

Municipal Service Review
For a Community Services District
Within Del Norte County

**Smith River
Community Services District**



Prepared by:

Del Norte
Local Agency Formation Commission

January 2009

For Updating the Sphere of Influence Report

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INTRODUCTION

This Municipal Service Review (MSR) was prepared as part of a mandated review of the spheres of influence (SOI) of all government entities in the County by the Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). This report focuses on the Smith River Community Services District (SRCSD). The purpose of this study is to examine and evaluate local governmental services in order to improve overall understanding of local service conditions and to enhance these conditions through comprehensive review and analysis. This MSR presents for the Commission's consideration a discussion, analysis, and recommendations regarding services provided by the SRCSD. The current SOI for the SRCSD was updated on March 8, 2007; this MSR serves to update the relevant data on services provided within the district's SOI. At this time, the SOI is not proposed to be amended.

Review Methods

This MSR was prepared by LAFCo staff during January of 2009. The SRCSD completed an agency profile questionnaire, which provided LAFCo with the current status of district operations. The draft report was sent to district staff for review and clarification. All information gathered for this report is stored in Del Norte LAFCo files for future reference.

Statutory Authority

The fundamental role of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) is to implement the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Act) consistent with local conditions and circumstances. The Act guides LAFCo's decisions. The major goals of LAFCo as established by the Act are to:

- Encourage orderly growth and development;
- Promote orderly development;
- Discourage urban sprawl;
- Preserve open-space and prime agricultural lands by guiding minimizing resource loss;
- Exercise its authority to ensure that affected populations receive efficient services;
- Promote logical formation and boundary modifications that direct the burdens and benefits of additional growth to those local agencies that are best suited to provide services;
- Make studies and obtain and furnish information which will contribute to the logical and reasonable development of local agencies to provide for present and future needs;

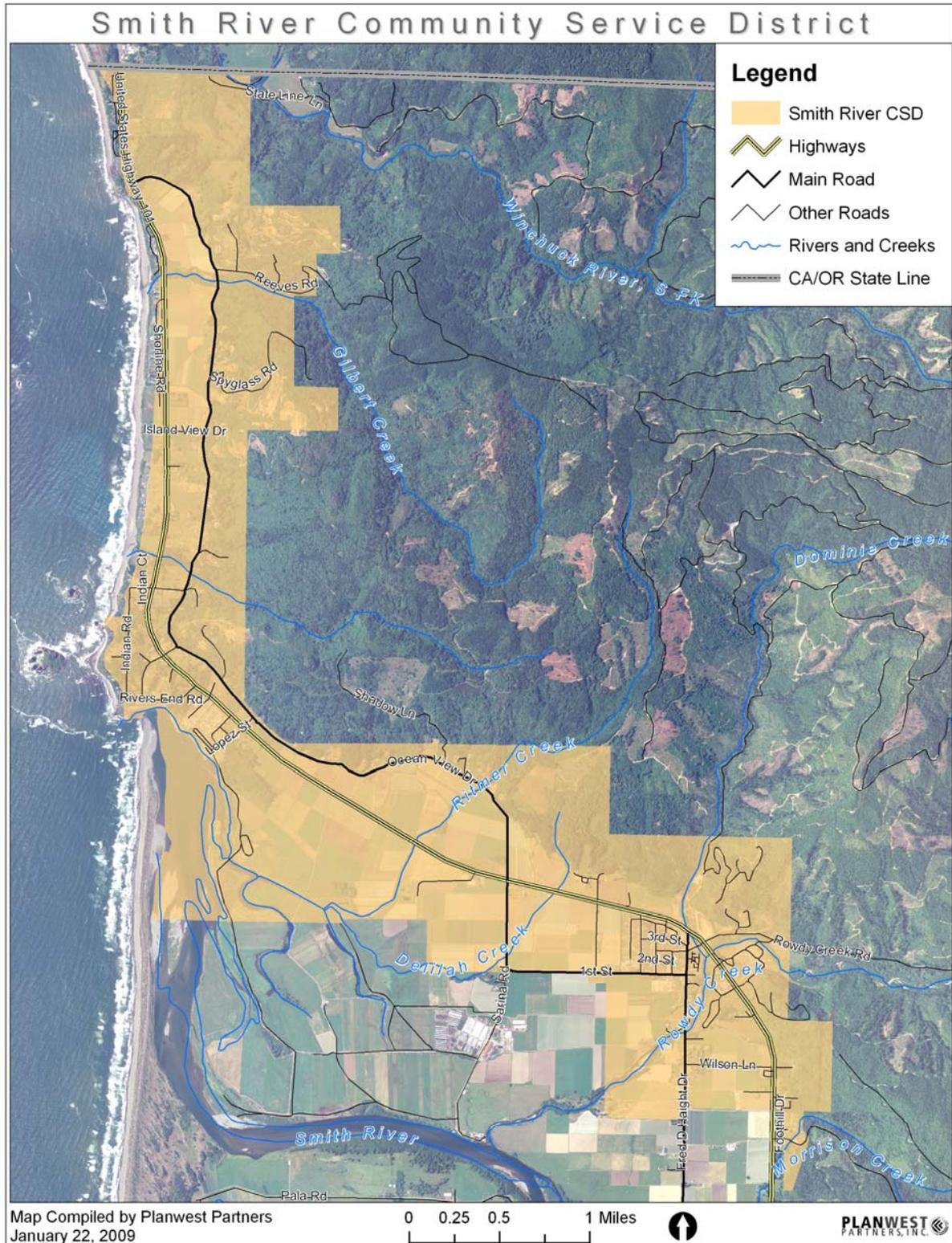
- Establish priorities by assessing and balancing community service needs with financial resources available to secure and provide community services and to encourage government structures that reflect local circumstances, conditions and financial resources;
- Determine whether new or existing agencies can feasibly provide needed services in a more efficient or accountable manner and, where deemed necessary,

As set forth in §56425(g) of the Act, on or before January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, Humboldt LAFCo shall review and update each Sphere of Influence (SOI). An MSR shall be conducted prior to, as a part of, or in conjunction with, the action to adopt, amend, or revise an SOI pursuant to the Act. Together, the SOI and MSR documents analyze the District's ability to serve existing and future residents.

In accordance with §56430 of the Act, in preparation for adopting, amending, or revising an SOI, Humboldt LAFCo shall comprehensively review all services and public service providers within the designated geographic area. The Commission shall prepare a written statement of determinations on six subject areas as pursuant to state law; these determinations may be utilized in future decision-making about the provision of services, appropriate boundaries, changes of organizations, and need to revise or update SOIs. LAFCO is required to make written determinations on the following:

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. Financing 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. Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

Figure 1: SRCSD Boundary and Sphere of Influence



AGENCY PROFILE

The Smith River Community Services District is located approximately 13 miles north of Crescent City in the northwest corner of the State of California. The district encompasses the mouth of the Smith River and extends north and southeast. The district provides services to the immediate area of the community of Smith River, as well as, to adjacent neighborhoods along Highway 101, Ocean View Drive, Indian Road, and Wilson Laneⁱ

Formation

The SRCSD was formed by Resolution of the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors on June 22, 1970. The special district was formed for the purpose of providing potable water to district residents.

Table 1: Agency Profile

Agency Name	Date of Formation	Enabling Legislation
Smith River Community Services District	June 22, 1970	
Contact Person	Contact Title	Email/Website
Myron Williamson	General Manager	srwater@ charterinternet.com
Mailing Address	Physical Address	Phone/Fax
SRCSD 241 1 st Street Smith River, CA 95567	SRCSD 241 1 st Street Smith River, CA 95567	Phone: (707) 487-5381 Fax: (707) 487-5191

Governance Structure and Administration

SRCSD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors that is elected by district residents. The Board meets on the second and fourth Monday of every month. Meeting dates are posted in the district office and an agenda is posted outside the district office 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Table 2: Board of Directors

Board Member	Title	Term Expiration
Tim Reichlin	President	2012
Keith Sellers	Vice President	2010
Ernie Silva	Treasurer	2012
Jim Floyd	Director	2010
Bruce Kohler	Director	2010

Population and Land Use

County Population and Growth

According to the State of California, Department of Finance, Del Norte County has an estimated 2008 population of 29,419ⁱⁱ. Del Norte County's 2007 population growth rate was 0.7%ⁱⁱⁱ. Assuming this growth continues, the County's 2025 population will be 33,136.

The County General Plan guides land use decisions within Del Norte County and the SRCSD's jurisdiction. Del Norte County covers approximately 1,008 square miles, or 640,000 acres. More than eighty percent of this land is publicly owned. The county consists of 600,000 acres of forestland and 10,000 acres of agricultural land^{iv}.

District Population and Housing Projections

The Smith River Rancheria is located within the SRCSD. The Rancheria is working on a master plan that includes both residential and non residential growth.

The Del Norte County General Plan includes Visitor Serving Commercial in both the Smith River Community and at the State line. There is also land designated in the CSD for additional residential development.

The District also has two pending annexation applications that could increase demand for additional residential development.

Services

The SRCSD provides water service to 600 connections and streetlighting to 200 residents within its boundary. There are also 150 standby customers not currently receiving water service. The district currently employs three full-time staff: an Office Manager, a Field Maintenance Operator, and a General Manager. All agency decisions are overseen by the Board of Directors.

Water

The district receives its water from four 40-foot wells that are that are set back approximately 100 feet from Rowdy Creek, upstream from Fred Haight Drive^v. The water is classified as "ground water under direct influence of surface water"^{vi}.

Infrastructure

The SRCSD's water system includes the following infrastructure:

- four 40-foot wells,
- eight storage tanks,
- four 25 horsepower pumps, and
- 35 miles of eight-inch mainline.

The district's total storage capacity is 900,000 gallons. Three main storage tanks have a 600,000 gallon combined storage capacity and five smaller storage tanks, located in proximity to various hill side subdivisions, have a 300,000 gallon combined storage capacity.

Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

The district has approximately 25 miles of Asbestos Cement piping that is more than 30 years old and needs replacement. The district needs additional main storage capacity.

Planned Upgrades

The SRCSD is in the construction phase of a water system upgrade project. This project will change the system's disinfectant from chlorine gas to sodium hydra chloride and will allow a silica phosphate additive for more aggressive water treatment.

Street Lights

The SRCSD provides street lights within the community of Smith River. Street lights are funded by direct charges on monthly utility bills and the district's general fund.

Services in Formation Authorization but not Currently Provided

- Collection, treatment or disposal of sewage, waste and storm water
- Collection or disposal of garbage or refuse
- Protection against fire
- Public recreation by means of parks, including but not limited to aquatic parks, and recreational harbors, playgrounds, golf courses, swimming pools, or recreational buildings
- Mosquito abatement
- The equipment and maintenance of a police department or other police protection
- To acquire sites for construction and maintenance of library buildings
- The opening, widening, extending, straightening, and surfacing in whole or part of any street, subject to the consent of the governing body of the county or city in which said improvement is to be made in
- The construction and improvement of bridges, culverts, curbs, gutters, drains, and works incidental to the purposes specified above, subject to the consent of the governing body of the county or city in which said improvement is to be made in

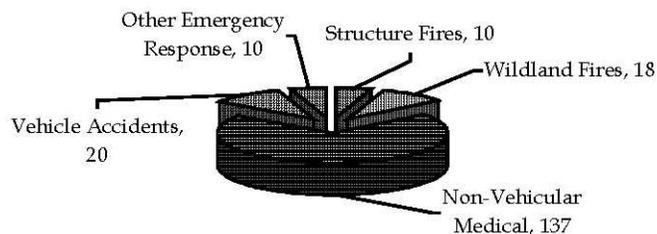
Other Service Providers

The Smith River Fire Protection District and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection provide fire services within the SRCSD's boundary. Law Enforcement and general governmental services are provided by the County. Wastewater treatment is handled by individual septic systems.

The Smith River Fire Protection District (SRFPD) provides first response fire and medical service to approximately 5,000 residents in their 25-square-mile District in Del Norte County. Twenty-six local residents currently volunteer with SRFPD, 15 of which are "active" firefighters. There are three paid staff members: Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, and Secretary^{vii}. SRFPD's main offices are located at 245 Haight Avenue in Smith River. There are two other fire stations located in this area: one on US Highway 199 in Hiouchi, and one on Low Divide Road.

Within Del Norte County, SRFPD can respond to incidents in the entire District within ten minutes. More than 80% of the District can be reached within five minutes, and 70% of the District is within a three-minute response from one of the SRFPD stations or engines. In 2003, SRFPD responded to a total of 195 incidents within the District^{viii}. The following table summarizes the type and frequency of incidents.

Figure 2: SRFPD Number of Incidents by Type



In addition to providing service within the Smith River area, SRFPD on occasion will respond outside of the District boundaries to incidents in Del Norte County where they are needed. SRFPD has mutual aid agreements with all of the Fire Protection Districts in Del Norte County, as well as Crescent City Fire. SRFPD Station #2 (Hiouchi) has an auto-aid agreement with Gasquet FPD^{ix}.

The Smith River Rancheria is completing a wastewater treatment facility within the CSD. Treated effluent will be piped north to be land applied to pasture land in the CSD.

Budget

Water

The SRCSD's draft 2009 budget estimates \$483,707 in water revenues and expenditures. The primary sources of water revenues include water sales and fees (80%) and interest income (3%). The primary water expenditures include employee salaries and benefits (35%), general expenses (14%), and supplies and equipment rentals (10%).

Street Lights

The SRCSD's draft 2009 budget estimates \$25,120 in street lights revenues and expenditures. The primary sources of street lights revenues include street light income (50%), County share income (34%), and investment income (15%). The primary street lights expenditures include electricity costs (30%), employee salaries and benefits (21%), and liability insurance (5%).

The district currently has no outstanding debt.

Table 3: Budget Summary

Water	FY 07-08 (Actual)	FY 08-09 (Budget)
Total Revenue	\$410,072	\$483,707
Total Expenditures	\$314,922	\$483,707
Balance	\$95,150	\$0
Street Lights	FY 07-08 (Actual)	FY 08-09 (Budget)
Total Revenue	\$24,884	\$25,120
Total Expenditures	\$20,629	\$25,120
Reserve Balance	\$4,255	\$0

MSR DETERMINATIONS

Growth and population projections for the affected area

There is potential for growth in the CSD area as identified in both Del Norte County and Smith River Rancheria planning. Additional Visitor serving commercial and residential development would increase demand for existing services, and those such as wastewater not currently publicly available in the Smith River Area, and extending to the Oregon Border. Smith River Rancheria growth projections are being developed as part of their master plan, and will likely increase population growth in the area.

Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies

Expansion of services will likely be needed to accommodate Del Norte County planned residential and non residential growth and ongoing growth by the Smith River Rancheria. The Smith River CSD is the most likely service provider for the north coastal portion of Del Norte County.

Financing ability of agencies to provide services

SRCSO currently has no debt. The majority of the District's income comes from service charges, but funding also comes from property taxes, interest revenue, connection fees, and other smaller sources. These should be periodically reviewed and adjusted as necessary. The District prepared an Improvement Design Report and Recommended Development Fees for Water System in 1992. The district should update this report, and review service connection fees at least every two years and make adjustments as necessary.

Status of and, opportunities for, shared facilities

SRCSO shares office space with the Del Norte Resource Conservation District and provides water service supplies to the Smith River Fire Protection District. There may also be opportunities for shared facilities with Smith River Rancheria.

Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

The SRCSO board meets regularly in public meetings. The Board members are elected by District residents and hold four year terms of office. A General Manager oversees the day-to-day operations of the District. The current government structure is operating efficiently, and appears to have sufficient governance structure and operational capacity, no change is needed.

Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy

The Smith River CSD should review all services identified in formation authorization and make an assessment of whether to expand to serve planned growth

SOI STATUS

The SRCSO should take action to increase the SOI to include the two pending annexations.

REFERENCES

ⁱ Del Norte County General Plan Background Report.

ⁱⁱ State of California, Department of Finance, E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties and the State with Annual Percent Change — January 1, 2007 and 2008. Sacramento, California, May 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ *ibid*

^{iv} DNRCD flier. *Del Norte Resource Conservation District: Benefiting Land and People in Del Norte County*. Accessed throughout January 2009.

http://ruralhumanservices.org/nortec/July_Sept06/DNRCD%20Flyer/DNRCD%20Flyer.pdf.

^v *ibid*

^{vi} SRCSD MSR Questionnaire. Completed in January 2009 by Myron Williamson.

^{vii} Del Norte Fire Safe Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Del Norte Fire Safe Council. September, 2005.

^{viii} *ibid*

^{ix} *ibid*