

BUTTE COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT CITIZEN'S CONCERN

SUMMARY

The 2007/2008 Grand Jury received a letter from a concerned citizen to investigate and determine if Butte County is responsible for maintaining the upper north end of Doe Mill road between the Skyway, and Powellton road on the east, and Garland road on the west, and which agencies are developing an evacuation plan for the upper ridge area.

BACKGROUND

The north end of Doe Mill Road connects to Powellton Road and the Skyway on the east end, and is mostly a dirt trail on private land until it connects to Garland Road on the west end which then is a gravel road continuing to Highway 32. Garland Road is a Butte County road, maintained twice a year in the spring and fall. The Skyway from Inskip to Humboldt Road at Butte meadows is not a paved road and is sometimes referred to as Forest Highway 171 and Skyway.

APPROACH

The Grand Jury met with the Director of Public Works to obtain information for the area of concern as to which roads were county or private roads. The Grand Jury also met with the current Butte County Supervisor for this district to obtain additional information regarding this matter.

DISCUSSION

The upper north end of Doe Mill Road between Garland Road and Powellton Road is a private road and is not maintained by Butte County. Private roads in Butte County are not maintained by the county until they are brought up to county standards, dedicated, and accepted by the county.

Butte County is planning in 2009 to pave the Skyway from Inskip to Butte Meadows connecting to Humboldt Road and State Highway 32. This project will be financed from a combination of federal and county funding.

The Public Works Director informed the Grand Jury members that there is a preliminary Upper Ridge Evacuation Plan in progress. Fire escapes are identified by directional signs put in place during an emergency by emergency services personnel. The location of the fire determines the evacuation route for the area, and the evacuation must remain flexible. This draft plan was developed by the following entities: The Butte County Fire Department, CAL Fire, Butte Unit, The Butte County Sheriff's Office, the Butte County Department of Public Works, the Butte County Office of Emergency Services, the

California Highway Patrol, CALTRANS, the Town of Paradise Fire Department, the Town of Paradise Public Works, the Butte County Firesafe Council, and Butte County Association of Governments. However, at this time the plan is still in a draft form and has not been finalized.

FINDINGS

1. The North end of Doe Mill Road does not meet county standards for maintenance at this time.
2. The Upper Skyway from Inskip to Humboldt Road at Butte Meadows will be paved starting in 2009, which will provide a connection to Highway 32 from Upper Skyway.
3. There is a preliminary Upper Ridge Evacuation Plan, called Butte County Inter-Agency Emergency Action Plan, which includes the communities of Magalia, Paradise Pines, Lovelock, and Stirling City.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Butte County Department of Public Works and Butte County Board of Supervisors should move forward expeditiously with the necessary steps, including coordination with related agencies and seeking citizen input, to adopt a final Upper Ridge Evacuation Plan.

RESPONSES REQUIRED

Butte County Board of Supervisors
Director of Public Works