

**Municipal Service Review  
and  
Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

**County Service Area #2  
Mono County, California**

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## SUMMARY

### Municipal Service Review Determinations

#### 1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

- The district has identified a need to continue maintenance at its Milner Site and to upgrade its facilities and equipment as needed.

#### 2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for significant additional growth in the area served by CSA #2.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to be primarily single-family residential development with limited commercial uses.
- The residential population in the area served by CSA #2 is projected to increase to 1,210 by 2,020 and 1,304 by 2,030, creating an increased demand for services.

#### 3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities

- County Service Area #2's future financing will continue to rely on annual homeowners assessments.

#### 4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities

- In the Tri-Valley, there are some overlapping service boundaries.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has limited long-term plans and no long-term planning documents.
- There are several service providers in the Tri-Valley that have administrative costs associated with the overall management of those organizations. There could be some duplication of services among the service providers, particularly in areas such as personnel management, insurance, risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the service providers.

#### 5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring

- County Service Area #2's future financing will continue to rely on annual homeowners assessments. There may be opportunities to adjust those rates.

#### 6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities and Resources

- The district currently shares space in Benton and Chalfant with other county facilities.
- The Tri-Valley area includes other special district service providers, as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be further opportunities for shared facilities among the service providers in the area. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs by sharing facilities.

## **7. Government Structure Options**

- The boundaries of the Countywide County Service Area encompass the other three County Service Areas, creating district overlap and administrative overlap.
- The Mono County Board of Supervisors administers all County Service Areas.
- County staff performs the budgeting and financial work for the districts and, in some cases, complete the operations and maintenance work required by the districts.
- CSA #2 could dissolve and its service functions and advisory board could become a Zone of Benefit within the Countywide County Service Area. The ZOB would function in the same manner as the former CSA functioned. This would reduce administrative overlap.

## **8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies**

- County Service Area #2 is governed by the Mono County Board of Supervisors.
- The district is administered by an advisory board of residents from within the district.
- County Service Area #2 has no longterm planning documents.

## **9. Local Accountability and Governance**

- CSA #2 complies with the minimum open meeting and public information requirements.

## Sphere of Influence Findings

### 1. Present and Planned Land Uses

Present land uses in the area served by County Service Area #2 include residential, commercial, and public uses. The planned land uses for community areas are similar with future development concentrated primarily within and adjacent to existing development.

### 2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services

The area within the boundaries of CSA #2 has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve the increasing residential development in the area.

### 3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has identified a need to improve both its facilities and services in order to serve additional development.

### 4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest

The Tri-Valley area exhibits social and economic interdependence with Bishop in Inyo County and, to a lesser degree, with Mammoth Lakes. An interdependence with either of those areas has no relevance in determining the sphere of influence for the district due to the distances involved, the fact that Bishop and Mammoth Lakes are incorporated entities and the Tri-Valley communities are not, and the fact that special districts cannot provide services outside of their county.

## Sphere of Influence Recommendation

An interim sphere of influence<sup>1</sup> that is coterminous with the boundaries of the CSA has been established for County Service Area #2.

## Reorganization Recommendation

Mono County currently has four County Service Areas:

CSA #1 provides TV service and community improvements in Long Valley

CSA #2 provides TV service in the Tri-Valley

CSA #5 provides TV service in Bridgeport

Countywide CSA serves as an administrative and funding mechanism to facilitate the provision of a variety of services to zones of benefit established throughout the county.

CSAs #1, #2, and #5 are all located within the boundaries of the Countywide CSA. The Mono County Board of Supervisors is the formal governing body for all the CSAs.

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<sup>1</sup> An interim Sphere of Influence is defined as a Sphere of Influence boundary that will remain in effect until the district consolidates with another special district capable of providing the same or a broader level of service.

## **County Service Area #2 -- Municipal Service Review**

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CSA #2 should ultimately dissolve and its service functions and advisory board should become a Zone of Benefit within the Countywide County Service Area (CWCSA). The ZOB would function in the same manner as the former CSA functioned. The same reorganization recommendation is included in the Municipal Service Reviews for CSA #1 and CSA #5. Such a consolidation of services should occur only with the concurrence of the involved districts.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Municipal Service Reviews**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) to conduct comprehensive reviews of all municipal services in each county in California and to periodically update that information. The purpose of the municipal service reviews is to gather detailed information on public service capacities and issues.

### **Relationship Between Municipal Service Reviews and Spheres of Influence**

The Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act requires LAFCOs to develop and determine the Sphere of Influence (SOI) for each applicable local governmental agency that provides services or facilities related to development. Government Code Section 56076 defines a SOI as “a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency.” Service reviews must be completed prior to the establishment or update of SOIs (§56430(a)). Spheres of influence must be reviewed and updated as necessary, but not less than once every five years (§56425).

The information and determinations contained in a Municipal Service Review are intended to guide and inform SOI decisions. Service reviews enable LAFCO to determine SOI boundaries and to establish the most efficient service provider for areas needing new service. They also function as the basis for other government reorganizations. Section 56430, as noted above, states that LAFCO can conduct these reviews “before, in conjunction with, but no later than the time it is considering an action to establish a SOI.”

The County Service Area #2 Municipal Service Review is being conducted in response to, and in conjunction with, an update of the sphere of influence for the district.

## **II. COUNTY SERVICE AREA #2**

### **DISTRICT OVERVIEW**

#### **District Area**

County Service Area #2 (CSA #2) was established in 1977 to provide television service for residents in the Tri-Valley, i.e. in the Benton, Hammil, and Chalfant valleys (see Figure 1). . The district boundaries include approximately 187 square miles of public and private lands along Highway 6 in the Tri-Valley (see Figure 1).

The district is bordered to the east by the White Mountains, to the west by the Benton Range, to the south by the Owens Valley, and to the north by the Nevada State Line. The Tri-Valley is located along an approximately 32-mile stretch of State Route 6, the only access through the area. There are no surface waters within the district. Topography within the district is characterized by the relatively flat floor of the valley, gently sloping alluvial fans to the sides of the valley floor and steep slopes above the alluvial fans. Vegetation in the district is primarily desert scrub.

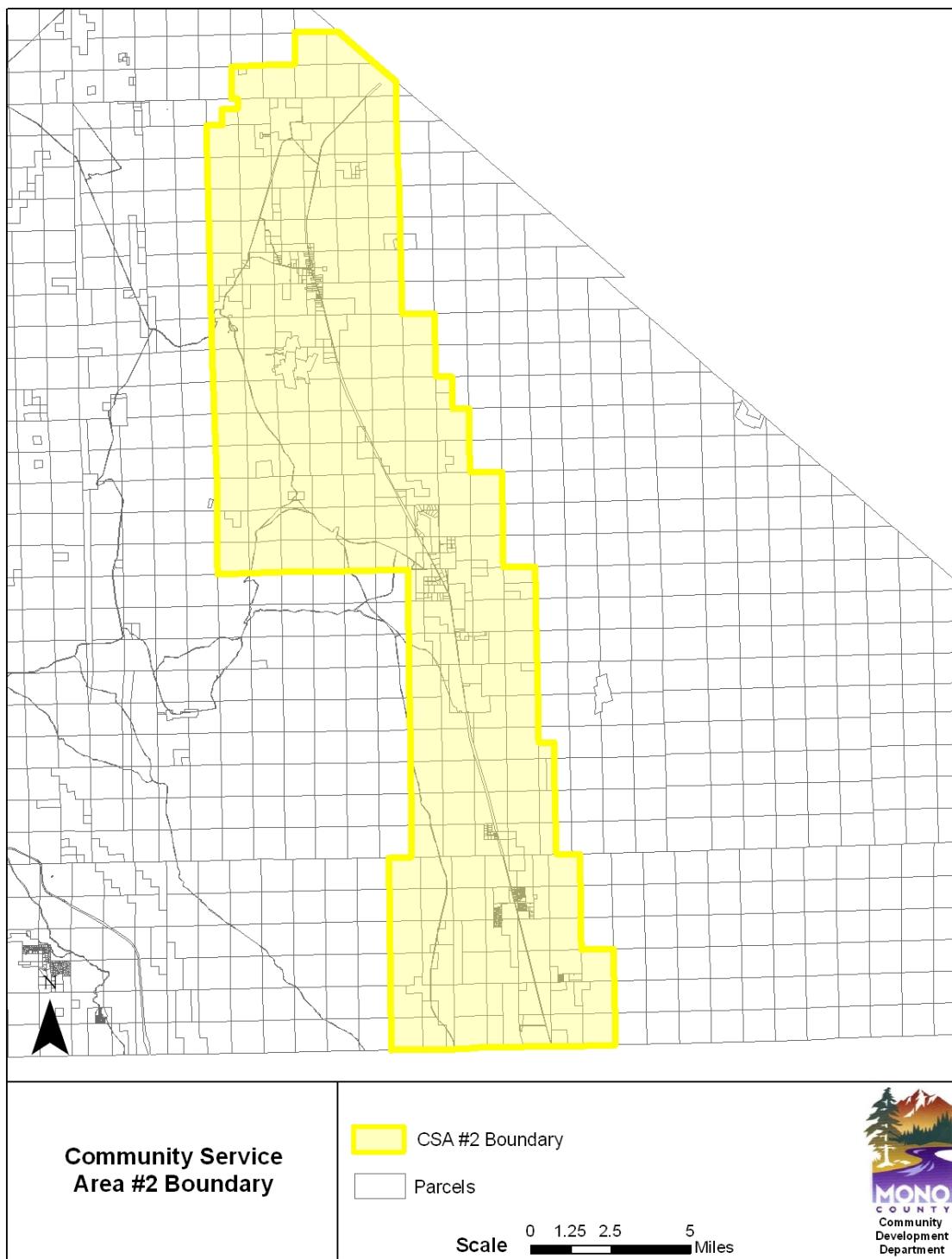
Benton is a rural residential community with limited small businesses, an elementary school, community center, senior center, church, county roadyard, fire station, state agricultural inspection station, and a county landfill/transfer station. Surrounding areas include large ranches with irrigated cropland and other agricultural uses. The Hammil Valley is primarily agricultural, mostly irrigated cropland with dispersed ranches and residential development.

Chalfant is a rural residential community with limited small businesses, a community center/senior center, fire station, and a county landfill/transfer station. The majority of the parcels within the community are one acre or smaller. Unlike Hammil Valley and Benton, Chalfant Valley has relatively few large private parcels used for agriculture. Chalfant is increasingly becoming a bedroom community for Bishop and that trend is expected to continue with Chalfant attracting more residents who work and shop in Bishop.

The surrounding area includes large tracts of land owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and large areas of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the Inyo National Forest.

#### **Population Characteristics**

Mono County GIS estimates that there are 855 parcels in the district, including 404 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population of the Tri-Valley to be 954 in 2000 and 974 in 2003 (Table 3, Mono County Housing Element).



**Figure 1**  
**County Service Area #2—District Boundaries and Sphere of Influence**

## **Services Provided**

The district provides the following services to communities in the Tri-Valley:

- Television services. The district re-broadcasts three TV channels to the Tri-Valley from its facilities (Milner Site) in the White Mountains. Transmission from that site is available either through an antenna or through cable services from Sudden Link Cable Company which picks up the re-broadcasting signal. If a resident has an antenna or subscribes to Sudden Link Cable Company, they must pay the district's \$50 annual assessment fee. Residents with satellite services from Direct TV or Dish Network do not need an antenna to pick up the channels re-broadcast by the district and therefore do not pay the annual assessment fee. Since the assessment fee is automatically collected by the county as part of the property tax collection process, those residents with satellite service may apply for a reimbursement of the annual assessment fee.
- The district has two all-terrain vehicles with a trailer that are available for use during emergencies (e.g. Search & Rescue).
- The district provides a storage container in Benton that is currently being used by the County Department of Social Services for disaster supplies.
- The district assisted the White Mountain Fire Protection District and the Benton Senior Center with the installation of an emergency generators
- The district assisted the Chalfant Fire Protection Department and the Chalfant Community Center/Senior Center with the installation of an emergency generator.

## **Other Services**

As a County Service Area, the district is authorized to provide a wide array of services, including television service, police, fire protection, parks and recreation, library, water, sewer, animal control, pest and rodent control, street sweeping, street lighting, refuse collection, ambulance, geological hazard abatement, and other miscellaneous extended services.

## **Land Ownership**

The district includes large areas of land owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, along with large areas of public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in addition to smaller privately owned parcels. Lands surrounding the district are generally public lands managed by the Inyo National Forest.

## **Planned Land Uses**

The Mono County Land Use Element provides for substantial additional development in Benton. The additional development allowed by the plan would be predominantly rural residential development throughout the valley, along with limited commercial uses and mixed-use development in Benton that could incorporate residential development and commercial development. The commercial development would occur in the existing community along State Routes 6 and 120. Residential development could also occur throughout the valley on agricultural lands. A large amount of the land designated for rural residential has large minimum lot sizes (4 acres or more) which means that the development would be spread out. Residential development could also occur on lands designated for agricultural uses and could be similarly spread out.

Hammil Valley has a development credits program that allows a certain number of units to be developed per parcel, depending on the size of the parcel and the ownership. Despite this limitation, additional residential development could occur in the Hammil Valley.

The Mono County Land Use Element provides for substantial additional development in Chalfant. The additional development allowed by the plan would be predominantly rural residential development throughout the valley. Limited residential development could also occur throughout the valley on agricultural lands, although most of the agricultural lands have a 40-acre minimum lot size. Residential development on lands designated for agricultural uses would be spread out.

## **District Planning**

The district's short-term plans include the following:

- Prepare for digital conversion, as well as changing channel designations.
- Facilitate space for internet service.

The district's long-term plans include the following:

- Require all parcels to pay the assessment, due to the possibility of providing additional services beyond television services.
- Provide information to the public about what services might be provided so the district is not considered a television service.

## **DISTRICT SERVICES**

### **Services**

The district provides, or has provided, a variety of community services including television re-broadcasting services, all-terrain vehicles for emergency use, storage facility, assistance with the installation of emergency generators.

### **Administration and Personnel**

The Mono County Board of Supervisors is the formal governing body for CSA #2. An advisory committee formed of residents from within the district oversees the day-to-day administration of the district. The district has no personnel. County staff performs the budgeting and financial work for the district. The district contracts for required work.

### **Finances**

The district relies on revenues from an annual property assessment. Parcels located within the district boundaries are assessed an annual amount to pay for the activities within the district. The assessment is collected by the county as part of each homeowner's property tax bill. Homeowners who do not have an antenna, or cable service, and who do not use the district's services, may apply for a refund of the annual assessment. Excess funds not used during the current year remain in the district's account.

### III. SERVICE REVIEW ANALYSIS AND DETERMINATIONS

Government Code §56430 requires the analysis of nine factors when assessing the capabilities of public service agencies. Each of the required factors is discussed below as it pertains to fire protection districts in general and the County Service Area #2, Community Service District specifically.

#### 1. Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

##### Overview

*Purpose: To evaluate the infrastructure needs and deficiencies of a district in terms of capacity, condition of facilities, service quality, and levels of service and its relationship to existing and planned service users*

##### *County Service Area #2*

The district has limited facilities and equipment, i.e.:

- Milner Site in the White Mountains, with equipment used to re-broadcast three TV channels to the Tri-Valley.
- Two all-terrain vehicles with a trailer that are available for use during emergencies (e.g. Search & Rescue), stored at a small fenced lot at the County Road Yard in Benton
- A storage container in Benton that is currently being used by the County Department of Social Services for disaster supplies.

The district has identified a need to upgrade its facilities and equipment, i.e.:

- Prepare for digital conversion, as well as changing channel designations.
- Facilitate space for internet service.

##### Determinations

The district has identified a need to continue maintenance at its Milner Site and to upgrade its facilities and equipment as needed.

#### 2. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area

##### Overview

*Purpose: To evaluate service needs based on existing and anticipated growth patterns and population projections.*

##### *Existing and Anticipated Growth Patterns in the Chalfant Valley*

Development in the Chalfant Valley is currently concentrated in the community of Chalfant and at White Mountain Estates. Future growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas. Development on lands designated for agricultural uses would create

new pockets of development away from currently developed areas. The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in the Chalfant Valley:

***Existing and Anticipated Growth Patterns in Benton and Hammil***

Development in Benton and Hammil is currently concentrated in the community of Benton and in smaller areas of residential development in the Hammil Valley. Future growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas. Development on lands designated for agricultural uses would create new pockets of development away from currently developed areas. The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for the following buildout in Benton and Hammil:

**Table 1: Buildout Figures for Chalfant**

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
ER Estate Residential	1 du/acre	109	109
RMH Rural Mobile Home	1 du/acre	443	365 <sup>a</sup>
C Commercial	15 du/acre	1	15
SC Service Commercial	---	3	1
RE Resource Extraction	---	40	---
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	3	---
RM Resource Management	1 du/40 acres	162	5
OS Open Space	1 du/80 acres		
NHP Natural Habitat Protection	1 du/5 acres		
AG Agriculture	1 du/2.5 acres	1,136	69 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Total Private Lands</b>		1,897	564
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	44,403	---
OS Open Space – LADWP	1 du/80 acres	7,769	97
<b>Total</b>		54,069	661

**Notes:**

a. 100 acres at 5-acre minimum lot size; 10 acres at 2-acre minimum lot size.

b. 1,030 acres at 40-acre minimum lot size.

**Table 2: Buildout Figures for Benton**

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
ER Estate Residential	1 du/acre		
RR Rural Residential	1 du/acre	1,799	586 <sup>a</sup>
MU Mixed Use	15 du/acre	110	1,650 <sup>b</sup>
RU Rural Resort	1 du/5 acres	35	---
C Commercial	15 du/acre	15	225 <sup>c</sup>
I Industrial	---	40	---
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	45	---
RM Resource Management	1 du/40 acres	893	22
AG Agriculture	1 du/2.5 ac.	3,578	1,391
<b>Total Private Lands</b>		6,515	3,874
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	37,248	---
<b>Total</b>		43,763	3,874

**Notes:**

- a. 492 acres RR; 288 acres RR 4 (4-acre minimum lot size); 16 acres RR 7 (7-acre minimum lot size); 775 acres RR 5 (5-acre minimum lot size); 134 acres RR 10 (10-acre minimum lot size); 234 acres RR 40 (40-acre minimum lot size).
- b. Assumes the development of a water and sewer system to obtain this density.
- c. 202 acres designated AG 5 (5 acre minimum lot size); 22 acres AG 7 (7-acre minimum lot size).

**Table 3: Buildout Figures for Hammil Valley**

Land Use Designation	Density	Acres	Maximum Potential Dwelling Units
RR Rural Residential	1 du/acre	411	17 <sup>a</sup>
PF Public/Quasi-Public Facilities	---	3	---
RM Resource Management	1 du/40 acres	355	9
AG Agriculture	1 du/2.5 ac.	6,134	278 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Total Private Lands</b>		6,903	304
RM Resource Management – Federal/State	---	60,674	---
<b>Total</b>		67,577	304

**Notes:**

- a. Hammil Valley has a development credits program that allows a certain number of units to be developed per parcel, depending on the size of the parcel and the ownership. Dwelling units were calculated using the Development Credits Table included in the land use policies for the Tri-Valley.

### ***Population Projections***

Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population in the Tri-Valley to be 954 in 2000 and 974 in 2003. In 2000, there were 377 households in the Tri-Valley. The population in the Tri-Valley is projected to increase to 1,210 by 2020 and 1,304 by 2030 (State Department of Finance Report P-3, Population Projections).

### **Determinations**

- The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element allows for significant additional growth in the area served by CSA #2.
- Growth is anticipated to occur primarily in and adjacent to existing developed areas and to be primarily single-family residential development with limited commercial uses.
- The residential population in the area served by CSA #2 is projected to increase to 1,210 by 2,020 and 1,304 by 2,030, creating an increased demand for services.

## **3. Financing Constraints and Opportunities**

### **Overview**

*Purpose:* To evaluate factors that affect the financing of needed improvements.

Expenses for special districts generally fall into one of three categories: (1) acquisition of facilities and major capital equipment, (2) employee expenses, and (3) ongoing operations and maintenance costs. The primary criteria that should be considered when evaluating adequacy of potential funding sources is availability, adequacy to meet the need, equity between existing and future residents, stability, and ability to cover on-going operating and maintenance costs.

### ***County Service Area #2***

The district relies on revenues from an annual property assessment. Parcels located within the district boundaries are assessed an annual amount to pay for the activities within the district. The assessment is collected by the county as part of each homeowner's property tax bill. Homeowners who do not have an antenna, or cable service, and who do not use the district's services, may apply for a refund of the annual assessment. Excess funds not used during the current year remain in the district's account.

### **Determinations**

- County Service Area #2's future financing will continue to rely on annual homeowners assessments.

## **4. Cost Avoidance Opportunities**

### **Overview**

*Purpose:* To identify practices or opportunities that may aid in eliminating unnecessary costs.

Cost avoidance opportunities are defined as actions to eliminate unnecessary costs derived from, but not limited to, duplication of service efforts, higher than necessary administration/operation cost ratios, use of outdated or deteriorating infrastructure and equipment, underutilized equipment or buildings or facilities, overlapping/inefficient service boundaries, inefficient purchasing or budgeting practices, and lack of economies of scale.

***County Service Area #2***

Generally, in Mono County each community area is a discrete geographic area and, as a result, there is no duplication of service efforts or overlapping or inefficient service boundaries. The Tri-Valley is a discrete geographic area in the county, with several residential areas. There are several service providers operating within the Tri-Valley which could result in the duplication of some services, particularly in such areas as personnel management, insurance, risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, purchasing/budgeting, economies of scale, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the service providers.

The following entities provide services in the Tri-Valley and have boundaries that overlap:

- Countywide County Service Area (CSA)--serves as an administrative and funding mechanism to facilitate the provision of a variety of services to zones of benefit established throughout the county.
- White Mountain Fire Protection District—provides fire protection to Benton and Hammil.
- Chalfant Community Service District, Fire Protection Department—provides fire protection services to Chalfant and Hammil.

The district has limited long-term plans, and no long-term planning documents or financial plans.

**Determinations**

- In the Tri-Valley, there are some overlapping service boundaries.
- Integrated planning, especially long range planning, is an important part of cost avoidance. The district has limited long-term plans and no long-term planning documents.
- There are several service providers in the Tri-Valley that have administrative costs associated with the overall management of those organizations. There could be some duplication of services among the service providers, particularly in areas such as personnel management, insurance, risk management, financial management services, fleet maintenance, etc. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs among the service providers.

## **5. Opportunities for Rate Restructuring**

### **Overview**

*Purpose: To identify opportunities to positively impact rates without decreasing service levels.*

As noted in the Financing Constraints and Opportunities Section, funding for fire protection districts in Mono County relies heavily on property tax revenues combined with mitigation fees, DIFs, augmentation funds, and other smaller revenue sources (grants, fundraisers, etc.). Each of these categories has inherent constraints that prevent an agency from restructuring them.

***County Service Area #2***

***Annual Assessment*** – The district's financing relies on an annual homeowner's assessment. There may be opportunities to adjust that assessment.

**Determinations**

- County Service Area #2's future financing will continue to rely on annual homeowners assessments. There may be opportunities to adjust those rates.

## **6. Opportunities for Shared Facilities and Resources**

**Overview**

***Purpose:*** *To evaluate the opportunities for a jurisdiction to share facilities and resources to develop more efficient service delivery systems.*

Sharing facilities and resources can result in a more efficient and cost-effective delivery of resources.

***County Service Area #2***

Currently, the district has a small fenced lot at the County Road Yard in Benton with a storage container where it stores its all-terrain vehicles and trailer. The district also has a storage container that is used by the Department of Social Services for disaster supplies. The district's files are kept at the Chalfant Community Center.

The Tri-Valley includes other special district service providers (see Item 4 above), as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be further opportunities for shared facilities among the service providers in the Tri-Valley communities. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs by sharing facilities.

**Determinations**

- The district currently shares space in Benton and Chalfant with other county facilities.
- The Tri-Valley area includes other special district service providers, as well as the County, that require facilities to support their services. There may be further opportunities for shared facilities among the service providers in the area. Further studies would be necessary to determine whether there are opportunities to reduce costs by sharing facilities.

## 7. Government Structure Options

### Overview

*Purpose:* To consider the advantages and disadvantages of various government structures to provide service.

Government Code §56001 declares that it is the policy of the State to encourage orderly growth and development essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well being of the State. The Code further states that “this policy should be effected by the logical formation and modification of the boundaries of local agencies, with a preference granted to accommodating additional growth within, or through the expansion of, the boundaries of those local agencies which can best accommodate and provide necessary governmental services.”

For local agency consolidations to occur there has to be significant (and popularly desired) cost savings or an increase in service.

### *County Service Area #2*

There are currently four County Service Areas in Mono County:

County Service Area #1 – provides TV service to the Long Valley communities.

County Service Area #2 – provides TV service to residents of the Tri-Valley.

County Service Area #5 – provides TV service to Bridgeport.

Countywide County Service Area -- serves as an administrative and funding mechanism to facilitate the provision of a variety of services to zones of benefit established throughout the county.

Each of the county service areas is formally governed by the Mono County Board of Supervisors. The day-to-day administration of CSAs #1, #2, and #5 is overseen by local residents. County staff performs the budgeting and financial work for the districts. The districts contract for required work. The Mono County Department of Public Work oversees the zones of benefit within the Countywide County Service Area. Work within those zones of benefit is completed by county staff, or in a few cases, by contractors.

### Determinations

- The boundaries of the Countywide County Service Area encompass the other three County Service Areas, creating district overlap and administrative overlap.
- The Mono County Board of Supervisors administers all County Service Areas.
- County staff performs the budgeting and financial work for the districts and, in some cases, complete the operations and maintenance work required by the districts.
- CSA #2 could dissolve and its service functions and advisory board could become a Zone of Benefit within the Countywide County Service Area. The ZOB would function in the same manner as the former CSA functioned. This would reduce administrative overlap.

## 8. Evaluation of Management Efficiencies

### Overview

*Purpose:* To evaluate the quality of public services in comparison to cost.

As defined by OPR, the term “management efficiency,” refers to the organized provision of the highest quality public services with the lowest necessary expenditure of public funds. An efficiently managed entity (1) promotes and demonstrates implementation of continuous improvement plans and strategies for budgeting, managing costs, training and utilizing personnel and customer service and involvement, (2) has the ability to provide service over the short and long term, (3) has the resources (fiscal, manpower, equipment, adopted service or work plans) to provide adequate service, (4) meets or exceeds environmental and industry service standards, as feasible considering local conditions or circumstances, (5) and maintains adequate contingency reserves. “Management Efficiency” is generally seen as organizational efficiency including the potential for consolidation.

The purpose of management is to effectively carry out the principal function and purpose of an agency. Good management will ensure that the agency’s mission is accomplished and that the agency’s efforts are sustainable into the future. Unfortunately, “good management” is a relatively subjective issue, and one that is hard to quantify.

### *County Service Area #2*

The Mono County Board of Supervisors is the formal governing body for CSA #2. An advisory board formed of residents from within the district oversees the day-to-day administration of the district. The district has no personnel. County staff performs the budgeting and financial work for the district. The district contracts for required work. The district has no longterm planning documents.

### Determinations

- County Service Area #2 is governed by the Mono County Board of Supervisors.
- The district is administered by an advisory board of residents from within the district.
- County Service Area #2 has no longterm planning documents.

## 9. Local Accountability and Governance

### Overview

*Purpose:* To evaluate the accessibility and levels of public participation associated with an agency’s decision-making and management processes.

Special districts such as fire protection districts are required to adopt budgets at open public meetings and to file their budgets with the county auditor. They are required to have annual or biennial independent audits. Districts are subject to the Ralph M. Brown Act for meetings, agendas and minutes. They are also subject to the Public Records Act.

Complying with the minimum open meeting and information requirements is not sufficient to allow an adequate amount of visibility and accountability. Outreach efforts, including

convenient meeting times, additional notice of meetings and dissemination of district information, are desirable.

***County Service Area #2***

The district's advisory board meets quarterly, or as needed. Meeting notices and agendas are posted at two locations, at the Chalfant Community Center, the Chalfant Market, the Benton Community Center, or the Benton Post Office. Meeting minutes are kept on file at the Chalfant Community Center and are available on request. Public attendance at district meetings is low. The district has no formal community outreach program but the boardmembers are available for questions.

**Determinations**

- CSA #2 complies with the minimum open meeting and public information requirements.

## IV. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE RECOMMENDATION

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425 requires the Local Agency Formation Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of its determination with respect to four required findings. Each of the required findings is discussed below as it pertains to County Service Area #2.

### 1. Present and Planned Land Uses

#### *Discussion:*

Present land uses in the area served by County Service Area #2 include residential, commercial, and public uses located in the three communities in the district. The Mono County GIS estimates that there are 855 parcels in the district, including 404 developed parcels (residential or commercial parcels valued at \$10,000 or more). Population data from the 2000 US Census and California Department of Finance population estimates show the population in the Tri-Valley was approximately 954 in 2000 and 974 in 2003.

The Mono County General Plan Land Use Element provides for substantial additional development in Benton. The additional development allowed by the plan would be predominantly rural residential development throughout the valley, along with limited commercial uses and mixed-use development in Benton that could incorporate residential development and commercial development. The commercial development would occur in the existing community along State Routes 6 and 120. Residential development could also occur throughout the valley on agricultural lands. A large amount of the land designated for rural residential has large minimum lot sizes (4 acres or more) which means that the development would be spread out. Residential development could also occur on lands designated for agricultural uses and could be similarly spread out.

Hammil Valley has a development credits program that allows a certain number of units to be developed per parcel, depending on the size of the parcel and the ownership. Despite this limitation, additional residential development could occur in the Hammil Valley.

The Mono County Land Use Element provides for substantial additional development in Chalfant. The additional development allowed by the plan would be predominantly rural residential development throughout the valley. Limited residential development could also occur throughout the valley on agricultural lands, although most of the agricultural lands have a 40-acre minimum lot size. Residential development on lands designated for agricultural uses would be spread out.

#### *Finding:*

Present land uses in the area served by County Service Area #2 include residential, commercial, and public uses. The planned land uses for community areas are similar with future development concentrated primarily within and adjacent to existing development.

## 2. Present and Probable Need For Public Facilities and Services

### *Discussion:*

Increased development throughout the county has created an ongoing need for a variety of community services. The buildup allowed by the General Plan will create a greater demand for those services in the future.

### *Finding:*

The area within the boundaries of CSA #2 has an existing and continuing need for public facilities and services to serve the increasing residential development in the area.

## 3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services

### *Discussion:*

The district provides an adequate level of service to its customers and has identified required improvements to meet present and future service demands. The district currently provides an adequate level of service to its customers. The district has identified the need to upgrade to digital service to serve current and future customers.

As a County Service Area, the district has a number of latent powers that would allow it to provide additional services within its service area, including police, fire protection, parks and recreation, library, water, sewer, animal control, pest and rodent control, street sweeping, street lighting, refuse collection, ambulance, geological hazard abatement, and other miscellaneous extended services.

### *Finding:*

The district currently provides an adequate level of service but has identified a need to improve both its facilities and services in order to serve additional development.

## 4. Social or Economic Communities of Interest

### *Discussion:*

Due to the physical geography of the Tri-Valley and southern Mono County, communities in the Tri-Valley tend to interact socially and economically with Bishop in Inyo County. Interaction with other communities in Mono County is limited although increasing residential development in Benton and Chalfant may provide housing for residents who work in other Mono County communities. Although residents of Long Valley share social and economic communities of interest with Bishop and Mammoth Lakes, the physical distance between the communities and the fact that Bishop and Mammoth Lakes are incorporated entities and the Tri-Valley communities are not make the interdependence of the communities irrelevant in determining the sphere of influence for the district.

**Finding:**

The Tri-Valley area exhibits social and economic interdependence with Bishop in Inyo County and, to a lesser degree, with Mammoth Lakes. An interdependence with either of those areas has no relevance in determining the sphere of influence for the district due to the distances involved, the fact that Bishop and Mammoth Lakes are incorporated entities and the Tri-Valley communities are not, and the fact that special districts cannot provide services outside of their county.

## **Sphere of Influence Recommendation**

An interim sphere of influence<sup>2</sup> that is coterminous with the boundaries of the CSA has been established for County Service Area #2.

## **Reorganization Recommendation**

Mono County currently has four County Service Areas:

CSA #1 provides TV service and community improvements in Long Valley

CSA #2 provides TV service in the Tri-Valley

CSA #5 provides TV service in Bridgeport

Countywide CSA serves as an administrative and funding mechanism to facilitate the provision of a variety of services to zones of benefit established throughout the county.

CSAs #1, #2, and #5 are all located within the boundaries of the Countywide CSA. The Mono County Board of Supervisors is the formal governing body for all the CSAs.

CSA #2 should ultimately dissolve and its service functions and advisory board should become a Zone of Benefit within the Countywide County Service Area (CWCSA). The ZOB would function in the same manner as the former CSA functioned. The same reorganization recommendation is included in the Municipal Service Reviews for CSA #1 and CSA #5. Such a consolidation of services should occur only with the concurrence of the involved districts.

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<sup>2</sup> An interim Sphere of Influence is defined as a Sphere of Influence boundary that will remain in effect until the district consolidates with another special district capable of providing the same or a broader level of service.

## **V. REFERENCES**

### **References Consulted**

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California State Department of Finance  
**Demographic Research Unit**  
**Population and housing estimates and projections**

California Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
**Cortese-Knox Act**  
**Guidelines on Municipal Service Reviews**

Mono County Local Agency Formation Commission  
**County Service Area #2 Sphere of Influence Report, October 1986.**

Mono County Planning Department  
**Mono County General Plan.** 1993.  
**Mono County General Plan, Revised Land Use Element and Land Development Regulations.** 2001.  
**Mono County Housing Element.** 2004.  
**Mono County Master Environmental Assessment.** 2001.

U.S. Census Bureau  
**Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF-1) 100 Percent Data**

### **Persons Consulted**

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CSA #2  
Olga Glidewell, Board Member

Mono County Department of Public Works  
Evan Nikirk, Director  
Walt Lehmann, Engineering Technician

Mono County Finance Department  
Brian Muir, Director

Mono County Community Development Department  
Scott Burns, Director