

Agency Profile

Miners, farmers, and loggers historically fought fires in the Mosquito area. Increased development and growth resulted in the organization of a volunteer fire department on June 14, 1973. The Mosquito Fire Protection District (MQT) was formed five years later, on January 1, 1978, under Government Code §61000 et seq., for the purpose of providing improved fire protection and related services (refer to Map J). MQT serves a relatively isolated, rural mountainous area with little road access, steep terrain and surrounded by the Eldorado National Forest on two sides. Its 13-square mile service boundary encompasses the communities of Mosquito and Swansboro Country, the latter of which is located in the wildland/urban interface area in the eastern portion of the district and is considered to be in a major fire risk zone. Access to the district is limited, with only Mosquito Road (via Highway 50) and Rock Creek Road (via Highway 193) leading in and out of the area. Mosquito Road becomes a dirt road on USFS land and provides limited access to Georgetown FPD.

Land Use Character

Land uses in the district consist primarily of agricultural and residential uses. Residential, single-family homes, on a minimum parcel size of two acres, are concentrated on the east side of the district. A winery owns 40 acres of agricultural land west of Finnon Lake. The 2004 County General Plan designates approximately ten acres of land on Rock Creek Road and six acres of land on Mosquito Road (south of Rock Creek Road) as a commercial area.

Level of Service

MQT provides a moderate level of services to its residents district-wide. Its per capita district expenditure was \$172.54 in Fiscal Year 2003-2004. Its main funding mechanisms for these services are property taxes, assessments, County Supplement Funds and development impact fees. Its single fire station provides 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 181-182, "Services and Programs;" pages 182-183, "Infrastructure and Facilities;" pages 183-184, "Equipment and Vehicles;" pages 184-185, "Personnel and Staffing;" page 286, "Table 107 – Comparative Ratio of Firefighters to Population per Agency;" page 301-302, "Mosquito FPD (MQT);" and Map 8 – "North County Stations."

2. *Financial capabilities and costs of service*

Refer to pages 187-190 “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 pages 178-180, “Mosquito 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 180, “History–Growth;” and pages 307-312, “Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area.”

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

The 2004 General Plan directs unincorporated growth to already existing population centers such as Mosquito and Swansboro Country, but in 1991 the State adopted regulations requiring adequate road access networks for emergency vehicles. Since Mosquito FPD has only one practical, year-round road leading in and out the area, the County has essentially frozen further parcel splits. Nevertheless, MQT continues to experience significant growth because developers for Swansboro Country, and surrounding areas, created multiple residential lots prior to 1991. At a rate of 12 new homes per year, MQT will continue to experience an increase in service demand because only 60% of the developable lots in its service area are built out. Approximately half of MQT’s service area has land use designations of “open space” and “natural resources.”

Despite the dual nature of the district, the services provided by MQT do not inherently induce urban growth or the premature conversion of open space land to urban uses. In the developed areas, these services protect the human, economic and resource assets of the community by responding to emergencies that threaten lives and property. In undeveloped areas, the district’s services protect forests and resources by responding to emergencies in undeveloped areas and minimizing the financial cost that a fire could cause.

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 181-182, “Services and Programs;” pages 182-183, “Infrastructure and Facilities;” pages 183-184, “Equipment and Vehicles;” pages 184-185, “Personnel and Staffing;” page 286, “Table 107 – Comparative Ratio of Firefighters to Population per Agency;” page 301-302, “Mosquito FPD (MQT);” and Map 8 – “North 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 MQT:

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

The present land use in the MQT area consists primarily of agricultural and residential uses, with a limited number of acres designated by the 2004 County General Plan for commercial purposes. Primary residential areas within MQT tend to primarily be located within the eastern portion of the district. There are no known development proposals expected to occur outside of a fire protection district boundary within the immediate vicinity of the MQT that may require a future amendment to the MQT sphere of influence.

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

Presently, all developed and undeveloped areas within the MQT district receive sufficient fire suppression and emergency response services as needed. There are no areas outside of the current MQT service boundaries that are likely to require inclusion consideration within its sphere of influence in the foreseeable future.

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

MQT appears to provide adequate 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.

MQT serves the communities of Mosquito and Swansboro Country; however, these would not be considered large, concentrated, social or economic communities of interest within the agency.

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that Mosquito FPD Sphere of Influence be updated to affirm its original sphere, which is coterminous with its current boundaries.