

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Lake County Board of Supervisors

2025–2030 Capital Improvement Program

Spring Valley Secondary Emergency Access / Old Long Valley Road Bridge Project

Submitted by:

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Spring Valley Resident

Good morning Board of Supervisors,

I am submitting this public comment regarding the County's Capital Improvement Program project titled:

"New Structure Crossing on Old Long Valley Road over Long Valley Creek."

I first want to acknowledge something very important:

Lake County has now officially recognized in its own Capital Improvement Program that Spring Valley requires improved secondary emergency access.

The County's own project description states this bridge project is intended:

"for improved secondary access for Spring Valley."

This is significant because the residents of Spring Valley have been raising this issue for many years.

Spring Valley has repeatedly faced wildfire evacuations and emergency access concerns, including during: the Rocky Fire, the Pawnee Fire, the Mendocino Complex Fire, and numerous red flag warning events over the years. Residents in Spring Valley know firsthand what it means to live in an area that effectively has one reliable way in and out during emergencies.

What concerns me is that public records show this issue has already been identified for well over a decade.

The County's wildfire planning and hazard mitigation documents referenced Old Long Valley Road and emergency access concerns as far back as approximately 2012 wildfire planning discussions.

The County's Hazard Mitigation Planning documents continued to identify: "Old Long Valley Road – Low Water Crossing" as a mitigation action item.

Additionally, Eastern Regional Town Hall Committee meeting minutes from 2025 specifically state that: "Long Valley Bridge is on the capital improvement list."

Now, in the County's 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Program, this project finally appears formally identified with a total projected cost of approximately \$10 million.

However, according to the County's own CIP: only \$250,000 is currently programmed, the project remains in "Planning" status, funding sources are still listed as "TBD," and approximately \$9.75 million has been pushed into unspecified "future years." At the same time, multiple other transportation and bridge projects throughout the County are receiving multi-million-dollar funding allocations despite already having multiple access routes available.

Meanwhile, Spring Valley — which has repeatedly experienced wildfire threats and evacuation concerns — still effectively has one primary ingress and egress route.

This is not merely a transportation issue.

This is: a life safety issue, a wildfire evacuation issue, an emergency response issue, an infrastructure resilience issue, and potentially a long-term public safety responsibility issue. The County's own planning documents already acknowledge these risks.

Federal and state funding programs already exist specifically for projects such as: FEMA BRIC grants, wildfire resilience grants, hazard mitigation infrastructure funding, evacuation route funding, and transportation resilience programs. Therefore, I respectfully ask the Board the following questions: How many years has this project, or versions of this project, appeared in County planning documents, transportation plans, wildfire plans, hazard mitigation plans, or Capital Improvement Programs? Has Lake County formally pursued FEMA BRIC funding, Cal OES evacuation funding, FHWA bridge funding, or other state and federal resilience grants for this project? If not, why has this funding not been aggressively pursued given the documented evacuation concerns in Spring Valley? What is the actual timeline for: feasibility completion, environmental review, engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and eventual construction? What specific actions will the County take during 2026 to move this project beyond "Planning" status? The County's own planning documents, wildfire planning discussions, hazard mitigation plans, and

now the Capital Improvement Program itself demonstrate that Lake County has long been aware of the evacuation and secondary access concerns affecting Spring Valley.

When a public safety concern is identified repeatedly over the course of more than a decade, yet remains largely unresolved, it raises serious questions regarding long-term emergency preparedness, infrastructure prioritization, and the County's responsibility to communities facing known wildfire evacuation risks.

Additionally, simply removing a project from planning documents does not remove the underlying public safety concern itself. The evacuation limitations affecting Spring Valley would still remain.

For that reason, I respectfully request transparency regarding: what funding efforts have been pursued, what barriers remain, and what concrete timeline exists for moving this project beyond planning and into implementation. For over 10 years, the public record has continued to acknowledge the need for improved secondary access for Spring Valley.

The residents of Spring Valley deserve more than continued acknowledgment of the problem. They deserve meaningful progress toward a real emergency evacuation solution.

Thank you.