

Shasta Local Agency Formation Commission



Municipal Services Review & Sphere of Influence Update

Western Shasta Resource Conservation District

April 2014

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary.....
- 2. General Background
- 3. District Services.....
 - a. Infrastructure, Facilities, Services
 - b. Administration, Management, Operations.....
 - c. Fiscal.....
 - d. Governance.....
- 4. Regional context/Relevant services by other agencies
- 5. Agency Boundary & Proposed Sphere of Influence Service Area
- 6. Written Determinations for Municipal Service Review.....
 - a. Growth & population projections.....
 - b. Disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs)
 - c. Present and planned capacity of public facilities
 - d. Adequacy of public services.....
 - e. Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies
 - f. Financing Constraints and Opportunities
 - g. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring
 - h. Status of and Opportunities for Shared Facilities.....
 - i. Accountability for community service needs,
governmental structure and operational efficiencies
- 7. Written Determinations for Sphere of Influence Update
- a. Present/planned land uses
- b. Present and probable need for public facilities and services.....
- c. Present capacity of public facilities/adequacy of services
- d. Existence of social or economic communities of interest.....
- e. Present and probable needs of disadvantaged unincorporated
communities within area
- 8. Conclusion.....
- 9. References
- 10. Exhibits.....
 - a. Map of District showing proposed SOI Boundary Update.....
 - b. Map of Western Shasta RCD Service Area.....
 - c. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) Calculator
 - d. Notice of Intent to Adopt CEQA Determination – Statutory Exemption PRC
21083
 - e. No Effect Determination – California Department of Fish & Wildlife
 - f. Resource Conservation District Guidebook:
 - i. What is an RCD?.....
 - ii. Powers and Authorities of RCDs under Division 9
 - iii. [Public Resources Code 9001-9978]
 - iv. Common Federal and State Programs for Local
Conservation Assistance

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Local agency formation commissions have been tasked with updating local agency municipal service reviews (MSR) and sphere of influence boundaries (SOI) every five years since 2008 [Government Code Section 56425 *et seq.*]. This study presents a baseline review of the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District services and SOI needs, satisfying the requirements of this statute.

2. GENERAL BACKGROUND

To understand how integral Resource Conservation District services are to the protection and productivity of local agricultural and natural resources, it will help to take a quick look at how these seldom heard of local agencies came into being in California.

U.S. Soil and Water Conservation Service/National Resource Conservation Service

In 1933 during the height of the “Dust Bowl” the Soil Erosion Service was created under the Department of Interior, later moving to the US Department of Agriculture and becoming the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) and sixty years later the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS).

The SCS was authorized in 1936 to “make payments and grants of aid to support approved soil and water conservation measures.” Its projects were successful but covered too little territory and were far too expensive. It was deemed that a true grass-roots approach was required, legally constituted local organizations called Soil Conservation Associations, to manage “all erosion control work on private lands.” President Franklin D. Roosevelt notified all states, “suggesting that farmers and ranchers be granted the authority to establish districts specifically for conservation of soil and water resources.” [*Soil and Water Resources Appraisal, 1980*]

California authorized formation of RCDs under the Public Resources Code, Division 9, and landowners began to petition their counties to initiate proceedings for these new local agencies.

This system connected the NRCS with landowners through these newly minted RCDs. NRCS provided the funding, the RCDs provided planning services, and the landowners agreed to participate in projects on private lands. It is one of the oldest and most successful government agencies of its kind. Private landowners voluntarily conserve soil, water, air, plant, animal, wildlife, and related resources.

The NRCS itself is a non-regulatory federal agency that provides conservation technical assistance and as of 2011 administers over 41 different local conservation programs, including:

**Western Shasta Resource Conservation District
Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update**

| | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Farm Bill | Grasslands Reserve | Healthy Forests Reserve |
| Wetlands Reserve | National Ag Water Mgmt. Team | Snow Survey/Water Supply |
| Wildlife Habitat Incentive | Conservation Tech. Assistance | Gulf of Mexico Initiative |
| International programs | Water Management | Water Quality |
| Watershed programs | Fish and Wildlife | Insects & Pollinators |
| Invasive Species and Pests | Livestock | Plants |

NRCS does not enforce laws or ordinances, issue permits, or respond to complaints in a regulatory manner. Individuals who participate in NRCS programs are responsible for compliance with all laws, ordinances and permit requirements. In return, NRCS provides advice and counsel, and, by agency policy, protects the confidentiality of its clients, customers, and the public.

Resource Conservation Districts

Although initially empowered to manage and conserve soil and water resources, additional powers were added in 1971 to add “related resources” including fish and wildlife habitat. Today, resource conservation districts manage a wide variety of conservation projects. Education of agriculturists on better and new environmental practices, particularly around water conservation, is a high priority. Other typical projects include:

| | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Soil & Water Conservation | Habitat Improvement | Exotic plant & species control |
| Watershed Restoration | Conservation Planning | Conservation Education |
| Creek restoration | Stream Bank Restoration | Fish Passage |
| Hedgerow Plantings | Community Education | Grower Workshops |
| Native Plantings | Creek Clean-up Programs | Classroom Visits |
| Fire Prevention Projects | Fire Prevention Education | Technical Assistance |
| Ag Discharge Waivers | Post Fire/flood emergency svc | Defensible space for homes |

Most RCD receive very little funds from local taxation. They rely heavily on grants and others forms of fundraising to continue operations.

Although RCDs continue to provide private landowners with these services, they now function as leaders in the conservation community, especially within watersheds, with Coordinated Resource Management Planning (CRMO) programs.

RCDs are uniquely placed between NRCS and the private landowners, permitting the flow of public funds and local planning programs that encourage landowners to support and participate in the multiple national conservation goals.

As of 1988 there were 103 RCDs in California. The state currently has programs designed to encourage the consolidation of the many smaller RCDs. Geographical and local social interests do not always support such consolidation efforts. In Shasta County, two RCDs have co-existed for decades, divided by a mountain system and soils systems that are at opposite ends of the scale. In Colusa County, for example, a reorganization/consolidation of

Western Shasta Resource Conservation District Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update

two RCDs in the 1980s helped two barely surviving agencies to address the landowner and conservation needs of this agriculturally dense county.

Attachments to this study more fully describe the powers and responsibilities of this RCD, as well as the types of federal and state funding programs currently available. The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts provides excellent hands-on guidance in district operations and responsibilities through training sessions, publications, and public workshops.

RCDs are independent special districts under California law and are served by a board of directors either elected by landowners within the district or appointed by a local Board of Supervisors. Some RCDs include territory in more than one county, although most, like the Western Shasta RCD, are contained within its County of origin.

Water flows into Shasta County through fourteen watershed areas:



3. AGENCY SERVICES

The Shasta County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution on April 12, 1954, requesting the State Soil Conservation Service to begin proceedings to form the Western Shasta County Soil Conservation District. The new district would cover more than 108,197.02 acres. A petition to include additional land brought that final total to 1,635,240 acres.

After two years and an affirmative vote of landowners, the boundaries of this new District were fixed and established on September 26, 1957. An additional 230,000 acres were later added to the District, and the boundaries have remained fixed since 1988. Its eastern boundary is coterminous with the westerly boundary of the Fall River Resource Conservation District.

The mission of the Western Shasta RCD is to *“collaborate with willing landowners, government agencies and other organizations to facilitate the conservation and restoration of Western Shasta County’s natural resources.”*

The District has accomplished many projects, large and small, since its formation. In addition to numerous private landowner project partnerships, the following notable projects are in various stages of development:

- Habitat Mitigation for
 - Jellys Ferry-Twin Gulches Curve (#18-29)
 - Baker Curve (#18-44)
 - Bella Diddy (#17-46)
 - Turtle Bay East, Willow Pond and Sulfur Creek Open Space Preserve (#17-48)
- Ecosystem Restoration for
 - Stillwater Park Conservation Easement (#17-52)
 - Lower Clear Creek Floodplain Rehabilitation-Phase 3B (#26-70)
- Fire and Fuel Reduction/Erosion Control
 - Centimuci Lake Boulevard Fuel Break (#37-04)
 - Keswick Basin Management Plan (#38-06)
- New for 2014: Implementation of the Chappie-Shasta OHV Area Restoration Plan

a. Infrastructure, Facilities and Services

The District is primarily a service agency, and does not have extensive equipment stores. They have a routine maintenance program for their facilities.

**Western Shasta Resource Conservation District
Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update**

b. Administration, Management and Operations

The District has sixteen employees. The District board maintains personnel policies and procedures.

c. Fiscal

The Western Shasta RCD is fully funded by grants and contracts, and receives no property tax revenues. 2012-13 budget follows.

District FY 2012-13 Budget Table

| | Budget 12-13 | | | Budget 12-13 |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Ordinary Income/Expense | | | | |
| Income | | | | |
| 4110 · Grant Revenue | 1,000,000.00 | 5196 · Meetings Expense | | 1,400.00 |
| 4120 · Mitigation Revenue | - | 5200 · Rent/Lease Field Equip. | | 25,000.00 |
| 4191 · Unrealized Gain/Loss | - | 5205 · Rent/Lease Office Equip. | | 1,131.00 |
| 4620 · Services Provided Revenue | 480,000.00 | 5210 · Rent/Lease Office Space | | 26,684.00 |
| Total Income | 1,480,000.00 | 5220 · Small tools-field <\$5000 | | - |
| Gross Profit | | 5225 · Small Equip-Office <\$5000 | | - |
| Expense | | 5226 · Barter Expense | | 45,000.00 |
| 5001 · District Manager | 23,900.00 | 5230 · Printing Expense | | 11,100.00 |
| 5002 · Administration | 24,980.00 | 5231 · Education & Training | | 2,000.00 |
| 5003 · Accounting | 41,600.00 | 5248 · Fuel | | 13,300.04 |
| 5004 · Project Manager | 113,415.31 | 5249 · Vehicle Maintenance | | 11,000.00 |
| 5005 · Project Coordinator | 69,000.00 | 5250 · Transportation & Travel | | 26,000.00 |
| 5006 · Watershed Coordinator | 44,200.00 | 5251 · Lodging | | 1,200.00 |
| 5007 · Education Coordinator | - | 5252 · Meals | | 900.00 |
| 5008 · Specialty Technician | 25,000.00 | 5253 · Conferences | | 1,000.00 |
| 5009 · Lead Technician | 82,000.00 | 5255 · Directors Expense | | 650.00 |
| 5010 · Field Technicians | 74,515.00 | 5260 · Utilities | | 8,500.00 |
| 5012 · Payroll Expenses | - | | | |
| 5030 · Taxes & Benefits | 149,577.09 | Total Expense | | 1,461,111.65 |
| Total Payroll & Taxes | 648,167.40 | Net Ordinary Income | | (1,461,111.65) |
| 5040 · Agriculture | 6,320.25 | Other Income/Expense | | |
| 5045 · Field Supplies | 32,807.00 | Other Income | | |
| 5050 · Clothing/Personal Supplies | - | 4190 · Interest | | - |
| 5060 · Communications | 8,500.00 | 4192 · Interest - Mitigation Acct. | | - |
| 5080 · Food | - | 4881 · Sinking Fund | | 41,700.00 |
| 5090 · Household Expense | 5,969.14 | 4890 · Other Income | | - |
| 5100 · Insurance | 11,262.00 | 4891 · Donations | | - |
| 5120 · Repairs & Maint. - Field | 4,000.00 | Total Other Income | | 41,700.00 |
| 5130 · Repairs & Maint. - Office | 721.96 | Other Expense | | |
| 5150 · Memberships | 12,230.31 | 5290 · Long Term Debt | | - |
| 5160 · Miscellaneous | - | 5300 · Building Interest | | 15,786.00 |
| 5170 · Office Expense | 6,253.69 | 5302 · NVB GMC Canyon Interest | | 2.35 |
| 5171 · Postage | 1,300.00 | 5303 · LOC Interest Expense | | 20,500.00 |
| 5172 · Advertising | 861.00 | 5307 · Depreciation Building | | - |
| 5173 · Events/Prize Expense | - | 5309 · Depreciation-Vehicles | | 15,700.00 |
| 5180 · Professional Services | 121,030.86 | 5310 · Deprec-Field | | - |
| 5181 · Construction Services | 385,703.00 | 5311 · Deprec-Office | | 8,600.00 |
| 5182 · Consulting/Monitoring Services | - | 5370 · Office Equipment | | - |
| 5183 · Accounting Services | 35,000.00 | 5371 · Field Equipment | | - |
| 5184 · Legal Services | - | | | |
| 5190 · Publications & Legal | - | Total Other Expense | | 60,588.35 |
| 5195 · Permits, Licenses & Fees | 6,100.00 | Total Expenses | | 1,480,000.00 |
| | | Net Income | | - |

d. Governance

Oversight of District responsibilities and activities is provided by a five-member board of directors who enjoy additional support of four appointed associate directors. All members are landowners and business people who reflect a broad knowledge about conservation and possess a respects for agriculture, forestry, mining, and other endeavors that use natural resources. Board members are appointed to regular terms by the Shasta County Board of Supervisors.

4. Regional Context/Relevant Services by Other Agencies

Land use and building regulation services are provided by the County of Shasta, as are law enforcement, road services and other general services provided to the unincorporated areas of the county by various county departments.

5. Agency Boundary and Proposed Sphere of Influence Update Maps.

The proposed sphere of influence boundary is recommended to be coterminous with the District's existing boundary. Currently the northerly, westerly, and southern boundaries match those of Shasta County. The Fall River Resource Conservation's westerly boundary abuts the easterly boundary of this RCD. There is no room for the agency to expand its boundaries within Shasta County.

The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts (CARCD) does have baseline funding available for RCDs who wish to consolidate with other RCDs. However, the two RCDs in Shasta County serve significantly different geographical and agricultural regions, and therefore consolidating these two agencies might create more difficult rather than improved service situations.

6. Written Determinations for the Municipal Service Review

a. Growth & Population Projections

Population growth has been slow for the past decade, right around 1%. Viable employment opportunities are not easy to find in the beautiful high valleys of Eastern Shasta County.

b. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs)

The communities in Western Shasta County qualify for the designation of "Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities." California State Parks

**Western Shasta Resource Conservation District
Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update**

www.parks.ca.gov) provides a Community Locator tool which helps with identifying the general income within one mile of the town center. It usually sufficient to provide a guideline for this classification (see attached sheets). The population counts shown on these reports encompass a 25 mile diameter and do not reflect the actual population assigned to the identified communities.

The median income for the state is \$46,477, and communities qualify for this designation if their median income falls below 80% of this figure. The median income calculation for communities in Western Shasta County (excluding the cities) is calculated at \$27,240.

c. Present and Planned of Public Facilities

Other special districts in the area provide community services and facilities. As a service-based agency involved in projects with private landowners and other public agencies, the Western Shasta RCD has no demonstrated need for public facilities per se, and has no plans for future facilities of this nature at this time.

d. Adequacy of Public Services

A number of other special districts provide community services and facilities within the area of this District. As a service-based agency involved in projects with private landowners and other public agencies, the Western Shasta RCD has little need for maintaining public facilities per se, and has no plans for future facilities of this nature at this time.

e. Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

There are no known infrastructure needs or deficiencies at the time of this study.

f. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

The District is funded through grant funding and contracts. It receives no property taxes and has assigned no assessments. In the future, as landowners may desire, the District board of directors could consider having landowners approve assessments for specific projects by creating zones of benefit to manage such programs. However, it has no current plans for considering implementation of this type of funding process.

g. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

There are currently no such opportunities, since this is not an enterprise district.

h. Status of and Opportunities for Shared Facilities

The District works collaborative with many agencies, organizations and individuals. Due to the diverse nature of their support services, a good portion of their work occurs out in the field. It maintains its related offices and equipment in a large building south of Redding that is also adequate for holding large meetings and workshops, and is not seeking use of shared facilities with other agencies at this time. The only other RCD in Shasta County is located in the Fall River Valley and surrounding areas, which likewise has its own facilities more than 70 miles east of the Western Shasta RCD offices.

i. Accountability for Community Service needs, governmental structure, and operational efficiencies.

The District meets monthly, notices meetings in both communities and offers the public an opportunity to participate in their meetings, which are mainly focused on provision of water and maintenance of facilities. It maintains a website at www.wshasta.com.

7. Written Determinations for the Sphere of Influence Update

a. Present and planned land uses

Shasta County designates much of the area served as rural residential and agricultural, with areas of commercial and industrial uses. This serves a primarily a rural area, with community development clustered around the smaller communities and incorporated cities of Shasta County.

b. Present and probable need for public facilities; adequacy of services

The District has not identified a need for additional public facilities. Services are very adequate, are currently meeting the needs of landowners, and are fulfilling the needs of associated state and federal agencies by facilitating programs that assure adequate protection of local natural and agricultural resources.

c. Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of services

Again, services are very adequate, are currently meeting the needs of landowners, and are fulfilling the needs of associated state and federal agencies by facilitating programs that assure adequate protection of local natural and agricultural resources.

d. Existence of social or economic communities of interest

Western Shasta Resource Conservation District Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update

All local rural communities within the District share social and economic interests. Anderson, Redding, and Shasta Lake provide local commercial and industrial centers for the outlying unincorporated communities, and a number of smaller clusters of both commercial and light industrial business are often found in the smaller communities and neighborhoods.

- e. Present and probable needs of disadvantaged unincorporated communities (DUCs) within the area.

As identified in the MSR section, the unincorporated communities served by the District qualify as disadvantaged unincorporated communities. Shasta County is studying these DUCs as part of their General Plan update, and additional information should be available for an expanded analysis of this designation during the next MSR/SOI Update due in 2019.

8. Conclusion

The boundaries of the Western Shasta RCD are constrained by the boundaries of Shasta, Trinity, Tehama, and Siskiyou Counties, and to the east by the established shared boundary with the Fall River RCD.

It is recommended that the municipal service review and sphere of influence update for the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District be adopted as proposed.

9. References

- a. Western Shasta Resource Conservation District (interviews, records, website)
- b. County of Shasta
- c. Shasta LAFCO files for this district.
- d. Internet research on various sites.

10. Exhibits

- a. Map of District showing proposed SOI Boundary Update
- b. Map of Western Shasta RCD Service Area
- c. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) Calculator
- d. Notice of Intent to Adopt CEQA Determination – Statutory Exemption PRC 21083
- e. No Effect Determination – California Department of Fish & Wildlife
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Western Shasta Resource Conservation District
Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Update

Western Shasta Resource Conservation District SOI Update April 2014
Eastern Boundary Coterminous with Fall River RCD





