



Outlook

**POLLP01 - Pollock Pines - CUP24-0013 - 1/22/2026 Planning Commission Agenda Item 2 - 26-0095 -
Re: Fire Chief's Letter**

From Frank Schabarum <frank.schabarum123@gmail.com>

Date Thu 1/15/2026 10:11 AM

To Steven C. Osborn <Craig.Osborn@edcgov.us>; Planning Department <planning@edcgov.us>

1 attachment (1 MB)

County Chiefs Support FirstNet Cellular_10_2025.pdf;

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Greetings Craig and Planning Department,

Please date stamp this attached letter that was supposed to be in the Staff Report for this project. Please let me know what happens when an item such as this is uploaded as a public comment. At what time does the Planning Commission see it and by what method?

Thank you.

*Frank Schabarum
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Mobile Phone: [619-743-0309](#)*

26-0095 Public Comment Rcvd 01-15-26



EL DORADO COUNTY FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

501 Pleasant Valley Road, Diamond Springs, CA 95619

October 7, 2025

El Dorado County – Planning Division
Building C
2850 Fairlane Court
Placerville, CA 95667

SUBJECT: Letter of Support – FirstNet Wireless Telecommunications Tower in Sly Park

Planning Commission,

The purpose of this letter is to express the El Dorado County Fire Chiefs Association (FCA) support for projects that enhance the wireless connectivity within the County. We understand that you are evaluating a proposed FirstNet/AT&T wireless telecommunications facility located at 5005 Loch Leven in Pollock Pines. While we understand that there are many planning and community issues that you must work through when approving a specific cell site, we wanted to make sure that the El Dorado County Planning Commission understands that the FCA supports the “global concept” of enhancing the wireless connectivity within the County.

The FCA support for these projects stems from the recognition that a lack of wireless coverage is a public safety issue. As of 2023, 76.0% of adults and 86.8% of children live in wireless-only households¹, and approximately 90% of 911 calls are made from wireless devices². Gaps in wireless coverage limit or prevent routine communication and access to critical services. Without reliable wireless networks, people struggle to contact 911 during emergencies, resulting in delayed response times for medical, fire, or law enforcement assistance. It also limits access to real-time alerts about natural disasters, severe weather, or other threats, leaving communities vulnerable.

Poor wireless coverage also impedes coordination among first responders. Following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, the 9/11 Commission identified that public safety agencies struggled with interoperable communications, as their radio systems often operated on different frequencies, and the wireless networks were completely saturated by the public, preventing effective coordination. Major disasters since then have further exposed these gaps, with first responders often unable to communicate reliably due to network congestion and a lack of dedicated infrastructure.

To address this, in 2012, the US Congress created the National Public Safety Broadband Network (NPSBN), also known as FirstNet, by adopting the Middle-Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act, Public Law 112-96. This action created the FirstNet Authority within the US Department of Commerce and dedicated wireless spectrum in Band 14 solely for public safety use. In 2017, the FirstNet Authority

entered into a public-private partnership with AT&T to build and operate the network. This one-of-a-kind partnership exists to deliver a secure, scalable, and resilient communication system tailored to the unique needs of first responders, improving coordination and response effectiveness during disasters and routine operations¹¹.

The local fire districts, USFS and CalFire all rely on robust cellular coverage for everything from routine matters to major emergencies and disasters. The fire service relies on wireless coverage to distribute and receive dispatch information, pre-arrival information, and intelligence; GPS routing to emergencies; emergency notifications; evacuation management; medical device telemetry connections with medical facilities; and medical orders and reporting. In summary, wireless coverage is a critical resource that our personnel rely on daily.

El Dorado County has an extensive wildland fire history. Most recently, the Caldor Fire burned up to and around the southern side of Jenkinson Lake – the area that this proposed FirstNet project is designed to provide vital wireless coverage.

As demonstrated in Image 1, there is a significant gap in the wireless coverage. As a result, there is either very poor or no coverage whatsoever in the Jenkinson Lake and Sly Park Recreation Area.

Image 2 shows the quality of coverage in Sly Park. It is essential to acknowledge that none of the three major wireless carriers has reliable (“good”) coverage in this area. Most importantly, AT&T/FirstNet currently has the worst coverage, making this project all the more crucial for public safety.

For the reasons outlined above, the El Dorado County Fire Chiefs Association supports projects that enhance the cellular coverage for all our firefighters.

Respectfully submitted,



Tim Cordero
El Dorado County Fire Chiefs Association,
Chair

10/07/2025

Date

Image 1 – Existing Coverage

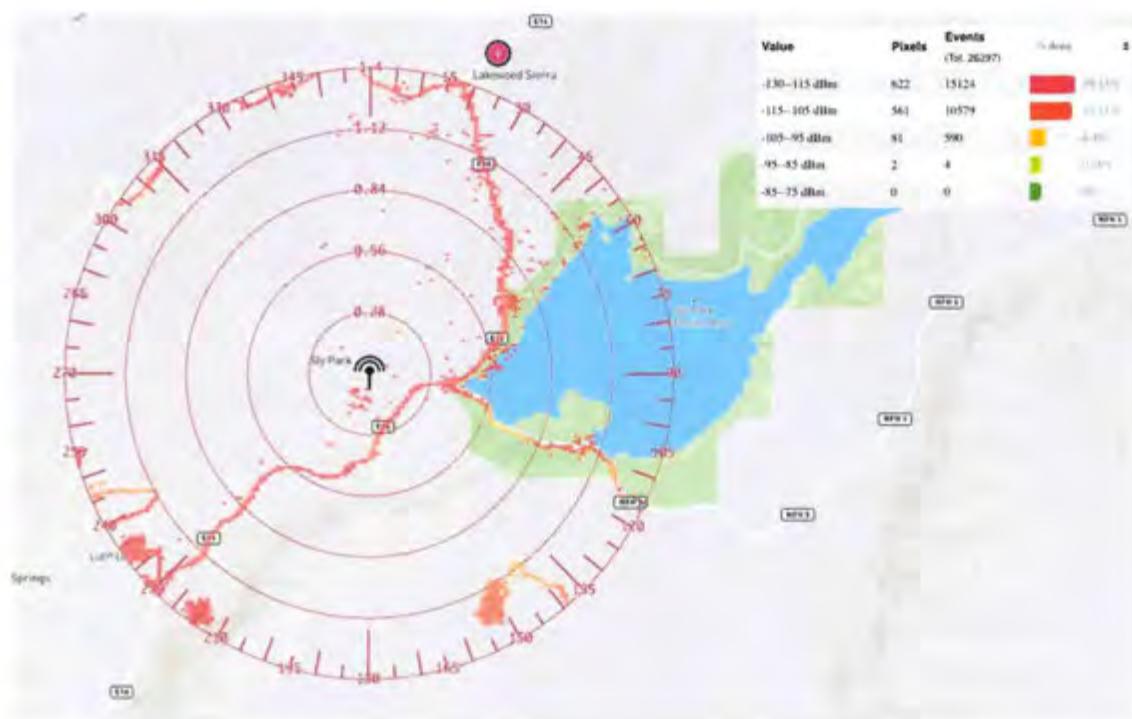
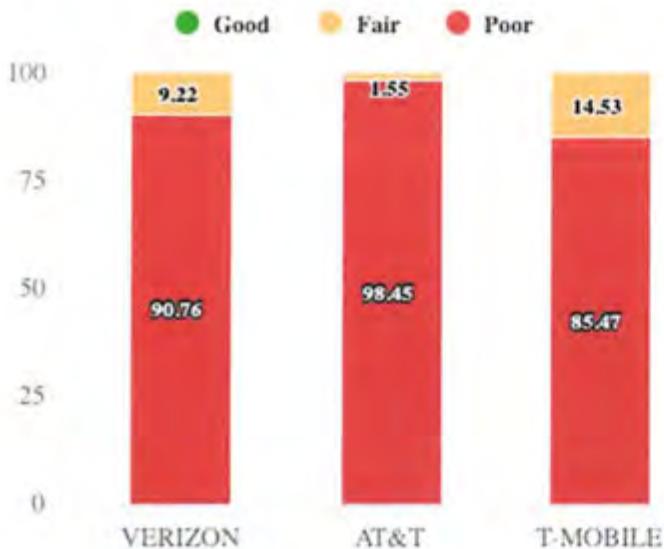


Image 2 – Coverage Quality

Situation in the area by carrier



¹ Centers for Disease Control, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nhis/earlyrelease/wireless202406.pdf>

² National Emergency Number Association, <https://www.nena.org/page/911Statistics>

³ FirstNet Authority, <https://www.firstnet.gov/network>