

SONOMA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

111 SANTA ROSA AVENUE, SUITE 240, SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
(707) 565-2577 www.sonomalafco.org

Item 4.2

Staff Report

Meeting Date:	March 1, 2023
Agenda No.	Item 4.2
Agenda Item Title:	Municipal Service Review and Proposed Sphere of Influence Amendment: Russian River County Sanitation District
Proposal:	None
Environmental Determination:	Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") pursuant to Section 15061 (b)(3) of the State CEQA Guidelines
Staff Contacts:	Mark Bramfitt

ANALYSIS

Background

The Russian River County Sanitation District (“District”), in response to a request from the County’s Community Development Commission, requested that LAFCO conduct a Municipal Services Review and consider a sphere of influence amendment for the District.

Staff has prepared a Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study, using a contracted consultant, and has circulated it to affected agencies and interested parties for review and comment.

Staff is recommending that the Commission conduct a public hearing to solicit additional comment and subsequently adopt a resolution making determinations regarding the District and amendments to the Sphere of Influence.

District Description

The Russian River County Sanitation District was formed in 1983 and provides wastewater collection, treatment and disposal services for approximately 3,300 parcels in and around the unincorporated communities of Guerneville, Rio Nido, Guernewood Park and Vacation Beach, in the lower Russian River region.

The District operates a “standard” wastewater system including a network of collection pipes and a central treatment plant. Russian River Sanitation is a dependent District of the County of Sonoma, thereby governed by the Board of Supervisors acting as Directors of the District.

Municipal Service Review Determinations

Section 56430 of the Cortese-Knox Hertzberg Act defines areas for consideration when LAFCO prepares Municipal Services Reviews, including criteria such as the subject agency’s ability to provide service, governance and accountability, and opportunities for shared services with other agencies.

The report prepared for the Russian River County Sanitation District indicates that the District is appropriately meeting the needs of property owners and residents, providing wastewater collection and treatment services that meet regulatory standards. District governance has been sound, and the District has been effectively managing operational, financial, and infrastructure needs well.

Sphere of Influence Amendment

The County's Community Development Commission recently purchased the "George's Hideaway" properties, comprising three parcels, south of Guerneville and the District's present boundary on Highway 116. The County is proposing to develop permanent supportive housing on the site. The site receives municipal water service from the Sweetwater Springs Water District but relied on a septic system for sanitation in its previous uses.

A supportive housing development as proposed by the County would constitute new development and use, making the site ineligible for service under an Outside Service Area Authorization. Annexation of the three parcels to the District cannot be considered without the inclusion of the parcels in the District's LAFCO-authorized sphere of influence.

The Municipal Services Review and Sphere of Influence Study recommends that the George's Hideaway parcels be added to the District's sphere of influence, making them eligible for annexation to the District and the provision of sanitation services to the site.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Conduct a public hearing seeking comment from affected agencies and interested parties.
2. Adopt, with any desired changes, a resolution approving the determinations indicated in the Municipal Services Review for the Russian River County Sanitation District, and the proposed amendments to the Sphere of Influence of the District.

ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION

None

ATTACHMENTS

1. Municipal Services Review and Sphere of Influence Study for the Russian River County Sanitation District
2. Draft Resolution
3. Letter from Brenda Alderman