



***ALAMEDA COUNTY RESOURCE
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FINAL***

January 10, 2013

Prepared for the
Local Agency Formation Commission of Alameda County
by
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1. AGENCY OVERVIEW

Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCD) provides information, financial and technical assistance for resource conservation efforts, including creek restoration, equine facilities management, watershed management, and erosion prevention services. ACRCD also facilitates federal conservation programs in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). These services are provided in the non-urbanized areas of the County. Additionally, ACRCD continues its efforts in urban areas with respect to conservation and on-the-ground demonstrations.

The most recent municipal service review for the ACRCD was adopted in November 2005.

FORMATION

ACRCD was formed on May 9, 1972 by consolidation of two districts (the Eastern Alameda County Soil Conservation District established in 1946 and the Western Alameda County Soil Conservation District established in 1955) into a single independent special district. The two districts shared a contiguous boundary. ACRCD was created to conduct and lead conservation efforts primarily for agricultural lands.

The principal act that governs the ACRCD is Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code.¹ The principal act empowers resource conservation districts to control runoff, prevent and control soil erosion, protect water quality, develop and distribute water, improve land capabilities, and facilitate coordinated resource management efforts for watershed restoration and enhancement.² Districts must apply and obtain LAFCO approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.³

BOUNDARY

The boundary area includes all of Alameda County except for most of the urban areas of the County, including the cities of Albany, Alameda, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont, and San Leandro and the developed unincorporated communities of Ashland,

¹ Public Resources Code §9151-9491.

² Public Resources Code §9001.

³ Government Code §56824.10.

Cherryland, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, and Fairview. Portions of the cities of Hayward, Fremont, Newark and Union City are included but contain mostly undeveloped hill and marshland areas. Only three small areas are excluded from ACRCO in eastern Alameda County; two are in the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton and the third is an unincorporated area southwest of Pleasanton.

The land area within ACRCO's boundaries is 568 square miles.

Extra-territorial Services

ACRCO serves as a resource for several agencies and offices outside its service boundaries, including the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, San Ramon, and Danville, East Bay Municipal Water District, East Bay Regional Park District, San Francisco Public Utilities District, Bay Area Open Space Council, and Contra Costa County. ACRCO also provides public education services to urban areas, and its watershed restoration activities benefit urban as well as rural areas.

Unserved Areas

There are no areas within ACRCO bounds that lack resource conservation services or where the services would be unavailable upon request.

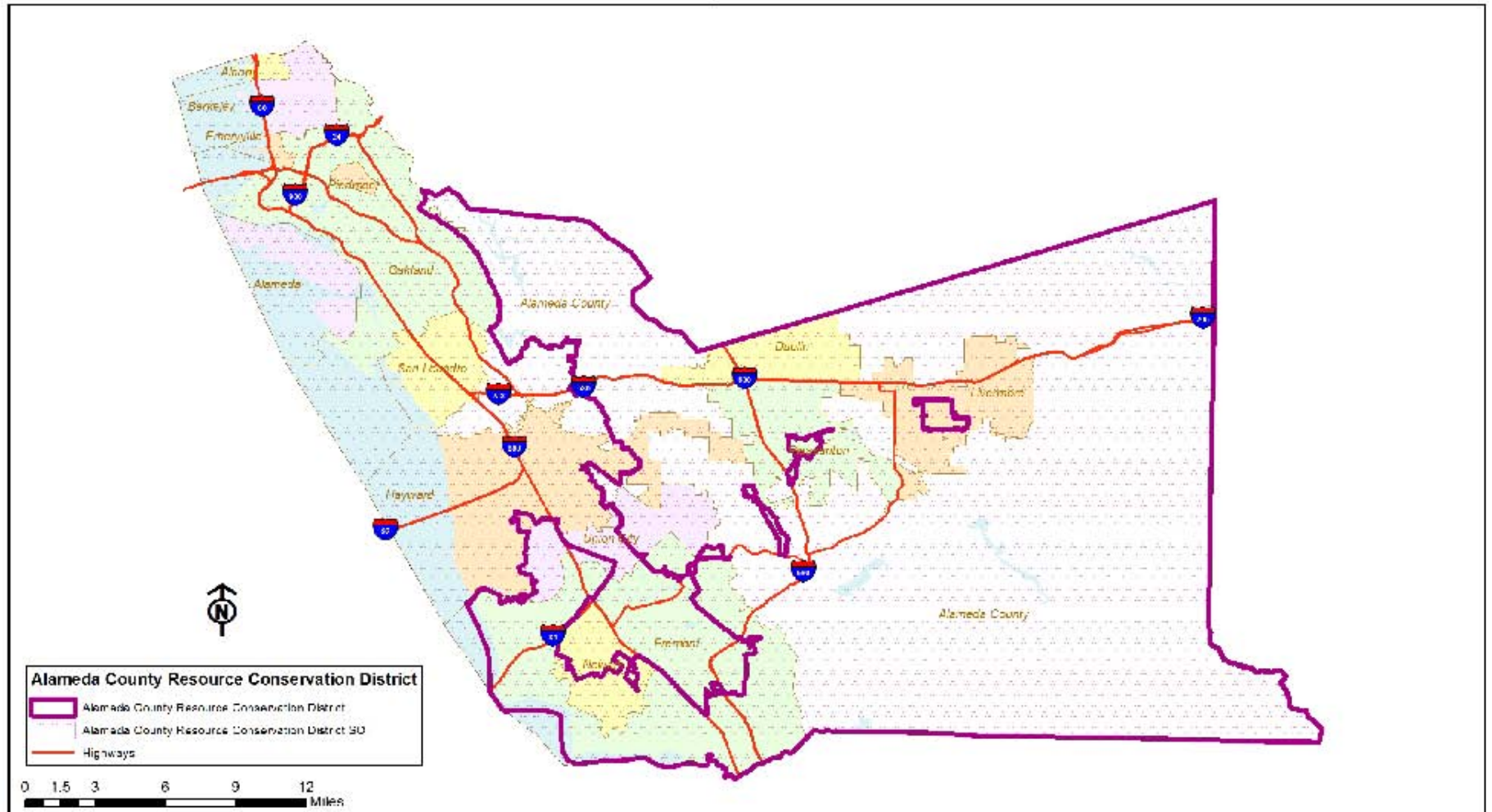
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

ACRCO's SOI was originally established on April 19, 1984 as coterminous with its bounds.

During the 2006 SOI updates, the Commission elected to expand ACRCO's SOI to be countywide. The Commission determined that ACRCO's services and programs benefit all residents of the County, including those in urban areas, through enhanced natural resources and conserved open space. By adopting a countywide SOI, LAFCO intended to signal to the District that a countywide agency boundary may better reflect ACRCO's service area. Over time, urbanization spread into formerly rural areas, cities annexed additional territory and new cities formed. ACRCO's boundaries were not updated to reflect these historical changes.

Figure 1-1: Alameda County RCD Boundaries and SOI

**Alameda County Resource Conservation District Boundary and SOI*
July 2012**



*Agency sphere differs from the service area boundary

Created for Alameda LAFCO by the Alameda County Community Development Agency

ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Accountability of a governing body is signified by a combination of several indicators. The indicators chosen here are limited to 1) agency efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities, in addition to legally required activities such as agenda posting and public meetings, 2) a defined complaint process designed to handle all issues to resolution, and 3) transparency of the agency as indicated by cooperation with the MSR process and information disclosure.

ACRCD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors. The Board is appointed at large by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to serve four-year terms. Board members are landowners within ACRCD's boundaries, have served as associate directors of the District for a period of at least two years, or serve as agent of a landowner within the District.⁴ There are presently no vacancies on the Board. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 1-2.

Figure 1-2: Alameda County RCD Governing Body

Alameda County Resource Conservation District				
<i>District Contact Information</i>				
Contact:	Katherine Boxer, Executive Officer			
Address:	3583 Greenville Road, Suite 2, Livermore, CA 94550			
Telephone:	(925)371-0154			
Fax	(925)371-0155			
Email/website:	www.acrcd.org			
<i>Board of Directors</i>				
Member Name	Position	Term Expiration	Manner of Selection	Length of Term
Paul Blanke	Director	November 2014	Appointed	4 years
Brenda Vieux	Director	November 2014	Appointed	4 years
Tim Koopmann	Director	November 2014	Appointed	4 years
Becky Dennis	Vice Chair	November 2016	Appointed	4 years
James Perry	Chair	November 2015	Appointed	4 year
Darrel Sweet	Director	November 2015	Appointed	4 years
Dan Sachau Jr.	Director	November 2016	Appointed	4 years
<i>Meetings</i>				
Date:	Every third Monday of the month at 6pm.			
Location:	Meetings are held at the District offices in Livermore.			
Agenda Distribution:	Posted on office window and distributed to the Board and other interested parties.			
Minutes Distribution:	Available upon request.			

⁴ Associate Directors provide expertise to ACRCD.

The Board of Directors meets on the third Monday of each month. Prior to the monthly meeting, the agenda is posted on ACRCDD's office window and website and distributed to the Board, Associate Directors and other interested parties. ACRCDD mails annual reports to all project partner organizations and staff, cities, the County, advisors, NRCS partners, and other interested parties.

To update constituents on district activities, ACRCDD sends out press releases, posts a description of programs and activities on the District's website, and gives presentations at constituent and partner meetings. If informational flyers are prepared, they are posted on the website, e-mailed, postal delivered, passed out at meetings and displayed in the office lobby, all as appropriate to the project.

Although no formal complaint process or forms exist, any complainants are urged to contact ACRCDD's Executive Officer. The person responsible for handling complaints is the Executive Officer. ACRCDD reported that it received no complaints in 2011.

ACRCDD demonstrated accountability in its disclosure of information and cooperation with LAFCo questionnaires and other requests for information and draft report review.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

While public sector management standards vary depending on the size and scope of the organization, there are minimum standards. Well-managed organizations evaluate employees annually, track employee and agency productivity, periodically review agency performance, prepare a budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, conduct periodic financial audits to safeguard the public trust, maintain relatively current financial records, conduct advanced planning for future service needs, and plan and budget for capital needs.

District positions include the executive officer, accountant, biologist, farm and ranch coordinator, two resource conservationists, plus six part-time/seasonal positions. This is an increase of two full-time and four part-time positions since 2005. Staff performance evaluations are completed annually.

ACRCDD conducts district performance evaluations with annual financial audits, as well as monthly and mid-year staff reports to the Board of Directors. ACRCDD's finance committee reviews expenditures, project status and budget status on a monthly basis.

ACRCDD monitors productivity with monthly staff reports to the Board that portray each staff person's workload in the District's annual work plan. Another report tracks contract and grant budgets, timeline and staff assignments. Finance committee reports demonstrate budget status and indicate workload and progress.

ACRCDD does not conduct performance-based budgeting (where budgets are determined by annual performance goals) or benchmark studies. ACRCDD does perform an annual financial audit via an outside Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

ACRCDD's performance goals and priorities are highlighted by its current mission statement and objectives as well as its detailed annual work plan. ACRCDD's most recent

long-range plan covers a five-year period through 2012. The planning efforts include review of future goals and opportunities, District capacity and past performance.

All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.⁵ In the case of ACRCO, the District must submit audits annually. ACRCO has submitted its audit to the County for FY 10-11 within the required 12 month period.

GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

This section discusses the factors affecting service demand, such as land uses, and historical and anticipated population growth.

Land Use

ACRCO's boundary area is approximately 568 square miles. The County is the land use authority for the unincorporated areas. Cities are the land use authorities within the respective city boundaries. ACRCO encompasses a wide variety of land uses, but for the most part the district land area is consistent with areas preserved for open space and agriculture.

Existing Population

As of 2010, the population of the area in ACRCO was 305,625. Its population density—538 residents per square mile—is significantly lower than the countywide density of 1,840 people per square mile.

Projected Growth and Development

Based on Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) growth projections and ACRCO's estimated 2010 Census population, the population of the area within the District is anticipated to reach 388,144 by 2035, with an average annual growth rate of one percent.⁶ Per ABAG population projections, the rate of growth in ACRCO is expected to be similar to the countywide growth rate of 27 percent through 2035. However, since ACRCO's boundary excludes the older mostly developed area of the County and includes many of the

⁵ Government Code §26909.

⁶ Association of Bay Area Governments, Projections 2009, August 2009.

newly developed higher growth areas of Alameda, such as the cities of Dublin, Pleasanton and Livermore, there may be potential for a higher rate of growth within the District.

ACRCD reported that urban expansion reduces the areas for agricultural activities, open space, and habitat management but results in a partial restructuring of services to urban outreach and conservation, education, and stream and runoff assistance. In other words, ACRCD has been able to assess the strategic direction of the District and modify it based on the community's evolving needs. The majority of the conservation programs are conducted in the eastern part of the County on rural agricultural and open space parcels, both privately and publicly owned. However, there is an increased demand for conservation and agriculture-related education programs within the urban sector of Alameda County.

ACRCD forecasts its service demand based on programs jointly conducted with USDA and NRCS for the rural sector, education requests for the urban sector and project requests for assistance by other agencies and districts.

FINANCING

The financial ability of agencies to provide services is affected by available financing sources and financing constraints. This section discusses the major financing constraints faced by ACRCD and identifies the revenue sources currently available to the District.

ACRCD reported that current financial levels were adequate to deliver services. ACRCD's work is project based and funds are delivered accordingly. However, ACRCD identified some challenges to financing. Program funding by the USDA and NRCS is declining. In order to cope with the reduction of available funding, ACRCD has increased the amount of work under its ongoing contracts with several other public agencies by proposing and performing additional tasks, writing and receiving grants, utilizing federal earmark funds for conservation project construction, and offering technical services to local public agencies on a contractual basis. In order to control expenses, ACRCD has hired mostly part time staff for work that is billable to specific projects, continues to rent space at the lowest rates in the area, has offered very limited pay increases for project staff, and generally acted in a very budget conscious manner.

In order to increase its efficiency, ACRCD has shifted its emphasis somewhat to assisting local districts and agencies with their conservation and special project needs. Additionally, the County is funding more outreach and education programs that are related to conservation of natural resources, which is assisting ACRCD's efforts. Specifically, ACRCD has developed a program called "Hands-On Conservation," which provides opportunities for community members and student volunteers to assist with creek stewardship and cleanup activities at a number of "adopted spots" in the County. ACRCD staff also conduct an increasing number of community outreach events in the County to encourage watershed protection, non-point source pollution prevention and stewardship. The primary funding source for these activities the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the Alameda County Clean Water Program.

Revenues

ACRCD's revenues for FY 10-11 were \$1,210,078. Revenue sources included project income (70 percent), property taxes (13 percent), project cost recovery (five percent), interest income (0.1percent), and other income (two percent).

ACRCD's primary revenue source is project funds derived from cost reimbursement contracts. NRCS provides funding to assist farmers, ranchers and other landowners through conservation technical assistance and cost-share programs; the NRCS cost-sharing program, addresses environmental and agricultural challenges on the beneficiaries' lands. NRCS also contracts with ACRCD to provide outreach and technical assistance for Farm Bill programs.

Expenditures

Expenditures in FY 10-11 for ACRCD were \$1,110,773, which consisted mainly of direct program costs (66 percent), wages and related expenditures (26 percent), and overhead (six percent). Other expenditures (two percent) included bank and service charges, donations and special projects, memberships and subscriptions, office equipment, insurance, printing and duplicating, professional services, legal, public relations, travel, training, conferences, meetings, capital funding, and miscellaneous.

In FY 10-11, total revenues exceeded total expenditures by \$99,305.

Liabilities and Assets

At the end of FY 10-11 the unassigned fund balance was \$295,468. ACRCD does not have a policy to maintain financial reserves. In the FY 10-11 audited financial statement, the CPA recommended that ACRCD establish a financial reserve fund and review the fund's balance during budget preparation. ACRCD reports that its reserve policy is currently under review.

ACRCD does not have any long-term debt.

Financing Efficiencies

ACRCD does not participate in any joint financing mechanisms, such as Joint Power Authorities (JPAs).

2. MUNICIPAL SERVICES

RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICES

Service Overview

ACRCD provides creek restoration, permit coordination, education, and technical and grant administration services. It serves as an advisor to many other agencies and stakeholder groups, primarily at the county level.

Educational activities are the largest sector of the conservation services provided by ACRCD and include technical assistance for proper equine facilities management, watershed awareness, responsible agriculture programs, and programs for schoolchildren. Specific programs include Watershed Adventures, an interactive program for fourth-grade students, and watershed tours.

ACRCD works closely with landowners, land operators, cities, the County, state and federal agencies, and other special districts. For projects, ACRCD acts as the contractor in the planning and completion of conservation projects with and for these clients. In this capacity and by utilizing this approach, the District reported that duplication of effort is eliminated and partnerships are built to better serve the community.

ACRCD provides education to landowners on what conservation and mitigation easements are through workshops and one-on-one technical assistance. ACRCD also provides to interested landowners and/or agencies complete baseline inventory reports, long term management reports etc. ACRCD has the ability to hold easements and endowments and are in the process of completing that for a couple of mitigation projects on public lands.

The permit coordination program is designed to assist landowners who are required to hold agency permits for conservation projects. ACRCD holds the master permit for such projects to streamline permitting, expedite projects and economize on fees. The program is conducted as the Conservation Partnership in collaboration with NRCS. The Conservation Partnership also serves as the gateway for several Farm Bill programs funded by NRCS, including the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program and the Grassland Reserve Program. In addition, ACRCD performs outreach and technical services under contract with NRCS.

ACRCD is also an active partner with the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (ACFCWCD) and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, as well as other agencies in habitat restoration projects and educational endeavors, including Palomares Creek and the restorations of Eden and Cull Canyons, Mission Creek and Arroyo de la Laguna. ACRCD has acted as a project manager for other local agencies assisting in

creek restoration, bank stabilization, erosion control, and with compliance of endangered and threatened species requirements.

ACRCD serves as the lead organization for agricultural enhancement programs.⁷ This involves serving as liaison between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, landowners and media groups, advising the Alameda County Agriculture Advisory Committee, and participating in community-based planning to enhance agriculture. ACRCD also participates in the Alameda Creek Watershed Management Planning Group and is a partner in the East Alameda County Conservation Strategy—a collaborative effort to preserve endangered species by developing and adopting a shared vision to guide long-term habitat protection.

Demand for Services

The farming community and farm acreage has generally been declining in Alameda County. One of ACRCD's goals is to preserve and enhance rural lands. Based on the most current data available from USDA, the number of farms and ranches in the County increased from 424 in 2002 to 525 units in 2007, due primarily to the South Livermore Valley Area Plan and to estate distributions of larger family held units. The average size of ranch and farm units dropped from 514 acres to 390 acres for the same reasons. Over the same time period, total rural lands decreased from 218,094 acres to 204,633, due mainly to urban expansion and the addition of lands to the public park systems. When lands are transferred to a park system, the designation changes from agricultural to public parks, although the use may remain the same.

The future demand for resource conservation education and creek restoration programs may relate to population growth. The ACRCD boundary area includes a number of growth areas. For details on population growth in the District, please refer to the Projected Growth and Development section of this report.

Infrastructure and Facilities

ACRCD's facilities consist of rented office space. In the early 2000s, ACRCD moved to a larger office, which appears to have sufficient capacity to provide adequate services, as reported by the District. ACRCD does not own or maintain any other infrastructure.

⁷ Agriculture enhancement generally refers to implementation of business plans for the agricultural community, such as streamlining the permit process and holding workshops on agri-tourism and estate planning.

Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

ACRCD does not have infrastructure needs, as it does not own any infrastructure.

Shared Facilities and Regional Collaboration

In nearly every one of its programs ACRCD works in partnership with another county, state, federal or local agency. ACRCD's primary partner organizations are Tri-Valley Vision 2010, the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Zone 7 Water Agency, Alameda County Clean Water Program, Alameda County Planning Department, Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Department of Fish and Game, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, City of Livermore, local school districts, and United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

ACRCD has also been an active collaborator with citizen and landowner organizations such as the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association, Alameda County Agriculture Advisory Committee, various equine advocacy groups, Cattleman's Association, South Livermore Valley Agricultural Land Trust, and Tri-Valley Conservancy.

ACRCD's office is located in the Alameda County Agricultural Center, which also houses the Alameda County Department of Agriculture's field office, various County branch offices, University of California Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener program, and the Livermore Valley Winegrowers Association. This proximity to partner agencies allows for greater efficiency in collaborations.

ACRCD shares its offices with the local partnership office of the NRCS, which promotes synergies, staffing and equipment efficiencies, and the sharing of expertise between the two programs. NRCS and ACRCD have an operation agreement that allows for NRCS to continue to be housed in Alameda County as a partnership office. ACRCD covers the rent and NRCS provides services such as phone and computer systems and associated maintenance, copier and other office supplies. This allows for NRCS to maintain a local presence in Alameda County rather than being located in an adjacent county. The local, consistent presence of NRCS in the County allows for a significant contribution to providing private and public landowners and land managers with the technical and financial resources that are needed to address resource concerns.

Service Adequacy

This section reviews indicators of service adequacy, including management efficiencies, accountability to constituents, complaints, and continued willingness of agencies to work with ACRCD.

ACRCD is a well-managed district based on the fact that it evaluates employees, periodically reviews agency performance, prepares a budget before the beginning of the fiscal year, conducts annual financial audits to safeguard the public trust, maintains current

financial records, and conducts advanced planning for future service needs through a long-range plan.

ACRCD is fairly accountable to its constituents based on a combination of several indicators. In addition to legally required agendas and minutes, ACRCD conducts extensive outreach activities. In addition, ACRCD cooperated with the MSR process and information disclosure. However, ACRCD does not have a defined complaint process designed to handle all issues to resolution.

Service adequacy can be gauged by service complaints and by the continued willingness of agencies and landowners to work with and contract with the District. ACRCD did not receive any complaints in 2011. ACRCD continues to be awarded contracts and projects and work with various entities in the County to advance its mission and vision.

3. MSR DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ As of 2010, the population within Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCD) was 305,625.
- ❖ Based on ABAG growth projections the population of ACRCD is anticipated to be 388,144 by 2035.
- ❖ There is the potential for ACRCD's population growth rate to be higher than the countywide growth rate as its bounds include areas that are urbanizing with a higher potential for new developments.
- ❖ Urban expansion reduces the areas for agricultural activities, open space, and habitat management, but results in a partial restructuring of services to urban outreach and conservation, education, and stream and runoff assistance.

Location and Characteristics of Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence

- ❖ Based on Census Designated Places, Alameda LAFCo determines that there are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities that meet the basic state-mandated criteria. Alameda LAFCo recognizes, however, that there are communities in the County that experience disparities related to socio-economic, health, and crime issues, but the subject of this review is municipal services such as water, sewer, and fire protection services to which these communities, for the most part, have access.

Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services, Including Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

- ❖ The farming community and farm acreage generally has been declining in Alameda County.
- ❖ The future demand for resource conservation education and creek restoration programs may relate to population growth, as well as public awareness.
- ❖ ACRCD does not own or maintain any infrastructure, and consequently there were no infrastructure needs or deficiencies identified.
- ❖ ACRCD's offices appear to have sufficient capacity to provide adequate services.

Financial Ability of Agency to Provide Services

- ❖ ACRCO reported that its financing level was adequate to deliver services.
- ❖ ACRCO's primary revenue source is project funds.
- ❖ ACRCO maintains a healthy reserve of \$295,468 and does not have any long-term debt.

Status and Opportunities for Shared Facilities

- ❖ ACRCO works in partnership with various other county, state, federal and local agencies.
- ❖ ACRCO has also been an active collaborator with citizen and landowner organizations.
- ❖ ACRCO's office is located in the Alameda County Agricultural Center, which it shares with other organizations and programs with which it partners for various programs. ACRCO also shares its offices with the local partnership office of the NRCS.

Accountability for Community Services, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

- ❖ ACRCO practices good governance and accountability. ACRCO makes efforts to engage and educate constituents through outreach activities in addition to legally required activities such as agenda posting. ACRCO is transparent as indicated by cooperation with the MSR process and information disclosure.
- ❖ One possible governance alternative for ACRCO is consolidation with Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCO). Possible benefits of an RCD consolidation may be capitalizing on each other's existing programming, economies of scale, greater regional collaboration and planning on regional issues and concerns, and provide efficiency for funding projects at a regional level. The two districts have not discussed the possibility of consolidation; however, ACRCO voiced concerns that the two districts serve different functions and purposes, which would minimize any benefit from this kind of reorganization.
- ❖ An additional option is to expand ACRCO's boundary area to become countywide. ACRCO's SOI is countywide; and the scope of some of the District's resource conservation programs extends beyond its current boundaries.
- ❖ Another governance structure option is to detach all the urban areas from the District to realign ACRCO's boundaries with the original rural vision; however, this would not reflect the District's current service area which includes some urban areas.

4. SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE

Existing Sphere of Influence Boundary

ACRCD's existing SOI is larger than its boundaries and includes the entirety of Alameda County. The SOI was established in 1984 as coterminous with its bounds. In 2006, the Commission elected to adopt countywide SOI to reflect historical changes in services and accurately reflect the existing service area.

SOI Options

Three options are identified with respect to the SOI update for ACRCD:

Option #1 - Retain existing countywide SOI

ACRCD services and programs benefit all residents of the County, including those in urban areas, through enhanced natural resources and conserved open space. Should the Commission wish to keep the urbanized areas in ACRCD's service area and encourage annexation into ACRCD's boundary area then retaining the countywide SOI is appropriate.

Option #2 - Reduced SOI (Rural-Outside UGB)

If the Commission determines ACRCD's bounds should include only rural and open space lands in the County, then LAFCo should reduce the SOI to exclude urban areas inside the urban growth boundaries of the relevant cities and the County.

Option #3 - Reduced SOI (Rural-Unincorporated)

If the Commission determines ACRCD's bounds should include only unincorporated lands in the County, then LAFCo should reduce the SOI to exclude territories of all the cities in the County.

Recommended Sphere of Influence Boundary

ACRCD wishes to retain its countywide SOI, as its programs benefit all citizens in the County with enhanced natural resources, conserved open space and viable agriculture. The ACRCD Board of Directors recommends that ACRCD retain the countywide SOI for now, and undertake analysis of expanding its boundaries as a long-term project. While annexing territory contiguous with the existing boundary may be in the County's and the District's interest, the District need to develop a strategic plan that clearly defines additional resource conservation programs for urban property owners compatible with and complimentary to the rural property owners that are currently served.

Similar to other counties, it has been found that as areas develop and demand for conservation services related to agriculture decline, the RCD has transitioned to providing more services directed at watershed areas and urbanized areas. In addition to serving rural landowners, ACRCDC currently provides education and outreach services to urban residents. ACRCDC serves as a lead technical agency in the County for public and private organizations and rural and urban landowners to develop partnerships, funding, and education for natural resources conservation and agricultural issues. It is recommended that the Commission maintain a countywide SOI for ACRCDC in anticipation that all areas will eventually be annexed into the District.

Proposed Sphere of Influence Determinations

Nature, location, extent, functions, and classes of services provided

- ❖ ACRCO provides creek and habitat restoration, equine facilities management, watershed management, erosion prevention, soil conservation, responsible agricultural programs such as grassland reserves, environmental quality and habitat incentives, grant administration, permit coordination, technical education and training, clean water education and other resource conservation services to undeveloped areas in the southern and eastern portions of the County, most territory in the cities of Dublin, Pleasanton and Livermore, and undeveloped hill and marsh areas in the cities of Hayward, Fremont, Newark, and Union City. ACRCO also provides public education services to urban areas, and its watershed restoration activities serve urban as well as rural areas throughout the County.

Present and planned land uses, including agricultural and open-space lands

- ❖ City and county plans include land uses and population growth, which will stress agricultural land resources, create substantially more impervious surfaces, and increase the amount and velocity of runoff thus exacerbating soil erosion problems. ACRCO has no authority over the types and nature of land uses within its boundary. City and county policies support the provision of watershed protection and resource conservation services for city and county residents.
- ❖ District services enhance agricultural productivity and open space conservation and do not induce or encourage urban growth.
- ❖ ACRCO's boundary and SOI include all agricultural lands in the County. ACRCO will continue to provide agriculture enhancement services, which help maintain the physical and economic integrity of open space and agricultural lands. No Williamson Act contracts will be adversely affected.

Present and probable need for public facilities and services

- ❖ There is an existing demand for ACRCO's services. It is anticipated that this demand for services will likely continue; however urbanization will enhance demand in non-agricultural areas.
- ❖ It is likely that urbanized areas will increase use of ACRCO's services to combat soil erosion, and water quality and flooding problems.

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

- ❖ ACRCO has the capacity to serve additional areas. ACRCO continues to receive project funding from federal, state and local agencies, and continues to collaborate with and advise agencies. The District has received no recent complaints.

- ❖ Based on ACRCDD's management practices, accountability to constituents, number of complaints, and continued willingness of agencies to work with ACRCDD, services offered by the District appear to be adequate.

Existence of any social or economic communities of interest

- ❖ All county residents benefit from services provided by ACRCDD. Agricultural areas benefit from Farm Bill and agricultural programs provided by ACRCDD.