing with fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2028-2029 unless repealed, with annual audits, and all tax receipts being used exclusively for wildfire hazard reduction services benefitting Special Tax Zone 1?

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a public meeting of the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District Board of Directors held on January 27, 2021 by the following vote:

Ayes: Noes: Absent: Abstain:	
ATTEST:	
Board Secretary	Board President
	APPROVED AS TO FORM:
	William D. Ross, General Counsel

NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

PROVIDING FOR THE IMPOSITION OF A SPECIAL TAX TO FUND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES TO A SPECIAL TAX ZONE

- WHEREAS, California Government Code §§ 50075 and 53978, and Article XIII.A of the California Constitution authorize the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District to determine and levy a special tax; and
- WHEREAS, the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District has determined additional local tax revenue is necessary to conduct its Vegetation Management Program which has been created to reduce or prevent wildfire hazards to the residents and businesses in the community by enhancing fire prevention activities; and
- WHEREAS, the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District has been requested to create a special tax zone and impose a special tax exclusively for vegetation management services by the Vineyard Valley View Property Owners and selected adjoining parcels; and
- WHEREAS, the North East Geyserville Citizens Organized to Prepare for Emergencies (COPE), in cooperation Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District with the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District, has prepared a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that includes an Action Plan listing vegetation management projects and priorities in the COPE area.
- **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Directors of the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District ("Board") that:
- **Section 1. Authority.** This Ordinance is adopted pursuant to Article XIIIA, Section 4, Article XIIIB, Section 4, and Article XIIIC, Section 2 of the California Constitution; Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 50075) of Chapter 1 of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code; Article 3.7 (commencing with Section 53720) of Chapter 4 of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code; Government Code Section 53978; and Sections 13911 and 13913 of the Health and Safety Code.
- **Section 2. Purpose and Intent.** It is the purpose and intent of this Ordinance to authorize a special tax on parcels of real property on the secured property tax roll of Sonoma County within the newly created Special Tax Zone 1 to provide revenue for the District to use in performing necessary vegetation management services, including acquiring, operating

and maintaining vegetation management equipment, payment of personnel costs, and funding any needed contracted services.

Section 3. Special Tax Zone. A Special Tax Zone shall be established for levy of the special tax. The special tax zone, titled Special Tax Zone 1, shall encompass and area that included the territory of the Vineyard Valley View Property Owners and selected adjoining parcels as show on **Exhibit A**. Proceeds of the special tax shall be used exclusively for vegetation management services within Special Tax Zone 1 or on adjacent lands as may be needed to reduce wildfire hazard in Special Tax Zone 1.

Section 4. Special Tax. The special tax shall be levied annually, on taxable real property as defined below in the special tax zone at a rate not to exceed the amount specified below. The special tax levied on a parcel shall be the sum of the maximum special tax levies that can be imposed on all the property characteristics and uses located on that parcel.

Character of Property and Use

Tax Rate

Parcel with Occupied Residential \$400.00 per parcel

Unit(s)(s)

Parcel with Commercial-Recreational \$400.000 per parcel

Uses

Vacant Parcel \$50.00 per parcel

"Occupied Residential Unit," shall mean any Parcel occupied or intended and available to be occupied for living or lodging purposes, and includes a single-family residence, condominium, mobile home, modular home, accessory dwelling unit and garage or other similar space converted to a living space.

"Commercial-Recreational" shall mean a Parcel developed or used for commercial recreational purposes.

"Vacant Parcel," shall mean any Parcel as identified by County Use Codes or by independent inspection by the District without a residential use or commercial recreational use.

Section 5. Inflation Adjustment. There shall be no inflation adjustment to the special tax during its eight (8) year duration.

Section 6. Sunset of Special Tax. The special tax shall be levied for a period of eight (8) years commencing with fiscal year 2021-2022 through fiscal year 2028-2029. Future levy of the special tax will require voter authorization. Additionally, the special tax shall sunset if it is determined by the Board that new District-wide funding from a District-wide special tax measure, an allocation of a County-wide special tax measure is passed.

Section 7. Amount of Revenue Raised Annually. The board anticipates the special tax to raise approximately \$50,000 annually.

Section 8. Advisory Committee. Pursuant to Section 13956, The Board shall appoint and sustain an Advisory Committee consisting of residents and property owners withing the boundaries of the Special Tax Zone. This Advisory Committee shall advise the NSCFPD Board of Directors regarding the annual project and service priorities within the Special Tax Zone, consistent with the adopted Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and provide local liaison with property owners regarding overall wildfire hazard reduction efforts. The Advisory Committed shall include ex officio membership, including an appointed member of the VVVPOA Board of Directors, a Block Captain of the Northeast COPE, and the Fire Chief. The ex officio members may appoint two to four additional members that are residents or property owners within the Special Tax Zone 1. The Advisory Committed shall meet no less than once per year and provide a written report to the Board that summarizes vegetation management work completed during the prior year and advice on project priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

Section 9. Collection. The special tax levied on each parcel pursuant to this ordinance shall be a charge upon the parcel and shall be due and collectible as set forth in this section.

- (a) Taxes as Liens Against the Property. The amount of the special tax for each parcel each year shall constitute a lien on such property, in accordance with Revenue and Taxation Code Section 2187, and shall have the same effect as an ad valorem real property tax lien until fully paid.
- (b) Collection. The special tax levied on each parcel shall be billed on the secured roll tax bills for ad valorem property taxes. The special tax shall be collected by Sonoma County on behalf of the District in the same manner in which Sonoma County collects secured roll ad valorem property taxes. The times and procedure regarding exemptions, due dates, installment payments, corrections, cancellations, refunds, late payments, penalties, liens, and collection for secured roll ad valorem property taxes apply to the collection of this tax. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the foregoing, as to this tax: (1) the secured roll tax bills shall be the only notices required for this tax; and (2) the homeowner and veterans exemptions shall not be applicable because such exemptions are determined by dollar amount value.

Section 10. Accountability Measures. Upon the levy and collection of the tax authorized by this ordinance, an account shall be created into which the proceeds of the tax will be deposited. The proceeds of the tax authorized by this ordinance shall be applied only to the specific purposes identified in this ordinance. An annual report that complies with the requirements of Government Code Section 50075.3 shall be filed with the District Board of Directors no later than January 1 of each fiscal year in which the tax is levied.

Section 11. Exemptions. The special tax authorized by this ordinance shall not be imposed upon any Federal or State governmental agency, any local public agency, or any parcel of property that is exempt from ad valorem taxes under any applicable law.

Section 12. Appropriations Limit. The appropriations limit of the District established under Article XIIIB of the California Constitution shall be increased by the amount collected by the levy of this special tax in accordance with the applicable requirements of state law.

Section 13. Election. Pursuant to Government Code Section 50075 *et seq.*, Elections Code sections 4000 and 4108 and Health and Safety Code section 13911, the District requests that the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors direct the Registrar of Voters to take all steps necessary to hold an election by all-mail ballot pursuant to Division 4 of the Elections Code on May 4, 2021, for the purpose of submitting to the voters of the special tax zone the question of the Special Tax to be levied by the District in the amount and for the purposes stated herein.

Section 14. Required Votes. The District shall levy the special tax provided for herein upon approval of two-thirds of the votes cast by voters voting upon the measure.

Section 15. Cost of Election. The District shall bear the cost of the election.

Section 16. Full Text. The board hereby approves and adopts the full text for the ballot set forth in Exhibit B, attached hereto. The District requests the Registrar of Voters to print the full text for the ballot set forth in Exhibit A, in the voter information pamphlet to be distributed to the voters.

Section 17. Abbreviated Statement. Pursuant to Elections Code section 13247, the abbreviated statement of the ballot form of the measure shall be as follows: (75-word limit.)

MEASURE: FUNDING VEGETATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES				
MEASURE FOR NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION				
DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ZONE 1				
To assure reduction of wildfire risk, preserve public safety and ensure				
essential fire prevention services are provided to our community,	Yes			
shall the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District				
Ordinance No be adopted imposing a special tax, including				
\$400 per occupied residential parcel and \$50 per vacant parcel for an				
eight year period commencing with fiscal year 2021 through fiscal				
year 2028-2029 unless repealed, with annual audits, and all tax	No			
receipts being used exclusively for wildfire hazard reduction services				
benefitting Special Tax Zone 1?				

Section 18. Argument in Favor. The Chair of the District Board or designees are hereby authorized to prepare and file with the Registrar of Voters a ballot argument in favor of the special tax, or act as an author of any ballot argument prepared in connection with the election, including rebuttal argument, each within the time established by the Registrar of Voters, which shall be considered the official ballot arguments of this Board as sponsor of the measure.

Section 19. Necessary Acts. The Chair of the District Board or designees, is authorized and directed to execute any other document and to perform all acts necessary to place the measure on the ballot, including making any changes to the text of the measure described in this Ordinance, or to the abbreviated form of the measure, or to the text of this Ordinance as may be convenient or necessary to comply with the intent of this Ordinance, the requirements of elections officials, and requirements of law.

Section 20. Severability. If any section, subsection, sentence phrase or clause of this Ordinance is for any reason held to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this Ordinance. The voters of the District hereby declare that they would have adopted the remainder of this Ordinance, including each section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause, irrespective of the invalidity of any other section, subsection, sentence, phrase or clause.

Section 21. Effective Date and Publication. This Ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its confirmation by the two-thirds of the voters voting thereon in an allmail ballot election to be held on May 4, 2021, so that the special tax shall first be collected hereunder for the tax year beginning July 2021. The levy of taxes authorized herein, shall be collected annually in perpetuity from and after the date of this election unless changed by the voters at a subsequent election. Within 15 days of passage, this Ordinance shall be published once, with the names of the Directors voting for and against it in a newspaper of general circulation published in this County.

SIGNATORIES:	
Director	
APPROVED AND ADOPTED on	this 27th day of January, 2021.
On motion of Director	, Seconded by Director
And approved by the following vote:	
Ayes:	
Noes:	
	Chairman
	Secretary:

Exhibit A
Boundary of Special Tax Zone 1

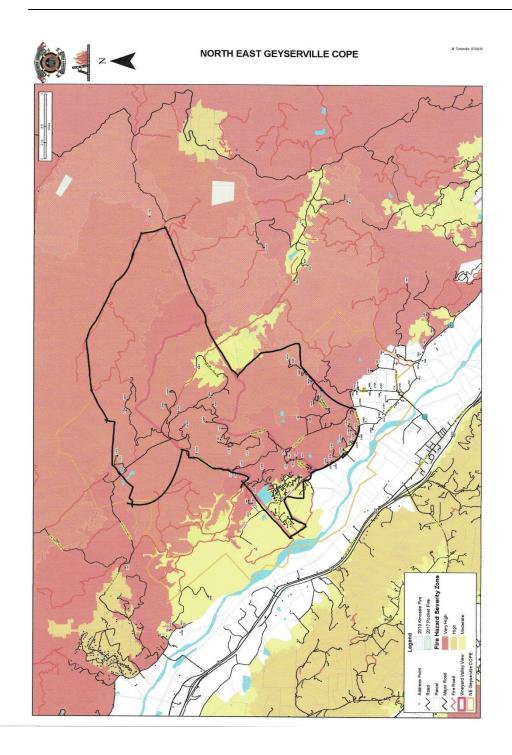


Exhibit B FULL TEXT OF BALLOT MEASURE

NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX TO FUND FIRE PREVENTION VEGETATION MANAGEMENT IN SPECIAL TAX ZONE 1

The Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District community faces a continuing significant threat from wildfire and needs to take steps to enhance fire prevention efforts. To ensure essential fire prevention vegetation management to our community, the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District proposes to levy a special tax of on each taxable parcel of land within the described special tax zone of the District for a period of eight (8) years.

The revenue available to the District from its allocated share of property taxes and existing District funding measures is inadequate to meet the cost of continuing to provide fire prevention vegetation management services pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 13862. The District must establish a stable source of revenue to assist in meeting the associated expenses of providing such services and exercising the other rights and powers provided to the District.

The estimated \$50,000 in revenue from this special tax will provide the District with funding to use in delivering and maintaining ongoing essential fire prevention vegetation management services to the community within the designated special tax zone. Pursuant to Government Code Section 50075.1, the proceeds of the special tax shall be used only for the purposes stated above.

The District will prepare an annual report, to be filed with its Board of Directors, which shall include the amount of special tax revenues collected and expended each year, and which shall otherwise comply with Article 3.5 (commencing with Section 50075) of Chapter 1 of Part I of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Government Code.

The special tax shall be collected in the same manner and subject to the same penalty as other charges and taxes collected by or on behalf of the District by the County of Sonoma. The Sonoma County Tax Collector may deduct reasonable administrative costs incurred in collecting the special tax.

The District's appropriation limit will be increased by the amount of this voter-approved tax.

If approved by the voters, the special tax shall be effective for the District's 2021-22 fiscal year and will be levied annually from and after the date of this election for eight (8) years.

The Ballot Statement for the Measure shall read as follows:

MEASURE: FUNDING VEGETATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES MEASURE			
FOR NORTHERN SONOMA COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION			
DISTRICT SPECIAL TAX ZONE 1			
To assure reduction of wildfire risk, preserve public safety and ensure essential fire prevention services are provided to our community, shall the Northern Sonoma County Fire Protection District Ordinance No be adopted imposing a special tax, including \$400 per occupied residential parcel and \$50 per vacant parcel for an eight year period commencing with fiscal year 2021 through fiscal year 2028-2029 unless repealed, with annual audits, and all tax receipts being used exclusively for wildfire hazard reduction services benefitting Special Tax Zone 1?		Yes	
		No	
PASSED AND ADOPTED at County Fire Protection District 2021 by the following vote:			
Ayes:			
Noes:			
Absent:			
Abstain:			
ATTEST:			
Board Secretary	Board President		
	APPROVED AS TO	FORM:	
	William D. Ross, Ger	neral Counsel	