

**SANTA YNEZ RIVER WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT NO. 1**

**MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE**

Report to the
**Santa Barbara Local Agency
Formation Commission**

April 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

This report regarding the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 was prepared by the Santa Barbara Local Agency Formation Commission (“LAFCO”) in accordance with Section 56430 of the California Government Code. It responds to the requirement that LAFCO conduct a Municipal Service Review (MSR) to study the delivery of municipal services and adopt and update spheres of influence.

This report reports on services for LAFCO to consider, determinations as required by law and issues regarding the District sphere of influence. The decision to approve or disapprove any determinations or policies rests entirely with the Commission.

Written determinations regarding the MSR and sphere of influence update are provided for the Commission’s consideration. This report is an informational document and does not substitute for discretionary decisions that can only be made by the Commission.

This Report is subject to reconsideration and revision as directed by the LAFCO staff or by the Commission during the course of its deliberations.

2. MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW

Description of District

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 was formed in 1960 as an improvement district of the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District. That “parent district” was formed in 1939.

The District became a separate entity in 1968 after its governing board was established in accordance with Water Code Section 75165. A number of statutory and contractual provisions govern the relationship between the District and the Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District.

The District furnishes retail water services within its boundaries which encompass the western portion of the Santa Ynez Valley generally south of Highway 154. It was formed and operates under provisions of the California Water Conservation Law of 1931, Water Code Section 74000 et seq.

The District is governed by a five-member board of directors, elected by divisions. A General Manager is responsible for District administration and operations.

A map of the District boundaries and proposed sphere is enclosed.

District Services

The District provides water service. It currently serves approximately 2,220 municipal and industrial customers and approximately 117 agricultural customers.

Water supplied by the District is obtained primarily from the Cachuma Project with the remainder coming from other sources including District wells.

Detailed information about the District and its operations is enclosed as Exhibit A.

Other Governmental Agencies within the District

Local agencies that overlap the District include Cachuma Resource Conservation District, City of Solvang, County Service Area 32 (Unincorporated Law Enforcement), Oak Hill Cemetery District, Mosquito and Vector Control District of Santa Barbara County, Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District, Santa Ynez Community Services District and Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District.

3 . M S R D E T E R M I N A T I O N S

Growth and population projections for the affected area

Santa Barbara County Association of Government's growth projections are used in preparing Municipal Service Reviews for agencies within the Santa Ynez Valley. The District accepts these growth projections for planning purposes.

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

Detailed information about the District's water sources, distribution system facilities and adequacy to provide services is set forth in Exhibit A.

Financial ability to provide services

The majority of District revenues are derived from water sales and Authority Revenue from Solvang, with lesser revenues from capital facilities fees, interest and taxes. These revenue sources seem adequate at present and from projections into the future to continue to allow the District to provide adequate services.

Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities

There are no obvious opportunities for shared facilities in the operations of the District.

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

The District is governed by a board of directors that is elected by and accountable to the voters residing within the District boundaries.

Public service economies might be achieved if a single agency provided water supply and wastewater collection services within the District's service area. This would require a detailed evaluation by affected agencies including the Santa Ynez Community Services

District and possibly the City of Solvang. Thus far no or little interest has been expressed by these local agencies in considering such reorganization.

4. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE REVIEW

Description of Proposed Sphere of Influence

It is recommended the Sphere of Influence be consistent with the exterior boundaries of the ID No. 1. A map of the District and its recommended sphere is attached.

Sphere of Influence Determinations

In determining the sphere of influence of each local agency, the commission is required to prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to specific subjects as set forth below. The staff's recommended determinations are presented under each heading.

1. Present and planned land uses in the area, including agriculture and open space.

Of the 10,850 acres within the District, approximately 5,000 are residential at densities up to five acres per parcel, 150 acres are commercial, 400 acres are schools, parks and cemeteries, 3,137 are irrigated agriculture and 2,163 are used for grazing or are unused.

It is expected that undeveloped land within the District will continue to be developed in accordance with County and City of Solvang zoning designations.

2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

The existing and planned land uses within the District require a variety of public services which are provided by the County, the City of Solvang within its boundaries and by the special districts that serve the area.

Fire protection is provided by the Santa Barbara County Fire Protection District. The County Sheriff provides law enforcement, including services under contract to the City.

Wastewater collection services are provided by the Santa Ynez Community Services District and City of Solvang, with the City providing treatment and disposal services.

With the exception of the City of Solvang, four small mutual water companies and a small number of private wells the District is the sole public water purveyor within its boundaries, providing both domestic and agricultural water services.

Productive agricultural lands do not require the same range and level of services as do urbanized or suburban uses.

3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

Information provided in Exhibit A indicates the District has sufficient capacity to provide services.

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.

ID No. 1 encompasses the majority of the Santa Ynez Valley. Although it is recognized there are various identified sub-areas or neighborhoods, the Santa Ynez Valley is considered to be a social and economic community of interest as evidenced by the County-adopted land use plans for the area,

5. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area

The existing and planned land uses within the District require a variety of public services which are provided by the County, the City of Solvang within its boundaries and by the special districts that serve the area.

Environmental Considerations

A Municipal Service Review is not a “project” subject to the California Environmental Quality Act. The adoption of a Sphere of Influence with boundaries coterminous with the boundaries of the local agency has no environmental impact.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES

The Santa Barbara LAFCO staff prepared this Municipal Service Review. Responsibility for any errors or omissions rests with those who prepared the report.

The Santa Ynez River Water Conservation District, Improvement District No. 1 provided the basic information and documents upon which the study is based. General Manager Chris Dahlstrom was instrumental in providing data.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended the Commission find the proposal has no environmental impact and adopt the Sphere of Influence contiguous with the District’s exterior boundaries as shown on the enclosed map.