

**SONOMA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
EVALUATIONS OF SPHERE OF INFLUENCE PROPOSALS
FOR SONOMA COUNTY FIRE AND EMS AGENCIES**

September 22, 2020

The Sonoma Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) has received requests from Fire and Emergency Medical Service agencies in the County for Sphere of Influence amendments that would precede agency reorganization proposals.

Additionally, LAFCO has received a plan put forward by the Fire Services Working Group (a group of Fire Chiefs from selected agencies that reports to an ad hoc committee of the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors), proposing a set of five regional sphere alignments.

LAFCO staff has formally proposed two sets of sphere amendments to the Commission, and has several other proposals that are forthcoming.

It should be noted that LAFCO has not adopted Municipal Service Review determinations for all fire and EMS agencies in the County. Therefore, Municipal Service Reviews would need to be prepared by staff and adopted by the Commission prior to amending spheres involving those agencies.

A Municipal Service Review for North County agencies is underway; a half-dozen other agencies (two districts and four territories within County Service Area 40) have yet to be evaluated.

In September 2019, the Commission adopted a set of evaluation criteria for sphere of influence amendments. This report is intended to describe the dozen-or-so proposals and indicate how they address those criteria.

The report does not, however, attempt to indicate the best set of sphere amendment proposals. The Commission has directed staff to meet with the Fire Services Working Group and an ad hoc committee of the Commission to evaluate proposals.

Criteria for Amending SOIs to Support Regional Reorganizations

Operational Fit

Perhaps the most important criterion is whether agencies within a proposed regional organization make a good operational fit.

Operational fit includes an evaluation of geography and travel times. A proposed regional consolidation should include agencies that can realistically provide service coverage using existing facilities and combined staffing.

One way to consider this criterion is to evaluate the prevalence of mutual aid support. For example, if two neighboring agencies are the principal mutual aid partners for each other, it is a good indication that they should be part of the same sphere of influence.

A secondary set of operational fit criteria might include whether agencies have similar staffing models, or whether they currently provide similar services (i.e. whether agencies are providing advanced or basic life support services).

Financial Sustainability

Reorganizations that could include the extension of special taxes (almost always in the form of parcel taxes) can be a vital component of enhancement of the financial sustainability of the provision of services, and therefore should be reflected in sphere of influence amendment evaluations. Similarly, any opportunity to reduce costs, however modest, should be evaluated.

For County Service Area 40 – Fire Services territory, the willingness of the County of Sonoma to provide suitable long-term financial support for Volunteer Fire Companies to join regional consolidations should also be considered.

Regardless of these considerations, the Commission has shown a willingness to consider sphere of influence amendments that do not have a clear pathway that would result in long-term financial sustainability for the affected agencies, but would likely be skeptical of actual reorganizations that don't show at least near-term financial sustainability.

(Staff believes that financial sustainability should be evaluated for staffing and equipment/vehicles, but not for cases where facilities are insufficient. Facility replacements or improvements can perhaps be best addressed through a combination of grant programs and Mello-Roos tax assessments.)

Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Territory

There are three Fire Protection Districts and two Health Care Districts in Sonoma County (and one City) that provide ambulance-based Advanced Life Support (ALS) service:

- Bodega Bay Fire Protection District
- Russian River Fire Protection District
- Valley of the Moon Fire Protection District (operating as the Sonoma Valley Fire and Rescue Authority)
- Coast Life Support District
- Cloverdale Health Care District

The three Fire Protection Districts provide ALS and ambulance transport services well beyond their respective district boundaries. The Districts receive per-call revenue when responding to calls outside their boundaries, but do not receive any tax revenue from these areas.

Both the Bodega Bay FPD and the Russian River FPD are finding it increasingly difficult to sustainably provide ALS/ambulance transport services. If the communities that are outside the respective district boundaries wish to continue to receive ALS/ambulance transport services from these agencies, it would be equitable to have tax revenues from those areas supporting the service.

Therefore, while not a sole criterion regarding setting spheres of influence or for consideration of reorganizations, referencing the ambulance service areas of the three districts is recommended.

Agency Request/Preference

Agencies are free to request sphere of influence amendments at any time, with the understanding that a Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study must be conducted to evaluate any proposals. Without precluding the Commission from appropriate deliberations regarding any proposals, agencies that cooperatively support sphere of influence amendments are perhaps best-positioned to secure SOI amendments.

Elimination of CSA 40 Territory

The County of Sonoma has entered into a contract with North Bay Fire, Inc., which represents the remaining Volunteer Fire Companies who are providing service to most of County Service Area 40 – Fire Services, for continued service provision. The County also has responsibility for Integrated Response Plan (IRP) areas, which are generally provided services by neighboring Fire Protection Districts under contract.

The contract with North Bay Fire, Inc. is intended to cease at the close of 2020, with the County intent on seeing all CSA 40 and IRP areas reorganized into regional agencies.

Given this timeframe, staff believes it incumbent upon LAFCO to facilitate reorganizations involving the remaining CSA 40 and IRP areas by including these territories into Fire Protection District spheres of influence, and to adjudicate reorganization proposals as appropriate.

Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities

A proposed sphere of influence amendment should not preclude further amendments that could include additional agencies, or a broader, regional consolidation. Although there is some advantage to seeking one-time “solutions” for sphere of influence amendments in support of regional consolidations, the Commission has the authority to amend SOIs as long as there has been a study performed that conforms to the requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.

Evaluation of Proposals

There are three sets of sphere of influence amendment proposals:

- Fire Service Working Group proposals.
- Agency proposals
- LAFCO staff proposals.

For each proposal, a description is provided that includes which entity has put forward the proposal, what agency would have its sphere amended, and which territories would be added to the sphere. Staff has also prepared provisional maps that reflect the proposals.

An evaluation of each proposal against the six criteria is then presented, first in a tabular summary format, and then through a narrative evaluation.

Short Form Designation: FSWG “Sphere 1”

“Annexing” Agency: Sonoma County Fire District

SOI Additions: CSA 40 – Fort Ross

CSA 40 – IRP 51 Forestville

CSA 40 – IRP 56 Russian River

Cazadero Community Service District

Monte Rio Fire Protection District

General Notes:

- A recently-adopted Municipal Service Review covers all territory within the proposal.
- This proposal is substantively similar to one proposed by LAFCO staff to the Commission in December 2019, with the exception of the northern portion of the territory served by the Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company. (Staff believes that this territory should be included in a sphere of influence amendment for the North Sonoma Coast and Timber Cove Fire Protection Districts.)
- The proposal acknowledges that the Russian River Fire Protection District has already been reorganized, becoming part of Sonoma County FD, and that the Forestville Fire Protection District territory has already been included in a sphere amendment for Sonoma County FD. (A reorganization proposal for Forestville is expected to be filed with LAFCO in the fall of 2020.)

Fire Services Working Group

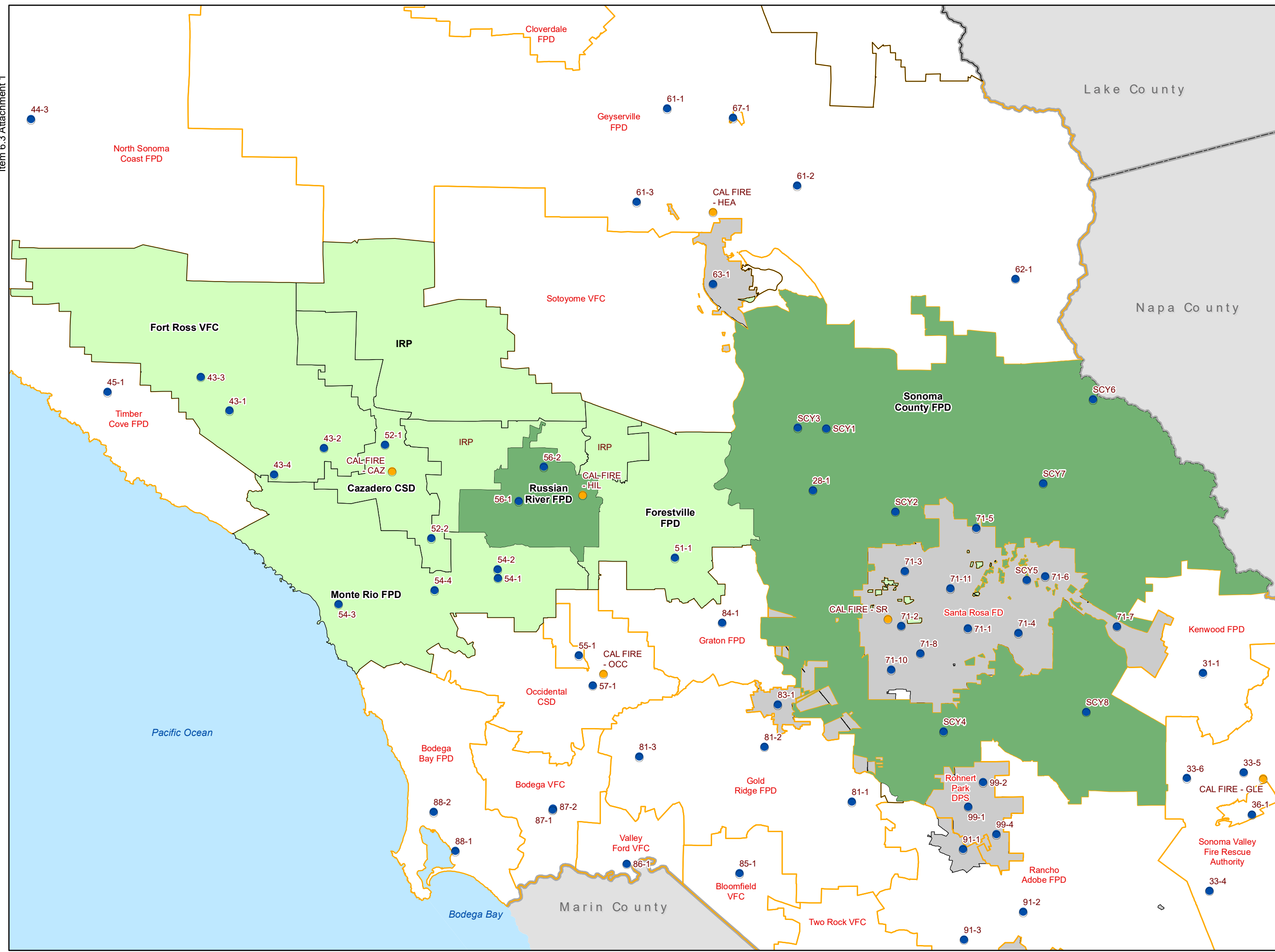
"Sphere 1" LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency Sonoma County FD

SOI Additions:
CSA 40-Fort Ross
CSA 40-IRP 51 Forestville
Cazadero CSD
Monte Rio FPD

Sonoma County, CA



Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



1
Miles

October 7, 2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>The proposed sphere respects the current operational circumstances in the lower Russian River region, bringing together agencies that have existing mutual aid compacts.</p> | <p>The inclusion of the northern portion of the Fort Ross VFC territory is anomalous in that Timber Cove FPD is the usual mutual aid provider for that area.</p> |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>The extension of Sonoma County FD parcel tax rates throughout the region will likely be insufficient to address paid staffing needs.</p> | |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>The proposed sphere is largely coherent with the provision of ALS/ambulance service out of the Guerneville station.</p> | <p>The northern portion of the Fort Ross VFC territory is covered by the Coast Life Support District.</p> |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>The proposal is not consistent with the stated preferences of Monte Rio FPD and Cazadero CSD, nor with a proposal from Timber Cove FPD involving the northern portion of the Fort Ross VFD territory.</p> | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>The proposal includes all CSA 40 territory within the lower Russian River region.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal precludes two others, as well as a nascent concept of including Monte Rio FPD and Cazadero CSD in the Gold Ridge/North Bay Fire, Inc. sphere proposal.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

Other than the question regarding the appropriate assignment of the northern portion of the CSA 40 territory served by the Fort Ross VFC, this proposal makes operational sense and is coherent with existing ALS/ambulance territory. (The northern portion of the Fort Ross territory is served by the Coast Life Support District.)

Although the Monte Rio Fire Protection District recently passed a parcel tax measure, that funding may be insufficient to support the level of paid staffing needed to bolster volunteer service. Additionally, the Cazadero Community Services District is unable to adequately staff with volunteers, and relies on annual financial contributions from the County to extend CalFire service in the area year-round.

Therefore, without additional revenue, a reorganization based on this sphere amendment proposal would face challenges with regard to fiscal sustainability.

Both the Cazadero CSD and Monte Rio FPD boards have misgivings with regard to being reorganized under Sonoma County FD’s umbrella, and have considered seeking inclusion under the broad Gold Ridge FPD/North Bay Fire, Inc. proposal. Additionally, Cazadero CSD has requested a sphere amendment adding the Fort Ross territory in its entirety to its sphere.

Therefore, this proposal scores poorly on Agency Request/Preference.

This proposal does support the elimination of all CSA territory in the lower Russian River region.

The proposal does preclude the sphere amendment request of Cazadero CSD, and precludes any proposal to include Cazadero CSD and Monte Rio FPD territory in the Gold Ridge FPD/North Bay Fire, Inc. proposal.

Short Form Designation: FSWG “Sphere 2”
“Annexing” Agency: Glen Ellen FPD
SOI Additions: Valley of the Moon FPD
CSA 40 – Mayacamas
Kenwood FPD
Schell-Vista FPD
City of Sonoma (Fire Services Only)

General Notes:

This proposed sphere amendment has already been adopted by LAFCO, and a reorganization of three of the agencies (Valley of the Moon FPD, Glen Ellen FPD, and the Mayacamas portion of CSA 40) has been completed.

Summary Evaluation:

None required.

Fire Services Working Group "Sphere 2" (Completed) LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency:
Glen Ellen FPD

SOI Additions:

Kenwood FPD
Schell-Vista FPD
City of Sonoma

VMFD=
Valley of the Moon FPD
CSA 40 – Mayacamás
Eldridge FD
Glen Ellen FPD

Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

● Local Fire Station

● State Fire Station

■ Annexing FD

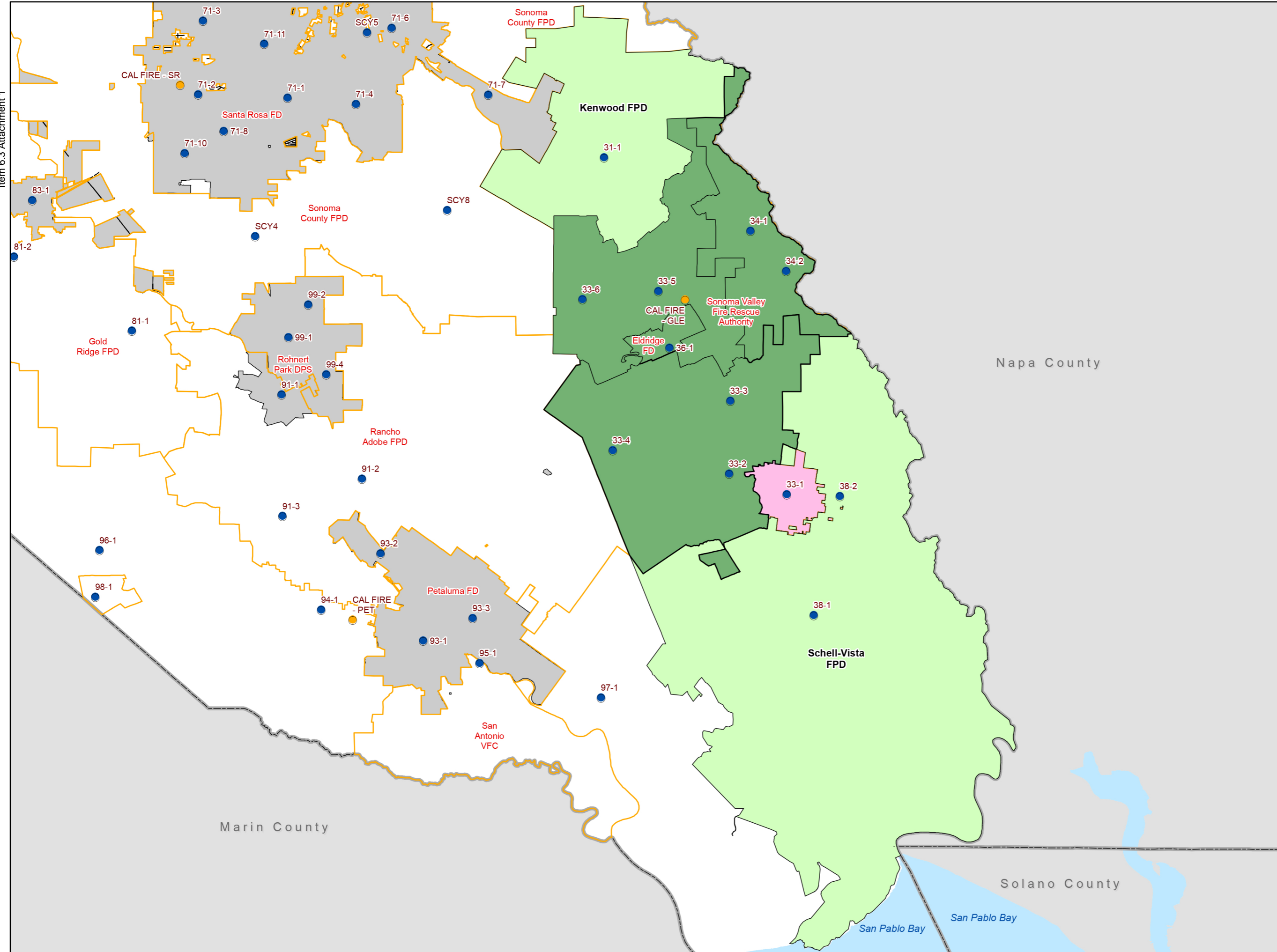
■ Subject Fire District

■ Other Fire District

— County Boundary

■ City FD

■ Incorporated City



October 7, 2020

Date: 9/23/2020

Short Form Designation: FSWG “Sphere 3”

“Annexing” Agency: Gold Ridge FPD

SOI Additions: CSA 40 – Two Rock

CSA 40 – Bodega

CSA 40 – San Antonio (assumed)

CSA 40 – Valley Ford

CSA 40 – Wilmar

CSA 40 – Camp Meeker

CSA 40 – Lakeville

CSA 40 – Bloomfield (assumed)

CSA 40 – IRP 81 Gold Ridge

Occidental FPD

City of Sebastopol (Fire service only)

Graton FPD

General Notes:

- A Municipal Service Review for four of the CSA 40 territories has not been conducted.
- Both the San Antonio and Bloomfield territories of CSA 40 are served by neighboring agencies (the VFCs in those areas are moribund).

Fire Services Working Group "Sphere 3" LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency
Gold Ridge FPD

- CSA 40 – Two Rock
- CSA 40 – Bodega
- CSA 40 – Valley Ford
- CSA 40 – Wilmar
- CSA 40 – Camp Meeker
- CSA 40 – Lakeville
- CSA 40 – Bloomfield (assumed)
- CSA 40 – IRP 81 Gold Ridge
- Occidental FPD
- City of Sebastopol
- Graton FPD
- San Antonio VFC

Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

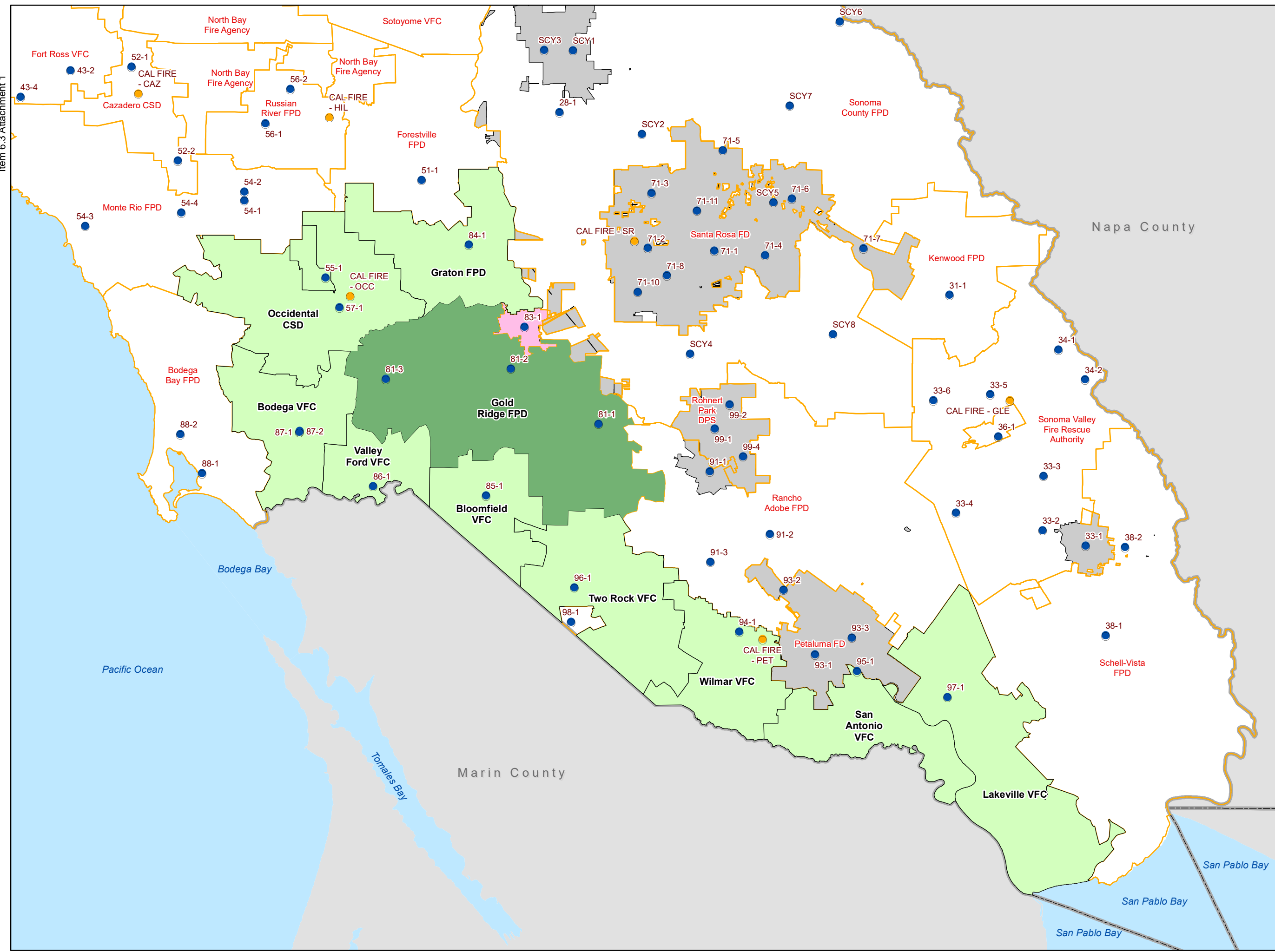
- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- City FD
- Incorporated City

1
Miles



Date: 9/23/2020

October 7, 2020



Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>Portions of the proposal cohere with current operational schemes (see notes). However, Bodega Bay FPD provides primary mutual aid and ALS/ambulance coverage to three of the VFCs, and the City of Petaluma provides similar services to three other VFCs.</p> | <p>Portions of proposal with solid operational fit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occidental CSD and the Camp Meeker portion of CSA 40 • Graton FPD, City of Sebastopol, Gold Ridge FPD • Gold Ridge FPD, the Two Rock portion of CSA 40 |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>The application of Gold Ridge FPD's parcel taxes to the agency territories would partially offset current County contributions to North Bay Fire, Inc.</p> | <p>It is unclear what funding mechanism would be applied for the City of Sebastopol (imposition of parcel taxes or a contracted funding stream from City general revenues).</p> |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>This proposal is not coherent with ALS/ambulance service areas for both the Bodega Bay FPD and the City of Petaluma Fire Department.</p> | |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal is coherent with the preferences of the subject agencies; it is not coherent with the stated preference of the Rancho Adobe FPD.</p> | <p>Although the Bodega Bay FPD has not actively stated a desire to take in the three VFC territories to the south, they do recognize that they are providing service to those areas without recompense.</p> |

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| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>This proposal does cover all CSA 40 territory south of the lower Russian River region and in the region west of Gold Ridge and Rancho Adobe FPD territories and surrounding the City of Petaluma.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal is in conflict with a proposal from the Rancho Adobe FPD, and in conflict with a LAFCO staff proposal.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

The Fire Service Working Group states that this proposal is intended primarily to find a near-term solution for the remaining Volunteer Fire Companies operating as North Bay Fire, Inc. By enabling a reorganization of most of those agencies (Camp Meeker VFC and the “corridor” VFCs).

LAFCO staff have two criticisms of the proposal: the first is that the areas served by the Bodega and the Valley Ford VFCs, and the territory once served by the Bloomfield VFC, are within Bodega Bay FPD’s ALS/ambulance service area, and receive primary mutual aid from Bodega Bay as well. (Bodega Bay FPD is automatically dispatched to all calls within these areas.)

The second criticism is similarly an operational one: the Rancho Adobe FPD is surely a better operational fit for taking on the Willmar, San Antonio (moribund), and Lakeville VFC territories, forming a district that entirely encircles the City of Petaluma.

(At some point it may be prudent to include the City of Petaluma in a regional reorganization. While Petaluma is engaged with Rancho Adobe FPD through a contract, the City appears unready to consider a broader consolidation of fire and EMS services at this time.)

Staff acknowledges that there is some urgency in resolving where the remaining VFCs should “reside” given that North Bay Fire, Inc.’s contract for financial support from the County expires at the end of 2020, though it should also be pointed out that a reorganization involving agencies within this proposed sphere could not occur until 2021.

Staff also acknowledges that the agencies in this proposed sphere have indicated a preference for this alignment, and that Gold Ridge FPD’s parcel tax rates are an attractive option for extension to annexed territories.

In terms of other options, it may be prudent to amend the sphere of Occidental CSD to include the Camp Meeker VFC territory, and to amend the sphere of Sonoma County FD to include the

Bodega, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield areas. These alignments would respect the operational circumstances of Sonoma County Fire (assuming a successful reorganization of Bodega Bay FPD into that agency) and the near-term need to address Camp Meeker.

Staff acknowledges that these options don't address the Two Rock Willmar, San Antonio, and Lakeville areas, but believes that Rancho Adobe FPD must be included in a regional consolidation in this region.

Short Form Designation: FSWG “Sphere 4”

“Annexing” Agency: Northern Sonoma County FPD (formerly Geyserville FPD)

SOI Additions: Cloverdale FPD

CSA 40 – Sotoyome

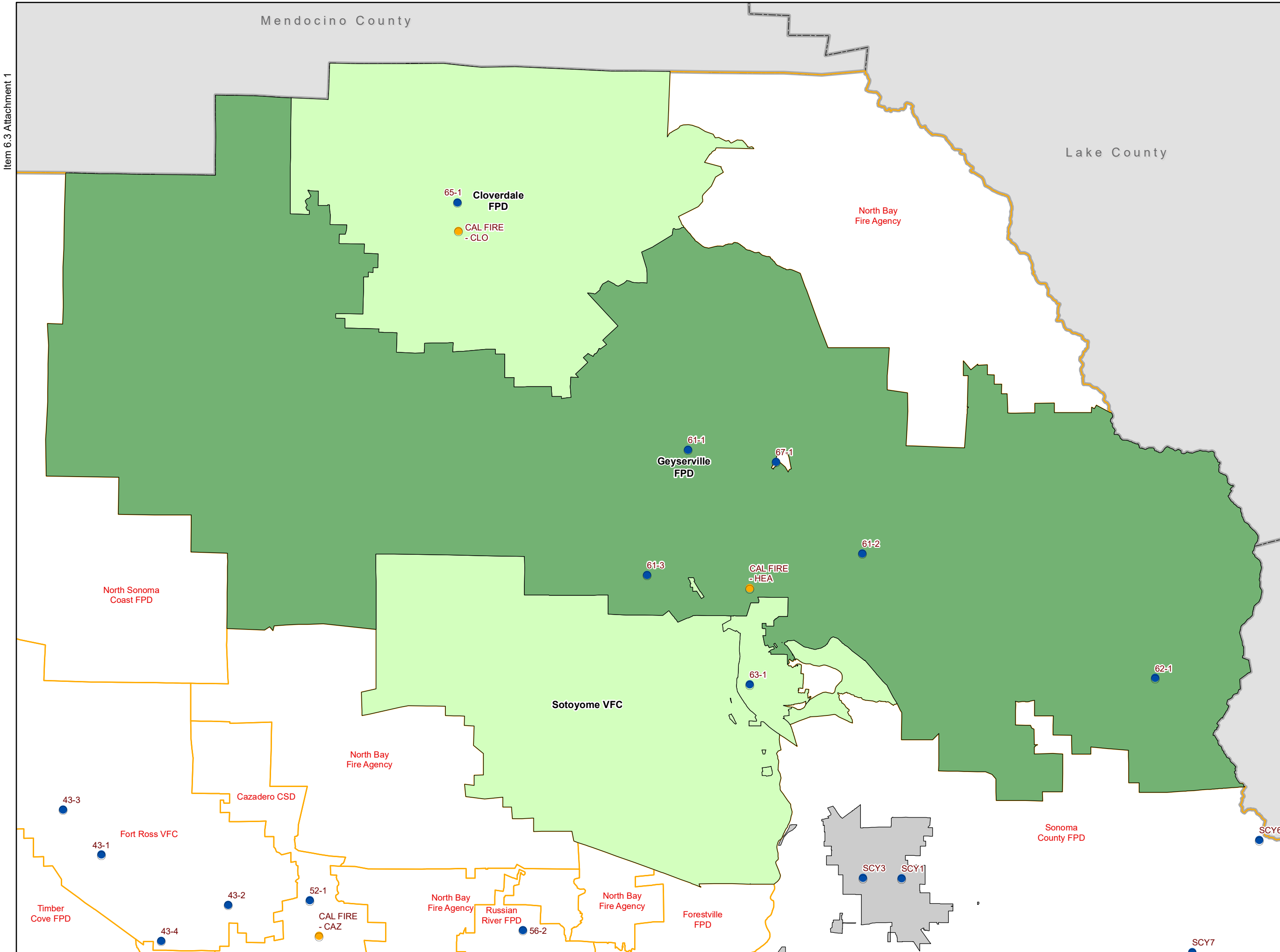
CSA 40 – IRP 61 Geyserville

CSA 40 – IRP 63 Healdsburg (Fitch Mountain)

General Notes:

- A Municipal Service Review for this region is underway.
- The CSA 40 Sotoyome territory is served by the City of Healdsburg under contract to the County. It has been generally proposed that a regional fire and emergency medical services agency in the region would continue this arrangement - in particular for the portion of the territory that covers a portion of Fitch Mountain.

Fire Services Working Group "Sphere 4" LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan



- Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations
- Annexing Agency
North Sonoma County FPD (formerly Geyserville FPD)
- SOI Additions:
Cloverdale FPD
CSA 40 – Sotoyome
CSA 40 – IRP 61 Geyserville
CSA 40 – IRP 63 Healdsburg (Fitch Mountain)

Sonoma County, CA

- Fire Station**
- Local Fire Station
 - State Fire Station
 - Annexing Fire District
 - Subject Fire District
 - Other Fire District
 - County Boundary
 - Incorporated City

1 Miles

October 7, 2020

Date: 9/23/2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>Northern Sonoma County FPD and Cloverdale FPD have already formed a Joint Powers Authority and the combined entity is largely providing service throughout the majority of the region (absent the City of Healdsburg and Sotoyome).</p> | |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>Northern Sonoma County FPD had a new parcel tax measure narrowly defeated in 2020. Some portion of the property taxes raised in the CSA areas will be needed to fund a regional agency.</p> | |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>The region is covered in the north by the Cloverdale Health Care District and in the south by a private provider with nominal service rights.</p> | |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>Both Northern Sonoma County and Cloverdale FPDs have a strong interest in forming a regional agency.</p> | <p>The City of Healdsburg has not determined whether joining a north county agency, Sonoma County FD, or remaining independent is their preferred option.</p> |

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| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>The proposed sphere eliminates all CSA territory within the region.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>A reorganization based on the proposed sphere would not preclude future options involving the City of Healdsburg or the formation of a single county-wide agency.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

The two fire districts in the north county area serve extensive woodland areas along with the City of Cloverdale and the village of Geyserville. Both have expressed a strong desire for many years to reorganize as a single entity, and have recently formed a Joint Powers Authority to effectively combine their respective operations.

Additionally, Northern Sonoma County FPD (under its former guise as the Geyserville FPD), recently completed a reorganization through LAFCO to take on service responsibility for the portion of CSA 40 that was served by the Knights Valley VFC.

There are two primary factors that will need to be addressed in a reorganization plan: what ongoing financial contributions will be provided by the County for the assumption of service for CSA 40 territory, and whether or how to incorporate the City of Healdsburg into the plan.

The CSA territories generate over one million dollars annually of fire service-directed property tax revenue. Northern Sonoma County FPD would like to secure all or a large portion of that tax base in order to maintain existing service and improve vegetation management and fire prevention services in the region.

The County is currently using the revenue generated in the region to support all of the remaining CSA 40 territories and the Volunteer Fire Companies that serve those areas.

The City of Healdsburg is aware of the opportunity to join a regional agency, maintain their existing services, or to consider an alignment with Sonoma County FD to the south. The City has advocated for a continuation of their services to the Fitch Mountain area (both the IRP area and a portion of the Sotoyome area) under contract absent a broader reorganization.

With acknowledgement that the question of the City's participation is not settled, the proposed sphere for the region makes operational sense, is supported by the two agencies in the region, and is not inconsistent with the ALS/ambulance service provision in the area. A reorganization would not preclude any of the options for the City of Healdsburg, and would not preclude a potential county-wide reorganization of fire and emergency medical services.

A financially-sustainable reorganization will likely require transferring a significant portion of the property tax revenue in the CSA territories paired with a parcel tax delineated by units of risk.

Short Form Designation: FSWG “Sphere 5”
“Annexing” Agency: North Sonoma Coast FPD
SOI Additions: Timber Cove FPD

General Notes:

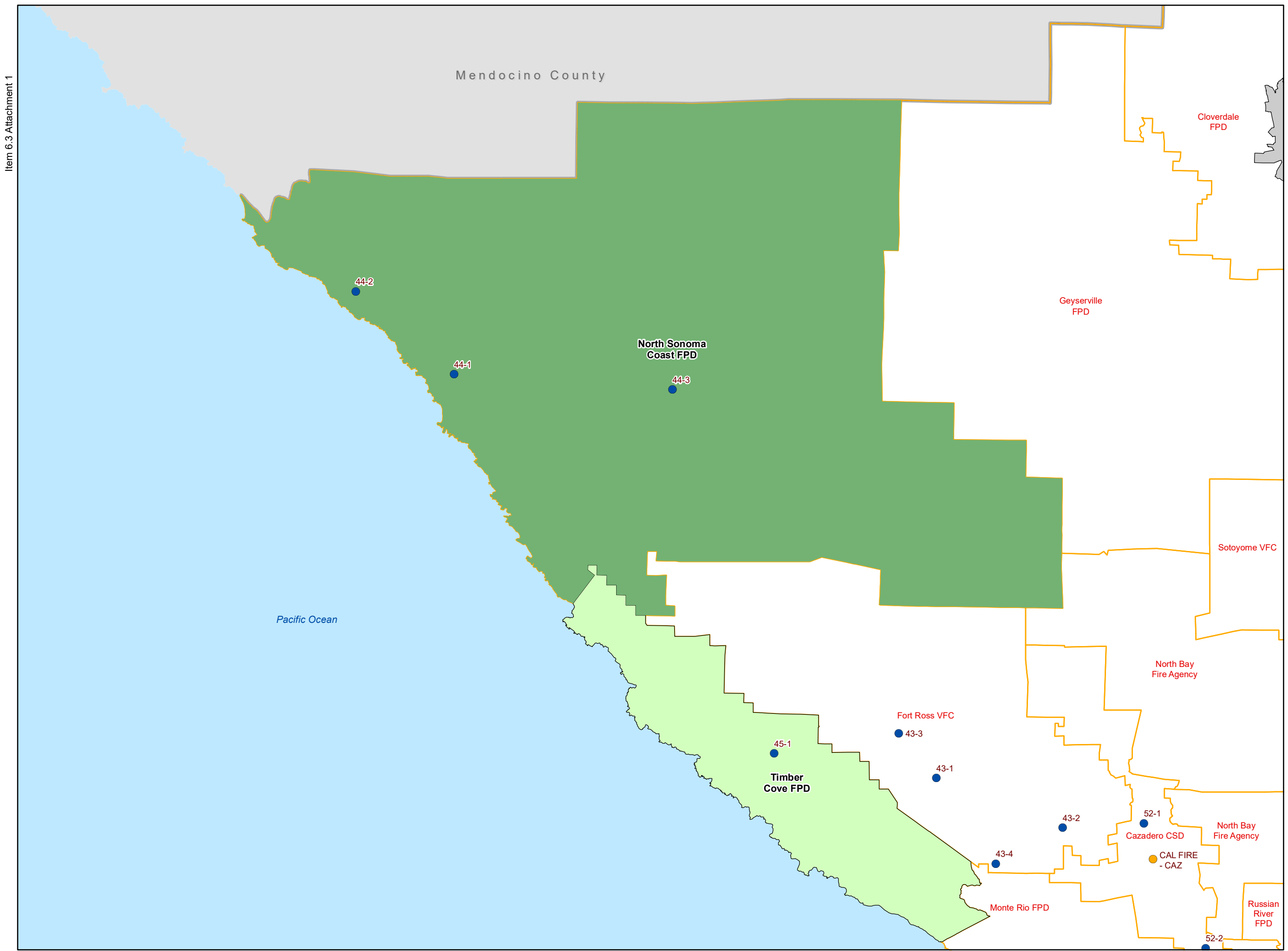
- A Municipal Service Review for the North Sonoma Coast FPD has not been conducted.

Fire Services Working Group "Sphere 5" LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency
North Sonoma Coast FPD

SOI Additions:
Timber Cove FPD



Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City

1
Miles



October 7, 2020

Date: 9/1/2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>Although there may be some modest operational advantage to a consolidation based on this sphere proposal, the reality is that joining these sparsely-populated, remote areas is likely not a pressing issue.</p> | <p>Other sphere proposals address the disposition of the Fort Ross VFC portion of CSA 40, which is a pressing operational issue.</p> |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>Under present circumstances both agencies are of sufficient financial health, and a consolidation would likely generate no cost savings.</p> | |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>Both agencies serve territory wholly within the Coast Life Support District territory.</p> | |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>While potentially open to reorganization, neither agency has expressed a desire to do so in the near term.</p> | |

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|--|---|--|
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>The proposal does not involve CSA 40 territory.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>The proposal does not preclude any other proposed alignment.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

There isn't a set of pressing needs to support a consolidation based on this proposed sphere, and therefore the two agencies have not proposed (or opposed) it.

The proposed sphere combines two fire protection districts, but doesn't address neighboring CSA 40 territory served by the Fort Ross VFC (which several other proposals do). There is some consensus that Timber Cove FPD has the best operational fit for the northern portion of Fort Ross, as discussed in other proposal evaluations.

North Sonoma Coast FPD utilizes a contract with CalFire to provide "backbone" services, supplemented with volunteer support, and has sufficient revenues to maintain that arrangement.

Timber Cove FPD relies solely on volunteers, and for now has a sustainable program. If the District had to move to paid staff, it is highly unlikely that sufficient revenues could be obtained solely through a parcel tax. Additionally, the District does not have the option of engaging with CalFire as there is no CalFire station in the area (the nearest locations are Sea Ranch and Cazadero).

The proposed sphere does not involve CSA 40 territory (Fort Ross) that other proposals do.

The proposed sphere is consistent with ALS/ambulance service provision which is provided by the Coast Life Support District.

Short Form Designation: Agency Proposal 1

“Annexing” Agency: Timber Cove FPD

SOI Additions: Northern Portion of CSA 40 – Fort Ross

General Notes:

- The Timber Cove FPD, in recognition of their primary role as a mutual aid partner into the northern portion of the CSA 40 territory served by the Fort Ross VFC, has proposed a sphere amendment to encompass that area.

LAFCO
Fire District
Concept Plan

Potential Fire
District Mergers
or Annexations

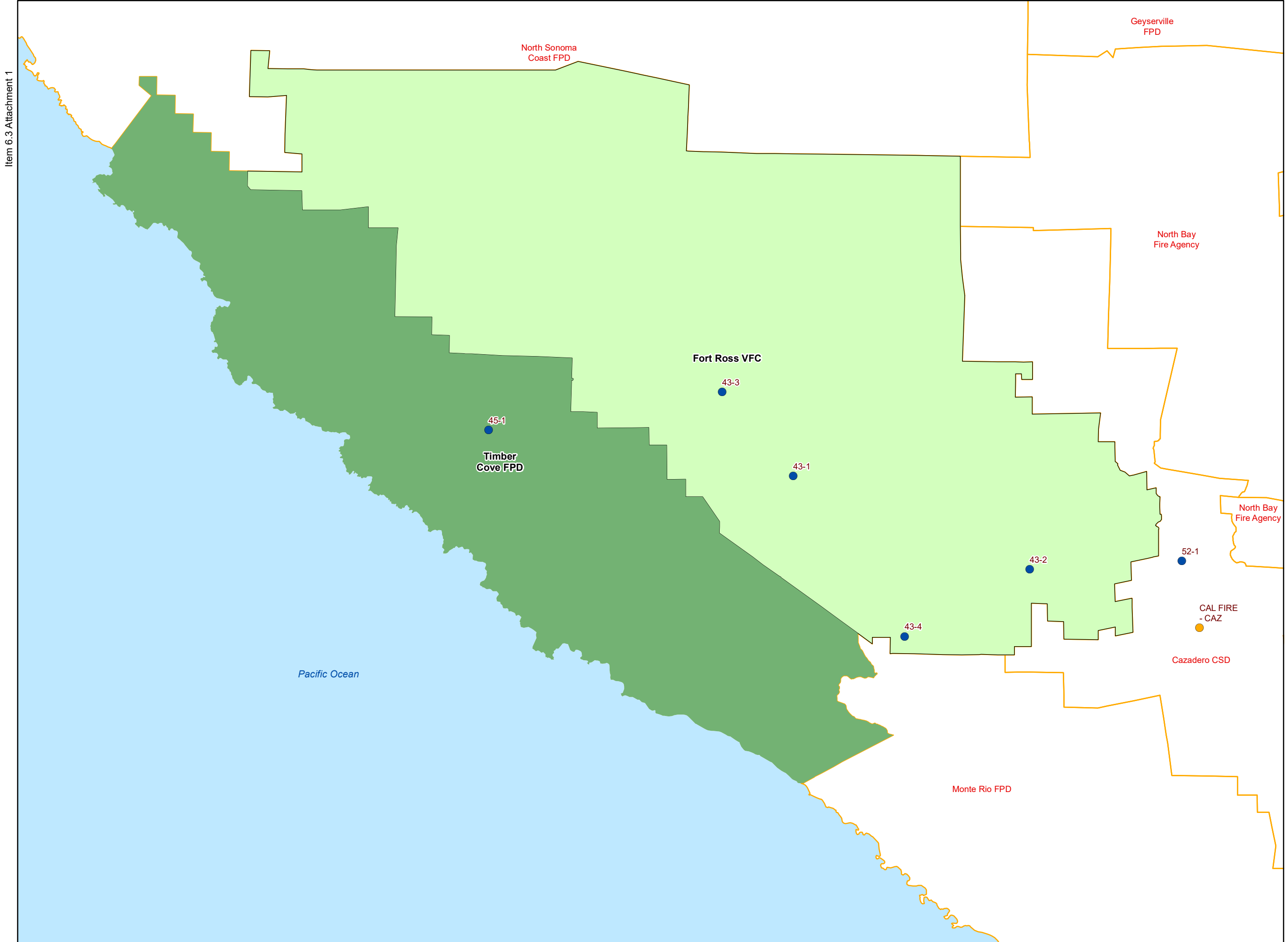
Annexing Agency
Timber Cove FPD

SOI Additions:
CSA 40 – Ft. Ross
(northern portion)

Sonoma County, CA

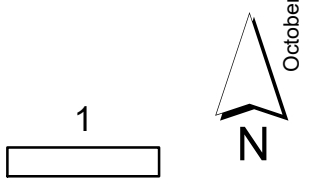
Item 6.3 Attachment 1

Item 6.3 Attachment 1



Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



Miles Date: 9/1/2020

October 7, 2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>As the primary mutual aid provider into the northern portion of the Fort Ross VFC territory, the sphere proposal represents a good operational fit.</p> | <p>Timber Cove is often the first responder into the area depending on the availability of volunteers in Fort Ross, which has diminished considerably.</p> |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>A reorganization based on this sphere proposal would likely involve the transfer a very small property tax increment to Timber Cove FPD. This increment would not address the long-term viability of Timber Cove, which is dependent solely on volunteers.</p> | <p>If Timber Cove FPD loses volunteers, a parcel tax could provide only a limited revenue source for addressing the situation through paid staffing.</p> |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>The proposed sphere alignment is consistent with the Coast Life Support District territory, which also covers the northern portion of the Fort Ross area.</p> | |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal is inconsistent with others, including proposals from the FSWG and from Cazadero CSD.</p> | <p>The Fort Ross VFC can be characterized as seeking and reorganization that would fold them into a larger agency to address service needs.</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>This proposal attends to a portion of the CSA 40 Fort Ross area, and in tandem with other proposals would address it in its entirety.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal would not preclude a future alignment of Timber Cove with North Sonoma Coast FPD. It does however conflict with a proposal from Cazadero CSD and the “Sphere 1” and “Sphere 5” FSWG proposals.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

Timber Cove FPD’s proposal fully recognizes the operational “facts on the ground” in the area - Timber Cove is often the sole provider of services in the northern portion of the CSA 40 Fort Ross territory.

The proposal does not address the long-term viability of Timber Cove. The agency is currently providing services using wholly volunteers, and has had a stable roster but will eventually face an “aging out” shift that will be difficult and expensive to address with paid staff or contracted services.

Nominally a combination of this proposal and the FSWG “Sphere 5” proposal, placing North Sonoma Coast and Timber Cove FPDs and the northern portion of CSA 40 - Fort Ross in one sphere, would provide the roadmap for an eventual consolidated agency serving the north coast region.

Short Form Designation: Agency Proposal 2
“Annexing” Agency: Cazadero CSD
SOI Additions: CSA 40 – Fort Ross

General Notes:

- The Cazadero Community Services District has proposed a sphere amendment for their agency encompassing the entirety of the CSA 40 territory served by the Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Protection District.

LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire
District Mergers
or Annexations

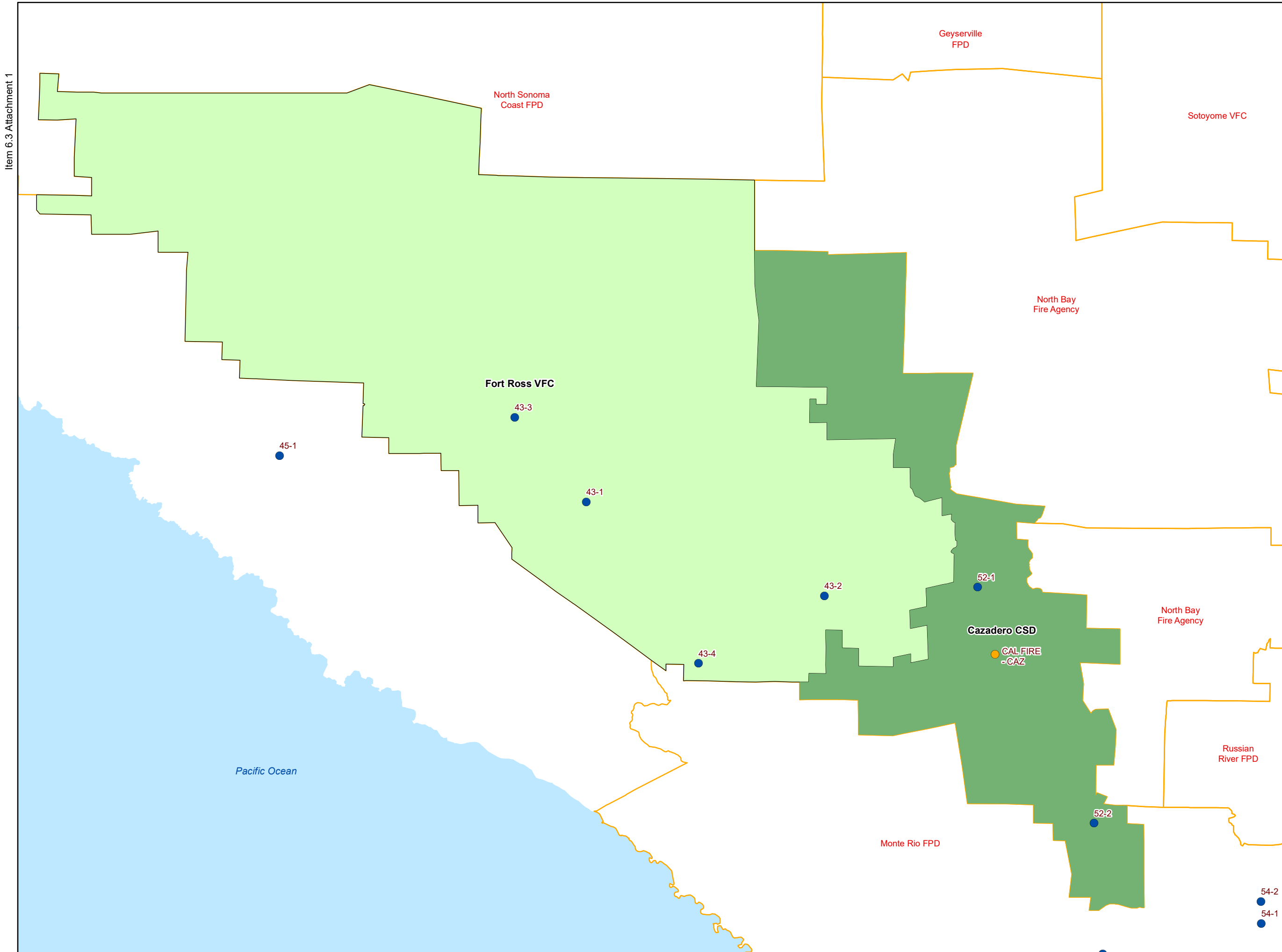
Annexing Agency
Cazadero CSD

SOI Additions:
CSA 40 – Ft. Ross

Sonoma County, CA

Item 6.3 Attachment 1

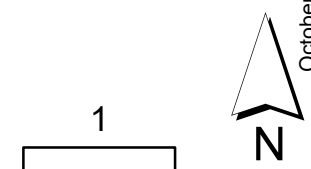
Item 6.3 Attachment 1



Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station

- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



1
Miles

Date: 9/1/2020

October 7, 2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>Cazadero CSD and its contractor CalFire provide mutual aid, and often primary service, for much of the CSA 40 territory served by the Fort Ross VFC. However, Timber Cove FPD has a valid claim as the primary responder for the northern portion of the Fort Ross area.</p> | |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>Cazadero CSD is not financially stable in its current condition as it is reliant on annual contributions from the County to enable year-round CalFire service coverage.</p> | <p>The addition of the Fort Ross territory would likely include the modest property tax revenue for fire services generated in the Fort Ross area. This revenue would not begin to address the CalFire contract expense. (Cazadero does not have a parcel tax.)</p> |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>This proposal is not consistent with the ALS/ambulance service provided by the Coast Life Support District.</p> | <p>The northern portion of the CSA 40 Fort Ross territory is served by Coast Life Support.</p> |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>This portal is inconsistent with other agency and LAFCO staff proposals; it is consistent with the FSWG “Sphere 1” proposal.</p> | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>The proposal does address the CSA 40 Fort Ross territory in its entirety.</p> | |
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>The proposal would not preclude the inclusion of these territories in a Russian River area or a county-wide reorganization in the future.</p> | |

Narrative Evaluation

Short Form Designation: Agency Proposal 3 (Withdrawn)

“Annexing” Agency: Schell-Vista FPD

SOI Additions: CSA 40 - Lakeville

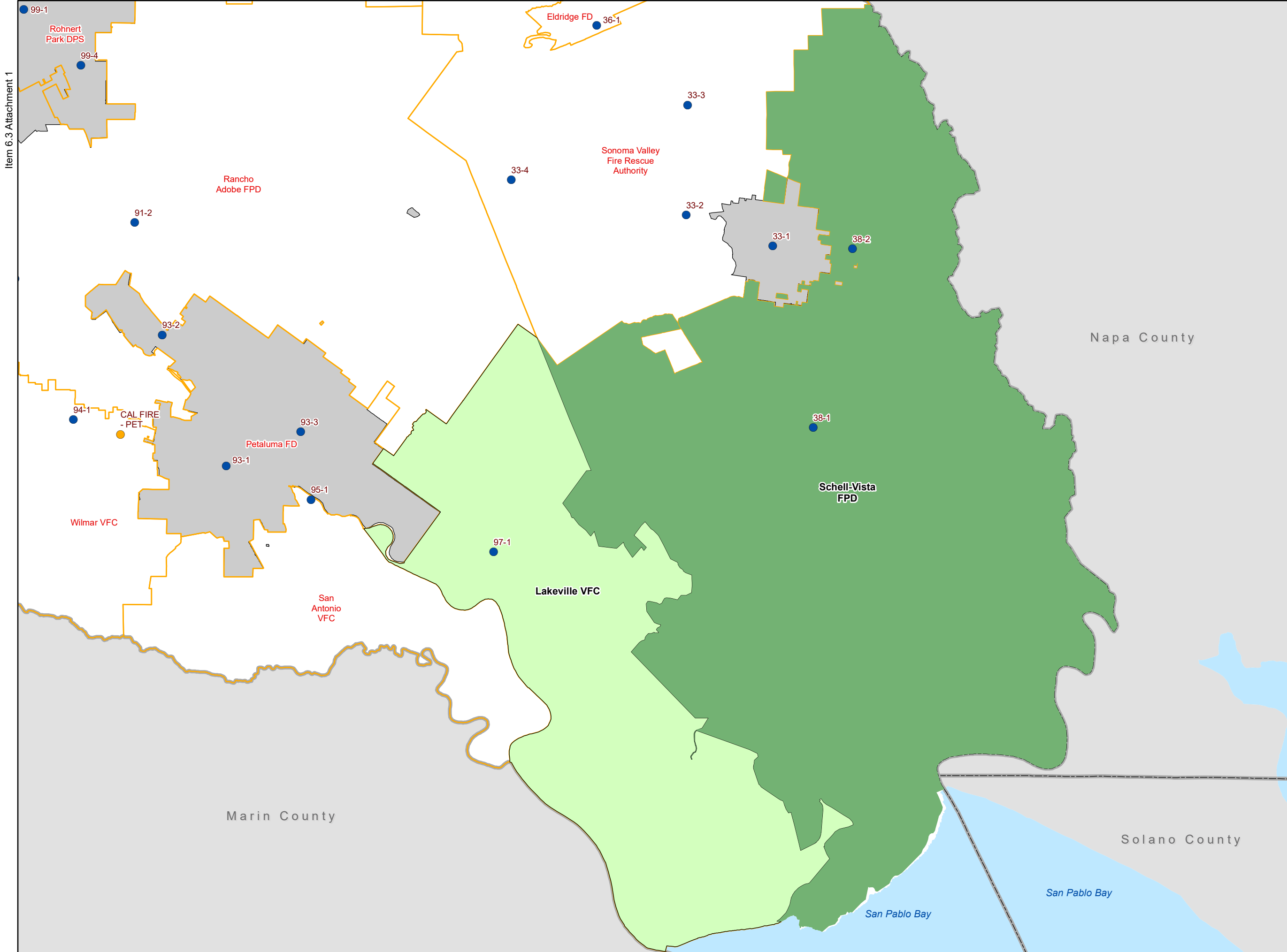
General Notes:

This proposal has been withdrawn by Schell-Vista FPD.

Summary Evaluation:

None required.

Agency Proposals 3
(Withdrawn)
LAFCO
Fire District
Concept Plan



Item 6.3 Attachment 1

Item 6.3 Attachment 1

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency
Schell-Vista FPD

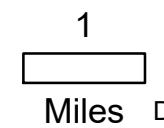
SOI Additions:
CSA 40 – Lakeville

Sonoma County, CA

51

Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



October 7, 2020

Miles Date: 9/1/2020

Short Form Designation: Agency Proposal 4
“Annexing” Agency: Rancho Adobe FPD
SOI Additions: CSA 40 – Two Rock
CSA 40 – Wilmar
CSA 40 – Lakeville
CSA 40 – San Antonio

General Notes:

- This is a proposal from the Ranch Adobe Fire Protection District to add CSA 40 territories to its sphere of influence, predicated a district that surrounds the City of Petaluma.
- A Municipal Service Review of this district and the CSA 40 territories has not been conducted or scheduled.

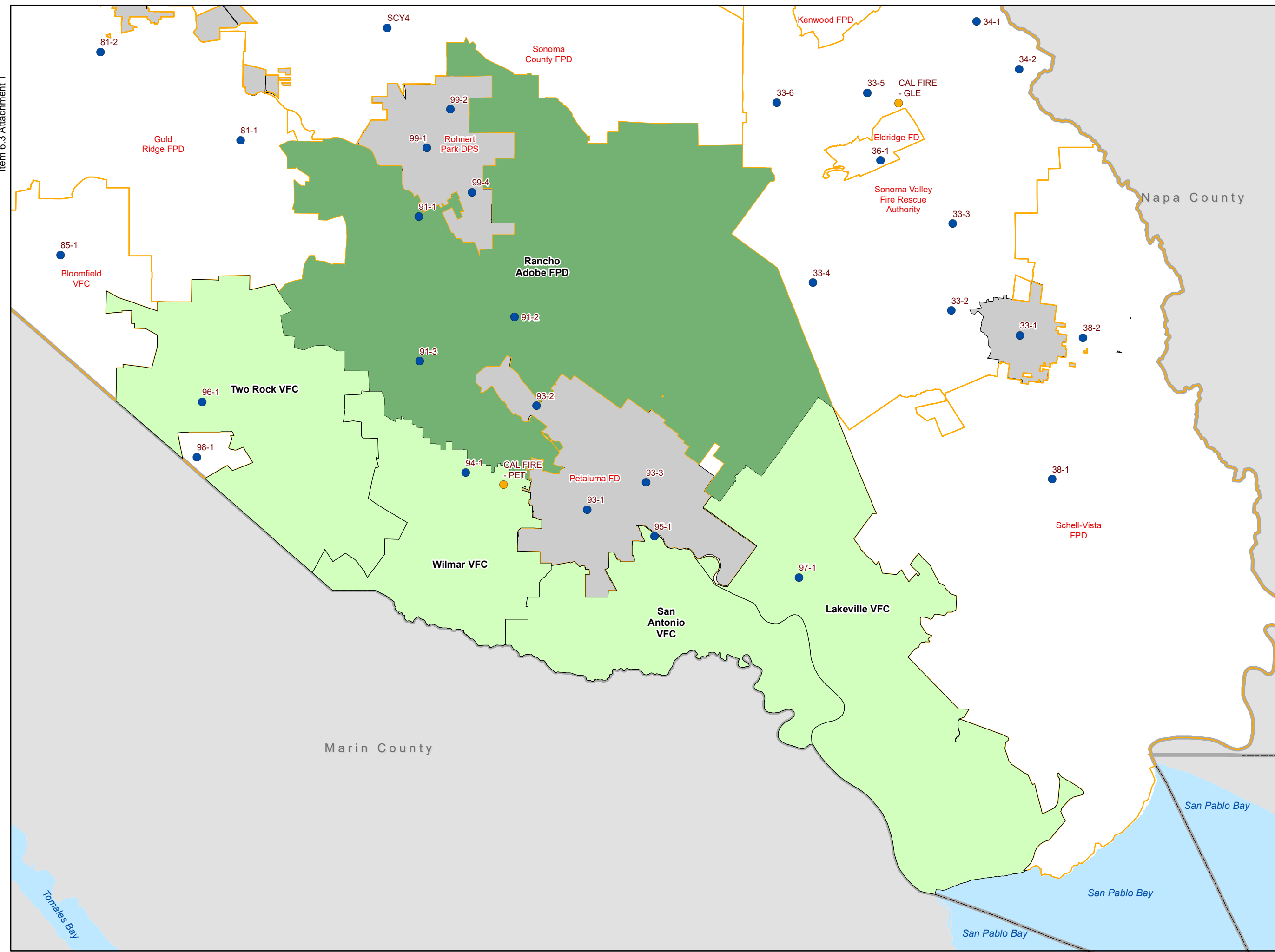
LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire
District Mergers
or Annexations

Annexing Agency
Rancho Adobe FPD

SOI Additions:
CSA 40 – Two Rock
CSA 40 – Wilmar
CSA 40 – Lakeville
CSA 40 – San Antonio

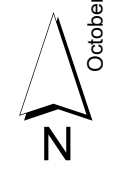
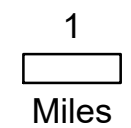
Sonoma County, CA



Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station

- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



Date: 9/1/2020

Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>Rancho Adobe is a good fit for serving Two Rock area, though the City of Petaluma is a more apt partner for the remaining three CSA territories.</p> | <p>Petaluma is not a likely partner at this time.</p> |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>Although an MSR has not evaluated potential tax revenues from extension of parcel taxes to annexed areas, Rancho Adobe recently passed a “healthy” parcel tax that would ostensibly generate significant revenues.</p> | |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>This proposal is almost entirely consistent with Petaluma’s ALS/ambulance service territory.</p> | <p>A portion of Rancho Adobe’s territory to the north is within the Exclusive Operating Area for ALS/ambulance service.</p> |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>The three active VFCs included in this proposal are strongly against an alignment with Rancho Adobe.</p> | |
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>In combination with other proposals, this alignment would address remaining CSA territory.</p> | |

| | | |
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| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>The alignment is in conflict with FSWG “Sphere 3”; otherwise, it would not preclude future realignments.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

Narrative Evaluation

This proposal is predicated on a longer-term vision where the City of Petaluma participates in a regional consolidation as a contract partner.

The proposal is fully consistent with the ALS/ambulance service area of the City, other than for a northern portion of the Rancho Adobe territory.

Although Rancho Adobe’s alignment with the Two Rock area is a sound operational fit, the City of Petaluma provides mutual aid and ALS/ambulance service to the Willmar, San Antonio, and Lakeville areas.

Rancho Adobe recently passed a parcel tax that assesses single family homes \$300 per year. A Municipal Service Review for this region could assess the relative financial sustainability of this alignment.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Short Form Designation: | LAFCO River/Central Coast Area |
| “Annexing” Agency: | Sonoma County FD |
| SOI Additions: | CSA 40 – Fort Ross (southern portion) |
| | CSA 40 – IRP 51 Forestville |
| | CSA 40 – IRP 56 Russian River |
| | Cazadero CSD |
| | Monte Rio FPD |
| | CSA 40 – Bodega |
| | CSA 40 – Valley Ford |
| | CSA 40 – Bloomfield |

General Notes:

- LAFCO staff presented this proposal to the Commission in December 2019. At that time the Commission decided to include the territories of the Russian River, Forestville, and Bodega Bay FPDs in Sonoma County FD’s sphere of influence.
- In a subsequent reorganization, the Russian River FPD territory has been annexed by Sonoma County FD. Sonoma County FD has indicated that an application for reorganization involving the Forestville FPD will be filed in the fall of 2020. An application to reorganize the Bodega Bay FPD territory is pending a successful negotiation with that District and the County.
- If an interim plan is required, staff would recommend removing Bodega Bay from Sonoma County FD’s sphere, and subsequently aligning the Bodega, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield territories with Bodega Bay.

LAFCO Staff Proposal - 1

River/ Central Coast Area LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire
District Mergers
or Annexations

Annexing Agency
Sonoma County FD

SOI Additions:
CSA 40 – Fort Ross
(southern portion)
CSA 40 – IRP 51
Forestville
CSA 40 – IRP 56
Russian River
Cazadero CSD
Monte Rio FPD
CSA 40 – Bodega
CSA 40 – Valley Ford
CSA 40 – Bloomfield

Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

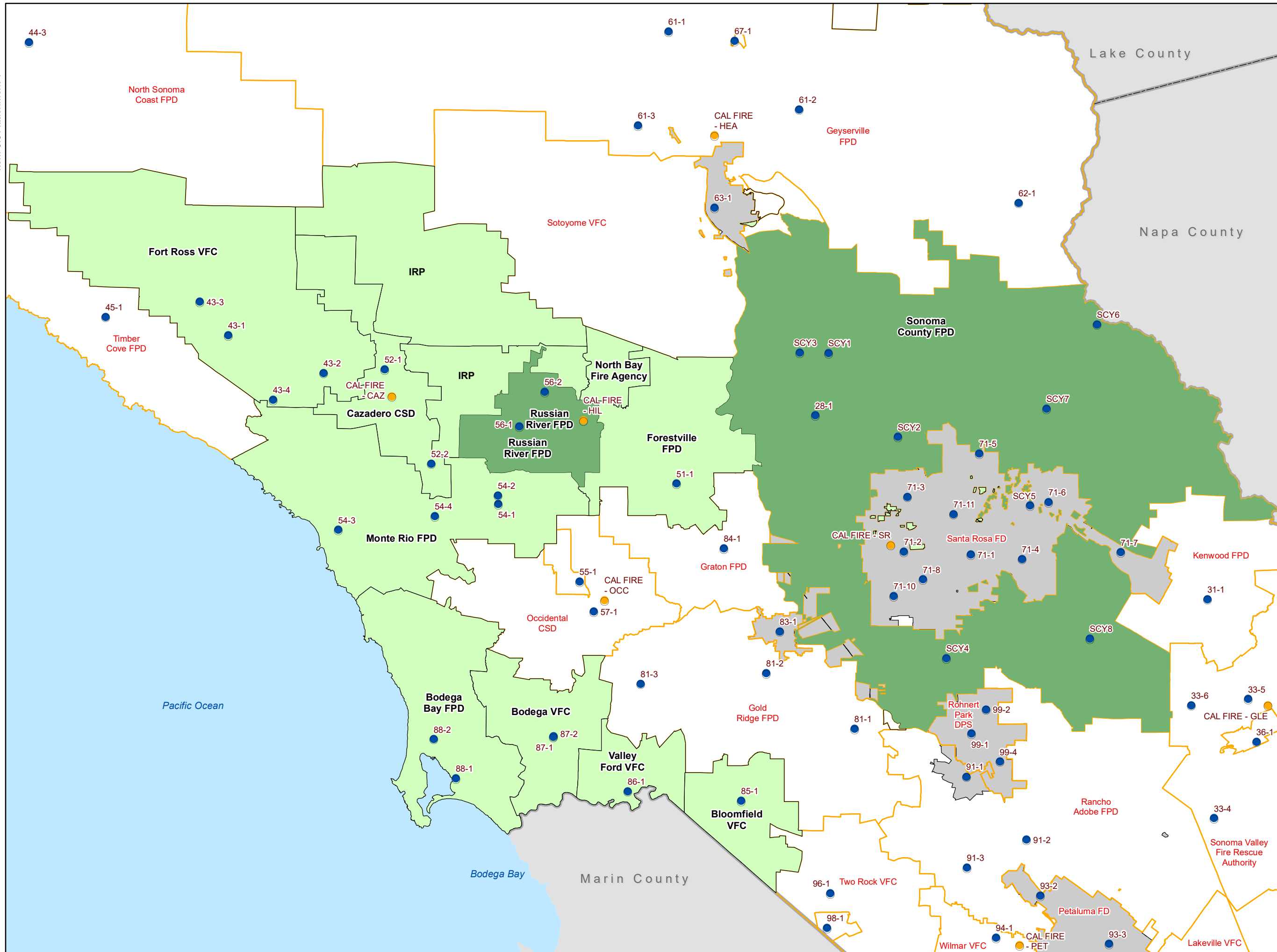
- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City

1
Miles



October 7, 2020

Date: 9/23/2020



Summary Evaluation:

| Criteria | Evaluation | Notes |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Operational Fit</p> <p>Does the proposed SOI make sense from an operational perspective?</p> | <p>This proposal reflects the existing operational circumstances in the lower Russian River area and the Coast.</p> | |
| <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>Will a future reorganization offer opportunities to increase revenues or decrease costs?</p> | <p>A reorganization based on this alignment will generate moderate revenue in the Cazadero, Fort Ross, Bodega, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield areas. It would also generate a reduction in revenue in Bodega Bay.</p> | <p>Monte Rio has a parcel tax which is almost coincident with Sonoma County Fire's rate schedule.</p> |
| <p>Advanced Life Support/Ambulance Service Territory</p> <p>Is the SOI amendment consistent with existing ambulance service territories, if applicable?</p> | <p>This proposed alignment is fully consistent with ALS/ambulance service areas.</p> | |
| <p>Agency Request/Preference</p> <p>Do the subject agencies support the sphere amendment, with the understanding that it predicts eventual reorganizations?</p> | <p>Forestville and Bodega Bay FPD's support this alignment. Cazadero CSD and Monte Rio FPD appear reticent or opposed. The Bodega and Valley Ford VFCs are vehemently opposed.</p> | |
| <p>Elimination of CSA 40 Territory</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment address remaining CSA 40 and IRP territory in the region?</p> | <p>This proposed alignment, in combination with others, fully addresses the inclusion of all remaining CSA 40 territory in regional agencies.</p> | |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Preservation of Further Consolidation Opportunities</p> <p>Does the sphere amendment preclude other options for future reorganizations?</p> | <p>This proposal is in conflict with agency and FSWG proposals.</p> | |
|--|---|--|

Narrative Evaluation

This proposal is a combination of two sub-regional alignments.

The lower Russian River alignment is underway in that Sonoma County Fire has annexed the former Russian River FPD territory and is preparing to apply for reorganization of the Forestville FPD territory. Inclusion of the Monte Rio FPD, Cazadero CSD, and the southern portion of the CSA 40 Fort Ross territory is consistent with ALS/ambulance service provision, and would generate some additional parcel tax revenue.

The Coast alignment similarly respects the existing operational circumstances whereby Bodega Bay FPD provides mutual aid and ALS ambulance service to the Bodega, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield areas. While a reorganization would generate some parcel tax revenue in the CSA territories, there would be a significant reduction in parcel tax collection in the Bodega Bay area.

A reorganization involving Cazadero CSD would have to contend with the parks and lighting services that the District provides (likely involving assignment of these services to other agencies or the County).

Short Form Designation: LAFCO Northern Coast Area
“Annexing” Agency: North Sonoma Coast FPD
SOI Additions: Timber Cove FPD
CSA 40 – Fort Ross (northern portion)

General Notes:

- A Municipal Service Review for the North Sonoma Coast FPD would need to be conducted prior to consideration of this proposal.
- The alignment of territories within a sphere of influence for the northern coast region has been discussed in the evaluations of Agency Proposals 1 and 2.

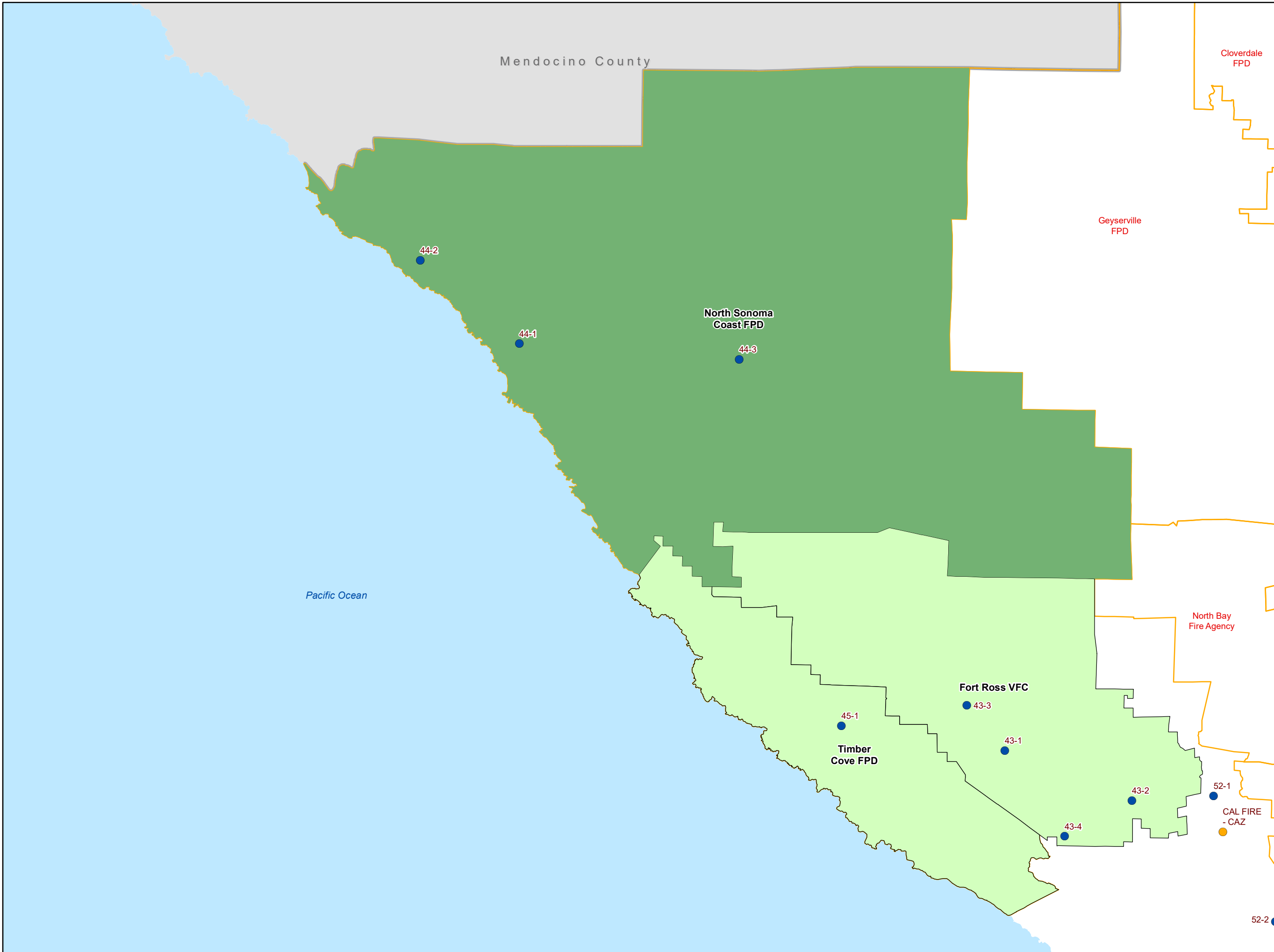
LAFCO Staff Proposal - 2

Northern Coast LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency
North Sonoma Coast FPD

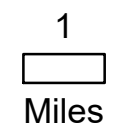
SOI Additions:
Timber Cove FPD
CSA 40 – Ft. Ross
(northern portion)



Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City



Date: 9/1/2020

Short Form Designation: LAFCO North County Area

“Annexing” Agency: North Sonoma County FPD (formerly Geyserville FPD)

SOI Additions: Cloverdale FPD

CSA 40 – Sotoyome

CSA 40 – IRP 61 Geyserville

CSA 40 – IRP 63 Healdsburg (Fitch Mountain)

General Notes:

- While staff has not completed a Municipal Service Review for the agencies in North County, staff expects to recommend this sphere alignment.
- This sphere proposal is consistent with the FSWG “Sphere 4” proposal.

Summary Evaluation:

See FSWG “Sphere 4” evaluation (Staff 3)

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Short Form Designation: | LAFCO Central/Lower River/Coast |
| “Annexing” Agency: | Sonoma County FD |
| SOI Additions: | All agencies in the Central, and lower Russian River |

General Notes:

- LAFCO staff is proposing this sphere alignment solely to predict a potential regional consolidation roadmap that is comprehensive, but short of a county-wide combination of all fire and emergency medical service agencies bar three cities (Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, and Petaluma).
- The proposal posits five regional agencies:
 - Northern County (Cloverdale/Geyserville/Geysers/Sotoyome)
 - North Coast (Sea Ranch/Timber Cove/Fort Ross)
 - Central County and Lower River/Coast
 - Sonoma Valley
 - South County (surrounding Petaluma)
- This proposal is perhaps provocative in that it places Camp Meeker VFC, Occidental CSD, Graton and Gold Ridge FPDs, and potentially the City of Sebastopol, in alignment with the Central region.
- An interim alternative would be an alignment of the agencies noted above into a region of their own, which staff believes would score highly against the Commission’s criteria.
- Given the breadth of this proposal, staff has not completed an evaluation, suggesting instead that one be conducted at a later date if the proposal is deemed as having merit by the Commission.

LAFCO Staff Proposal - 4

Central/ Russian River/ South County LAFCO Fire District Concept Plan

Potential Fire District Mergers or Annexations

Annexing Agency
Sonoma County FD

SOI Additions:
North Coast
(Sea Ranch/
Timber Cove/
Fort Ross)
Central County and
Lower River/Coast
Sonoma Valley
South County
(surrounding Petaluma)

Sonoma County, CA

Fire Station

- Local Fire Station
- State Fire Station
- Annexing Fire District
- Subject Fire District
- Other Fire District
- County Boundary
- Incorporated City

1
Miles



October 7, 2020

Date: 9/23/2020

