



San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission

Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

6a

AGENDA REPORT Public Hearing

December 5, 2022

TO: Commissioners

FROM: Keene Simonds, Executive Officer
Priscilla Mumpower, Analyst II

SUBJECT: **Proposed Sphere of Influence Updates for the Escondido Region |
City of Escondido, Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District, and the
Deer Springs Fire Protection District**

SUMMARY

The San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) will consider approving sphere of influence updates for the three affected agencies in the Escondido region under the Commission's oversight. The updates are being presented as part of the Commission's five-year study requirement to review and make changes as merited in using spheres to designate the affected agencies' appropriate and near-term boundaries and service areas. The updates draw on information included in a recently prepared municipal service review and headlined by three recommended actions. The first recommendation is to affirm two of the three agencies' – Deer Springs Fire Protection District (FPD) and Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District (MWD) – spheres with the expectation of preparing comprehensive updates at a later date and upon the completion of additional analyses. The second recommendation is to proceed with a limited update to the third agency's – City of Escondido – sphere to remove approximately 1,090 unincorporated acres along the northern perimeter to better align with parcel lines and other geographic markers. The third recommendation is to establish two special study areas to Escondido's sphere and in doing so provide these areas eligibility to proceed in the next five years with an actual amendment without necessitating a new municipal service review. A related general rule exemption finding as lead agency covering all recommended actions is also proposed.

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BACKGROUND

Spheres of Influence

LAFCOs establish, amend, and update spheres of influence for cities and special districts to designate the territory it independently believes represents the agencies' appropriate and probable future jurisdictional boundaries and/or service areas. All jurisdictional changes and out-of-agency services must be consistent with the affected agencies' spheres with limited exceptions. LAFCOs review and update spheres every five years as needed based on information generated in municipal service reviews. LAFCOs have broad discretion in designating spheres in step with meeting its objective to facilitate orderly and responsive growth and development so long as the following factors are considered.

- Present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural or open space lands.
- Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- Capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services the agencies provide.
- Existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area.
- Present and probable needs for water, wastewater, and fire protection for any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the agencies' existing spheres.¹

Informing Document to Sphere Update | Municipal Service Review and Associated Addendum on the Escondido Region

San Diego LAFCO recently completed a municipal service review on the Escondido region providing an independent evaluation of the availability, need, and sufficiency of the three affected agencies' service functions relative to community needs. The municipal service review comprises two parts. "Part One" covers Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD. "Part Two" covers the City of Escondido and further divided between a comprehensive report prepared by the City via Concordia Homes and an addendum prepared by LAFCO staff. Summaries of Part One and Part Two and their key conclusions, recommendations, and related determinations are attached.

DISCUSSION

This item is for San Diego LAFCO to perform its scheduled sphere of influence updates in the Escondido region involving the City of Escondido, Deer Springs FPD, and Rincon del Diablo MWD. The update is informed by the municipal service review recently prepared on the Escondido region and draws on the following baseline sphere information.

- **Escondido's** sphere was established by LAFCO in 1979 and last reviewed and updated in 2008. The sphere spans 43,590 acres and includes all of Escondido's 23,971 jurisdictional acres. It also includes 19,619 non-jurisdictional acres and marked by the unincorporated communities of Jesmond Dene, Felicita Park, and San Pasqual Valley. There are no special study areas currently assigned to Escondido's sphere.

¹ This factor applies only when establishing, amending, or updating spheres for agencies that provide one of the three listed functions.

- **Deer Springs FPD's** sphere was established by LAFCO in 1979 and last reviewed and updated in 2014. The sphere spans 20,255 acres and covers Deer Springs FPD's two active functions: fire protection and emergency medical. The sphere is smaller than the jurisdictional boundary with the exclusion of 8,020 acres in the Jesmond Dene community and done so in parallel of placing the lands within Escondido's sphere. The sphere does not include any non-jurisdictional lands. There are no special study areas currently assigned to Deer Springs FPD's sphere.
- **Rincon del Diablo MWD's** sphere was established by San Diego LAFCO in 1985 and last reviewed and updated in 2008. The sphere is 28,144 acres in size and covers Rincon del Diablo MWD's potable water, non-potable water, fire protection, and emergency medical service functions. The sphere includes all of Rincon del Diablo MWD's jurisdiction plus an additional 939 non-jurisdictional acreage with the majority near Lake Wolford. LAFCO has also established a secondary sphere for Rincon de Diablo MWD in step with activating its wastewater function in 2018. This secondary sphere is 425 acres and coterminous with the activated wastewater service area for the Harmony Grove Village. Two special study areas are currently assigned. Both special study areas apply to the secondary sphere and Rincon del Diablo MWD's wastewater function and involve the Valiano and Harmony Grove South development projects.

Maps showing all three current spheres of influence for the affected agencies are attached.

ANALYSIS

Proceeding with updates to affirm Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD's spheres of influence without changes appears sufficiently justified. Affirming the spheres maintains baseline expectations regarding possible expansions via annexations and/or out-of-agency services over the next five-year period while additional planned analysis proceeds to inform comprehensive updates for both agencies. The additional analysis ties to recommendations in the municipal service review and involve preparing a governance study to explore consolidation opportunities (functional and political) between Rincon del Diablo MWD and the City of Escondido as well as a countywide municipal service review on fire protection. No new special study area assignments to the spheres have been similarly identified.

A comparable recommendation to largely affirm the City of Escondido's sphere is proposed to maintain baseline expectations over the next five years given the scheduling of the aforementioned governance study – albeit with two notable exceptions. The first exception involves proceeding with a change to the Escondido sphere to remove 1,090 unincorporated acres – involving two non-contiguous areas – along the northern perimeter to better align with parcel lines and other geographic markers. These lands lie within the unincorporated communities of Hidden Meadows and Valley Center and/or all portions of 455 parcels that are largely under rural residential use with services provided by special districts. Escondido states these lands are also located beyond the current range of the City's existing infrastructure. The second exception involves establishing two new special study areas to the sphere and in doing so provide these areas eligibility to proceed in the next five years

with an actual amendment, without necessitating a new municipal service review. The proposed study areas are summarized below and involve proposed developments currently under review by the City.

- **Escondido Study Area No. 1: Harvest Hills**

The Harvest Hills project site (formerly Safari Highlands) involves 1,359 total unincorporated acres along the southeast perimeter of Escondido's existing jurisdictional boundary and sphere of influence. The Harvest Hills project application was filed with the City in 2015 and involves the development of a 550-lot residential subdivision along with ancillary amenities – including dedicated open spaces – on 1,098 unincorporated acres.

- **Escondido Study Area No. 2: Daley Ranch**

The Daley Ranch project site (formerly Sager Ranch) involves 1,783 total unincorporated acres along the northeast perimeter of Escondido's existing jurisdictional boundary. Approximately 92.8% of the project site is already within the sphere of influence with the remainder – which totals 128 acres – requiring inclusion into the sphere as part of any future annexation. The Daley Ranch project application was filed with the City in 2018 and involves the development of resort and residential uses – with the latter involving a 203-lot subdivision – on approximately 200 acres.

Several other areas were also considered by LAFCO staff for special study assignments as part of this update. These other areas were identified initially by Escondido during the municipal service review process and summarized in the accompanying footnote.² Staff believes proceeding without special study area designations for these other areas is appropriate given none involve active development projects under consideration by the City.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended San Diego LAFCO approve actions to update the spheres of influence for all three local agencies under its jurisdiction in the Escondido region as provided in the preceding section. This recommendation is consistent with Alternative One as outlined in the succeeding section and would be subject to a 30-day reconsideration period.

ALTERNATIVES FOR ACTION

The following alternative actions are available to San Diego LAFCO and can be accomplished through a single-approved motion.

² Three additional and separate special study areas were proposed by the City of Escondido, involving: (a) 471.0 unincorporated acres comprising an avocado ranch known as Beacon Sun Ranch, (2) 48.0 unincorporated acres within the City's Specific Plan Area #8, and (3) 73.0 unincorporated acres comprising two parcels on Old Guejito Grade Road. The three areas do not involve active applications with the City and staff does not believe they merit special study area designations.

Alternative One (recommended):

Adopt the attached draft resolution approving the following sphere of influence updates along with a general rule exemption under the California Environmental Quality Act:

- a) Update Deer Springs FPD's existing sphere of influence without any changes or new special study areas as shown in Exhibit B.
- b) Update Rincon del Diablo MWD's existing sphere of influence (primary and secondary) without any changes or new special study areas as shown in Exhibit C.
- c) Update City of Escondido's existing sphere of influence with limited changes along with two new special study areas as shown in Exhibit D.

Alternative Two:

Continue the item and request additional information from staff as needed.

PROCEDURES FOR CONSIDERATION

This item has been placed on San Diego LAFCO's agenda for action as part of a noticed public hearing. The following procedures are recommended in the consideration of this item:

- 1) Commissioner disclosures, if any.
- 2) Receive verbal presentation from staff unless waived.
- 2) Open the hearing and invite comments.
- 3) Close the hearing, discuss item, and consider the staff recommendation.

On behalf of the Executive Officer,



Priscilla Mumpower
Analyst II

Attachments:

- 1) Municipal Service Review Summary: Escondido Region – Part One
- 2) Municipal Service Review Summary: Escondido Region – Part Two
- 3) Deer Springs FPD Existing Sphere of Influence Map
- 4) Rincon del Diablo MWD Existing Sphere of Influence Map
- 5) City of Escondido Existing Sphere of Influence Map
- 6) Draft Resolution Approving Sphere of Influence Updates in Escondido Region
 - Exhibit A: Written Statements
 - Exhibit B: Proposed Sphere Update for Deer Springs FPD
 - Exhibit C: Proposed Sphere Update for Rincon del Diablo MWD
 - Exhibit D: Proposed Sphere Update for City of Escondido

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Municipal Service Review ESCONDIDO REGION

FINAL · PART 1

REPORT SUMMARY | October 2019

Credit: Google



General Themes and Conclusions

The Escondido region encompasses a geographically distinct subarea of “North County” removed from the coast and bisected by two of San Diego County’s most traveled commute corridors in Interstate 15 and State Route 78. The region’s distinctions are also reflected and tenured in local government with two of the earliest city and special district establishments in San Diego County with the City of Escondido incorporating in 1888 and the Escondido Irrigation District forming in 1891; latter being subsequently dissolved with its water system eventually divided between the City and Rincon del Diablo MWD at the time of its formation in 1954. Deer Springs FPD’s formation in 1981 completes the current and relatively confined concentration of local government in the region among these three agencies.

The current estimated population within the region is approximately 182,000 with four-fifths residing within

Escondido with considerable overlap with Rincon del Diablo MWD. Historically, Rincon del Diablo MWD and later Deer Springs FPD have served as unincorporated placeholders ahead of development requiring an expanded range of municipal services and annexing into Escondido. This historical trend is reflected in the rate of population growth in Escondido and the average annual change of 5.5% over a 20-year period between 1980 and 2000. More recently, however, there has been an orientation shift from this historical development pattern in the region with the average annual change in population growth in Escondido decreasing to 0.7% since 2000. This change is attributed to both interest within Escondido to slow the rate of new growth and marked by General Plan Policy E and its provisions to now require voter approval to intensify land uses as well as external pushback to City annexations from neighboring unincorporated residents. This recent shift – notably and as

one of the central themes detailed below – underlies a new and emerging role of Rincon del Diablo MWD and Deer Springs FPD serving as community separators in demarking the urban–rural interface in the region.

Part One of this municipal service review on the Escondido region produces seven central conclusions relative to San Diego LAFCO’s growth management tasks and interests as prescribed under statute and specific to Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD. These conclusions collectively address the availability, need, and adequacy of these two agencies’ municipal services and range in substance from addressing demand-to-capacity relationships to overall financial standing. The conclusions also address potential sphere changes. The conclusions are independently drawn and sourced to information collected and analyzed by the Commission between 2014 and 2018 and detailed in the agency profiles.

No. 1

Good Financial Standing

Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD both finished the five-year report period in good financial standing based on standard measurements showing the agencies have relatively high or otherwise strong liquidity, capital, and margin levels. Most notably, both agencies finished each fiscal year with positive operating and total margins near or above double-digit percentages. These positive margins underlie both agencies’ ability to improve their net-positions over the report period as well as double their respective operating reserve ratios.

No. 2

Adequate and Available Capacities

Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD have established adequate and excess capacities in meeting current demands for their core municipal services involving fire protection and emergency medical and potable water, respectively. This includes – and most pertinent to future growth – Rincon del Diablo MWD’s current average annual potable water demand over the five-year report period equaling no more than 35% of accessible supplies in either of the District’s two distinct service areas.

No. 3

Changing Roles

Rincon del Diablo MWD and Deer Springs FPD have historically served unincorporated areas adjacent to Escondido generally as placeholders ahead of new development requiring a range of municipal services and annexing into the City. These historical roles have begun to transition in recent years due to resident preferences as well as policy shifts and underlie changing roles for the agencies as community separators in demarking the urban–rural interface in the region.



Completed in 1988,
City Hall was the
first phase
of the Escondido
Civic Center.



Lake Hodges in
San Dieguito River
Park near Escondido

» General Themes and Conclusions

No. 4 Need for Additional Service Alignment

Rincon del Diablo MWD and Escondido share four distinct municipal service responsibilities in common: fire protection and emergency medical; potable water; recycled water; and wastewater. The agencies have synchronized the planning and delivery of three – fire protection and emergency medical, potable water, and recycled water – and in doing so delineated immediate and near-term service roles within the overlapping portions of their jurisdictional boundaries. Additional alignment is needed for wastewater to help inform capital planning for both agencies in the region and specifically within Elfin Forest, Eden Hills, and Harmony Grove.

No. 5 Exploring Long-Term Governance Roles

It would be beneficial for San Diego LAFCO to prepare an addendum to separately assess governance options involving Rincon del Diablo MWD and Escondido given overlap in boundaries and services. The addendum would respond to existing questions in the region regarding the agencies' ultimate service roles and primarily premised as an informational document and potentially transition with sufficient merit and consensus to facilitate a functional or political consolidation.

No. 6 Aligning Rincon del Diablo MWD's Jurisdictional Boundary to Services

Close to one-half of Rincon del Diablo MWD's jurisdictional boundary lies outside its improvement districts and do not receive municipal services from the District. Irrespective of other conclusions, San Diego LAFCO should work with Rincon del Diablo MWD to better align the jurisdictional boundary with existing and planned service provision and remedy otherwise misplaced boundary markers.

No. 7 Prepare Comprehensive Sphere of Influence Updates

A preliminary review indicates comprehensive updates to Rincon del Diablo MWD and Deer Springs FPD's spheres of influence are merited to consider one or more changes. These updates should be performed in conjunction with an anticipated update of Escondido and be formally added to the current workplan with the expectation the work may extend into the subsequent fiscal year.



Recommendations

The following recommendations call for specific action either from San Diego LAFCO and or one or more of the affected agencies based on information generated as part of this report and outlined below in order of their placement in Section 5.0 (Written Determinations). Recommendations for Commission action are dependent on a subsequent directive from the membership and through the adopted work plan.

1. San Diego LAFCO should coordinate with the County of San Diego and SANDAG to develop buildout estimates specific to Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD and incorporate the data into the next scheduled municipal service review.
2. Rincon del Diablo MWD should continue efforts to encourage the production and use of recycled water, including further partnering with the City of Escondido on the significant investments being made in recycled water production.
3. San Diego LAFCO should revisit the analysis in this report as appropriate in conjunction with Part Two of the municipal service review on the City of Escondido and its contract role to provide fire protection and emergency medical to Rincon del Diablo MWD.
4. Deer Springs FPD should explore opportunities to extend and/or expand its contract relationship with the County of San Diego consistent with San Diego LAFCO's policy objective to facilitate the orderly expansion of the Fire Authority and its role to organize and improve fire service in unincorporated San Diego County.
5. San Diego LAFCO should proceed to determine wastewater service responsibilities within the Elfin Forest, Eden Hills, and Harmony Grove areas and incorporate the analysis into subsequent sphere of influence updates.
6. San Diego LAFCO should add to a future workplan an addendum to separately assess long-term governance options involving Rincon del Diablo MWD and the City of Escondido given the existing overlap in boundaries and service activities.



Kit Carson Park
in Escondido

7. San Diego LAFCO and Rincon del Diablo MWD – and irrespective of other recommendations – should pursue realignment of the District's jurisdictional boundary to more succinctly reflect existing and/or planned services.



Pedestrian Bridge
across Lake Hodges,
the world's longest
stress ribbon bridge

» Recommendations

8. A preliminary review indicates comprehensive updates to Rincon del Diablo MWD and Deer Springs FPD's spheres of influence are merited to consider one or more changes involving both agencies. These updates should be timed in step with the Escondido update and formally added to the workplan for 2019–2020.
9. San Diego LAFCO should consider existing automatic aid agreements and the delivery of actual services in helping to inform potential changes to the Deer Springs FPD sphere of influence and – as appropriate – enact boundary changes.

Hodges Reservoir was created with the building of Hodges Dam on San Dieguito Creek in 1918. The City of San Diego purchased the dam and reservoir in 1925. When full, the reservoir has 1,234 surface acres, a maximum water depth of 115 feet and 27 shoreline miles.



Municipal Service Review ESCONDIDO REGION

FINAL • PART 2

REPORT SUMMARY | November 2022



General Themes and Conclusions

The Escondido region encompasses a geographically distinct subarea of “North County” removed from the coast and bisected by two of San Diego County’s most traveled commute corridors in Interstate 15 and State Route 78. The region’s distinctions are also reflected and tenured in local government with two of the earliest city and special district establishments in San Diego County with the City of Escondido incorporating in 1888 and the Escondido Irrigation District forming in 1891; the latter being subsequently dissolved with its water system eventually divided between the City and Rincon del Diablo MWD at the time of its formation in 1954. Deer Springs FPD’s formation in 1981 completes the current and relatively confined concentration of local government in the region among these three agencies.

The City of Escondido and its full-range of municipal services anchors the region’s social and economic interests and is the focus of this addendum.

A review of City of Escondido relative to San Diego LAFCO’s growth management tasks and interests produces nine central themes or conclusions. These conclusions collectively address the availability, need, and adequacy of municipal services Escondido and range in substance from addressing governance dynamics to financial standing. The conclusions also address potential sphere of influence amendments. The conclusions are independently drawn and sourced to information collected and analyzed in the municipal service review prepared Escondido via Concordia Homes and substantively supplement by this addendum.

The City of Escondido is a general law municipality incorporated in October 1888 with a total population estimate of nearly 150,779. This estimate produces a population density of 6.3 residents per acre and makes the region the 4th largest City in San Diego County.

No. 1

Introductory Municipal Service Review

This municipal service review and addendum herein serve as the Commission's first comprehensive municipal service review covering the City of Escondido. The report and this addendum consequently serve as a dual introduction. This is marked by introducing Escondido and their constituents in real-time to an otherwise unfamiliar outside planning process. The introduction similarly introduces the Commission to Escondido and their service activities at depths previously unvisited with the underlying goal of establishing baseline information to track and measure going forward.

No. 2

Changes in Leadership + Governance

The City of Escondido has experienced significant changes in elected and appointed leadership at the end of the addendum period and suggests substantive transitions in the City's approach to governance – including goal and priority setting – will follow. Markedly, and without the imposition of term limits, four of the five Council positions changed during the period with three of the four being new to elected public office. This change in leadership also extends to several senior staff positions and highlighted by the City Council recently appointing its first outside candidate to City Manager since 1989.

No. 3

General Fund Stresses + High Debt Levels

Actuals during the addendum period signal the City of Escondido's General Fund is becoming imbalanced with the rate of new expenses surpassing the rate of new revenues by more than one-fifth and the inability to satisfy its own reserve policy in four of the five years covered. It appears the primary stress factor ties to increasing pension debt payments – which have risen by nearly one-half in the addendum period – and now account for nearly two-fifths of all payroll expenses. The cumulative effect of increasing pension costs plus other financing decisions has substantively cut Escondido's capital levels and reflected in a debt-to-net asset measurement of 101% at the end of the period.

No. 4

Adequate Service Capacities with a Big Qualifier

The City of Escondido has established adequate and excess service capacities and related resources in meeting current demands and highlighted in this addendum with respect to potable water, wastewater, and integrated fire protection, emergency medical, and ambulance.

However, it is reasonable to apply qualifiers given increasing stresses in the General Fund will relatedly stress capacities and resources for associated City services and most notably community development, public safety, and parks and recreation. This dynamic suggests added caution for LAFCO in considering annexations and their potential impact – advantageous and disadvantageous – on the General Fund.

Maple Street
Plaza Arch Sign in
Escondido.



No. 5

Growth Challenges

Recent population growth in the City of Escondido has been relatively modest during the addendum period with an average annual change of 0.5%. This otherwise modest population growth has nonetheless proportionally exceeded housing construction in Escondido with LAFCO estimating an annual period shortfall of (64) housing units in the City necessary to maintain current household sizes. Pivoting forward, and in order to help curb this existing shortage, LAFCO estimates the average number of new housing units needed in Escondido in each of the next five years to proportionally keep pace with expected growth in population is 225 units.

No. 6

Growth Opportunities + LAFCO Support

The City of Escondido is favorably positioned to plan and accommodate additional growth and become a focal urban center for North County. This opportunity ties to Escondido's role as a full-service municipality and the controls it provides paired with its physical location along existing major transportation corridors as well as planned expansions – including a station stop on California's high-speed rail project. This opportunity further ties and can be supported by LAFCO's own interests and duties to facilitate orderly and city-centered growth.

No. 7

Connecting Escondido's Growth with Regional Influences

The City of Escondido's growth and development is the final responsibility of its City Council, but regional agencies – like LAFCO, SANDAG, and the County of San Diego – create policies that substantively influence the local decision-making. And while LAFCO can and should support Escondido's becoming of a focal urban center for North County, the policy direction of SANDAG, County, and others on this topic is less certain and merits attention to help connect and otherwise coordinate regional messaging for the benefit of the City.

No. 8

Becoming Whole: Literally + Figuratively

There are over a dozen unincorporated islands that are substantially or entirely surrounded by the City of Escondido with a LAFCO estimated population of 12,376. All of these islands lie within Escondido's sphere of influence and their continued existence perpetuate service inefficiencies for both the City and County of San Diego as well as raise social justice considerations for those within islands and/or for those outside the islands. It would be appropriate for Escondido and LAFCO to coordinate resources and work to gradually make the City whole with due consideration to the economic feasibility and impact on City resources.

No. 9

Assessing the Escondido + Rincon del Diablo Relationship

LAFCO concluded in Part One of the municipal service review it would be prudent to independently assess options to consolidate – politically or functionally and/or partially or entirely – the City of Escondido and Rincon del Diablo MWD. This earlier determination relied on preliminary analysis and highlighted by the agencies' overlapping boundaries and common service functions. Part Two of the municipal service review of this addendum further affirms this earlier conclusion and supports adding the governance study to the LAFCO workplan.

No. 10

Proceeding with a Limited Sphere of Influence Update

It would be appropriate for LAFCO to proceed with a limited sphere of influence update for the City of Escondido and defer an otherwise needed comprehensive action to a future municipal service cycle. The approach would involve proceeding with limited changes to the sphere to better align with parcel boundaries and/or other geographic markers. It would also – pertinently – establish one or more specific special study areas to memorialize areas the Commission would allow to come forward over the next five-year period without requiring a new municipal service review.



Completed in 1988, City Hall was the first phase of the Escondido Civic Center.



Recommendations

The following recommendations call for specific action either from San Diego LAFCO, City of Escondido, or other local agencies based on information generated as part of this addendum and outlined below in order of their placement in Section 5.0 (Written Determinations). Recommendations for Commission action involving additional studies are dependent on a subsequent directive from the membership and through the annually adopted work plan.

1. As a long-term principle, San Diego LAFCO should prioritize and direct growth in the region to the City of Escondido and its appropriate role to serve as an urban center.

2. In support of the preceding principle, San Diego LAFCO should prepare an informational report to assess the relationship of the Commission's own growth management policies – such as prioritizing City of Escondido as an urban growth center through sphere and jurisdictional changes – with other regional land use and housing policies. This includes – but not limited to – assessing connectivity to SANDAG's mobility hubs and the County of San Diego's recently adopted transportation study guide establishing vehicle miles traveled thresholds under Senate Bill 743.

3. San Diego LAFCO should coordinate with SANDAG to develop current buildout estimates in the City of Escondido and sphere of influence and incorporate the information into the next scheduled municipal service review. This should include impacts tied to the recent passage of Senate Bill 9 (Weiner) and the allowance for additional lot splitting.

4. As an immediate principle in the timeframe of this addendum, San Diego LAFCO should require all jurisdictional changes involving annexations to the City of Escondido demonstrate de minimis impacts to the City General Fund unless overriding policy considerations are made by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

5. San Diego LAFCO should coordinate with the County of San Diego to identify the scope and scale of active groundwater wells and septic systems within the City of Escondido and the sphere of influence and incorporate this information into the next scheduled municipal service review.

6. The City of Escondido should consider joint-use arrangements with local school districts to make available additional and needed greenery and play spaces to enhance recreational opportunities that are within walkable distance for residents.

7. San Diego LAFCO affirms its own previous determination that a governance study is merited to independently assess reorganization options to consolidate – politically or functionally – the City of Escondido and Rincon del Diablo MWD. The Commission should proceed with the governance study.



Kit Carson Park
Municipal Park in
Escondido.



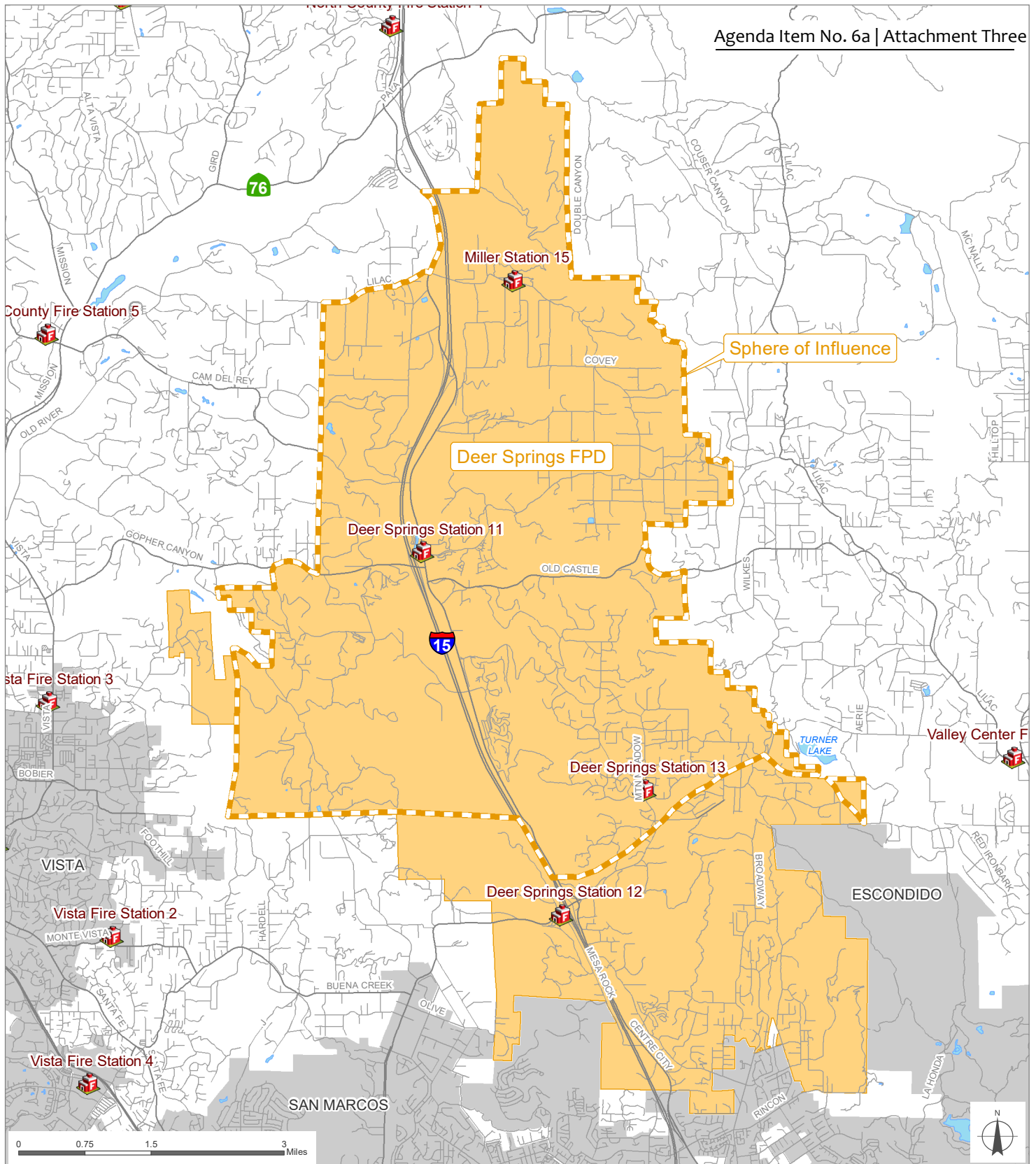
Pedestrian Bridge
across Lake Hodges,
the world's longest
stress ribbon bridge

» Recommendations

8. San Diego LAFCO should exercise additional discretion when considering jurisdictional changes involving the City of Escondido to prompt and/or otherwise require concurrent or future annexation of the existing unincorporated islands in the sphere of influence, with due consideration to the economic feasibility and impact on City resources.
9. The City of Escondido should coordinate with San Diego LAFCO to ensure existing municipal services provided outside the City that are subject to material changes – intensify or de-intensify – remain in compliance with Government Code Section 56133.
10. San Diego LAFCO should proceed with a limited sphere of influence update for the City of Escondido. The limited update should focus on aligning the sphere of influence wherever practical with parcel boundaries, roads, and other geographic markers that have adjusted and/or emerged since the last Commission action in 2003.
 - a) San Diego LAFCO should defer an otherwise merited comprehensive sphere of influence update for the City of Escondido to a future municipal service review.
 - b) Notwithstanding other determinations, San Diego LAFCO should proceed to establish one or more special study areas for the City of Escondido sphere of influence as part of a limited update and provide the affected areas eligibility to proceed in the next five years with an actual amendment without necessitating a new municipal service review. This includes a special study area for the Harvest Hills (previously Safari Highlands) project site.
 - c) Establishment of a special study area for the Harvest Hills project site and any subsequent accommodation to formally add to the City of Escondido's sphere of influence over the preceding 60-month period should be conditioned on further evaluation on potential fire risks and evacuation controls given local conditions – including community input to date.
11. San Diego LAFCO should revisit and expand on its inaugural analysis of pollution burdens and impacts on susceptible populations within the City of Escondido as part of future municipal service reviews.

Deer Springs FPD

Agenda Item No. 6a | Attachment Three



San Diego County
Local Agency Formation Commission
 Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

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SOI Adopted: 11 / 7 / 1983
 SOI Affirmed: 2 / 7 / 2005
 SOI Affirmed: 5 / 7 / 2007
 SOI Reaffirmed: 8 / 6 / 2007
 SOI Affirmed: 3 / 3 / 2014

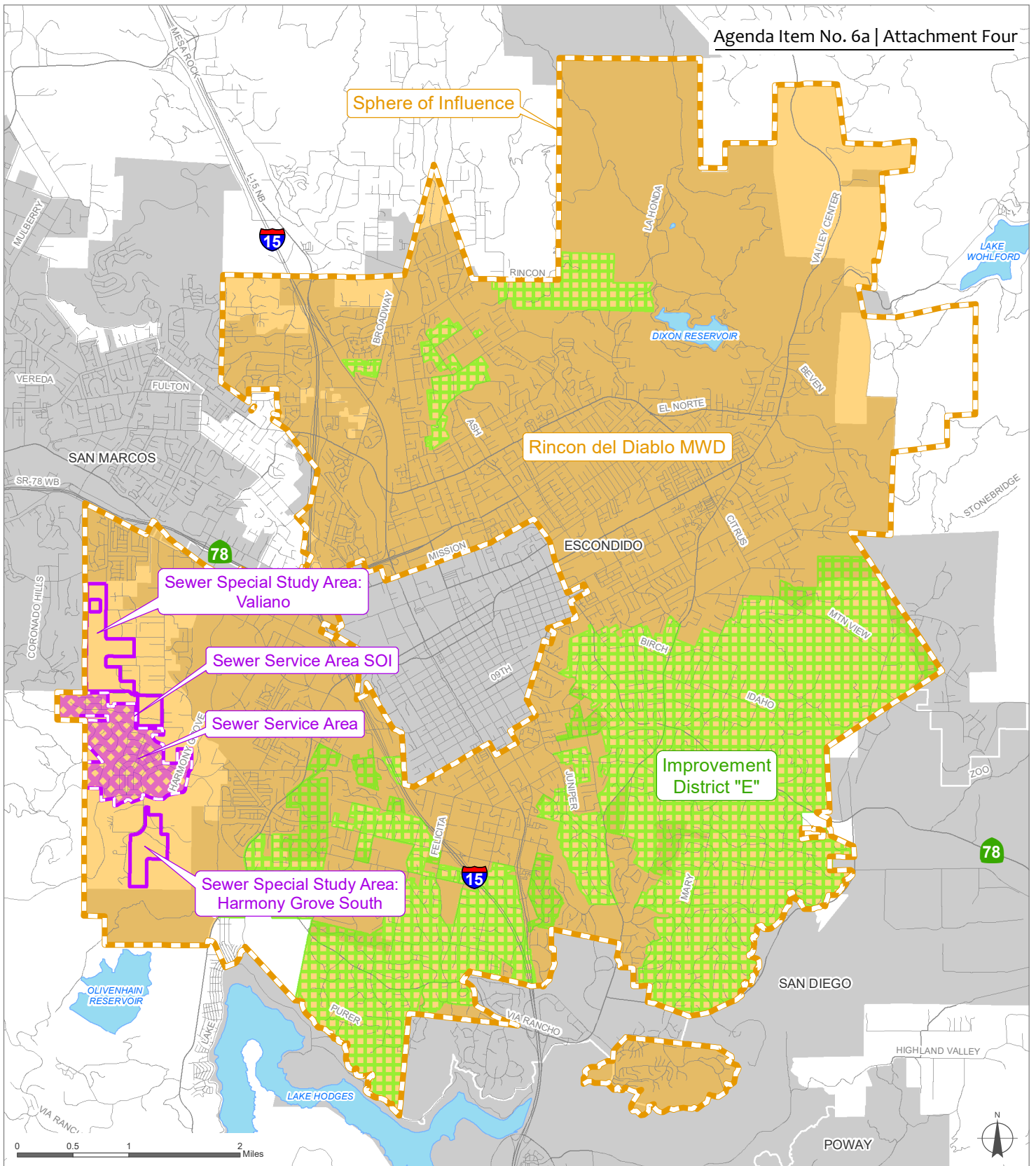
SOI = Sphere of Influence



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Rincon del Diablo MWD

Agenda Item No. 6a | Attachment Four



San Diego County
Local Agency Formation Commission
 Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

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Created by Dieu Ngu -- 5/24/2021

G:\GIS\PROJECTS\Profile_maps\2021 maps\Districts\MWD_Rincon.mxd

SOI Adopted: 4 / 1 / 1985
 SOI Affirmed: 9 / 8 / 2003
 SOI Affirmed: 2 / 7 / 2005
 SOI Affirmed: 5 / 7 / 2007
 SOI Reaffirmed: 8 / 6 / 2007

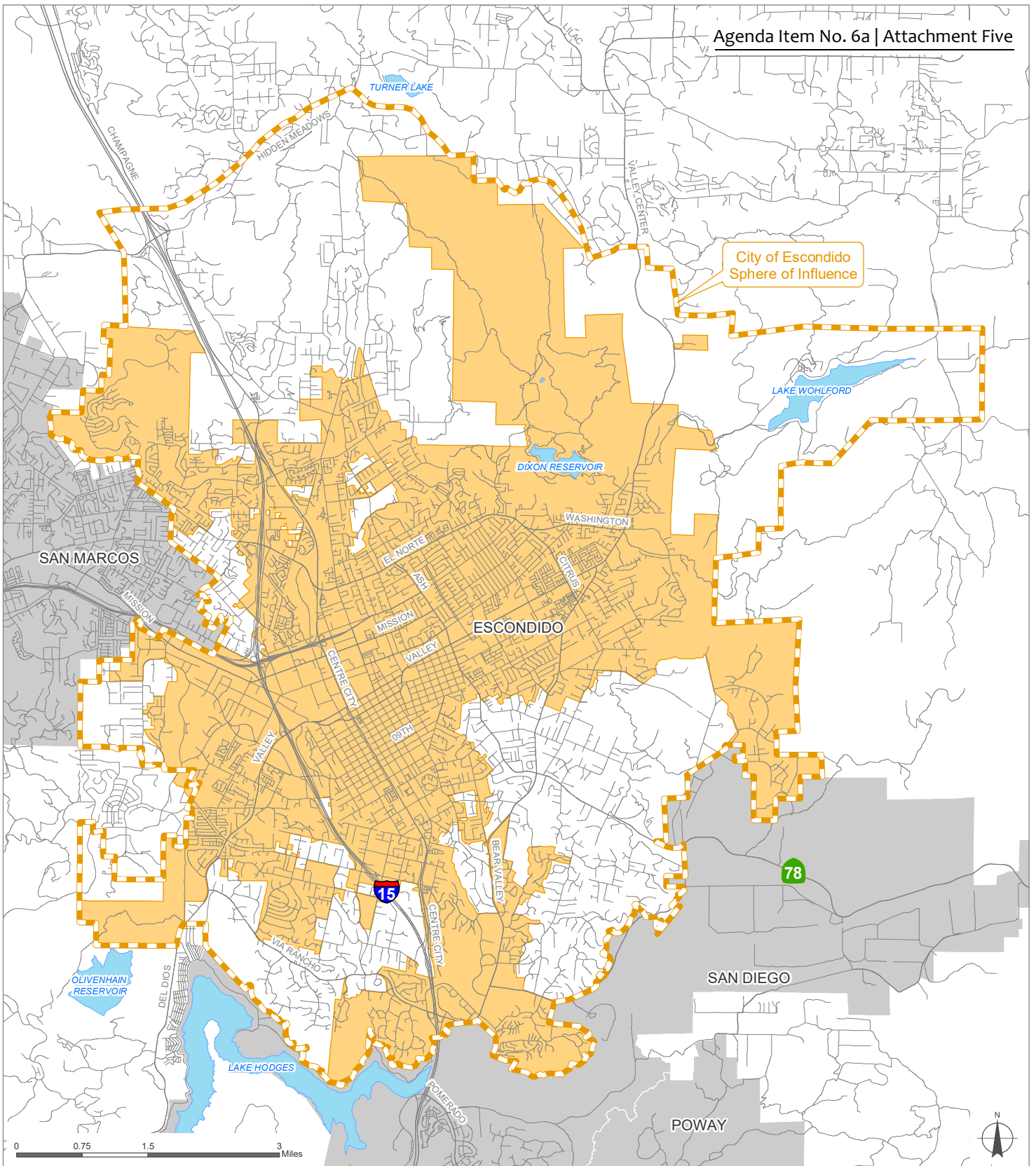
SOI = Sphere of Influence



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City of Escondido

Agenda Item No. 6a | Attachment Five



San Diego County
Local Agency Formation Commission
 Regional Service Planning | Subdivision of the State of California

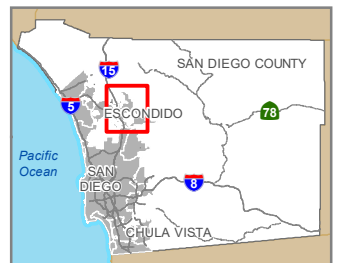
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Created by Dieu Ngu -- 5/19/2021

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SOI Adopted: 7 / 2 / 1979
 SOI Updated: 10 / 4 / 1993
 SOI Updated: 9 / 8 / 2003
 SOI Affirmed: 3 / 3 / 2008

SOI = Sphere of Influence



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RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION OF THE
SAN DIEGO COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION
MAKING DETERMINATIONS**

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES FOR THE ESCONDIDO REGION

WHEREAS, the San Diego County Local Agency Formation Commission, hereinafter referred to as the “Commission”, is a political subdivision of the State of California with regulatory and planning responsibilities to facilitate orderly growth and development under the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is responsible under Government Code Section 56425 to establish spheres of influence for all local agencies under Commission oversight with the added statutory directive that all jurisdictional changes must be consistent with the affected agencies’ spheres with limited exceptions; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is also responsible under Government Code Section 56425 to review and update all local agencies’ spheres of influence every five years as necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Commission completed a two-part municipal service review on public services within the Escondido region consistent with statute and includes the City of Escondido, Deer Springs Fire Protection District (FPD), and Rincon Municipal Water District (MWD) hereafter referred as the “affected agencies”; and

WHEREAS, the two-part municipal service review on the Escondido region serves as the informing document for the Commission to proceed with sphere of influence updates for the affected agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Officer’s written report and recommendations on sphere of influence updates for the affected agencies in the Escondido region was presented to the Commission in a manner provided by law; and

WHEREAS, the Commission heard and fully considered all the evidence presented at a public meeting concerning the sphere of influence updates in the Escondido region on December 5, 2022;

WHEREAS, as part of the sphere of influence update process, the Commission is required pursuant to Government Code Section 56425(e) to make a statement of written determinations with regards to certain factors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commission hereby finds, determines, and orders the following:

1. The Commission determines the sphere of influence updates for the affected agencies in the Escondido region represent a project under the California Environmental Quality Act but exempt from further review under the “general rule” provided under State Guidelines 15061(b)(3). This

exemption appropriately applies given it can be seen with certainty spheres of influence are planning policies and any amendments or updates do not make any changes to the environment or authorize any new uses or services.

2. The Commission has considered the Executive Officer's written report on the sphere of influence updates and recommendations therein for the affected agencies.
3. The Commission makes the statements set forth in Exhibit "A" in determining the spheres of influence for the affected agencies.
4. The Commission APPROVES updates for the affected agencies to affirm with no changes the existing sphere of influence designations for Deer Springs FPD and Rincon del Diablo MWD.
 - a) The updated sphere of influence for Deer Springs Fire Protection District is affirmed as shown as Exhibit "B".
 - b) The updated sphere of influence for Rincon del Diablo Municipal Water District is affirmed as shown as Exhibit "C".
5. The Commission APPROVES an update to the existing sphere of influence for the City of Escondido to include the following changes:
 - a) The sphere is reduced by approximately 1,090 unincorporated acres along the northern perimeter as shown in Exhibit "D" and comprises 455 assessor parcels.
 - b) The sphere is modified to include approximately 1,487 unincorporated acres in the form of two study areas as shown in Exhibit "D".
6. The Commission CONDITIONS the establishment of the two special study areas and any subsequent accommodation to formally add to the City of Escondido's sphere of influence over the proceeding 60-month period on further evaluation and specifically on potential fire risks and evacuation controls given local conditions – including community input to date.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Commission on December 5, 2022 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAINING:

ATTEST:

Keene Simonds
Executive Officer

EXHIBIT A

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES FOR THE ESCONDIDO REGION

STATEMENT OF DETERMINATIONS GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 56425

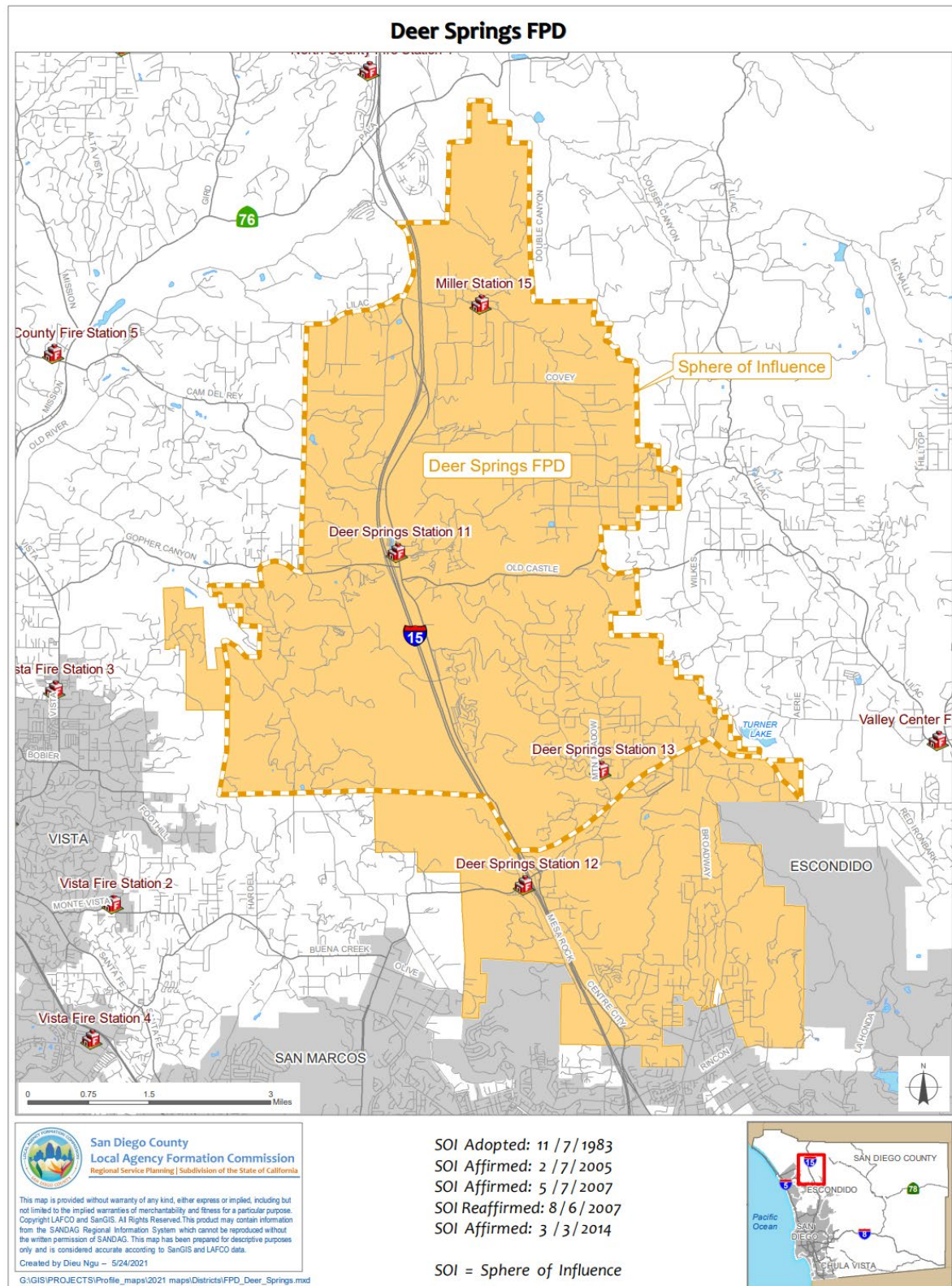
1. With respect to present and planned land uses in the area as required under Section 56425(e)(1), the Commission independently determines the following.
 - a) The affected territory included in the three proposed sphere of influence updates in the Escondido region largely overlaps and collectively spans 62,311 acres with an estimated 154,544 fulltime residents. The affected territory is under the land use authority of the either the City of Escondido, City of San Diego, City of San Marcos, or County of San Diego. The affected territory within Deer Springs FPD does not currently lie in either city, while Rincon MWD currently has 218 acres that lie in the City of San Marcos and 26 acres that lie in the City of San Diego. The current and planned uses are predominately urban in nature ranging from low density residential in Deer Springs FPD to more high-density residential along with commercial and industrial in Rincon del Diablo MWD and City of Escondido. A limited amount of agriculture and open-space lands exists within the three proposed spheres of influence and is not considered significant.
2. With respect to present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area as required under Section 56425(e)(2), the Commission independently determines the following.
 - a) The areas within the proposed sphere of influence updates reflect the appropriate current and near-term jurisdictional boundaries as well as service areas of the affected agencies as determined by the Commission.
 - b) Two Special Study Area designations for the City of Escondido should be established to allow Commission consideration of sphere amendments and annexations ahead of the next five-year review and update process.
3. With respect to present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services the agencies' provide or are authorized to provide as required under Section 56425(e)(3), the Commission independently determines the following.
 - a) A comprehensive evaluation of public services and adequacy therein for the areas has been separately prepared by the Commission as part of a municipal service review. The Commission relies on the municipal service review in making all related sphere of influence determinations for the affected agencies.
4. With respect to the existence of any relevant social or economic community of interest in the area as required under Section 56425(e)(4), the Commission independently determines the following.
 - a) The areas with the proposed sphere of influence updates have established social and economic interdependencies with the affected agencies through existing or – in limited instances –

expected provision of municipal services. These existing interdependencies have been memorialized by the Commission in past actions to include the lands in the spheres of influence of the affected agencies.

5. With respect to the present and probable need for public water, sewer, and fire protection services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or adjacent to the sphere as required under Section 56425(e)(5), the Commission independently determines the following.
 - a) There are no areas within the proposed sphere of influence updates that qualify as disadvantaged unincorporated communities under State and local policy.

EXHIBIT B

SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES FOR THE ESCONDIDO REGION DEER SPRINGS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT



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SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES FOR THE ESCONDIDO REGION RINCON DEL DIABLO MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT



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**SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATES FOR THE ESCONDIDO REGION
CITY OF ESCONDIDO**



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