

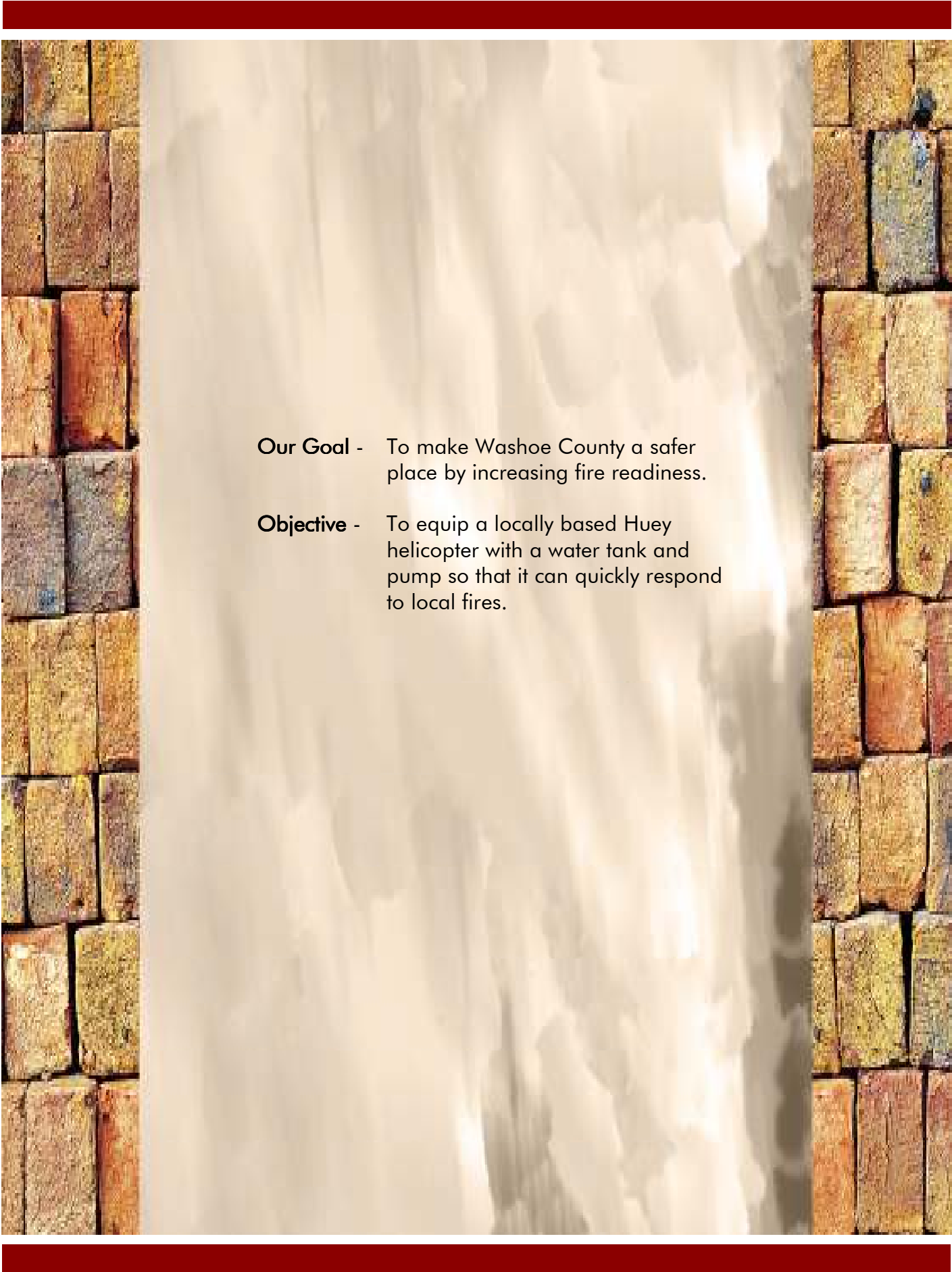
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Our Goal - To make Washoe County a safer place by increasing fire readiness.

Objective - To equip a locally based Huey helicopter with a water tank and pump so that it can quickly respond to local fires.

It is All About Response Time

Fire Access

Firefighters have trouble reaching vulnerable areas because most of the surrounding local terrain is inhospitable to vehicles. Firefighters and BLM workers must hike to a fire to fight it. This wastes valuable time. When the HH-1H is parked on the ramp at Stead Airport with a crew at the hanger on fire standby, it can launch in 7 to 10 minutes. Not limited by the steep, rocky landscape, this helicopter could annihilate these fires before they devastate our community.

Summary and Specs

The Washoe County Sheriff's Office has a Huey HH-1H helicopter capable of flying up to 120 miles per hour. It is part of the RAVEN unit at the Reno/Stead airport and could be equipped with a 369 gallon water tank with 30 gallons of fire suppressing foam capacity. When they obtain the tank, they plan to make it available to suppress wildfires.

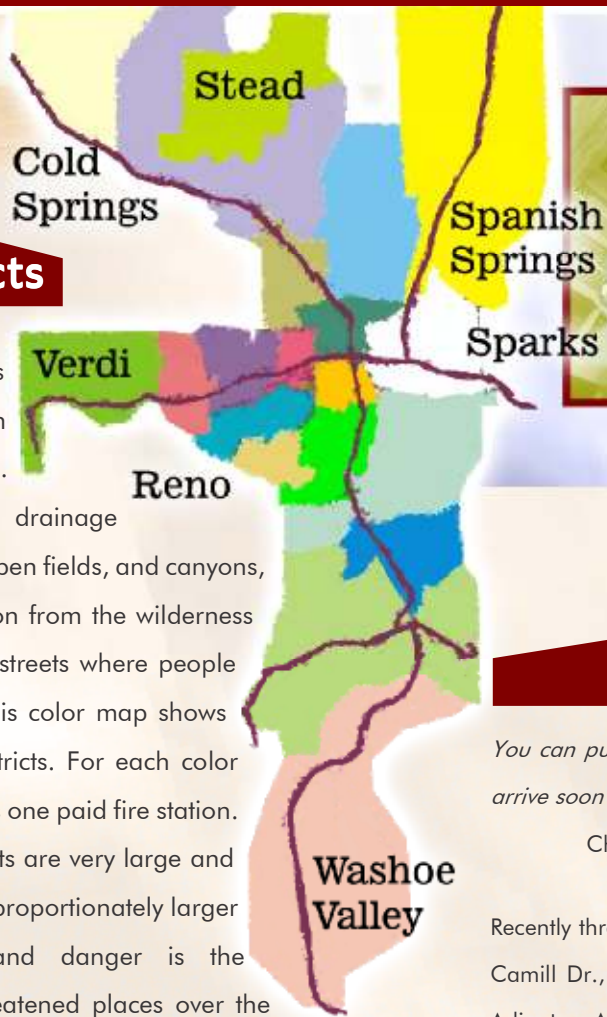


Discussing Tanks There are two ways to equip a helicopter for water delivery. The first is to hang a dip-bucket precariously below a helicopter. This method has several disadvantages. Few water sources in our area are eight feet deep or more so the helicopter must travel large distances to dip the bucket.

The second uses a snorkel to pump water from pools as shallow as 12 inches, so it makes more water sources available. It is also better to carry a secure tank over populated places than to dangle a bucket. In addition, the tank is more effective. It delivers the water more accurately and the foam/water mixture does not evaporate as quickly.

Fire Districts

We live in what is called an urban wildland interface. Because of the drainage ditches, hillsides, open fields, and canyons, fires easily transition from the wilderness tinderbox into the streets where people live and work. This color map shows our area's fire districts. For each color on the map there is one paid fire station. The outlying districts are very large and the response time proportionately larger where the wildland danger is the greatest. The threatened places over the last few years seems endless.



**Time
For
Action**

Community Threats

You can put a fire out stomping with your boot if you arrive soon enough

Chief Chuc Lowden

Recently threatened places: Lake Tahoe, Skyline Blvd., Camill Dr., Palomino Valley, Sun Valley, Heights Dr., Arlington Ave., Toll Rd., Andrew Ln., Panther Valley, Sagehen Ln., Huffaker Hills, Double R Blvd., Somerset, Peavine, Rattlesnake Mountain, Los Altos Prk., Martini Hill, Pleasant Valley, Virginia Highlands, Kings Canyon Meadow, Thomas Creek, Vista Blvd., Bull Ranch Rd., Red Rock, and Riverdale Ct. to name a few.

Discussing Ladder Fuels Noxious weeds introduced into this area have erased the natural fire barriers that once prevented large fires from forming. Cheat grass grows quickly and then dies on the ground between the native junipers. When lightning strikes, the grass carries the fire from bush to bush and into populated places.





Huey Project

Two homes burned down in our valley this spring. If Raven had been equipped with an under the belly water system, it is believed that one of the homes would have been saved. The equipment and labor for this conversion would only be a fraction of that loss. Your contribution will help to prevent future property losses. Equipment needed:

Simplex Fire System.....	\$225,000
High Skids	\$13,000
Dual Large Cargo Mirror	\$12,000

Total\$250,000

Government Share

Air support is no longer subsidized by the Federal government. The great expense makes local officials hesitant to order a helicopter from Minden and the extra distance lengthens the response time. The Sheriff's pilots have the expertise to operate a fire fighting air unit; however, adding a complete air operation to the Fire Department would be prohibitively expensive. The Sheriff's Office does not have the funds to complete the Huey enhancement on its own. The result will be lost homes, infrastructure, environment, and possibly lives. Businesses, organizations, and individuals can equip our departments with the gear that they need to protect our property and county.

**Time
To Take
Charge**

Operational Cost

Through care and innovation, the Washoe County Sheriff's Office carefully controls costs; San Diego and Sacramento budget \$800 per flight hour. Our modified huey will only cost \$500 per hour to run. In addition, the OH-58 helicopter costs

\$230.00 an hour to find the fire's path, speed, and detect hot spots which saves the county big bucks both during and after a fire. Detectors on the OH-58 cut the time to walk the fire line and on the Peavine Fire, allowed fire crews to be released about 7 days early.



Contact Information

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