

Draft Resolution

111 Santa Rosa Ave. Ste. 240
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

December 4, 2019

Resolution of the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma, State of California, Making Findings and Determinations Related to Information Contained in the Sphere of Influence Study for the Sonoma County Fire District and West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies, Determining Exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act, Adopting the Determinations of the Sphere of Influence Study, and Amending the Spheres of Influence of the Subject Agencies

RESOLVED, that the Local Agency Formation Commission of the County of Sonoma (“the Commission”) hereby finds and determines as follows:

1. Procedural History

1.1 Sonoma County Fire District requested that the Commission prepare a Sphere of Influence Study to determine the feasibility of amending the spheres of influence (“SOI”) of West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies (together, the “Subject Agencies”) pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Government Code section 56000 et seq. (“the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act”).

1.2 The Executive Officer considered the request and prepared a sphere of influence study (“the SOI Study”).

1.3 The Executive Officer determined that the Commission would comply with California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) and the State CEQA Guidelines by acting as the lead agency in its consideration of the SOI Study and proposed amendment of the spheres of influence of the Subject Agencies (together “the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments”). The Executive Officer further determined that the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments is exempt pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3).

1.4 Following the preparation of the SOI Study, the Executive Officer set the matter for consideration by the Commission and provided notice thereof as provided in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.

1.5 The Executive Officer considered written comments received on the SOI Study and prepared a staff report (“the Executive Officer’s Report”) which included a recommendation for the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments. The

Executive Officer furnished copies of the Executive Officer's Report to all persons entitled to copies under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act.

1.6 The Commission conducted a noticed public hearing to consider the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments on December 4, 2019. At the hearing, the Commission heard and received all relevant oral and written testimony and evidence presented or filed and considered the Executive Officer's Report and the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments. All interested persons were given the opportunity to hear and be heard. At the conclusion of public testimony, the Commission closed the public hearing and adopted the determinations in the SOI Study and voted to amend the spheres of influence ("the Spheres of Influence") of the Subject Agencies.

1.7 The Commission has reviewed and considered this resolution and hereby finds that it accurately sets forth the intentions of the Commission regarding the determinations of the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments.

2. CEQA Compliance

2.1 The Commission concurs with the Executive Officer and finds that the Commission is the lead agency for the preparation of the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments, pursuant to CEQA and the state CEQA Guidelines.

2.2 The Commission finds and determines that amendment to the Spheres of Influence of the Subject Agencies is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines, which states that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is not a possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA.

2.3 Amendment to the Spheres of Influence of the Subject Agencies will not result in a physical change to the environment in and of itself. Any future actions for change of organization would be further subject to separate environmental determination.

2.4 The Commission has considered the potential environmental effects of the SOI Study and Spheres of Influence Amendments prior to reaching its decision. The Commission finds that, in doing so, it has fully discharged its responsibilities under CEQA.

3. Amendments to Subject Agency Spheres of Influence

3.1 The Commission orders an amendment to the Sonoma County Fire District's sphere of influence to include the territory served by the Forestville, Russian River, Monte Rio, and Bodega Bay Fire Protection Districts; the Cazadero Community Services District (for fire and emergency medical service provision only); and the portions of County Service Area 40 served by the Fort Ross, Bodega, Valley Ford, and Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Companies, and for Integrated Response Areas 51, 56, and 65.

3.2 The Commission also orders that the spheres of influence for the Forestville, Russian River, Monte Rio, and Bodega Bay Protection Districts be set as “zero,” indicating that it is expected that the territories served by these agencies will be annexed to Sonoma County Fire District.

3.3 The Commission orders that the sphere of influence for the Cazadero Community Services District be set as “zero” for the provision of fire and emergency services, indicating that the territory of the District will be annexed to the Sonoma County Fire District with regard to fire and emergency services.

3.4 The Commission also orders that the sphere of influence for County Service Area 40 (Fire Services) be withdrawn from the areas served by the Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company, the Bodega Volunteer Fire Company, the Valley Ford Volunteer Fire Company, the Bloomfield Volunteer Fire Company, and from Integrated Response Plan areas 51, 56, and 61.

4. Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act Compliance – Sphere of Influence

- 4.1 With regard to requirements of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act for amendments of the Spheres of Influence of the Subject Agencies, the Commission makes the following determinations:
- 4.2 The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands:
 - a. Existing and future land use will have only minimal impacts on the provision of fire and emergency services by the subject agencies.
- 4.3 The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area:
 - a. The recommended sphere of influence amendments, if followed by a regional consolidation through annexations, would provide modest operational and cost efficiencies, although these efficiencies would not ensure the continued viability of service provision.
 - b. A regional consolidation would, if appropriately financed through a variety of methods, ensure continued service levels in the region.
- 4.4 The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide:
 - a. The proposed sphere of influence amendments will allow for reorganization proposals that will address service level deficiencies that are extant at the majority of the subject agencies.
 - b. A regional reorganization is best suited to maintain or enhance service levels, most importantly for Advanced Life Support/ambulance service.

- 4.5 The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency:
 - a. Portions of the region served by the subject agencies are economically disadvantaged. Territory throughout the region is “difficult to serve” in terms of density, access, and geography.
 - b. Portions of the region are heavily impacted by transient populations (tourism), leading to impacts on the provision of fire and emergency services.
- 4.6 The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency:
 - a. There are four LAFCO-designated disadvantaged unincorporated communities served by subject agencies.

NOW, THEREFORE, based on the foregoing findings and determinations and the record of these proceedings, and pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, the Commission hereby declares and orders as follows:

1. The foregoing findings and determinations are true and correct, are supported by substantial evidence in the record, and are adopted as hereinabove set forth.
2. The Commission has reviewed and considered the information contained in the SOI Study for the Sonoma County Fire District and West County Fire and Emergency Service Agencies.
3. The Commission adopts the determinations made in the SOI Study for the Subject Agencies and approves the amendments to the Spheres of Influence recommended in the SOI Study.
4. The Executive Officer is directed to file a Notice of Exemption, in accordance with CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.
5. The Clerk of the Commission is designated as the custodian of the documents and other materials that constitute the record of the proceedings upon which the Commission’s decision herein is based. These documents may be found at the office of the Clerk of the Commission, 111 Santa Rosa Ave., Ste. 240, Santa Rosa, CA, 95404.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was introduced at a regular meeting of the Commission on the 4th day of December 2019 and ordered adopted by the following vote:

Commissioners:

AYES:
NOES:
ABSENT:

WHEREUPON, the Chair declared the foregoing resolution adopted and
SO ORDERED.

Mark Bramfitt, Executive Officer

The within instrument is a true and correct copy of the original on file in this office.

ATTEST:

BY: _____
Clerk

DRAFT