

Yurok Tribe donates new fire truck to Klamath Fire Protection District

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The Yurok Tribe recently donated a brand new, fully equipped fire truck to the Klamath Fire Protection District.

“This donation will greatly enhance the health and safety of all residents in southern Del Norte County and northern Humboldt County,” said Joseph L. James, the chairman of the Yurok Tribe. “COVID-19 has shown us that we need to enhance our local emergency response capacity because we can’t necessarily depend on anyone else. The contribution to the Klamath Fire Protection District is one way that we are supporting our local first responders.”

“Whether it’s a structure fire or medical aid call, the Klamath Fire Protection District is always the first to respond. It was an easy decision to invest in the future of the department,” said Ryan Ray, the Yurok Tribal Council’s Requa district representative.

Purchased with funds from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, the new fire engine was selected because it contains everything firefighters need to confront all-hazard emergencies. Manufactured by HME Ahrens-Fox and purchased through HME distributor Derotic LLC, the HME Model 18 Type 1 fire engine is uniquely suited to facilitate a fast and effective response to incidents, such as structure fires, medical calls, hazardous materials and rescue calls. The new fire engine includes: a high capacity pump, water tank, fire hose in multiple diameters, ladders, and foam capability. The new engine can also hold many different types of tools and equipment, including: air lift bags, extension and roof ladders, generator, ventilation fans, extrication equipment, large diameter hose, self-contained breathing apparatus and medical response gear.

“The Yurok Fire Department was excited to work with the Tribal Council on procuring the Type 1 engine,” said Rod Mendes, the Yurok Fire Department chief. “This modern firefighting apparatus will serve the Klamath crew for the next 25 years.”

The Klamath Fire Protection District provides fire prevention and protection services as well as emergency medical aid. Many Yurok citizens reside within the district’s service area, which extends from Last Chance Grade to the Orick’s northern border. The Yurok Tribe’s administration building, the Yurok Tribal Court and the Yurok Police Department’s headquarters are also located within KFPD’s domain as is the tribe’s nearly completed emergency operations center.

“This new piece of equipment will significantly improve our ability to serve the community. The addition of the new truck will increase our crew’s capacity to respond to large fires, medical calls and hazmat incidents. On behalf of the district, I would like to thank the Yurok Tribe for this generous donation,” said Lonnie Levi, the KFPD chief.

The Klamath volunteer crew is the first to arrive at motor vehicle accidents, structure fires and human health-related crises as well as many other types of emergencies. Similar to many other rural areas, the closest ambulance is approximately 45 minutes away. It can take much longer if there are multiple concurrent incidents in distant locations. The highly trained Klamath volunteer team often performs life-saving procedures to stabilize patients before the medical transport vehicle arrives to take them to the hospital.

“The Klamath Fire Protection District plays an integral role in protecting our community and our infrastructure. We greatly appreciate all that the department does for our community,” concluded Chairman James.