

Agency Profile

Latrobe Fire Protection District (LTB) was formed pursuant to the Health and Safety Code on April 1, 1982 by LAFCO Resolution L-82-10. LTB is located in the southwestern corner of El Dorado County (refer to Map H). The district boundary includes the greater community of Latrobe as well as primarily rural lands. Major natural features include the Cosumnes River along the southern boundary and Ben Bolt Ridge, which runs north-south through the district. All of the communities in LTB are major risk areas for wildland/urban interface.

Land Use Character

Encompassing 36 square miles, an estimated 70% of the district's territory is agricultural and 30% is residential. Approximately 12,048 acres are under Williamson Act contracts; however, of these 2,203 acres are under notice of non-renewal. Residential lands are clustered into eight main areas surrounding the town of Latrobe. There are no commercial or industrial lands and there is one small winery.

Level of Service

LTB provides a moderate level of services to its residents district-wide. Its per capita district expenditure was \$303.21 in Fiscal Year 2003-2004. Its main funding mechanisms for these services are property taxes, assessments, County Supplement Funds and development impact fees. Its two fire stations provide sufficient coverage for the district.

Commission's Policies and Guidelines

LAFCO Policy 4.4 requires the Commission to review the following topics before making sphere of influence determinations. The Commission's recent review of fire suppression and emergency services addressed these requirements as noted below. All citations are from the Final Countywide Fire Suppression and Emergency Services Municipal Services Review, adopted by the Commission in August, 2006.

1. *Service capacity, level and types of services currently provided by the agency, and areas where these services are provided*

Refer to pages 157-158, "Services and Programs;" page 158, "Infrastructure and Facilities;" pages 158-159, "Equipment and Vehicles;" pages 159-160, "Personnel and Staffing;" page 286, "Table 107 – Comparative Ratio of Firefighters to Population per Agency;" page 300, "Latrobe FPD (LTB);" and Map 9 – "South County Stations."

2. *Financial capabilities and costs of service*

Refer to pages 162-164 "Funding and Budget;" pages 319-321, "Agency Funding;" page 342, "Table 113 – Comparative Ratio of Fire Protection Expenditures to Population per Agency;" and page 343, "Table 114 – Comparative Personnel Cost Percentage of Total Budget per Agency."

3. *Topographic factors and areas of social and economic interdependencies*

Refer to page 156, “Latrobe Fire Protection District;” and page 309, “Table 111 – El Dorado County Land Use Forecasts.”

4. *Existing and planned land uses, land use plans and policies, consistency with county and city general plans, and projected growth in the affected area*

Refer to page 156, “Growth and Population;” and pages 307-312, “Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area.”

5. *Potential effects on agricultural and open space lands*

Agricultural lands within LTB surround the town of Latrobe, which is located near the center of the district. The 2004 General Plan directs unincorporated growth to already existing population centers, or “community regions,” such as Latrobe. On the other hand, the General Plan also calls for protecting the county’s agriculture sector. While the land use designation in most of the lands in LTB is “rural residential,” the General Plan calls for grazing land and historic grazing land to be a minimum parcel size of 40 acres. Consequently, it is unlikely that the land use within the district will change significantly.

However, the services provided by the district do not induce urban growth or the premature conversion of agricultural land to urban uses. In agricultural areas, the district’s services protect farmland and the agriculture economy by responding to emergencies in undeveloped areas and minimizing the financial cost that a fire could cause to farmers.

6. *A description of the services that will be provided to any areas which may be added to the sphere and the timing and method for funding expansion of facilities or services*

Refer to pages 157-158, “Services and Programs;” page 158, “Infrastructure and Facilities;” pages 158-159, “Equipment and Vehicles;” pages 159-160, “Personnel and Staffing;” page 286, “Table 107 – Comparative Ratio of Firefighters to Population per Agency;” page 300, “Latrobe FPD (DSP);” and Map 9 – “South County Stations.”

7. *An analysis of the effects of a proposed sphere of influence on other agencies and their service capabilities:*

Refer to pages 336-339, “Government Structure and Cost Effectiveness.”

DETERMINATIONS

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425(e) requires the Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to four factors. Staff recommends the following determinations for amending the sphere for LTB:

1. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands.*

Present land use in the LTB area is primarily agricultural, followed by residential uses. Although rural residential areas are distributed throughout LTB, they are more concentrated in the northern portion of the district along Latrobe Road and to the south, directly north of the Cosumnes River. Future land uses are expected to remain relatively unchanged, with population growth that is likely to be consistent with, if not slightly slower than, the 2004 General Plan projections for the unincorporated portion of the County.

There are approximately 4,178 acres currently within the LTB sphere that are not within the district boundaries. Of these, land use designations and current zoning suggests that all of the 4,178 acres are in agricultural production. While these parcels are not within a fire protection agency, the vast majority of the area in question is surrounded on all sides by LTB boundaries, indicating that it would be the most likely agency to respond to a fire or medical emergency. This creates an issue of fiscal inequity to LTB, because it does not receive revenue from these parcels to offset the potential costs of service.

In the easternmost portion of LTB, there are parcels outside of the district but inside the current sphere, sharing a boundary with either El Dorado County Fire Protection District (ECF) or Diamond Springs / El Dorado FPD (DSP) boundaries. The LTB, DSP and ECF chiefs have requested that these parcels remain within the LTB sphere for now, pending a future collaborative effort from all of the fire districts to reorganize their service areas, if necessary.

2. *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.*

The 2004 General Plan has designated the areas within the LTB sphere as agricultural. However, it is conceivable that in the future, lands previously used exclusively for agricultural purposes may have structures built on them or be converted to other uses. If this were to occur, it would lead to an increase in service demand to the district. However, fire suppression and emergency medical services, in and of themselves, do not increase the likelihood of this type of activity and, therefore, induce urban growth or the premature conversion of agricultural, open space to urban uses.

Parcels currently within the LTB district receive sufficient fire suppression and emergency response services as needed. If annexed, the areas described above would increase demand for these services, although it is expected that existing personnel and equipment would be adequate to meet the level of service required for the inclusion. In addition, funding, in the form of increased property taxes, assessments and applicable development impact fees received, would offset increased costs and ensure the sufficient provision of services to serve the area.

3. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.*

LTB appears to provide moderate fire suppression and emergency response services within and, in cases of mutual aid responses, outside its boundaries. The district is compensated for these services primarily through property taxes, County Supplement Funds and district assessments.

4. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.*

LTB serves the greater community of Latrobe, as well as the surrounding rural areas. There are no social or economic communities of interest in the area that will be broken due to this sphere update, nor are there any areas that will require special consideration from the Commission in this matter.

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that the Latrobe FPD Sphere of Influence be updated to affirm its original sphere, as shown in Map H.