



AGENDA ITEM 9B

MEETING: September 21, 2022
TO: Humboldt LAFCo Commissioners
FROM: Krystle Heaney, Clerk/Analyst
SUBJECT: **Status of South County Water/Wastewater MSR Preparation**
The Commission will receive a report summarizing the Districts included in the South County Water/Wastewater MSR/SOI Update and status of document preparation. The report is being presented for information only.

BACKGROUND

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act directs Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) to regularly prepare municipal service reviews (MSRs) in conjunction with establishing and updating each local agency's sphere of influence (SOI). The legislative intent of MSRs is to proactively assess the availability, capacity, and efficiency of local governmental services. MSRs may also lead LAFCOs to take other actions under their authority, such as forming, consolidating, or dissolving one or more local agencies in addition to any related sphere changes.

As part of the FY2021/22 fiscal year work plan, staff has been working on a regional MSR for water and wastewater services for the south county region which can be generally described as all districts south of Rio Dell/Scotia.

DISCUSSION

South County Regional Water/ Wastewater MSR and SOI Update

Southern Humboldt County includes multiple small to medium sized water and wastewater districts. A total of eight districts will be included in the South County Regional Water and Wastewater MSR/SOI Update (Alderpoint CWD, Briceland CSD, Garberville SD, Miranda CSD, Phillipsville CSD, Redway CSD, Resort Improvement District #1 (Shelter Cove), and Weott CSD) which will allow staff and Commissioners to take a comprehensive look at services in the region. LAFCo staff has been working on background sections for each agency including population and growth, land use, hazards, tribal lands, and disadvantaged unincorporated communities. Below is a brief description of each District.

Alderpoint County Water District provides water to the community of Alderpoint. The District is located along the Eel River, 18 miles northeast of Garberville. The District was formed in 1965 and has an estimated population of 200. ACWD extracts raw water for potable use from an infiltration gallery located within the western bank of the Eel River. In 1992, ACWD received a certified letter from CDPH notifying them that their water source has been classified as groundwater under the direct influence of surface water, and that the system was in violation of the Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (ESWTR). Alderpoint completed Water Improvements in 2014, including a new Surface Water Treatment Facility, one 160,000 gallon water storage facility, and distribution system repairs.

Briceland Community Services District (CSD) has been providing water services to the community of Briceland since 1989. The District is located along Briceland Thorne Road approximately 5 miles west of Redway and 15 miles east of Shelter Cove by way of Shelter Cove Road. The BCSD is a rural CSD that serves the drinking and fire suppression water needs of a venerable disadvantaged community comprised of a day care, school, community center, and 25 households. The BCSD treatment and distribution system utilizes some of its original components that date back to the 1880's. Many components of the system are outdated, undersized, leaking, or have failed since they were installed. The District recently received funding for a water supply enhancement project, including improvements to the water intake, treatment, and fire suppression systems to enhance the resiliency and autonomy of Briceland by increasing water conservation, increasing firefighting capabilities, and reducing the District's annual O&M costs in a sustainable manner.

Garberville Sanitary District provides water and wastewater services to the Garberville community located along Highway 101 and the South Fork Eel River. The District was originally formed in 1932 to provide wastewater services to the area which is made up of mostly low density residential and agricultural lands. Water service is only provided to a portion of the District including the Kimtu and Connick Creek subdivisions and areas to the north and south of downtown Garberville. The District obtains water from both groundwater and the Eel River. Wastewater collection and treatment is provided to all areas within its jurisdictional boundary.

Miranda Community Services District was formed in 1964. The District provides water and fire services to the community of Miranda located west of Highway 101 and the South Fork Eel River, north of Phillipsville. The District utilizes two wells for water production and maintains two storage tanks, including one redwood tank, for a total of 200,000 gallons of storage. The District's infrastructure is aging and they are currently seeking funding for infrastructure upgrades including storage tank replacement and water main upgrades. The Miranda Volunteer Fire Department provides fire protection and rescue services on behalf of the District and has a response area larger than the District boundary consisting of approximately nine square miles. Fire services in areas outside of the District boundary are provided on a goodwill basis which has created an increased financial burden on the District.

Phillipsville Community Services District has been providing water services to the community of Phillipsville since 1990. The District is located just east of Highway 101 and the South Fork Eel River and south of Miranda. Water is sourced from an active well and a local spring with variable capacity. The water system has had notable issues with operation since its installation including low water flow, malfunctioning monitoring equipment, and limited chlorine contact time. The District is currently working to address these issues and are currently seeking funding for infrastructure upgrades.

Redway Community Services District provides water and wastewater services to the community of Redway just off of Highway 101 directly north of the Garberville. The District has been providing water services since 1965 and began providing wastewater services when it consolidated with the former Redway Sanitary District in 1977. Water is obtained from the Eel River through an infiltration gallery. There are a total of three storage tanks

with a combined capacity of 810,000 gallons. A portion of the District's water mains are comprised of aging 2 inch steel pipes which currently does not meet current standards for water systems. Additional water mains are over 40 years old and likely reaching the end of their useful life.

Resort Improvement District #1 (RID) provides water, wastewater, recreation, electricity, and fire protection services to the community of Shelter Cove located on the coast bordering the King Range National Conservation Area. They have been providing services since 1965 and are the only remaining district of this type in California. Water is obtained from numerous sources including surface and groundwater. The largest source of water is Upper Telegraph Creek but this subject to seasonal fluctuations. The District has been installing a number of wells with the intention of being able to meeting demand entirely with groundwater if need be. Wastewater services are provided to the lower portion of Shelter Cover and electricity is purchased wholesale from Western Area Power Authority. Fire services are provided through the Shelter Cove Volunteer Fire Company. The District also maintains numerous trails, a children's playground, and a community clubhouse.

Weott Community Services District has been providing water services to the community of Weott since 1965 and wastewater services since 1987. They are in between Highway 101 and the South Fork Eel River just north of Miranda. Water is obtained from two sources including Mill and Corner Creeks that flow down the western bank of the Eel River. Currently there are two storage tanks with a total capacity of 169,000 gallons. However, the District is working on replacing one of the tanks with a 165,000 gallon tank. Much of the District's water infrastructure has reached the end of its useful life and is in poor condition. Wastewater is collected and subjected to biological treatment through a large septic and recirculating tank before being chemically treated and distributed through a series of leech lines. The District is also authorized to provide fire protection services but the volunteer fire company was disbanded in 2017. Due to the recent passing of the General Manager, the District no longer has enough qualified operators to manage the two systems. This, in addition to aging infrastructure, difficulty recruiting board members, and financial constraints has left the District in a difficult position.

Next Steps

Staff has completed a review of all District boundaries and initial information that has been gathered. Staff will continue to work on obtaining contact information for some of the smaller districts and will complete drafts of the agency profiles based on the information obtained.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Commission receive and file this report.