

# Smith River Community Services District

## Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update



**ADOPTED**

September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Del Norte**

**Local Agency Formation Commission**

# DEL NORTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

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## Acknowledgements

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# INTRODUCTION

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This Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence (SOI) Update provides information about the services and boundaries of the Smith River Community Services District (herein referred to as Smith River CSD or District) The report is for use by the Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) in conducting a statutorily required review and update process. The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH Act) requires that the Commission conduct periodic reviews and updates of Spheres of Influence of all cities and special districts in Shasta County (Government Code § 56425). State law also requires that, prior to SOI adoption, LAFCo must conduct a review of the municipal services provided by that local agency (Government Code §56430). This report provides LAFCo with a tool to study current and future public service conditions comprehensively and to evaluate organizational options for accommodating growth, preventing urban sprawl, and ensuring that critical services are provided efficiently.

## Community Service District and Principal Act Overview

Community Service Districts (CSDs) are independent special districts governed under Community Service District law (Government Code § 61000 – 61850). A CSD can be authorized to provide a wide variety of services including domestic water, wastewater treatment, garbage collection, security, fire protection public recreation, street lighting, and many others to unincorporated areas. CSDs are governed by a board of five directors, all of whom are elected at large.

Smith River CSD is authorized to provide water and street lighting services. All other remaining services, facilities, functions or powers enumerated in the District’s principal act but not identified in the formation resolution are “latent,” meaning that they are authorized by the principal act under which the District is formed, but are not being exercised. Activation of these latent powers and services requires LAFCo authorization.

## Service Review Determinations

Government Code § 56430 requires LAFCo to conduct a review of municipal services provided in the county by region, sub-region or other designated geographic area, as appropriate, for the service or services to be reviewed, and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to each of the following topics:

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area;
2. The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence;
3. Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies (including needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged, unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence);
4. Financial ability of agencies to provide services;

5. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities;
6. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies; and
7. Any other matter affecting or related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by Commission policy.

State Guidelines and Commission policies encourage stakeholder cooperation in the municipal service review process. It also provides a basis to evaluate, and make changes to Spheres of Influence, if appropriate.

## **Sphere of Influence Determinations**

A SOI is a LAFCo-approved plan that designates an agency's probable physical boundary and service area. Spheres are planning tools used to provide guidance for individual boundary change proposals and are intended to encourage efficient provision of organized community services, discourage urban sprawl and premature conversion of agricultural and open space lands, and prevent overlapping jurisdictions and duplication of services.

LAFCo is required to establish SOIs for all local agencies and enact policies to promote the logical and orderly development of areas within the SOIs. Furthermore, LAFCo must update those SOIs every five years. For a SOI update, LAFCo is required to conduct a MSR and adopt related determinations. It must also make the following SOI determinations:

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands;
2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide;
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; and
5. The present and probable need for public facilities and services related to sewers, municipal or industrial water, or structural fire protection of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence (effective July 1, 2012).

## **Review Methods**

The following information was considered in the development of this service review:

- Agency-specific data: responses to LAFCo Requests for Information;
- Demographic data: U.S. Census Bureau; Department of Finance; CA Water Resources Board;
- Finances: budgets, rates and fees; and
- Other Reports: State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water.

Information gathered was analyzed and applied to make the required determinations. All information gathered for this report is filed by LAFCo for future reference.

## California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is contained in Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq. Public agencies are required to evaluate the potential environmental effects of their actions. MSRs are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to § 15262 (feasibility or planning studies) and categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15306 (information collection). CEQA requirements are applicable to SOI Updates. The CEQA lead agency for SOI Updates is most often LAFCo, unless an agency has initiated an SOI expansion or update.

## SMITH RIVER COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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### District Overview

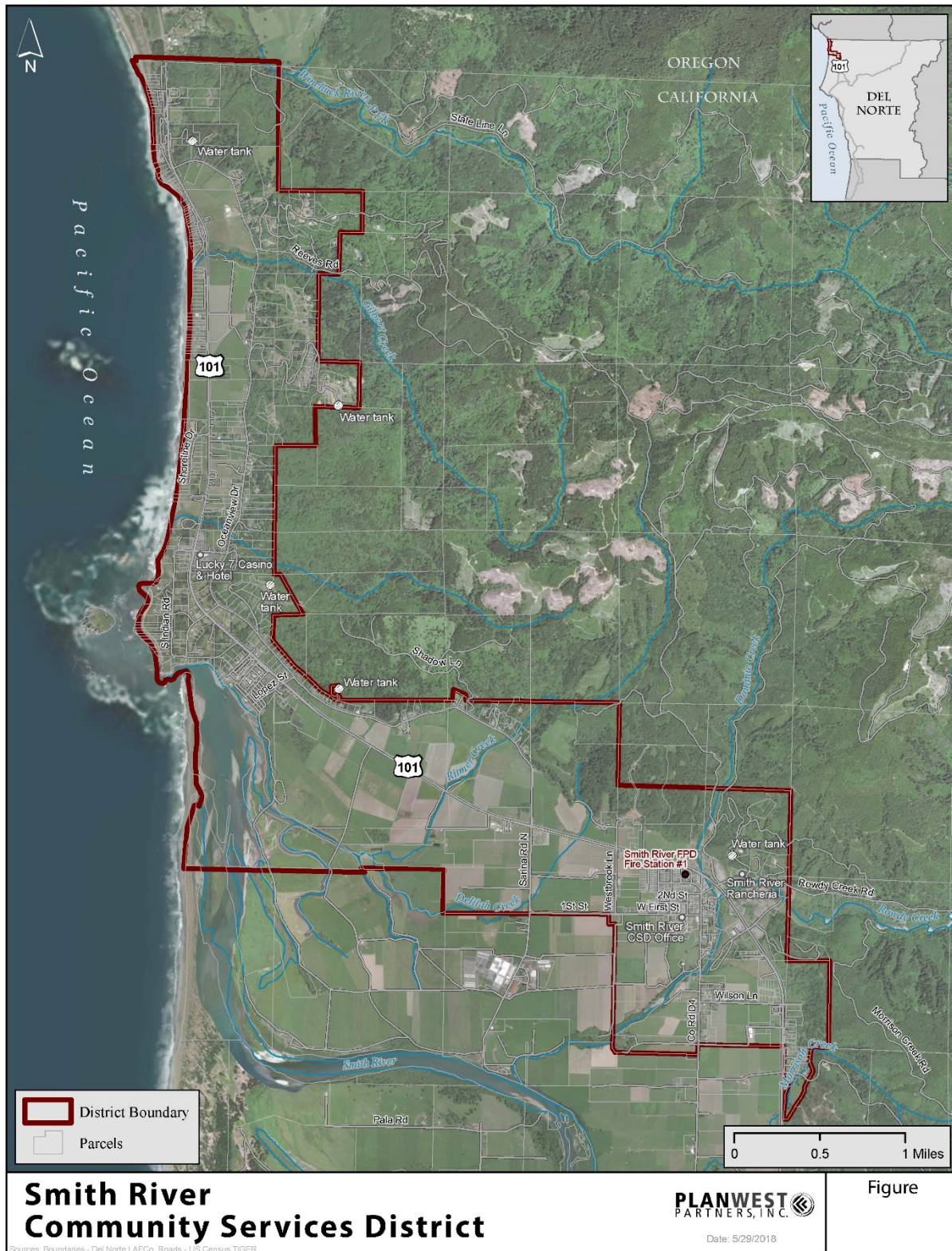
Smith River CSD provides domestic water, community center management and street lighting services. The District is located in northwestern Del Norte County, approximately 13 miles north of Crescent City; it encompasses the mouth of the Smith River and extends along Highway 101 north to the Oregon border (Figure 1). The District serves the unincorporated community of Smith River as well as Ocean View Drive, Wilson Lane, and other neighborhoods adjacent to Highway 101. Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation (a federally recognized Native American Tribe) lands are located within District boundaries. A MSR was previously prepared in 2009; this document updates the previous MSR and builds upon information provided therein.

**Table 1: Smith River CSD Agency Profile**

Formation	
Agency Name	Smith River Community Services District
Formation Date	June 22, 1970
Principal Act	Government Code §61000 - 61850
Contact	
Main Contact	Kathryn Demry, Office Administrator
E-mail	office.admin@srwater.net
District Office Address	241 West First St., Smith River, CA 95567
Alternate Contact	General Manager (when hired): general.manager@srwater.net
Phone/ Fax	(707) 487-5381 / (707) 487-5191
Governance	
Governing Body	Board of Directors
Board Meetings	Second and fourth Monday of every month
Staffing	General Manager, and staff (Kathryn Demry)
Services	
Services Provided	Domestic water, street lighting and community hall management
Areas Served	The unincorporated community of Smith River and adjacent neighborhoods along Highway 101 to the Oregon border.



Figure 1. District Boundary and SOI



## Formation

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

## Boundary and Sphere of Influence

The Smith River CSD covers approximately 2,500 acres (3.9 square miles). The District boundary and SOI are coterminous, as shown on Figure 1. No recent District boundary changes have been initiated.

## Accountability and Governance

Smith River CSD is governed by a five-member Board of Directors, elected at large by District residents to serve four year terms (Table 2). The Board meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month at the district office. Meeting dates and agendas are posted 72 hours prior to the meetings at the district office and are noted on resident's monthly water bills. District Staff can be reached by phoning the District Office, at the phone numbers provided in Table 1.

## Management & Staffing

The District currently employs two full-time and one part-time staff member: A General Manager, a Field Maintenance Operator, and an Office Manager. All agency decisions are overseen by the Board of Directors upon consideration of public input and discussion.

**Table 2: Smith River CSD Board of Directors**

Board Member	Title	Term Expiration
Bruce Kohler	Director	2018
Jo Ann Van Valkenburgh	Board Member	2018
Robert Dytewski	Board Member	2018
Tim Reichlin	Board Member	2020
Ernest Silva	Board Member	2020

## Population and Land Use

### Land Use

The Del Norte County General Plan (2003) and Zoning Code guides land use decisions within the unincorporated portion of Del Norte County including the community of Smith River. The area served by Smith River CSD is largely agricultural, commercial timber production lands, recreation areas, and low density residential. More concentrated residential areas are located in the communities of Smith River and Tolowa Dee-ni' Nation trust lands. The District also contains areas of light industrial and commercial areas, generally along the Highway 101 corridor and includes the federally recognized Wild and Scenic Smith River estuary. Much of the western border of the CSD is located along the coast and in the tsunami inundation zone.



## **County Population and Growth**

According to the US Census, the total population in Del Norte County was 27,507 in 2000 and 28,610 in 2010. The Department of Finance 2016 (DOF) reports a 1.07 percent increase in the unincorporated population of Del Norte County between 2015 and 2016, however, county population predictions from US Census data report a much lower rate of annual growth at only about 0.1 percent.

## **District Population and Growth**

The Smith River CSD estimates a District population of approximately 2,568. The District will likely continue to grow at or less than the current county-wide growth rate of 0.1 percent per year, putting the District population at approximately 2600 in 2030.

Smith River CSD provides domestic water service to approximately 590 active connections as well as street lighting to a population of approximately 3,000 people in the unincorporated community of Smith River. Opportunities for growth exist, but constraints such as flood plains and hillsides are growth barriers. Some tribal related growth is anticipated.

## **Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities**

LAFCo is required to evaluate water service, sewer service, and structural fire protection within disadvantaged unincorporated communities as part of this service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. A disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters where the annual median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income (pursuant to Government Code Section 56033.5 and Water Code Section 79505.5). Within a DUC, three basic services are evaluated: water, sewage, and fire protection. Smith River CSD provides domestic water services only and is therefore responsible for assuring that this service is adequately provided to the community. Community wastewater services are not provided in this area; the community relies upon individual septic tanks for sewage disposal. The Smith River Fire Protection District provides fire protection services within all of Smith River CSD.

According to the 2015 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the California median household income (MHI) is \$63,783. Smith River CSD is in Community Place, 0672380 and has a MHI of \$32,426 which is 51 percent of the state average MHI, thereby qualifying the area as disadvantaged. Should territory in the surrounding area be proposed for annexation in the future, disadvantaged communities in the area should be considered.

## **Services & Infrastructure**

### **Services Provided**

Smith River CSD provides water storage, treatment and distribution and street light services for the Smith River community, with a total of 590 active and 100 stand-by water service connections. The Smith River CSD holds a state water permit (public water system No. 0810002) for drinking water treatment and distribution. The water system and treatment plant originally permitted March 31, 1980 are reviewed annually by Del Norte County Public Health Department.

Based on the Department of Water Resources Groundwater Basin Maps (Bulletin 118), Smith River CSD is located in the Smith River Plain Groundwater Basin in the Smith River Watershed.

### Water Source

The water system is supplied by four 40-foot wells that are approximately 100 feet from Rowdy Creek, upstream from Fred Haight Drive.

**Table 3: Smith River CSD Water Source Data**

Source	Status	Capacity (gpm)
Well 01	Active	290
Well 02	Active	175
Well 03	Active	140
Well 04	Active	200
<b>Total</b>		<b>805</b>

### Water Treatment and Storage

Water is treated with sodium hypochlorite and a sodium silicate additive is used.

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.

### Water Demand

There is currently adequate water system capacity to service at the active and stand-by connections. The system has the capacity to provide 350-500 gpm.

### Infrastructure Overview

The water system includes four 40-foot wells, two 225,000-gallon redwood storage tanks, three 100,000-gallon redwood storage tanks, and three smaller tanks that have a combined capacity of 125,000 gallons. There are four 25-horsepower pumps and 35-miles of eight-inch mainline for water distribution.

### Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

Critical infrastructure needs include the replacement of the wooden storage tanks, secured tank foundations, and the installation of new fire hydrants. Additional main storage capacity is currently being added. According to the prior MSR, 25 miles of piping is made of asbestos cement and is in need of replacement.

### System Monitoring

System monitoring is performed annually and is reported to customers via the Annual Water Quality reports. The most recent report available is from 2015 and reports that the City of Crescent City's water met all EPA and State drinking water health standards.

### Street Lighting

The Smith River CSD 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.

### **Hall Management & Maintenance**

Smith River CSD has a community hall that it provides to the community as a rental space for events. The hall rental provides a significant source of income for the District with rental income of nearly \$30,000 for FY 2017-18. The District maintains and manages the hall.

### **Potential Latent Powers Activation –**

Community Service Districts (CSDs) are formed and governed in accordance with the Community Services District Law, Government Code §61000 et seq. CSDs can provide a range of municipal services pursuant to the principal act (CSD Law). Any service or function that is authorized by the principal act of the District but is not listed as one of a CSD's functions when the CSD was formed, or subsequently approved by LAFCO is considered a "latent power." A CSD wishing to exercise a latent power must first receive LAFCO approval before providing the service. The recently revised CSD law now provides that LAFCO approval is the final action for activating a latent power; a vote of the district's residents is no longer needed to activate a power.

### **Telecommunications Services**

The Smith River area community members lack high speed telecommunications infrastructure available to other areas. Special Districts have the authority to provide this service in underserved areas. The Smith River CSD is interested in activating its latent powers to provide internet service to the community. A Telecommunications Feasibility Study would need to be conducted that would include four steps: Technological Infrastructure Analysis, Customer Analysis, a Financial Plan and an Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup>. Within the Feasibility Study, the Technological Infrastructure section would include a review of existing fiber, microwave telecommunications, wireless communications towers, and potential service providers co-located on these facilities, a topographical analysis, and an emergency services telecommunications inventory. Customer Analysis would consist of developing a subscriber database and conducting a community meeting to assess community members' willingness to pay for locally provided high-speed internet access. Financial Planning would develop initial costs and ongoing operations and maintenance costs and identify potential funding sources. Implementation Planning would consist of preparing a business plan to summarize findings and demonstrate a path forward.

### **Wastewater**

The Smith River CSD does not currently provide wastewater services. Like telecommunications services described above, Special Districts have the authority to provide this service as well. Some municipal wastewater collection and treatment is provided by Tolowa-Smith River Rancheria for the casino hotel area. The District is looking into the provision of waste water services in the future and may build a treatment plant that would provide service. There are options for pre-manufactured package plants that are suitable for small communities and rural areas. This service would revitalize the commercial economy and allow for a more vibrant community.

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<sup>1</sup> Telecommunications Feasibility Study

## Other Public Service Providers

The County of Del Norte provides general governmental services including social services, emergency services, planning, county roads and parks, etc. to the unincorporated areas of Del Norte County. Law Enforcement is provided by the Del Norte County Sheriff's Office. The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) is responsible for the condition of U.S. Highway 101 that bisects the Smith River CSD.

### Other Service Providers

#### *Fire Protection*

Fire protection is currently provided by the Smith River Fire Protection District (Smith River FPD or District). The District purchased the vacant grocery store building at Hwy 101 and N. Fred Haight Drive in Smith River, for use as a fire station. The district has retained an architect and gone through a community outreach effort to solicit input on facility design. The District has also formed an advisory committee for ongoing input. This is part of a multi-year effort to develop the building and site. Planned building improvements include strengthened floors to handle fire apparatus, a new roof and a seismic retrofit. Other potential uses suggested during community outreach include a training facility, emergency services dispatch and sheriff substation. The building and site are larger than the District needs for a fire station and other community uses could be accommodated.

## Shared Facilities & Services

The Tolowa Dee-ni Nation, a federally recognized tribe of the Tolowa Indians, has property holdings within District boundaries. The Tribe maintains its own water and wastewater systems that serve tribal enterprises and residents in the Smith River area in and around the Lucky 7 Casino and Hotel. Additional expansion of the water system onto reservation lands is being planned.

## Budget

The District's primary revenue sources include water fees and service fees (standby and hook-up fees). The District's expenses are primary salaries, utilities, professional fees, and loan repayment. For the 2017-18 fiscal year the District's revenues exceeded its expenditures by \$27,829.

**Table 4: Smith River CSD Budget Summary**

<b>FY 2017-18 Adopted</b>	
<b>Revenues</b>	
Hall Rental Income	\$29,025.00
Street Light Revenue	\$22,900.00
Interest Income	\$0.00
Water Revenue	\$362,420.00
Misc.	\$0.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$414,345.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Salaries	\$194,302.00
Operating Expenses	\$6,800.00
Office Supplies	\$60,840.00
Rent	\$9,450.00
Communications	\$6,250.00
Utilities	\$59,546.00
Repairs & Maintenance	\$21,100.00
Professional Services	\$16,652.00
Insurance	\$11,576.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$386,516.00</b>
<b>Bond Financing Sources</b>	
<b>Bond Financing Uses</b>	

## Service Rates

Smith River CSD held a public hearing to adopt new water rates on February 26, 2018. Water rates will increase over a 5-year period beginning July 1, 2018 through FY 2022-23 when the final rates will be adopted. By the 5th year, SRCSD will have a balanced budget that will cover operational expenses and furnish the required reserves. A cost analysis of hill customers was done to determine the extra cost of delivering water and it was determined that hill customers should be charged 5.63% more on base charges and 13.45% more on the usage rate. Customers are charged a usage fee for every 100 c. f. of usage over 500 c.f.



**Table 5: Smith River CSD Fee Schedule (2018-2023)**

Meter Size	Town Customers Base Rate Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
0.625	\$30.85	\$32.40	\$34.02	\$35.72	\$37.50
0.750	\$46.28	\$48.59	\$51.02	\$53.58	\$56.25
1.000	\$77.13	\$80.99	\$85.04	\$89.29	\$93.76
1.500	\$77.13	\$80.99	\$85.04	\$89.29	\$93.76
2.00	\$246.83	\$259.17	\$272.13	\$285.74	\$300.02
3.000	\$246.83	\$259.17	\$272.13	\$285.74	300.02
4.000	\$771.35	\$850.41	\$850.41	\$892.93	\$937.58
6.000	\$1542.69	\$1700.82	\$1,700.82	\$1,785.86	\$1875.15
8.000	\$1542.69	\$1700.82	\$1,700.82	\$1,785.86	\$1875.15
Usage	\$1.35	\$1.42	\$1.49	\$1.56	\$1.64
Meter Size	Hill Customer Base Rate Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
0.625	\$32.59	\$34.22	\$35.93	\$37.73	\$39.62
0.750	\$48.89	\$51.33	\$53.90	\$56.59	\$59.42
1.000	\$81.48	\$85.55	\$89.83	\$94.32	\$99.04
1.500	\$81.48	\$85.55	\$89.83	\$94.32	\$99.04
2.00	\$260.73	\$273.77	\$287.46	\$301.83	\$316.92
3.000	\$260.73	\$273.77	\$287.46	\$301.83	\$316.92
4.000	\$814.79	\$855.53.	\$893.30	\$943.22	\$990.38.
6.000	\$1,629.57	\$1711.05	\$1,796.61	\$1,886.44	\$1980.76
8.000	\$1,629.57	\$1711.05	\$1,796.61	\$1,886.44	\$1980.76
Usage	\$1.53	\$1.61	\$1.69	\$1.77	\$1.86

### Financing Constraints and Opportunities

There is an opportunity to convert from manually read meters to an automated system, although this requires a significant up-front capital investment that would be paid off over time. There is also an opportunity to expand services, to serve the community, as described in this MSR.

### Cost Avoidance Opportunities

No cost avoidance opportunities were identified.

# MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

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This section addresses the requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (California Government Code Section 56430). As part of the municipal service review process, LAFCo makes the following written determinations.

## **Growth and population projections**

Smith River CSD was created to provide domestic water and street lighting to the community of Smith River. Population growth and population projections for the service area is expected to be limited or none.

## **The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

Smith River CSD has been identified as being a DUC. There are no other DUCs in the vicinity that could be served by the CSD.

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

There is currently excess water system capacity to serve all the active service connections.

## **Financial ability of agencies to provide services**

Smith River CSD has adequate resources to provide services and is considering expansion to included wastewater services and improved internet via adding telecom towers. For the 2017-18 fiscal year the District's revenues exceeded its expenditures by \$27,829.

## **Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities**

Smith River CSD is located in a rural region where physical separation from other communities limits the area where extension of domestic water services is practical. Due to limitations in distance and terrain, no opportunities for shared facilities have been identified.

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

The Smith River CSD is governed by the Smith River CSD Board of Directors. The CSD demonstrated accountability and transparency by disclosing financial and service related information in response to LAFCo requests.

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

None beyond those listed.

# SPHERE OF INFLUENCE DETERMINATIONS

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Del Norte LAFCo makes the following written determinations

**Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.**

The area serviced by the Smith River CSD is primarily agricultural, commercial timber production lands, recreation areas, and residential developments. There are areas of light industrial and commercial areas, most of which are vacant. Opportunities for growth exist, but physical hazards and constraints such as flood plains and hillsides are barriers to growth.

**Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.**

Prior to considering expanding services outside the current service area, the Smith River CSD must demonstrate the ability to provide services to those areas.

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

The current capacity of public facilities provided by the District appear to be adequate to serve current demand. All community services districts are now required to have websites. The Smith River CSD does not currently have a website and needs to set one up.

**Existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.**

Smith River CSD is located north of the City of Crescent City, which provides a major shopping and service industry hub for local residents in Del Norte County. Smith River's commercial and public businesses support daily local needs of the population.

**For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection, the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere.**

The Smith River CSD is considered a DUC. There are no DUCs adjacent to the CSD that should be considered for inclusion in the SOI.

## REFERENCES

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CA Dept. of Water Resources: [http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources\\_dac.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/resources_dac.cfm)

CA Dept of Water Resources Groundwater info center:  
<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/gwinfo/index.cfm>

Safe Drinking Water Information System

[https://sdwis.waterboards.ca.gov/PDWW/JSP/WaterSystemDetail.jsp?tinwsys\\_is\\_number=278&tinwsys\\_st\\_code=CA&wsnumber=CA0810002](https://sdwis.waterboards.ca.gov/PDWW/JSP/WaterSystemDetail.jsp?tinwsys_is_number=278&tinwsys_st_code=CA&wsnumber=CA0810002)

US Census Bureau: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/06>