

**LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION  
COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO**

215 North D Street, Suite 204,  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0490 • (909) 383-9900 • Fax (909) 383-9901  
E-MAIL: [lafco@lafco.sbcounty.gov](mailto:lafco@lafco.sbcounty.gov)  
[www.sbclafco.org](http://www.sbclafco.org)

---

**DATE:           OCTOBER 6, 2006**

**FROM:          KATHLEEN ROLLINGS-McDONALD, Executive Officer**

**TO:            LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**

---

**SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #6 – STATUS REPORT ON SAN BERNARDINO  
COUNTY FIRE REORGANIZATION LAFCO 3000/3001**

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Commission:

1. Note receipt of the status report and direct that it be filed as an information document; and,
2. Direct staff to make the necessary arrangements to conduct informational advisory meetings in each of the primary improvement districts proposed for the reorganization proposal prior to scheduling the item for Commission consideration. Attendance by one or two Commission members at each advisory meeting is to be a part of the arrangements.

**BACKGROUND:**

On August 1, 2005, the County submitted its two applications to reorganize the 28 separate County-governed fire providers into a single consolidated agency. These applications are a sphere of influence amendment and the actual reorganization proposal. This philosophically simple set of actions is in reality a complex reorganization of functions, services and agencies governed by the County Board of Supervisors. The proposals submitted to LAFCO are identified as follows:

**LAFCO 3000** – “County Fire Reorganization” -- LAFCO staff has simplified the title of this action for ease in processing. However, the changes included within the application are complex, as identified below:

1. Annexation to the Yucca Valley Fire Protection District (all unincorporated territory not currently a part of an independent fire provider and incorporated territory currently served by a County-governed fire provider)
2. Change the name of the District to the San Bernardino County Fire District
3. Dissolution of the Central Valley Fire Protection District, Forest Falls Fire Protection District, Lake Arrowhead Fire Protection District, County Service Area 38 and its Improvement Zones B – Angelus Oaks, D-Victorville, E-Summit Valley, H-Colton, I-Needles, J-Big River, K-Spring Valley Lake, L-Highland Paramedic, M-Yucaipa Paramedic, N-El Mirage, O-Baldwin Lake, and Q-Helendale; and County Service Area 70 Improvement Zone FP-1 (Windy Acres), FP-5 (Helendale) and PM-1 (Lake Arrowhead Paramedics)
4. Removal of Fire Function from County Service Areas 70 Unincorporated Countywide, 20-Joshua Tree, 29–Lucerne Valley, 30–Red Mountain, 53-Big Bear, 53B–Fawnskin, 56-Wrightwood/Pinon Hills, 56F-1–Pinon Hills, 70HL–Havasuu Lake, 70M-Wonder Valley, 70W – Hinkley, 79–Green Valley Lake, 82-Searles Valley, and 82SV-1 – Searles Valley
5. Removal of Ambulance Function from County Service Area 70 – Unincorporated Countywide, 29 – Lucerne Valley, 56 – Wrightwood, 82 – Searles Valley, and 82 SV-1-Searles Valley
6. Removal of Disaster Preparedness Function from County Service Area 63 (Yucaipa/Oak Glen)
7. Formation of Improvement Districts within the new San Bernardino County Fire District as follows:
  - i. Regional – Valley, Mountain, North Desert and South Desert
  - ii. Special Tax/Assessment Districts – FP-1 (Red Mountain), FP-2 (Windy Acres), FP-3 (El Mirage), FP-4 (Wonder Valley) and FP-5 (Helendale) for fire purposes; PM-1 (Lake Arrowhead), PM-2 (Highland), and PM-3 (Yucaipa) for paramedic services.

**LAFCO 3001** – Sphere of Influence Review Expansions for the Yucca Valley Fire Protection District (County Fire Reorganization) and Reductions (to a Zero Sphere of Influence) for County Service Area 38, Central

Valley Fire Protection District, Lake Arrowhead Fire Protection District  
and Forest Falls Fire Protection District

From August 2005 through December 2005, County and LAFCO staffs worked together to complete the requirements for a determination that a complete application was submitted allowing for circulation of the proposal for review and comment. On December 20, 2005, the Notice of Filing for these proposals was circulated for review and comment and a Departmental Review Committee meeting was held on February 2, 2006. The distribution of the Notice of Filing provided notification of the submission of the application to over 200 individuals and agencies. At the Departmental Review Committee meeting a number of questions and concerns on the information submitted were received and a letter requesting submission of additional information – most specifically more detailed budgetary information on the provision of services — was forwarded to the County on March 2, 2006.

On October 4, 2006, the County Administrative Office submitted the budget information in response to LAFCO staff's request for additional information. Staff will begin the review process of this material in order to provide for a staff report making the mandatory determinations that this is a more cost-effective and efficient method for providing service.

Outside the budget information necessary to continue processing these applications, several other issues remain to be resolved. They are:

1. Determination of potential effects on abilities of remaining CSAs to perform their functions once property tax revenues are permanently separated to fire.

With receipt of the budget response from the County, staff will begin the analysis necessary to review in more detail the revenue transfers from CSA 20 (Joshua Tree), County Service Area 29 (Lucerne Valley), CSA 53 (Big Bear), CSA 53 Zone B (Fawnskin), CSA 56 (Wrightwood), CSA 56 and CSA 56 Zone F-1 (Pinon Hills), CSA 70 Zone HL (Lake Havasu), CSA 70 Zone M (Wonder Valley), CSA 79 (Green Valley Lake), CSA 82 and Zone SV-1 (Searles Valley). Each of these agencies performs multiple functions for their communities and the approval of this reorganization will permanently alter the property tax revenue stream. LAFCO's responsibilities in reviewing these applications are to determine that there will be no detrimental effect to the remaining agency to perform its range of services.

2. Sovereign Indian lands included in the proposed annexation/dissolution portion of the application.

As sovereign nations, Indian lands cannot be annexed without the consent

of the affected Tribal Council and the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. LAFCO staff, along with staff from County Fire, has met with the Indian tribes along the Colorado River who will be affected by this change and will need to meet with representatives of the San Manuel Indian Tribe to discuss the actions proposed. Absent receipt of the consent, the annexation boundaries will need to be altered to remove the territory and the effects of any change in service levels addressed.

3. Transfer of Ambulance functions of dissolving agencies to new consolidated district. Concern has been expressed by representatives of American Medical Response (AMR) and staff of Inland County Emergency Medical Authority (ICEMA) regarding the transfer of existing ambulance service areas to the single fire protection district. Staff will be working with these agencies to resolve concerns.
4. Processing of the alternative application submitted by the City of Fontana (LAFCO 3000A) which proposes, rather than dissolving the Central Valley Fire Protection District, that territory be detached from this agency outside the City's sphere of influence and transferred to the County Consolidated Fire District and that the remaining lands within the District become a subsidiary district of the City of Fontana, to be known as the Fontana Fire Protection District.

Following submission of the County proposal to reorganize its fire functions, the City of Fontana, as an affected agency, expressed its concern regarding the effects of this change on fire service delivery to its residents. The City of Fontana is currently overlain by the Board-governed Central Valley Fire Protection District. LAFCO staff has not accepted this application as complete for filing due to concerns on the Plan for Service and the financial information presented therein. Discussions with City staff and the City consultant indicate that a revised Plan for Service should be submitted shortly for circulation for review and comment. This alternative proposal will be processed concurrently with the County Fire Reorganization.

5. Environmental processing of the applications cannot begin without information related to the financial impacts to the remaining agencies (outlined above) which will continue to exist with a reduced number of services and level of revenues. Upon receipt of the County's updated financial information, the Commission's environmental consultant along with staff will begin to evaluate the proposal.

As can be seen from this listing of items to be resolved, the processing of these applications has a way to go before official presentation for Commission consideration. It is the desire of LAFCO staff and the County to complete these actions in time for a transition of services at the beginning of the next fiscal year

(July 1, 2007). However, in order for that to take place, it will require that the Commission's hearings for this set of proposals be concluded by April 2007, so that the reconsideration period is completed (30 days) and the protest proceedings can be concluded prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Staff anticipates that processing of this application will include conducting, at a minimum, one advisory meeting in each of the primary improvement districts to discuss the impacts of the proposal, the processing of the application, and review any specific regional concerns. Staff anticipates that one or two members of the Commission would attend each of these meetings to hear from the residents and other agencies. Staff is requesting direction from the Commission on this process through its recommendation.

**CONCLUSION:**

As outlined above, staff is moving forward with the processing of each of the applications in its efforts to provide for a final determination prior to the close of the fiscal year. Staff will be happy to answer any questions of the Commission on this Status Report.

KRM/

Attachments:

- 1 -- Maps of LAFCO 3000 and its various components for change
- 2 -- Map of LAFCO 3001