

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Project: Countywide Annexation - Del Norte Resource Conservation District
Location: Countywide
APNs: See attached map - Figure 1
NOTICE: The above referenced proposal has been submitted to LAFCo and this notice of filing is issued in accordance with Government Code § 56658(b)(1). To receive application documents, please contact LAFCo at (707) 825-9301 or eo@delnortelafco.org.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LAFCo has received an application submitted by Del Norte Resource Conservation District (“Del Norte RCD”) Board action (Resolution No. 25-01) for a Countywide Annexation. The proposed RCD Boundary would be coterminous with County boundaries for more extensive provision of services. Services in the area would continue to be provided through grant funding.

The proposed annexation of territory is consistent with the adopted sphere of influence for the District. There is no anticipated development as a result of this annexation and no new improvements or upgrades to structures, roads, or sewer or water facilities are required if the change of organization is completed.

SERVICES

Because this is a Annexation Application, there would be no change in service providers. The present provider list below is for the proposed RCD Boundary:

Service	Present Provider	Proposed Provider
Sewer	Septic systems except for Crescent City area	No change
Water	Crescent City & multiple CSDs	No change
Fire	Multiple FPDs & Cal FIRE	No change
Police	Crescent City Police & Del Norte County Sheriff	No change
Roads	Crescent City & County of Del Norte	No change
Recreation	Crescent City, Del Norte County & Sovereign Governments including Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation	No change
Drainage	County of Del Norte	No change
Street Lighting	Crescent City	No change

Agency Response: Please review and respond with any agency comments by February 12, 2026. Comments may be mailed to LAFCo at 670 9th Street, Suite 202, Arcata, California 95521 or emailed to eo@delnortelafco.org.

CC: Betty Crockett, Del Norte RCD District Manager
Alex Cunha, North Coast Resource Partnership

Attachment - Figure 1



DEL NORTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
670 9th Street, Suite 202
Arcata, California 95521
TEL (707) 825-9301 FAX (707)825-9181
eo@delnortelafco.org

NOTICE OF FILING

DATE: January 22, 2026

TO: Del Norte County Community Development Department, Roads Division

Del Norte County Auditor's Office

Del Norte County Administrative Office

Del Norte County Clerk of the Board

Del Norte County Sheriff's Office

City of Crescent City

Del Norte County Unified School District

College of the Redwoods - Del Norte Campus

Del Norte County Flood Control District

Del Norte County Service Area No. 1

Del Norte County Healthcare District

Del Norte County Library District

Crescent City Harbor District

Bertsch-Oceanview Community Services District

Crescent Fire Protection District

Fort Dick Fire Protection District

Church Tree Community Services District

Smith River Cemetery District

Smith River Fire Protection District

HRC Community Services District

Klamath Fire Protection District

Klamath Community Services District

Hunter Valley Community Services District

Redwood Park Community Services District

Gasquet Fire Protection District

Gasquet Community Services District

Big Rock Community Services District

Del Norte County Fairgrounds, Recreation, and Park District

Tolowa Dee Ni' Nation

Elk Valley Rancheria

Yurok Tribe

Pulikla Tribe

Cal FIRE - Crescent City Station

CA Department of Fish & Wildlife - Eureka Office

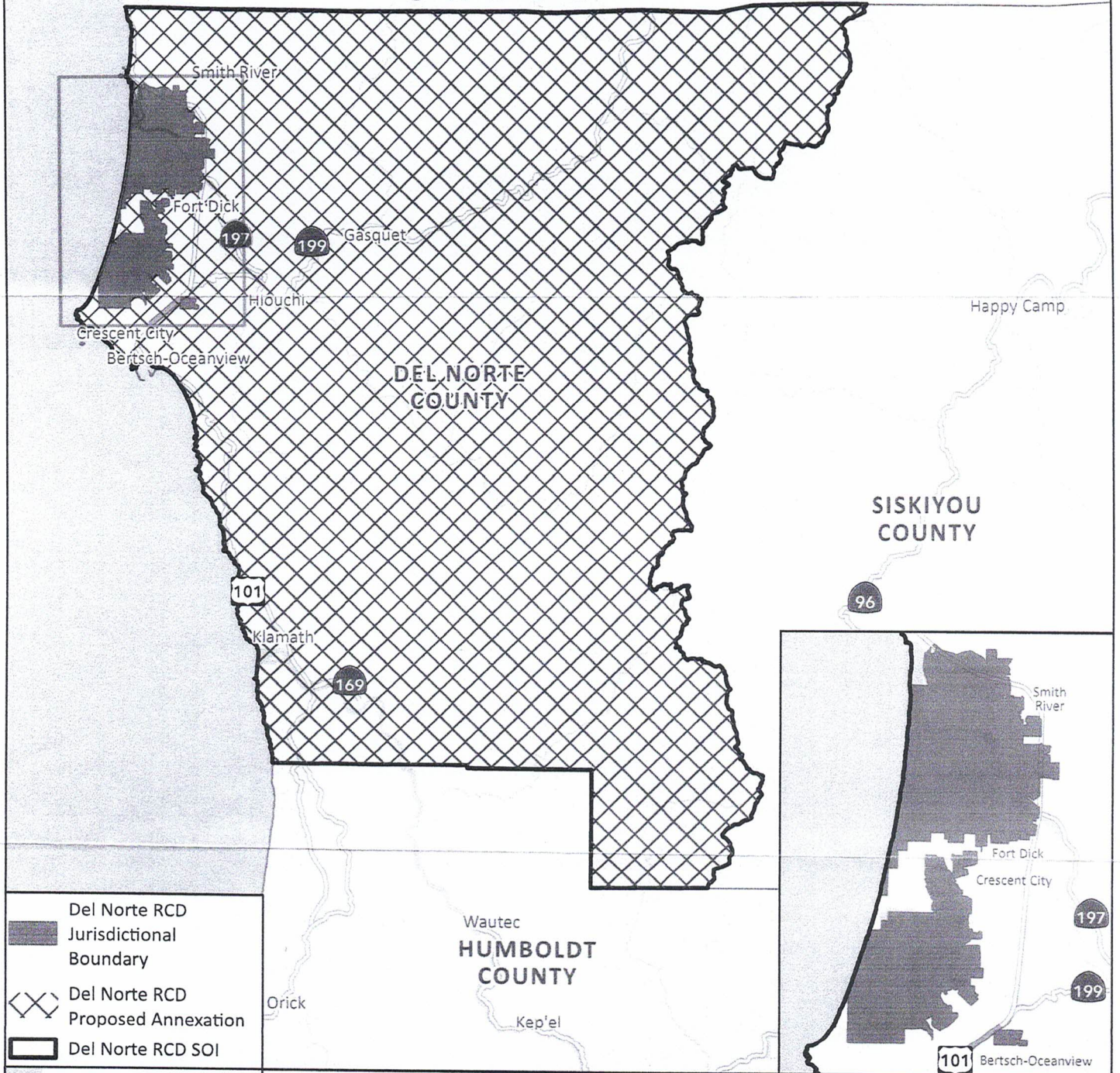
Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District




Cc: Betty Crockett, DNRCD Manager
Alex Cunha, North Coast Resource Partnership

FROM: George Williamson, LAFCo Executive Officer

SUBJECT: APPLICATION RECEIVED - Del Norte Resource Conservation District (RCD) Countywide Annexation

OREGON



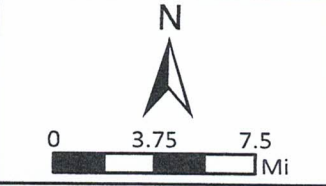
-  Del Norte RCD Jurisdictional Boundary
-  Del Norte RCD Proposed Annexation
-  Del Norte RCD SOI



Del Norte RCD Proposed Annexation

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community
Del Norte RCD: Del Norte LAFCo,
Roads: U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line Shapefile Roads 2024

1/22/2026



Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 10N



**DEL NORTE
RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

241 W First St, Suite B, Smith River, CA 95567
DelNorteRCD@yahoo.com

**DEL NORTE COUNTY RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT (DNRCD)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

RESOLUTION NO. 25-01

RESOLUTION OF APPLICATION OF THE DEL NORTE RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS REQUESTING THE DEL NORTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION INITIATE PROCEEDINGS FOR ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY TO THE DISTRICT

RESOLVED, by the Del Norte Resource Conservation District Board of Directors, that:

WHEREAS, the Del Norte Resource Conservation District (DNRCD) was formed by order of Del Norte County Board of Supervisor's August 2005; and

WHEREAS, DNRCD is operating as a Special District established under Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code to deliver and facilitate natural resources conservation services; and

WHEREAS, the DNRCD Board of Directors desires to initiate proceedings pursuant to Cortese/Knox/Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000, Division 3, commencing with California Government Code Section 56000, for the annexation of territory to the District; and

WHEREAS, the proposed annexation of territory is consistent with the adopted DNRCD sphere of influence; and

WHEREAS, the reason for the proposed change of organization is to facilitate and provide natural resources conservation services across the entire area inclusive of Del Norte County, the incorporated area of Crescent City and the unincorporated areas of Smith River, Fort Dick, Gasquet, Hiouchi and Klamath; and

WHEREAS, notice of intent to adopt this resolution of application has been given, and this Board has conducted a public meeting based on this notification; and

NOW, THEREFORE, This Resolution of Application is hereby approved and adopted by the DNRCD Board of Directors.

The Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission is hereby requested to initiate proceedings for the proposed change of organization that includes the entire area inclusive of Del Norte County, the incorporated area of Crescent City and the unincorporated areas of Smith River, Fort Dick, Gasquet, Hiouchi and Klamath in a manner provided by the Cortese/Knox/Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000.

Passed and Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Del Norte Resource Conservation District this 19th day of February, 2025.

I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution Number 25-01 was duly adopted by the Board of Directors following roll call vote:

Ayes: Matt Westbrook, Rob Miller, Vanessa Nunes, Steven Westbrook, Rich Wetherell, Robert Tedson

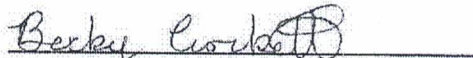
Nays: none

Absent: Blake Alexandre



Matt Westbrook, Chairman
DNRCD Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Becky Crockett
DNRCD District Manager

**DEL NORTE
LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**

670 9th Street, Suite 202
Arcata, California 95521
(707) 825-9301

**APPLICATION FORM
Proposed Annexation of Territory**

APPLICANT INFORMATION

<i>Agency Name</i>	Del Norte Resource Conservation District
<i>Address</i>	241 1 st Street, Unit B Smith River California 95567
<i>Staff Contact</i>	Becky Crockett
<i>Telephone</i>	(503) 729-0893
<i>E-mail</i>	delnortercd@yahoo.com

Property Owner(s):

<i>Name</i>	Multiple throughout Del Norte County
<i>Address</i>	
<i>Telephone</i>	
<i>E-mail</i>	

Landowner Representative (if applicable):

<i>Name</i>	N.A.
<i>Address</i>	
<i>Telephone</i>	
<i>E-mail</i>	

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

1. Affected property address/location:
The affected area includes all lands in Del Norte County that are outside the DNRCD's current annexation boundary, including all unincorporated lands as well as the incorporated lands of Crescent City.
2. Assessor Parcel Number(s):
All those parcel numbers outside the existing DNRCD annexed area within Del Norte County.
3. Type of Service(s) to be provided:

Del Norte Resource Conservation District (DNRCD)
County Services
August 20, 2025

4.

The DNRCD aims to provide the following services County-wide for the purpose of facilitating and actively participating in achieving an improvement in the balance between the natural environment and resource productivity within our county.

Collaboration Lead: Lead, facilitate collaboration and participate as appropriate in projects within Del Norte County impacting agriculture, forestry, natural resources and land use.

Wildfire Resilience: Work closely with all entities engaged in wildfire management projects to prevent wildfires, increase resilience, maintain existing risk reduction efforts and reduce the risk of wildfires to communities, agriculture, forestry and resource lands. Evaluate opportunities for biomass utilization in agriculture, forestry, energy production and carbon sequestration.

Water Quality: Effectively manage agriculture, forestry and natural resources towards improving water quality including: improving drainage, erosion control and productivity on agricultural lands; restoring riparian habitat by establishing native vegetation; advocating on-site nutrient management; establishing buffer areas between tilled agriculture and natural stream corridors; and restoring natural fluvial processes for sediment transport.

Stream Restoration and Enhancement: Actively lead, advocate and provide financial support (grant applications) for stream restoration and riparian enhancements in support of aquatic and terrestrial species habitat; especially for the benefit of native fish populations.

Agricultural Lands Restoration: Advocate and work with agricultural property owners and renters to restore compromised agricultural lands to increase productivity. Actions to include noxious weed abatement, grazing recommendations for Aleutian Goose and Rosevelt Elk management, coordination with the Natural Resource Conservation Service for education

and financial assistance, and advocacy towards maintaining and preserving the utilization of historical agricultural lands in the county.

Fish and Wildlife Adaptive Management: Advocate, lead and actively participate in fish and wildlife projects that provide a mutual benefit to agriculture, forestry production and species preservation. Examples include management of the Aleutian Goose and Rosevelt Elk populations.

5. Is the reason for application a public health or safety threat to residents (e.g., a failing septic system or contaminated water supply)?

YES NO X

If yes, please attach documentation and state public health or safety:

N.A.

If no, what is the reason for application?

The reason for the application is to allow the DNRCD to support more private and public landowners across Del Norte County in completing projects that protect, enhance, nurture, and conserve natural resources.

6. Is the affected property to be served within the applicant city or district's sphere of influence?

YES X NO

Explain why a jurisdictional change (e.g., annexation) is not being considered at this time as an alternative to providing services outside the agency's boundaries.

Annexation is being requested for all areas outside the existing DNRCD boundary.

LAND USE AND SERVICES

7. What is the existing use of the site?

The area/site contains a mix of land and ownership uses including agriculture, forestry, rural and urban development.

8. Is a change in use proposed? If yes, please provide a description of the change.

No change in use is being proposed.

9. Is development proposed?

YES

NO

If yes, please provide a description of the project and indicate whether discretionary approvals (e.g., use permit, subdivision lot line adjustment) are required. Provide any supporting development documentation.

10. Describe the physical on and off site improvements needed to extend services to the subject property. Please be specific about the location of existing facilities and the location and extent of the proposed connections.

No physical on and off-site improvements are needed.

11. Indicate any improvement costs and connection fees the city or district may charge, and method of financing, if applicable.

No improvement costs or connection fees are required.

12. Please list any desired conditions, restrictions or terms to be added to the LAFCo approval.

No desired conditions, restrictions or terms are to be added to the LAFCo approval.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Environmental Determination: Copies of environmental documentation, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), prepared by the lead agency (including an initial study, technical reports, and written comments or recorded public testimony relative to the environmental documents) should be submitted with the application.

The following environmental document has been prepared:

Statutory or Categorical Exemption

Negative Declaration

Mitigated Negative Declaration

Environmental Impact Report

Filing Fees: Applicants are required to pay fees in accordance with LAFCo's adopted fee schedule to cover the administrative and staff costs required to evaluate proposals. Payment must be made by check, made payable to: "Del Norte LAFCo".

INDEMNIFICATION

LAFCo policy requires that all applicants sign a volunteer indemnification agreement specifying whether they agree to indemnify LAFCo in the event of litigation concerning the approval of an application.

Agreement attached

RCD Annexation Application Plan for Services.

(1) An enumeration and description of the services currently provided or to be extended to the affected territory.

The DNRCDD aims to provide the following services County-wide for the purpose of facilitating and actively participating in achieving an improvement in the balance between the natural environment and resource productivity within our county.

Collaboration Lead: Lead, facilitate collaboration and participate as appropriate in projects within Del Norte County impacting agriculture, forestry, natural resources and land use.

Wildfire Resilience: Work closely with all entities engaged in wildfire management projects to prevent wildfires, increase resilience, maintain existing risk reduction efforts and reduce the risk of wildfires to communities, agriculture, forestry and resource lands. Evaluate opportunities for biomass utilization in agriculture, forestry, energy production and carbon sequestration.

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Fish and Wildlife Adaptive Management: Advocate, lead and actively participate in fish and wildlife projects that provide a mutual benefit to agriculture, forestry production and species preservation. Examples include management of the Aleutian Goose and Rosevelt Elk populations.

(2) The level and range of those services.

The level of services to be provided is dependent on grant approval for various projects that are proposed. The range of services is county wide.

(3) An indication of when those services can feasibly be extended to the affected territory, if new services are proposed.

The opportunity for RCD services are to be extended upon approval of annexation with no new services being required in order for implementation.

(4) An indication of any improvement or upgrading of structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other conditions the local agency would impose or require within the affected territory if the change of organization or reorganization is completed.

No new improvements or upgrades to structures, roads, sewer or water facilities, or other conditions are required.

(5) Information with respect to how those services will be financed.

Services will continue to be provided through grant funding as opportunities arise.

Del Norte Resource Conservation District

DEL NORTE



RESOURCE

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Municipal Service Review &
Sphere of Influence Update

Commission Approved — November 24, 2025



Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission

Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission

Commissioners

Lyle Armstrong	Chair, Public Member
Dean Wilson	Vice Chair, County Member
Darrin Short	County Member
Isaiah Wright	City Member
Jason Greenough	City Member
Valerie Starkey	Alternate County Member
Vacant	Alternate City Member
Donna DeWolf	Alternate Public Member

Staff

George Williamson, AICP, Executive Officer
Amber Chung, Administrator
Jacqueline Roberts, Legal Counsel
Emma Haskett, Analyst
Louis Choy, GIS & Spatial Data Analyst

Acknowledgements

LAFCo staff would like to thank the contributors to this Municipal Service Review. Input instrumental in completing this report was provided by Resource Conservation District staff.

DEL NORTE LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
670 9th Street, Suite 202
Arcata, California 95521
TEL (707) 825-9301 FAX (707)825-9181

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) conducts municipal service reviews (“service reviews” or MSRs) to assess existing and future public service conditions for cities and special districts within Del Norte County. This service review allows LAFCo, local agencies, and the public to better understand how public services are provided by the Del Norte Resource Conservation District (DNRCDC or District). This chapter provides a background of the service review requirements and an overview of the process and methodology of the review.

Resource Conservation Districts & Principal Act Overview

Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are independent special districts under Public Resources Code §9151 et seq. RCDs manage a diversity of resource conservation projects, including soil and water conservation projects, wildlife habitat enhancement and restoration, control of exotic plant species, watershed restoration, conservation planning, education, and many others. RCDs are governed by a board of five, seven, or nine Directors, either elected by resident voters to 4-year terms or appointed by County Supervisors.

RCDs were first founded in the 1930s to bring federal and state funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers so that they could voluntarily conserve water, soil, and wildlife habitat on their land with the help of a local and neutral partner.¹ Today each RCD’s projects and programs are different, and their services often include habitat restoration, forest health, healthy soils, public education, landscape-scale conservation planning, climate resilience, and assisting municipalities and the state in managing water use and preparing for drought and fire.

Municipal Service Review Determinations

Government Code § 56430 requires LAFCo to conduct a review of municipal services provided in the county by region, sub-region or other designated geographic area, as appropriate, for the service or services to be reviewed, and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to each of the following topics:

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area;
2. The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence;

¹ <https://carcd.org/rcds/what-are-rcds/>

3. Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies (including needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged, unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence);
4. Financial ability of agencies to provide services;
5. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities;
6. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies; and
7. Any other matter affecting or related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by Commission policy.
8. State Guidelines and Commission policies encourage stakeholder cooperation in the municipal service review process. It also provides a basis to evaluate, and make changes to Spheres of Influence, if appropriate.

Sphere of Influence Determinations

A Sphere of Influence (SOI) is a LAFCo-approved plan that designates an agency's probable physical boundary and service area. Spheres are planning tools used to provide guidance for individual boundary change proposals and are intended to encourage efficient provision of organized community services, discourage urban sprawl and premature conversion of agricultural and open space lands, and prevent overlapping jurisdictions and duplication of services.

LAFCo is required to establish SOIs for all local agencies and enact policies to promote the logical and orderly development of areas within the SOIs. Furthermore, LAFCo must update those SOIs every five years. For an SOI update, LAFCo is required to conduct a Municipal Services Review (MSR) and adopt related determinations. It must also make the following SOI determinations:

1. The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands;
2. The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
3. The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide;
4. The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the Commission determines that they are relevant to the agency; and
5. The present and probable need for public facilities and services related to sewers, municipal or industrial water, or structural fire protection of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence (effective July 1, 2012).

Review Methods

The following information was considered in the development of this service review:

- Agency-specific data: responses to LAFCo Requests for Information.

- Land Use and Del Norte County General Plan and Zoning data: Del Norte County Planning Division and GIS webpage.
- Demographic data: U.S. Census Bureau; Department of Finance; CA Water Resources Board.
- Finances: budgets, rates and fees.
- Personal Communications with District staff.
- Other Resources: California Association of Resource Conservation District website

Information gathered was analyzed and applied to make the required determinations. All information gathered for this report is filed by LAFCo for future reference.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is contained in Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq. Public agencies are required to evaluate the potential environmental effects of their actions. MSRs are statutorily exempt from CEQA pursuant to § 15262 (feasibility or planning studies) and categorically exempt pursuant to CEQA Guidelines § 15306 (information collection). CEQA requirements are applicable to SOI Updates, with lead agency most often LAFCo.

2.0 AGENCY PROFILE

Table 1: Del Norte RCD Agency Profile

Formation	
Agency Name	Del Norte Resource Conservation District
Formation Date	August 9, 2005
Principal Act	Federal Standard State Conservation District Law of 1937 and Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code
Contact	
Contact (s)	Becky Crockett District Manager
E-mail	delnorteRCD@yahoo.com
Website	<u>none</u>
District Office	241 1st Street, Unit B Smith River, CA 95567
Mailing Address	Same as above
Phone	(707) 487-7630
Governance	
Governing Body	Seven-member Board of Directors
Board Meetings	Third Wednesday of every month at 10:00 AM
Staffing	District Manager, & contract staff as needed
Services	

Services Provided	Assistance for projects to benefit the land, water, and life of Del Norte County
Areas Served	Lower Smith River and Lake Earl

District Overview and Formation

The Del Norte Resource Conservation District (DNRCD) was formed as an independent special district and board members were appointed by the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors on August 9, 2005. The purpose of the district is to provide local leadership to help people within the district conserve, improve, and sustain their natural resources and environment and improve the area’s economic viability. The District provides procurement and coordination of grant funds for resource conservation uses.

“The mission of the DNRCD is to protect, enhance, nurture and conserve the natural resources of land owners (public and private) by providing technical & planning advice, education, financial aid, and assistance for projects to benefit and meet the needs of the land, water and life in Del Norte County.”

RCDs have their origins in the Federal “Standard State Conservation District Law”; commonly known as the “Standard Act” of 1937 and a modified version adopted by the State of California in 1938. RCDs are legal, non-regulatory, political subdivisions of state government. Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code authorizes the formation of RCDs, defines the State of California’s framework for conducting the business of resource conservation within the State, and details the general powers and operations of RCDs.

RCDs across the nation focus attention on local land, water and related resource issues, then work to develop programs to address those issues. RCDs enlist and coordinate help from all public and private sources that can contribute to accomplishing the District’s goals. RCDs also work to further conservation education in the local community.

Boundary and Sphere of Influence

The current DNRCD location is between the communities of Crescent City and Smith River, west of Highway 101 in Del Norte County in the northwest corner of the State of California. The District covers approximately two percent of Del Norte County’s land area and lies in the alluvial plains of Smith River. The District’s boundary includes two main areas; Area One surrounds the lower Smith River and Area Two surrounds Lake Earl. The district covers approximately 18,093 acres (28 square miles).

Countywide resource and agricultural lands that may benefit from District conservation and restoration programs are being analyzed as part of the SOI Amendment Application. Figure 1 shows the DNRCD boundary and Figure 2 shows the expanded SOI.

Figure 1: DNRCD Boundary & SOI

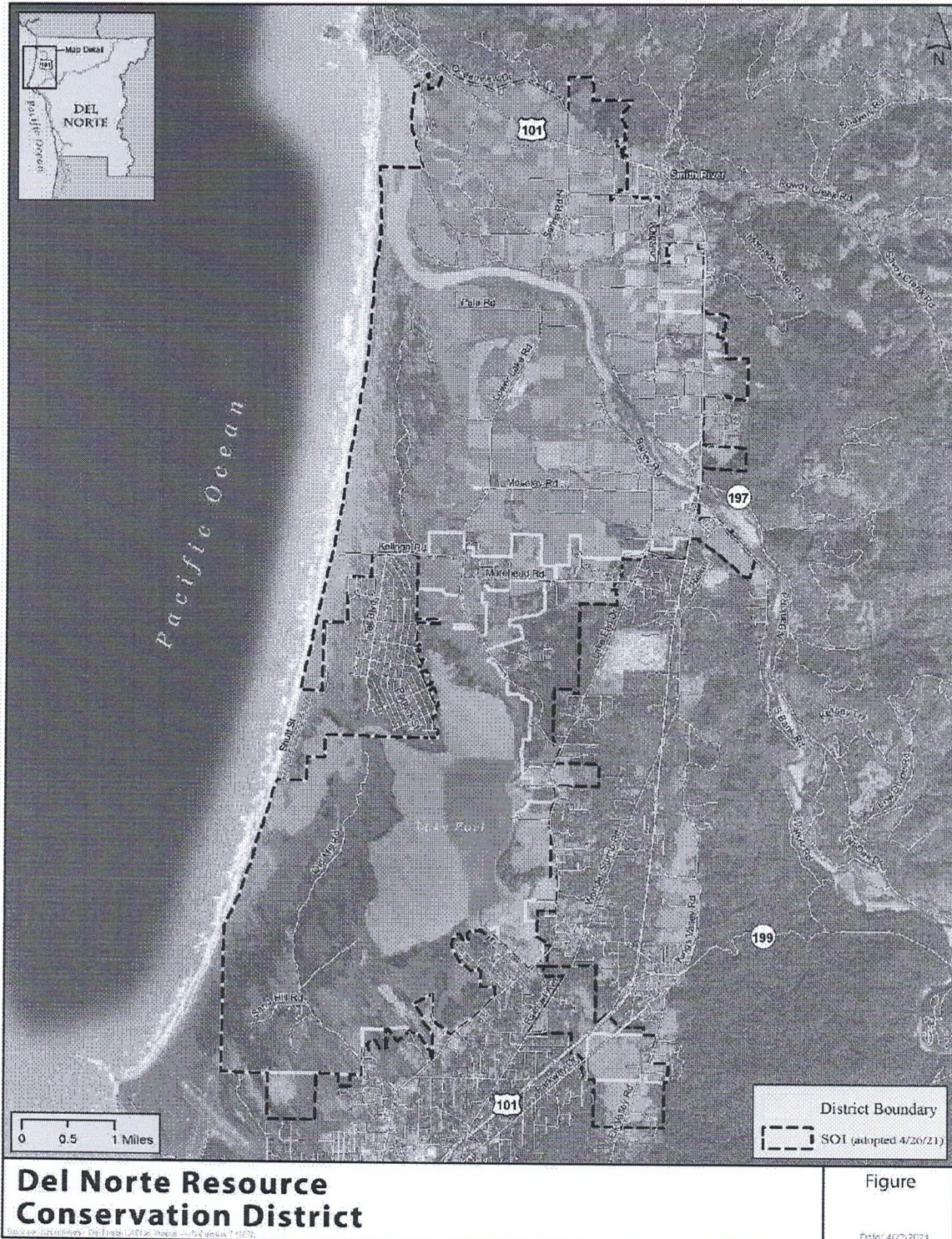
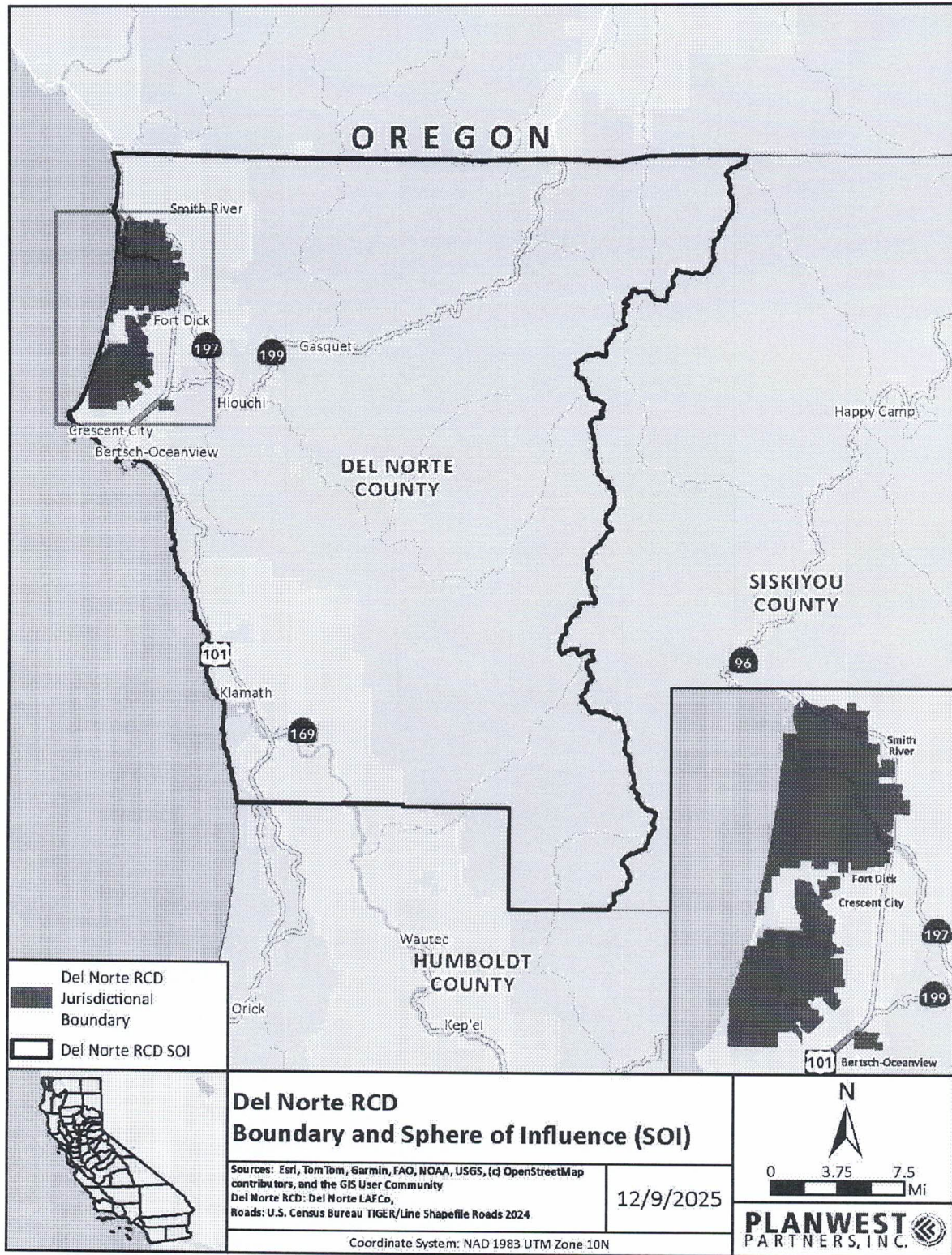


Figure 2: DNRCD SOI



Accountability and Governance

The DNRCD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors to serve four-year terms. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month at 10:00 AM and are noticed by posting notice and e-mail.

The District office is open Monday through Friday 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM and staffed through a partnership with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services. The District is available by e-mail and phone.

Table 2: Del Norte RCD Board of Directors

Board Member	Title	Term Expiration
Matt Westbrook	Chair of the Board	January 11, 2026
Blake Alexandre	Secretary-Treasurer	January 11, 2026
Richard Wetherell	Vice-chair	January 11, 2026
Vanessa Nunes	Board Member	July 31, 2029
Rob Miller	Board Member	July 31, 2029
Steven Westbrook	Board Member	July 31, 2029
Robert Tedson	Board Member	July 31, 2029

DNRCD demonstrated full accountability and transparency in its disclosure of information and cooperation with Del Norte LAFCo during the MSR process. The District responded to the questionnaires and cooperated with the document requests.

Public Outreach

The District currently does not currently have a website. However, the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts maintains website at www.carcd.org that provides information regarding the District and links to other RCDs in the North Coast region, including Humboldt and Trinity RCDs. The Del Norte RCD is listed, and a phone number is provided but it is the only listed North Coast region RCD without a website link.

The DNRCD is scheduled to have a website developed and online in the next 6-12 months.

SB 929 (McGuire) was signed into law on September 14, 2018 requiring all independent special Districts to have and maintain a website by January 1, 2020. Hardship-based findings, identified in a board resolution approved at a regular meeting, would allow a District to be exempt from establishing or maintaining a website. The findings may include inadequate internet access; significantly limited financial resources; or insufficient staff resources. The District has met the criteria for a hardship exemption since 2018.

Population and Land Use

Land Use

The Del Norte County General Plan (2003) and Zoning Code guides land use decisions within the unincorporated area of the County. The Crescent City General Plan and Zoning guides land use decisions in the incorporated area of the County.

Population and Growth

According to the U.S. Census, the total Del Norte County population was 27,743 in 2020 and estimated at 27,293 in the 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimate, which is an approximately 1.6 % population decrease². California Department of Finance projections also show similar population decreases throughout the MSR planning period. However, it should be noted that the County population has historically fluctuated.

Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

LAFCo is required to evaluate water service, sewer service, and structural fire protection within disadvantaged unincorporated communities as part of this service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. A disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters where the annual median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income (pursuant to Government Code Section 56033.5 and Water Code Section 79505.5).

According to the 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the California median household income (MHI) was \$96,334. The Del Norte countywide MHI is \$66,780 which places it at 69% of the California MHI. With only one incorporated city, Crescent City, most of the County's population exists in unincorporated communities that qualify as "disadvantaged".

The California Department of Water Resources has mapped communities that are at or below 80% of the annual median household income using county census data. According to this data, the communities of Smith River, Hiouchi, Gasquet, Klamath, and parts of the incorporated City of Crescent City are classified as disadvantaged within Del Norte County.

² U.S. Census QuickFacts. Del Norte County, CA.
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/delnortecountycalifornia/PST045218#PST045218>

The DNRCD does not provide any of the three basic services - water, sewer, or structural fire protection. Fire protection services are provided by the Smith River Fire Protection District (FPD), Fort Dick FPD and Crescent FPD. Water services are provided by Crescent City and Smith River CSD; many areas within the District boundaries are removed from water systems and rely on private water supply. There are no wastewater services in the DNRCD boundary.

3.0 DISTRICT SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

Services

DNRCD provides resource management services to in-district public and private landowners including:

- Promoting voluntary action to resolve natural resource issues;
- Focusing attention on local resource problems and opportunities;
- Developing and implementing educational programs for landowner benefit;
- Providing input for the development and implementation of government programs; and
- Coordinating with federal, state, and local agencies as needed for technical assistance.

The DNRCD has identified five priority natural resource issues to focus their resource management services:

Aleutian Geese Depredation: The District is working with state and federal agencies in developing an overall goose management plan through a comprehensive, region-wide hazing program with neighboring counties. This program will alleviate the Aleutian Geese' impact on private lands by opening 500 acres of short grass habitat for the geese.

Water Quality (Erosion and Runoff): The District aims to achieve erosion control on 50% of lily bulb fields in the district. The program includes development and implementation of nutrient management plans for dairies including soil sampling and manure sampling as part of a non-point source pollution prevention program.

Noxious Weeds: The District is developing a County-wide Weed Management Program that includes a redemption program for tansy ragwort, reed canary grass, and scotch broom.

Stream Enhancement: The District will continue working on stream bank and riparian enhancements. This includes fencing livestock, implementing demonstration projects, resolving gravel issues, improving channels, and monitoring fish populations on the lower Smith River and its tributaries.

Gravel Extraction: The District provides technical and environmental assistance to rural gravel operators, including geomorphic and watershed studies.

The DNRCD aims to provide the following services County-wide for the purpose of facilitating and actively participating in achieving an improvement in the balance between the natural environment and resource productivity within our county.

Collaboration Lead: Lead, facilitate collaboration and participate as appropriate in projects within Del Norte County impacting agriculture, forestry, natural resources and land use.

Wildfire Resilience: Work closely with all entities engaged in wildfire management projects to prevent wildfires, increase resilience, maintain existing risk reduction efforts and reduce the risk of wildfires to communities, agriculture, forestry and resource lands. Evaluate opportunities for biomass utilization in agriculture, forestry, energy production, and carbon sequestration.

Water Quality: Effectively manage agriculture, forestry and natural resources towards improving water quality including improving drainage, erosion control and productivity on agricultural lands; restoring riparian habitat by establishing native vegetation; advocating on-site nutrient management; establishing buffer areas between tilled agriculture and natural stream corridors; and restoring natural fluvial processes for sediment transport.

Stream Restoration and Enhancement: Actively lead, advocate and provide financial support (grant applications) for stream restoration and riparian enhancements in support of aquatic and terrestrial species habitat; especially for the benefit of native fish populations.

Agricultural Lands Restoration: Advocate and work with agricultural property owners and renters to restore compromised agricultural lands to increase productivity. Actions to include noxious weed abatement, grazing recommendations for Aleutian Goose and Rosevelt Elk management, coordination with the Natural Resource Conservation Service for education and financial assistance, and advocacy towards maintaining and preserving the utilization of historical agricultural lands in the county.

Fish and Wildlife Adaptive Management: Advocate, lead and actively participate in fish and wildlife projects that provide a mutual benefit to agriculture, forestry production and species preservation. Examples include management of the Aleutian Goose and Rosevelt Elk populations.

Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

The District does not own or maintain equipment, vehicles, or buildings currently.

Shared Services

The DNRCD works in partnership with various government agencies including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The District is a member of the North Coast Resource Partnership and participates in regional planning activities. The District maintains Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Del Norte Weed Management Area (WMA) and North Coast Integrated Water Management Plan (NCIWMP).

Del Norte RCD is a member of the Northwest California RC&D Area, which is sponsored by County Boards of Supervisors and RCDs representing Trinity, Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. The Northwest California RC&D Area was established in 1994, covering only Trinity County. In 2006, the RCD Area was expanded from one to three counties and officially changed its name to "Northwest California RC&D". The Northwest California RC&D Council is made up of 15 Board

members, five from each of the three counties. In addition to the two sponsoring members from each county that represent the RCDs and Board of Supervisors, nine “at-large” Council positions are available: three from each county. This local input and county representation make the RC&D program unique in its ability to solve problems at a regional level.

In 1997, Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Siskiyou & Trinity Counties agreed to collaborate on a proactive, positive response to the federal listing of Coho salmon as a Threatened species by forming the Five Counties Salmonid Conservation Program (5C). Upon the acquisition of 5C in 2009, the Council executed MOUs with neighboring RCD Councils - North Coast and NorCal - to facilitate 5C work outside Northwest RCD Council boundaries (Mendocino and Siskiyou Counties). The primary 5C goal is to strive to protect the economic and social resources of Northwestern California by providing for the conservation and restoration of salmonid populations to healthy and sustainable levels and to base decisions on watersheds rather than county boundaries.³

According to the District, the District has a close working relationship with HRCD. There is an existing contract with HRCD for wildfire resilience work and a potential upcoming project with HRCD under the State Healthy Soils Program.

4.0 FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Budget

DNRCD’s primary revenue sources are state and federal grants with reimbursable administrative and indirect costs. The District has been particularly successful at procuring grant funding for its programs. In 2024, the District reported \$34,285 in income from watershed restoration, invasive species removal and soil health management, and promotion. The District receives no property taxes, special assessments, or other local funding. Grants with reimbursable administrative and indirect costs are required. The district lacks a baseline funding source.

It would be beneficial to the District to have a local funding source to maintain operations when grant funding is not available. Grant funding can be cyclical in nature. As a result, many RCDs in the State have faced challenges in ensuring sufficient funding to maintain staff and minimum service levels. The District does not have outstanding debt. Budget decisions are made annually.

³ <http://northwestcarcdc.org/projects.html>
Del Norte Resource
Conservation District

Table 3: Del Norte RCD Revenues & Expenses

Revenues	Budget 2022	Budget 2023	Budget 2024
CASH	46,765	36,340	19,370
Cal Recycle		18,174	
Middle Fork Smith River (Invasive Plant Monitoring)	4,000	440	440
CA RCD Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) Carbon Farming	0	5,039	4,800
Delilah Creek Plan Development	6,000	787	3,825
Total Revenues	56,765	60,780	28,435
Expenses	Budget 2022	Budget 2023	Budget 2024
<i>Project/Program Expenses</i>			
SRA PM Carbon Farming		11,785	11,785
Cal Recycle		15,170	3,360
Smith River Middle Fork Partners	2,500		
<i>Subtotal</i>	2,500	26,955	15,145
Rent \$350 per month at 12 months	4200	4200	4200
District Manager/Bookkeeping/other	10,000	6,650	7,880
Office Supplies/postage	200	850	440
Dues CARCD/NCRCD	250		
Professional Fees/Accounting/Audit	750		
Prior year adjustment			(2,889)
Insurance – Liability	1,200	1,545	2,339
Internet	1,325	1,210	1,320
<i>Subtotal</i>	17,924	14,455	16,179
Total Expenses	20,425	41,410	31,324
Balance Forward	36,340	19,370	0

Audits

DNRCD requested that the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approve a change from the annual audit required by Government Code 26909 for Special Districts to an audit covering a 5-year period. This request was pursued by the District as a substantial revenue saving procedure and was approved unanimously by the BOS on December 11, 2018. The District still undergoes annual financial review without receiving a formal audit and this represents a large cost saving for the District on the order of thousands of dollars annually. The 5-year audit window has been exceeded, an updated audit should be completed.

5.0 MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW DETERMINATIONS

This chapter addresses Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (California Government Code Section 56430) requirements. As part of the municipal service review process, LAFCo is required to make written statements of determinations in each of the categories listed below.

1) **Growth and population projections**

The current DNRCD SOI has an approximate population of 1762, based on 2020 Census Block data. The District largely contains resource conservation area and prime agricultural lands and will likely continue to develop at or less than the current county-wide rates of 0.6 percent per year, putting the DNRCD population at approximately 1816 people in 2025.

2) **The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

The community of Smith River is adjacent to District boundaries and has been identified as a disadvantaged unincorporated community.

Because the DNRCD does not provide water, sewer or structural fire protection services, the District is not responsible for assuring that these services are adequately provided to communities that meet the DUC thresholds.

3) **Present and planned capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services, including infrastructure needs or deficiencies**

The District provides valuable resource conservation services to landowners and collaborates with several other agencies. Countywide growth may increase pressure to convert resource lands; therefore, demand for services may increase due to this and other regulatory requirements.

The District currently does not own or maintain any facilities and consequently does not have any infrastructure needs or deficiencies associated with District-owned infrastructure.

4) **Financial ability of agencies to provide services**

The District relies on grant funding for its programs and does not receive a constant, reliable funding source. DNRCD has been successful at procuring grant funding as shown by the increase in revenue from 2018 to 2020. The District is saving money currently by only undergoing a full audit every five years upon approval by the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors December 11, 2018. An updated 5-year audit should be scheduled.

5) **Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities**

According to the District, there are no current projects with Humboldt RCD. However, there are potential opportunities for shared services in the future as Humboldt RCD manages California Department of Fish and Wildlife contracts that could service the DNRCD.

Opportunities for shared projects with other organizations (including tribal governments) in Del Norte County and Crescent City should be considered.

6) Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies

The DNRCD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The District holds public meetings in accordance with the Brown Act. District staff is best reached by email.

7) Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy

Other RCDs in California cover larger portions of the Counties that they serve; for instance, the Humboldt County RCD boundary includes the entire County. As part of the MSR/SOI Update expanding the SOI to include more of Del Norte County's northern agricultural lands has been considered.

6.0 SPHERE OF INFLUENCE DETERMINATIONS

The Del Norte Resource Conservation District SOI amendment included within the Municipal Service Review encompasses the entire County, including extensive resource and agricultural lands that may benefit from District conservation and restoration programs.

1) Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.

The County contains resource conservation areas and prime agricultural lands. Little change in actual or designated land uses within the District is anticipated over the next 20 years.

2) Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.

The District appears to have experienced a fluctuation in demand for its services over the last few years, subject to grant funding for specific projects. An expanded SOI may increase opportunities for RCD services countywide.

3) Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.

4) The District provides valuable resource conservation services to landowners and collaborates with several other agencies. RCD's generally are constrained by available funding sources; DNRCD has been successful in receiving grant funds to continue providing services.

5) Existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

The District includes resource and agricultural lands. The communities of Smith River and Fort Dick are adjacent to District boundaries.

6) For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special District that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection, the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere.

The RCD does not provide facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection.

7.0 REFERENCES

California Association of Resource Conservation Districts. <https://carcd.org/>

US Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov>

Del Norte Resource Conservation District Municipal Service Review, January 2015. Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission.

Del Norte Resource Conservation District Municipal Service Review Questionnaire.

Northwest California RC&D Area <http://northwestcarcdc.org/projects.html>

Personal communication with RCD General Manager, July 2025.