

EL DORADO LAFCO

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

AGENDA OF JANUARY 22, 2020

REGULAR MEETING

TO: Shiva Frentzen, Chair, and
Members of the El Dorado County Local Agency Formation
Commission

FROM: José C. Henríquez, Executive Officer

PREPARED BY: Riley Nork, Assistant Policy Analyst

AGENDA ITEM #4G: OPEN THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR THE DRAFT
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND SPHERE OF
INFLUENCE STUDY FOR THE EL DORADO COUNTY AND
GEORGETOWN DIVIDE RESOURCE CONSERVATION
DISTRICTS (LAFCO PROJECT NO. 2019-02)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission:

1. Open the Public Hearing to receive comments on the Draft El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study; and
2. Continue the Public Hearing until the February 26, 2020 meeting to allow sufficient time and opportunity for the public and the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District Board of Directors to review and comment on the study. Staff will return this item in February for final action and adoption.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION

The El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) Update provides a current snapshot of service delivery for the Districts, and also serves to identify areas of potential growth for future extension of services, or areas of potential reduction for lack of services, where appropriate. State Law requires that an MSR be performed before the Commission can update an agency's SOI.

BACKGROUND

El Dorado County RCD - The El Dorado County RCD (EDCRCD) was formed in 1939 by election of the landowners pursuant to the provisions of the California Public Resources Code. This district was created to address soil and other resource management problems in the southern portion of El Dorado County and promote sound land management practices by working with landowners on a voluntary basis to promote good stewardship.

The original district covered 28,684 acres with the boundaries coinciding with the El Dorado Irrigation District. Over the years, transfers of land and additions to the district have resulted in the current total of 617,241 acres. Generally, EDCRCD area includes land within El Dorado County south of the South Fork of the American River, excluding the Tahoe basin.

Georgetown Divide RCD - The Georgetown Divide RCD (GDRCD) was formed in 1953 under the provisions of the California Public Resources Code, Division 9, following a resolution of approval by the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors in 1956. It was organized to address resource management problems and promote sound management of natural resources in northern El Dorado County.

At the time of formation, GDRCD contained 224,678 acres and gradually increased in size to its present maximum of 345,060 acres. It is located on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, generally north of the South Fork of the American River and west of the crest of the Sierras.

Municipal Service Review Determinations

The MSR provides analysis for the statutory criteria set forth within the CKH Act, as well as additional locally adopted requirements. These criteria are listed as follows:

- Growth and Population Projections
- Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities
- Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies
- Financial Ability to Provide Services
- Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities
- Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies
- The Potential Effect of Agency Services on Agricultural and Open Space Lands

Throughout the analysis portions of the report, LAFCO staff did not identify any substantial areas for improvement or current issues faced by the Districts that needed to be addressed or resolved as a part of this Municipal Service Review. Overall, the MSR found that the EDCRCD and GDRCD provide sufficient resource conservation services consistent with the residents' expectations, as identified by the EDCRCD and GDRCD Board of Directors.

Because of the shared staff, coordination of programs and the close working relationship between the respective governing boards, the MSR determinations summarized below are for, and apply to, both agencies.

MSR Determination 1 – El Dorado County encompasses 1,805 square miles of the Sacramento Metropolitan area and had an estimated population of 185,000 people in 2017. Countywide, El Dorado County has experienced a significant population increase since 1990, largely occurring on the Western Slope. The Districts have experienced an increased demand for their services due to growth in the County's population and an increased awareness of, and demand for, the districts' educational programs.

MSR Determination 2 – Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs) are defined as inhabited territory (12 or more registered voters) that constitutes all or a portion of a community with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income. The 2017 statewide median household income was \$67,169 (U.S. Census Bureau 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates), making the median household income for a disadvantaged community as defined by the Water Code \$53,735.

According to 2014-15 Census data, multiple areas that are considered disadvantaged communities lie within the RCDs' boundaries. However, pursuant to Government Code Section 56430, disadvantaged unincorporated communities also lack water, waste water, and structural fire protection services. The RCDs do not provide any of these services. Most of the areas that are considered disadvantaged by the Census receive water and wastewater service from Georgetown Divide Public Utilities District and El Dorado Irrigation District. These areas also are within the service boundaries of one of the County's fire suppression agencies.

MSR Determination 3 – The El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCDs themselves do not own or maintain infrastructure beyond geographic information system (GIS) files, and general office equipment such as computers, utilized for administrative functions. The Districts operate in a consolidated office in Placerville, which is also shared with National Resources Conservation Service staff. The Districts share a website that provides an abundance of information and publications. In addition, staff is very receptive to public inquiries regarding the various programs and services that are available to landowners within the respective districts.

MSR Determination 4 – The primary source of funding is State and Federal grants. Grant funding is secured through a competitive process whereby the RCDs coordinate with other local agencies and organizations to align strategic priorities. In addition, the Districts currently have in place a five-year agreement (beginning in FY 2016-17) with the County in which they received \$406,750 from the County General Fund, to be apportioned in annual increments throughout the five years (\$81,350 per year). This agreement is adjusted each fiscal year according to the actual percentage change of the prior year's County general fund growth in assessed value. Through these measures, the Districts appear to be financially stable.

The El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCDs appear to be very adept at cost avoidance measures and sharing of facilities. The Districts' use of the same staff allows them to minimize the duplication of administrative resources. In addition to sharing office space with the NRCS, the Districts maintain a strong collaborative relationship with numerous local, state and federal agencies that are working toward a common goal of resource conservation within El Dorado County.

MSR Determination 5 – The RCDs participate in a number of cooperative efforts with public, private, and volunteer organizations with respect to protecting and restoring natural resources in El Dorado County. The Districts are two of only three resource conservation districts in the County, and already share a general manager, staff, and office space.

MSR Determination 6 – Each district is governed and managed by a locally elected or appointed volunteer board of directors. The EDCRCD and GDRCD have separate governing boards, yet share a staff of three employees, including a general manager, for all of their administrative and operational functions.

Although the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCDs share staff, office space, and resources, there is no recommendation for the two districts to merge into a single district at this time. While the stated Mission Statement of each district is the same, each are recognizably different from each other. Similarities between the Districts exist which are associated with such things as internal controls, policies, procedures and other related administrative processes. However, each district has its own independent Board of Directors which function independently to ensure natural resource concerns and local priorities are addressed.

MSR Determination 7 – One of the goals of the Districts is to promote the responsible stewardship of the natural resources within their service boundaries. This is accomplished, in part, by discouraging the premature conversion of agricultural, open space, or forest land to urban uses. The 2004 General Plan directs unincorporated growth to already existing population centers or “community regions.” Therefore, it is reasonable to expect areas such as El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park, Diamond Springs, Georgetown, Garden Valley, and Cool to be further developed to a medium or lesser density in the coming years.

Sphere of Influence Determinations

The MSR also includes a review of the existing SOI for the Districts to determine if changes should be made. Written determinations are included within the MSR consistent with the requirements of CKH that address the following:

- Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area, including Agricultural and Open-Space Lands
- Present and Probable Need for Public Facilities and Services
- Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services
- Existence of Any Social or Economic Communities of Interest
- Present and Probable Need for Public Facilities and Services Related to Water, Sewer, or Fire Protection, of any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community within the Existing Sphere of Influence

SOI Determination 1 – Present land use in the EDCRCD area varies depending on the location, and includes low to high-density residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural related activities such as orchards, vineyards, livestock, and timber production. Present land use in the GDRCD area includes primarily low to medium-density residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural related activities such as orchards, vineyards, livestock, and timber production.

Future land uses are expected to remain relatively unchanged, with population growth consistent with the 2004 General Plan within already-established community regions.

SOI Determination 2 – EDCRCD serves an estimated population of 125,293 people, and GDRCD serves an estimated population of 16,600 people. Both have experienced an amplified demand for services due to growth in the County's population and an increased awareness of, and demand for, the districts' educational programs. As more development occurs on the western slope, discretionary permits will require that more resource conservation practices are implemented to minimize their effects on the local environment.

SOI Determination 3 – Both districts appear to provide an above-average level of resource conservation services to district residents. Instead of receiving an increment of local property taxes, the RCDs receive revenue to fund their programs through various grants, and a base-contribution from the El Dorado County General Fund. The Districts do not appear to have difficulties in financing their operations at this time.

SOI Determination 4 – EDCRCD serves multiple distinct communities including the City of Placerville, El Dorado Hills, Cameron Park, and Diamond Springs, which represent the primary concentrated, social or economic communities of interest within the district. Also included in the EDCRCD boundaries are the areas of Rescue, Latrobe, Coloma, Camino, Pleasant Valley and Fairplay.

GDRCD serves multiple distinct communities within the Georgetown Divide, including Georgetown, Garden Valley, Cool, Greenwood, Pilot Hill, Kelsey, Quintette and Volcanoville. Georgetown and Garden Valley represent the primary concentrated, social or economic communities of interest within the district.

SOI Determination 5 – While LAFCO has identified disadvantaged communities within the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide service area boundaries, the Districts do not provide any of the municipal services as defined in Government Code 56425(e)(5).

Sphere of Influence Recommendations

This SOI was last updated on December 5, 2007. The SOI set by the Commission at the time affirmed the original sphere. Based upon the information contained in this report, it is recommended that the El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCD sphere of influence be updated to affirm the original sphere, as shown in Maps 1 and 2 of the Draft El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCD MSR/SOI Study.

Staff Outreach and Public Comment Period

Staff reached out to Mark Egbert, the General Manager for both districts, for additional information about the RCDs and provided him with an Administrative Draft of the report for review prior to this publishing of the Draft MSR. No comments were received on the Administrative Draft. The EDCRCD and GDRCD Boards, affected landowners, and the general public will have until the end of the public comment period on February 26, 2020 to submit comments for the Final MSR and SOI Update.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Draft El Dorado County and Georgetown Divide RCD Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study (LAFCO Project #2019-02)