

EL DORADO LAFCO

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

AGENDA OF MARCH 23, 2011

REGULAR MEETING

TO: Ken Humphreys, Chair, and
Members of the El Dorado County Local Agency Formation
Commission

FROM: José C. Henríquez, Executive Officer

**AGENDA ITEM #2G: OPEN THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR THE
COUNTYWIDE FIRE SUPPRESSION AND EMERGENCY
SERVICES DRAFT MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW**

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission:

1. Open the Public Hearing to receive comments on the Draft Countywide Fire Suppression and Emergency Services Municipal Service Review; and
2. Continue the Public Hearing until the next LAFCO meeting to allow sufficient time and opportunity for the governing boards of the agencies and the public to review and comment on the Municipal Service Review. Staff will return this item at the June LAFCO meeting for final action and adoption.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION

The Municipal Service Review (MSR) is required by State Law to serve as a guidance document for any future boundary changes to the agencies that provide fire suppression and emergency services in El Dorado County. Any comments received from the chiefs and their staff will be incorporated into the document before Commission adoption.

BACKGROUND

This MSR was prepared for all of the agencies that provide fire suppression and emergency services in El Dorado County. This study analyzes the agencies' ability to provide existing and future residents with fire protection, fire suppression and emergency medical services within their respective service areas. The MSR was prepared to meet the requirements and standards of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH). The Service Review was prepared using the Service Review Guidelines prepared by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

The fundamental role of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is to implement the CKH Act (found in Government Code §56000, et seq.), consistent with local conditions and circumstances. LAFCO's decisions are guided by the CKH Act. This MSR will assist the Commission and its staff when considering actions that will affect the following agencies:

- City of South Lake Tahoe Fire Department
- Diamond Springs/El Dorado Fire Protection District
- El Dorado County Fire Protection District
- El Dorado Hills County Water District
- Garden Valley Fire Protection District
- Georgetown Fire Protection District
- Lake Valley Fire Protection District
- Latrobe Fire Protection District
- Meeks Bay Fire Protection District
- Mosquito Fire Protection District
- Pioneer Fire Protection District
- Rescue Fire Protection District

Specifically, the MSR provides agency analysis based upon the six factors of analysis contained in OPR's Service Review Guidelines referenced above:

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area.
2. Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies.
3. Financial ability of agencies to provide services.
4. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities.
5. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies.
6. The potential effect of agency services on agricultural and open space lands.

The MSR discusses the operationally interconnected, yet financially fragile, system of fire suppression and emergency services system in El Dorado County. As with all local government, financial resources affect an agency's ability to provide quality, reliable service. Overall, this MSR found that all fire agencies have properly trained personnel and sufficiently well-maintained equipment to serve the public well. This is true even when some agencies have no paid staff or rely on older-than-recommended equipment. The crown jewel of inter-agency cooperation is the agency's automatic aid agreement, where the nearest resource is dispatched to an emergency regardless of jurisdictional boundaries. However, automatic aid comes at a price, and several districts are already nearing the breaking point.

While it did not start out that way, this report attempted to complement and enhance the 2010 Fire and Emergency Study (FESS) created by Citygate for the fire agencies and

the County of El Dorado. The MSR delved into subjects the FESS did not cover (population trends, governmental structure and reorganization options) and provided historical context on certain issues. In return, the FESS made this report better by diving deeper into operational issues in a more comprehensive way than LAFCO staff could have on its own.

In addition, the MSR reiterated the 2006 MSR's findings that

- Some agencies may need to realign their service areas if any reorganization (such as consolidation or merger) is ruled out as a possibility.
- The issues of service area islands and areas that are outside of agency boundaries continue.

Both of these issues speak to the fiscal inequity that exists within the system.

A complete list of references is included in the back of the MSR. LAFCO staff would like to thank the fire chiefs and their staff for their assistance, as well as the County Auditor's Office, the County Administrator's Office and staff from the California Department of Forestry.

Please note that the draft MSR does not contain complete call data. When the report was drafted, it contained "up-to-date" 2008 call data. Since the report is more than a year late, the goal is to include up to the 2010 data. This information will be listed in the final draft. In addition, the Lake Valley section was updated without district input. The narrative was submitted to Lake Valley for comment several times, but LAFCO staff did not receive any feedback from the district. Any comments from Lake Valley or any other district will be incorporated into the final draft. Finally, the sphere of influence recommendation for all agencies is to reaffirm the current SOI for the reasons specified in the study.

Attachment:

Attachment A: Draft Countywide Fire Suppression and Emergency Services Municipal Service Review (LAFCO Project No. 2008-02)--*Attachment included on accompanying CD*