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**FINAL  
MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW  
FOR THE  
SALINAS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
  
LAFCO OF MONTEREY COUNTY**

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**NOVEMBER 2005**



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SALINAS RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Municipal Service Review (MSR) is a report evaluating service conditions in the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District (District) located within the County of Monterey, as required by the Cortese Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. This act, officially known as AB2838 (Chapter 761, Statutes of 2000), was signed into law on September 26, 2000 and stands as the most significant reform to local government reorganization law since the 1963 statute creating Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs). Comprehensive in scope, the bill addressed problems of basic reorganization law, a need for orderly growth, local government coordination, and public interest and involvement in the government. This report itself is a creation of the act and responds to the following requirements:

1. LAFCOs shall update all spheres of influence for local agencies by January 1, 2006.
2. Municipal Service Reviews are to be completed for each local agency prior to or simultaneously with the Sphere of Influence (SOI) update.

This MSR was prepared prior to amending the District SOI and annexing properties into the District, as required by AB2838. The purpose of the MSR is to provide baseline information for the involved service district, thus providing for informed decision making and an expedited review process. The format of this MSR is based on MSR State Guidelines and is designed to be consistent with other MSRs completed within Monterey County. MSRs must evaluate nine factors for each service district:

1. Infrastructure needs and deficiencies;
2. Growth and population;
3. Financing constraints and opportunities;
4. Cost-avoidance opportunities;
5. Rate restructuring opportunities;
6. Opportunities for shared facilities;
7. Government structure options;
8. Management efficiencies;
9. Local accountability and governance.

Most of the information was provided by the service districts itself, as they are uniquely able to provide such data, with supplemental information and corrections provided by AMBAG and the consultants preparing the MSR.

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District is predominantly rural and agricultural in nature, with the population clustered adjacent to the City of Salinas.. This MSR evaluates the service capabilities of just the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District. The role and service area of the District is defined, and then followed by the nine required statements and a "conclusions" section, which summarizes the major points of the service district. Specific recommendations are not given, as that is not the purpose of the report; rather the information is there to provide guidance for future studies and decision-making regarding Sphere of Influence updates and other actions by LAFCO.

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## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

In enacting the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Reorganization Act of 2000, the Legislature set forth its intent in Government Code section 56001 by reinforcing policies encouraging orderly growth and development that is essential to the social, fiscal and economic well-being of the state. The Legislature recognized that the logical formation and determination of local agency boundaries is an important factor in balancing competing public interest in discouraging urban sprawl, preserving open space and prime agricultural lands, and efficiently extending government services.

In every California County the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) is the authority responsible for the approval or disapproval of all boundary changes involving cities and districts, the incorporation or disincorporation of cities, and the formation and dissolution of most special districts. As part of its responsibilities each LAFCO must adopt a "Sphere of Influence" for each government agency within its county. A "Sphere of Influence" (SOI) is a plan for the probable physical boundaries and service area of a local agency within the next 20 years, as determined by a LAFCO. Determining the location and scope of a district's expansion is one of the core functions of each LAFCO, so as to ensure that districts do not overlap, sufficient service capacity exists for each expansion, and that leapfrog development does not occur.

Effective January 1, 2001, Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCO) are required to conduct reviews of municipal services provided by local agencies as stipulated in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000. Pursuant to Section 56430 of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (LAFCO Act), LAFCOs are required to perform the following:

"(a) In order to prepare and to update spheres of influence...the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area designated by the commission...and shall prepare a written statement of [the following] determinations:

- (1) infrastructure needs or deficiencies;
- (2) growth and population projections for the affected area;
- (3) financing constraints and opportunities;
- (4) cost avoidance opportunities;
- (5) opportunities for rate restructuring;
- (6) opportunities for shared facilities;
- (7) government structure options;
- (8) evaluation of management efficiencies; and
- (9) local accountability and governance."

"(b) In conducting a service review, the commission shall comprehensively review all of the agencies that provide the identified service or services within the designated geographic area."

“(c) The commission shall conduct a service review before, or in conjunction with, but no later than the time it is considering an action to establish a sphere of influence...or to update a sphere of influence...”

Although municipal service reviews may not directly change how services are provided, they are intended to furnish affected agencies, LAFCOs, and the public with a tool to understand and enhance public services conditions. Because LAFCOs are required to review Spheres of Influence every five years beginning January 1, 2001, all LAFCOs must prepare and adopt a Municipal Service Review prior to January 1, 2006.

### **The Role of LAFCO and the Public**

LAFCOs are a creation of the State Legislature to coordinate local and regional growth decisions at the County level. A LAFCO exists in every county to oversee boundary changes, incorporation, formation of special districts and the consolidation, merger, annexation and reorganization of cities and special districts. LAFCOs also guard against duplication of services and haphazard annexation of territory to cities and special districts. Unless otherwise specified by the legislature, the final decision making authority is a seven member Commission consisting of two members of the Board of Supervisors, two members representing city councils within the county, two members representing special service districts, and one public member who is elected by the six other members. Although they operate independently of the state, LAFCOs must act within the legislative parameters that encourage planned, well-ordered, and efficient development patterns and the preservation of open-space.

The purpose of the MSR is to provide LAFCO decision makers with a baseline of technical information about the services provided by a local agency so well informed decision-making can occur about the SOIs under review. This draft version will be subject to a 30-day public review period. During this time any local agency or member of the public may make comments on the content of the Draft MSR. A public meeting will also be held at the Salinas Rural Fire Station at 201B Monterey-Salinas Highway at the corner of Highway 68 and Spreckels Boulevard on July 27, 2005 beginning at 7:00 p.m. The public meeting will allow interested members of the public to better understand the process and purpose of the MSRs and will enable the viewpoints of service receivers to offer their perspective on public services.

After the close of the first comment period a second (final) draft of the MSR will be available for public review at least 21-days prior to the LAFCO hearing during which adoption of the MSR will be considered. The final draft will incorporate and respond to all written comments made on the original Draft MSR, as well as any other necessary changes to the first draft to ensure accuracy and clarity. LAFCO will consider the Final Draft MSR for approval and adoption on a publicly noticed schedule. Any final changes occurring as a result of the LAFCO government commission will be included in the third and final adopted version of the MSR.

### **The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District**

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District was formed in 1934. The original boundaries surrounded the City of Salinas and followed River Road to Pine Canyon. Over the years, annexations into the District have increased its service area to approximately 250 square miles with a population of approximately 21,000 residents.

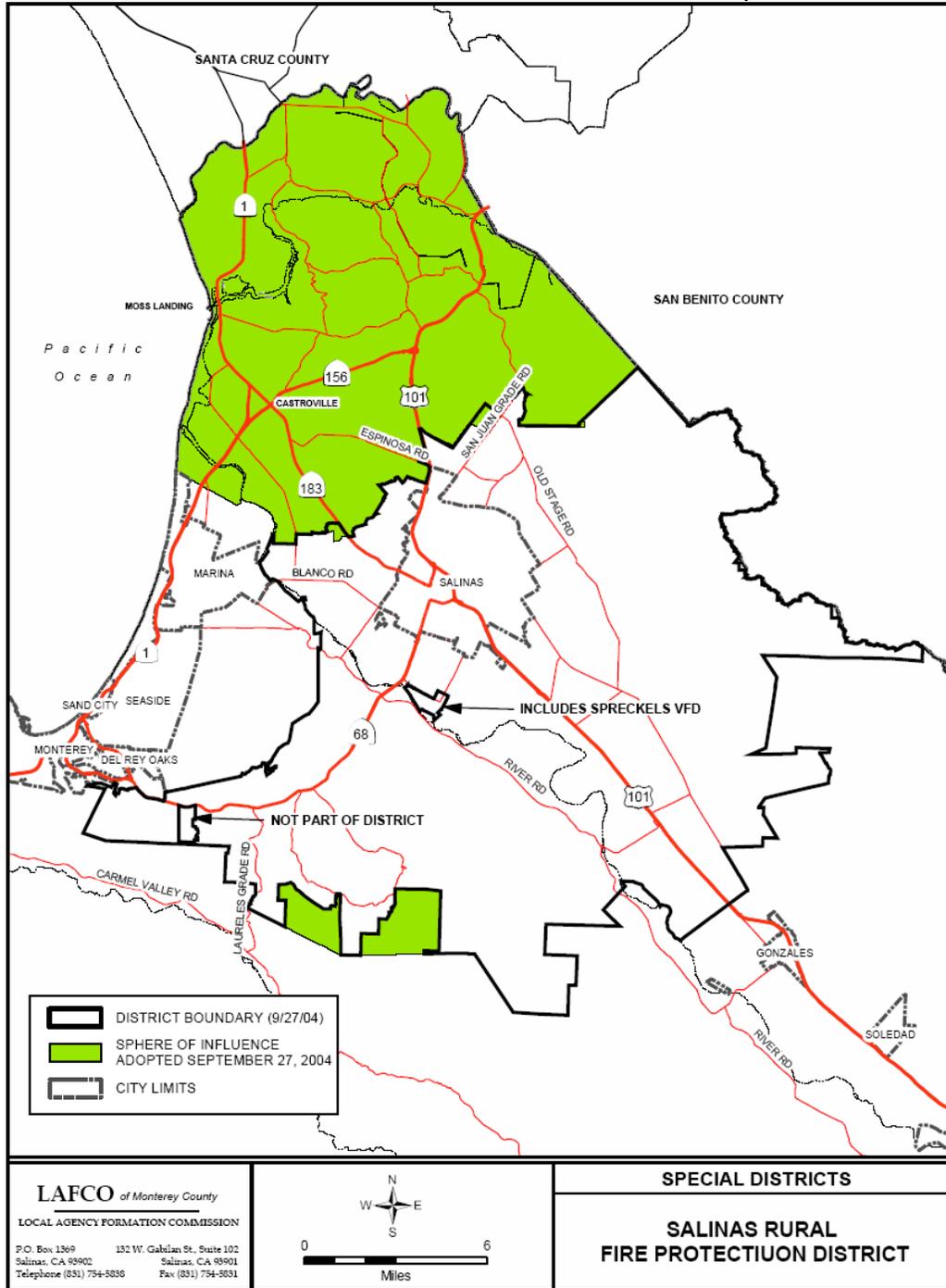
The area that lies within the District is predominantly rural. In the middle of the District is the City of Salinas. Although the City does contract with the District to provide services within the City, it is not a part of the District. Within the district are several existing or future community areas. These community areas, which will remain unincorporated areas of the County, are Spreckels, East Garrison, Boronda and Rancho San Juan. The local economy is dominated by agribusiness with row crops and low-density residential development.

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## SERVICES PROVIDED AND SERVICE AREA

The discussion for the District begins with an overview of its mission, history and a map of its existing service area. Following this overview are examinations of the nine required findings, some of which have been consolidated for efficiency or due to overlap.

**Figure 1**  
**Salinas Rural Fire Protection District Boundary**



A "Summary and Determinations" section concludes with a summary of important information and observations of existing conditions. Recommendations for future action are not included as that is not the purpose of the report; rather, it is designed to provide LAFCO and others with baseline information to enable informed decision-making.

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District responds to structure, wildland, vehicle, and other types of fires that occur in the District. In addition, Salinas Rural Fire is the "first responder" element of the emergency medical system and performs basic life support medical treatment to the sick and injured as well as performing the rescue and extrication of victims trapped in car accidents and other emergency situations. Public services and hazardous material responses are also part of the work performed. In 2003, Salinas Rural Fire responded to over 1334 incidents. In 2004, Salinas Rural Fire responded to 1,287 incidents. Approximately 41% of these responses were medical emergencies. As the fire service provides the "first responder" element of the emergency medical system in the County, all of the engines carry a full complement of medical and rescue equipment.

## MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW FACTORS

### 1. INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES

The Administrative office is located at 201 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Suite B. The Fire District staffs three fire stations; one is located on Portola Drive in Toro Park area, one at Highway 68 and Laureles Grade, and the other in the community of Chualar.

Each station firehouse has a fire engine designed to fight structure fires and another designed to fight wildland fires. In addition, a water tender (tanker) and reserve structure engine are housed at the Toro Station. The Chualar Station also houses a water tender and a State of California Office of Emergency Services Engine that has been assigned to the District. The Laureles Station houses a Breathing Support Unit used to refill firefighting-breathing apparatus air cylinders.

The average time taken to receive a 911 call at the dispatch center and dispatch a fire unit is one minute. Turnout time (the time for the firefighters to put on their protective clothing, board the engine, and roll out of the station) is another one to two minutes. Travel time to the emergency averages six minutes and may take longer depending on the location of the emergency and traffic congestion. Responses to daytime fires usually take less time than responses to nighttime fires.

Salinas Rural Fire Protection District sends various apparatus to emergencies. The type of fire as it relates to what is dispatched is listed below.

#### Structure Fires:

- 2 closest structure engines (with on-duty crews)
- 2 water tenders (with on-duty crew).
- Volunteers respond to the scene.
- Duty Chief Officer responds to the scene.

#### Wildland Fires:

- 2 closest wildland engines (with on-duty crews).
- 2 water tenders (with on-duty crew).
- 1 reserve structure engine (with off-duty crew).
- Volunteers respond to the scene.
- Duty Chief Officer responds to the scene.

#### Vehicle Accidents/Rescues/Hazardous Materials:

- 2 closest structure engines (with on-duty crews).
- Duty Chief Officer responds to the scene.

#### Medical Emergencies/Other Incidents

- Closest structure engine (with on-duty crew).

Typically, Salinas Rural engines deploy with a minimum of **three** personnel on board. Engines are capable of fully equipping four to six firefighters once off-duty and volunteers arrive at the scene. OSHA requires that four firefighters be on a scene before entering a structure fire, unless there is a “known rescue.” A rescue becomes known if someone tells the arriving firefighters someone is inside or the firefighters see or hear someone inside the burning structure.

The District adopts an annual fire capital facility mitigation analysis and financing plan and has adopted a comprehensive vehicle replacement plan. As part of the annual budget process various programs that involve firefighting and protective clothing equipment have a predetermined replacement cycle. For example each year six Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) cylinders and six sets of structural turnouts are replaced. In addition monies are set-aside in the Designated Reserve for future replacement of equipment, i.e. Defibrillators, Rescue Tools, and Fire Apparatus.

The District is currently lacking apparatus room space for reserve apparatus. In addition the District is leasing administrative office space. The District is researching the feasibility of building a detached apparatus room and administrative office on the Toro fire station property.

Service needs are determined as planning occurs. In conjunction with the Monterey County General Plan and through the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) process the District strives to maintain its current level of service in terms of response times and the Insurance Service Office (ISO) grading schedule.

Based on two major developments planned in or adjacent to the District, Citygate and Associates conducted a comprehensive study of future service needs. The “Threshold Analysis” and “Decision Process for Deployment Review” contained in those reports will provide the basis for future service studies. The two proposed developments are the East Garrison area, and the Rancho San Juan Development proposed north of Salinas.

**2. GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE AFFECTED AREA**

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District sets and adopts long-range goals and objectives by examining building projections and what types and amount of equipment would be necessary to service the projections. The District does not maintain independent growth and population projections. However, because the District provides services to areas of unincorporated Monterey County, AMBAG population forecasts for the County were used for those areas to highlight potential growth rates in the area.

**Table 1**  
**Overall Unincorporated Monterey County**  
**2004 AMBAG Population, Housing Unit, & Employment Forecasts**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
Employment	68,915	73,389	73,334	78,714	84,094	90,604	97,113
Housing Units	37,047	40,006	39,718	42,704	45,689	47,180	48,670
Population	100,252	110,003	105,485	114,776	124,067	129,721	135,375

Source: AMBAG Population Estimates, 4-2004

As shown in Table 1, AMBAG housing unit forecasts for the unincorporated areas of Monterey County project substantial growth in the near and intermediate future from approximately 110,008 people in 2005 to 135,375 people in 2030. In addition, with the increased housing associated with proposed developments and potential annexations into the fire District involving Spreckels, East Garrison, and Rancho San Juan, the increased service needs will require additional firefighters, equipment, and infrastructure. With this growth in the number of structures prone to fire, and residents in need of emergency response services, a greater number of calls for service can be expected in the near and intermediate future.

### **3. & 4. FINANCING CONSTRAINTS, FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES, AND COST AVOIDANCE**

Revenue sources for the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District are as follows:

- Secured and Unsecured Property Taxes
- Interest
- Proposition 172
- Fire Mitigation fees on new construction
- Fire Prevention Plan check fees
- Grants
- Cost Recovery Charges

The District is financed almost exclusively from property taxes. During Fiscal Year 1992/1993, the State of California transferred about 10% of the District's revenue back to Sacramento to solve the State's budget deficit. This placed the District in a position of facing a major deficit of its own.

Representatives from the fire service met with the Board of Supervisors and received a guarantee of funding if the proposed Proposition 172 (the Public Safety Sales Tax initiative) passed. The proposition did pass, and the Fire District now receives revenue that replaces what was lost in 1992/1993. The amount provided to the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District is approximately 8% of the tax revenues received by the District.

**Table 2**  
**SRFPD Revenues for the District**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Budget FY 2000-2001</b>	<b>Budget FY 2004-2005</b>
Property Taxes	\$3,007,772	\$4,491,328
Public Safety Revenue (Prop 172)	410,089	393,814
Fire Prevention Fees	42,195	61,800
Overtime/ Equip Rental Reimbursement	173,966	171,387
Cell Tower Leases	42,667	72,472
Fire Capital Mitigation Fees	150,011	85,826
Other Misc. Revenue	24,294	51,640
Grants	0	98,063
Acct. Receivables from FY 03/04	0	145,632
Prior Year Fund Balance/ Designated Reserve	605,106	1,129,897
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$4,456,100</b>	<b>\$6,701,859</b>

**Table 3**  
**SRFPD Expenditures for the District**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Budget FY 2000-2001</b>	<b>Budget FY 2004-2005</b>
Salaries	\$1,700,810	\$2,537,657
Benefits	996,210	1,914,780
Maintenance & Operations	361,012	584,460
Contracted Fire Protection	140,000	150,375
Fixed Assets - Equipment	28,371	144,610
Fixed Assets - Structures	25,709	8,259
Fixed Assets - Fire Cap. Mit. Fees	37,784	102,395
Fixed Assets - Grants	0	5,987
Contingencies	0	0
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$3,289,896</b>	<b>\$5,448,523</b>
<b>Fund Balance/ Designated Reserve On 6/30</b>	<b>\$1,166,204</b>	<b>\$1,253,336</b>

Funding for the District has stabilized over the years; however the current budget crisis facing the State of California and Monterey County is a cause for concern. Currently, the fire protection Districts and volunteer fire brigades/companies and the County have reached an agreement on a plan to take back 25% of the 9.13% Proposition 172 funds the County shares with the fire Districts and volunteer fire brigades/companies for FY's 2004-2005, and 2005-2006. The County will take back, if necessary in 2006-2007, 20% of the 9.13% funding. By FY 2007-2008 the full level of 9.13% should be restored to the fire protection Districts and volunteer fire brigades/companies.

Another potential issue facing the District is the loss of area to city annexations and thus the loss of tax base. Currently, there is no tax transfer agreement between the City and District that would protect the District's tax base. As cities (primarily the City of Salinas) expand out into the area covered by the District, tax base is lost and the District must continue to provide service to the remaining 250 square miles with reduced tax revenue. Tables 3 and 4 show the Budgeted revenues and expenditures for the District.

Since the taxing authority of the District is limited to what is allowed by State Law, any increase above that would require a two-thirds majority vote of the affected registered voters. This could be one constraint associated with the District's ability to generate additional revenue.

One other revenue constraint could result from actions in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There were areas annexed into the District with no portion of the property tax base being provided to the District. Currently with annexations the County will only allow a portion of tax growth to be shared with the District but none of the base.

A recent rating by the Moody's Investors Service gave the County an A1 bond rating that was downgraded from the previous rating of Aa3. The County's lease ratings were downgraded from A3 to A2. Even with the downgrades, Moody's Investor's Service feels the County is in a stable position. Reasons for the downgrades include a slowdown in economic growth associated with the overall State slowdown and the continued fiscal crises at Natividad Healthcare Center.

In order to retain reserves, the Board of Directors has directed the Chief to maintain a 5% emergency reserve in the Designated Reserve section of the budget.

The District is currently working with its auditor in refining its capital inventory and establishing a depreciation process. In addition, the apparatus Replacement Plan was adopted by the Board of Directors and establishes the timeline and criteria for replacing District apparatus.

Each year the District budgets funds to insure the proper maintenance of District stations, equipment and emergency response fleet. As a result, replacement of existing stations should not be necessary for another twenty-five years.

The District has not been involved in any claims by employees or other parties within the last three years. There is a procedure established for filing a claim against the District.

Once the Board of Directors adopts the budget the expenditures are controlled through Standard Operating Procedures.

## **5. RATE RESTRUCTURING OPPORTUNITIES**

District Ordinance 1997-01 sets forth provisions to annually update the District resolutions establishing the "Unit of Cost Calculation" and the "Current Rate" for the Fee Schedule.

Since 1997 the Unit of Cost Calculation has been the value of "one unit" which was equivalent to one hour of field time based on the Fire Marshal's salary and benefit package plus and administrative fee. In 2004, the unit cost was established at \$85.57. The "unit cost" for 2005 is calculated at \$117.96.

In developing the 2005 Unit of Cost Calculation, District staff reviewed the cost methodology from past years as well as Fee Schedules from neighboring fire departments. This review has been incorporated into developing the 2005 Unit of Cost Calculation. In addition to the Fire Marshal's salary and benefit package and the Administrative fee the new Unit of Cost will include the following:

**1. Salary and benefit package or the Part-time Receptionist/ Clerk:**

It was determined that 100% of the Part-time Receptionist/ Clerk position is related to plan check processing, tracking and invoicing for new development.

**2. Vehicle Expense hourly rate:**

The vast majority of plan review and inspections require at a minimum, one site visit. This fee is based on the hourly OES vehicle reimbursement rate

**3. Building and Grounds fee:**

The Fire Prevention Division occupies approximately 30% of the currently leased facility for these services. This fee represents the hourly rate for the percentage that the Fire Prevention Divisions based on our current lease agreement.

The District has updated the apparatus and staff vehicle hourly charges to reflect the State OES and FEMA reimbursement rates.

Upon completion of the District Strategic Plan, one of the needs that was identified was to update the engineering study that established the "per square foot" Fire Mitigation Fee on new construction every five years. This fee requires the payment of a fee dependant on the size of the structure constructed to offset the impacts to the District of the additional fire protection that the structure would require. This would allow for a more appropriate fee schedule linked to building trends within the community.

## **6. OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED FACILITIES**

In the past 22 years two major feasibility studies were conducted for the consolidation of Salinas Rural Fire Protection District and the North Monterey County Fire District. Both studies found that it would be operationally and fiscally prudent to consolidate both agencies.

A study was conducted in 1997 by members of Salinas Rural and North County Fire Districts to determine whether a consolidation was appropriate between the two agencies. As a result of the study and the lack of an automatic aid agreement among the City of Salinas, the North County Fire District, and the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District, response times would have increased to nine minutes in the northern part of the Salinas Rural Fire District. This was a significant increase from the existing service level, which was an average of six minutes provided by the City of Salinas Fire Department under contract. As a result the study was put on hold and no additional action was taken to consolidate the districts.

In September of 2002, the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District stated that they attempted to resurrect the discussion of consolidation with the North County Fire District in response to the requirement of additional fire coverage spurred by the Rancho San Juan development proposal. The development would build a fire station and close the current gap between both agencies. According to the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District, this would eliminate the need for auto-aid from the Salinas Fire Department. The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District states that they are willing to discuss the consolidation of fire protection services with any agency at any time. Please see section 7 for additional discussion on this matter.

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District is part of the Monterey County Fire Service Mutual Aid system. The District provides and receives assistance from others when the responsible Districts cannot handle an emergency situation. An example provided by the District states:

“Our normal response time to a structure includes the two closest on-duty engines, a chief officer and two water tenders. Off-duty personnel and volunteers also respond. If help from neighboring departments is needed, fire engines from agencies closest to the incident will be dispatched. In some areas, and engine company from a neighboring jurisdiction is automatically dispatched to the emergency through a program called Automatic Aid.”

The District operates by Standard Operating Procedures and Emergency Operations Plans. As an example, the District worked with the Sheriff's Office, California Highway Patrol, County Parks, the Emergency Medical Services Agency, County Office of Emergency Services and the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) in formalizing an Emergency Operations Plan for the Laguna Seca Recreation Area. This plan formalizes what these agencies will do in terms of covering major events at Laguna Seca from an emergency service standpoint.

The District currently contracts with the City of Salinas for emergency fire services in the north corner of the District.

The District currently responds to all fires, EMS, and service calls within the Spreckels Community Services District (CSD). The Spreckels Volunteer Fire Company asked the District to do so to insure an emergency response. The Spreckels CSD contracts with the District for fire prevention services.

In addition to the cooperative agreements mentioned above, the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District participates in numerous Joint Powers Agreements (JPAs) as listed below.

1. Sharing of equipment with the City of Salinas.
2. Monterey County Local Agencies Insurance Authority to self-insure for Worker's Compensation.
3. Urban Search and Rescue (US&R), which is an agreement among Salinas Rural, Monterey City, and the North Monterey county Fire Districts to fund a 30 member technical rescue team.
4. Monterey County Fire Training Joint Powers Agency, which is an agreement among nine different agencies to purchase and maintain training equipment.
5. Mobile Air Support Unit purchased and maintained by eleven separate agencies.
6. Rental of a portion of the Chualar Fire Station to the Sheriff's department.
7. The Physical Ability Test, which tests and screens firefighters for recruitment into five separate agencies.

## **7. GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE OPTIONS**

The District is governed by five Directors that are appointed by the Board of Supervisors. As a result of a reorganization that occurred in the early 1980's, which involved the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District and the Chualar Rural Fire District, the Board agreed that three of its members would reside in the original Salinas Rural Fire Protection District and two from the Chualar Rural Fire District.

Regular meetings of the Board are held on the last Tuesday of each odd numbered month and in June unless scheduled otherwise. Board members may receive \$75.00 per meeting attended in accordance with California Health and Safety Code section 13857. No other benefits are provided.

### **Proposed Developments**

Proposed developments that would potentially need service by the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District are described below.

#### East Garrison

This development will consist of 1,470 residential units, 75,000 square feet of commercial space, 11,000 square feet of institutional uses, and 100,000 square feet of artist studio space. The East Garrison development is not currently within the District's service boundaries and the project area will require annexation into the District. The development will provide the District with a new fully equipped fire station, fire apparatus and staff to protect the new community. A financial analysis to determine an adequate financing mechanism for the ongoing staffing and operational cost of the fire station will be completed. In addition, a Development and Stipulation Agreement between the East Garrison Project Proponents and the District will be produced that will detail the funding mechanism, the stipulations of the annexation process, the fire station site and construction, and the acquisition of the fire apparatus. Figure 2 shows where this area is located.

## Rancho San Juan

The Rancho San Juan development consists of a new urban village within the County of Monterey, along the northern border of the City of Salinas. The fully developed site is anticipated to provide 2,782 residential units distributed over a wide variety of unit types and sizes, many affordable to low- and moderate-income families and targeted to the workforce of the Salinas Valley. The plan also includes a mixed-use town center and Town Square with 373,000 square feet of retail/community space, a major employment center with over 2.4 million square feet of light industrial/business park use and nearly 200,000 square feet of office development. Community amenities include over 600 acres of natural or enhanced open space with trail system. When fully developed, over a period of approximately twenty years, Rancho San Juan will be a community of nearly 17,000 people. The Rancho San Juan EIR details the specific needs of the District, which includes staffing, building a new fire station, and the purchasing of the necessary fire apparatus.

### **North County Fire District**

NCFD's closest fire station is Station 2, located on Pesante Canyon Road in the unincorporated community of Prunedale. The station is approximately 2.5 miles to the northwestern portion of the project site off Harrison Road, and average response time is five minutes. This station is staffed by a three-person engine company and has two fire engines for structural fires and one fire engine for wildland fires. NCFD has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating of four. NCFD has mutual aid agreements with the City of Salinas Fire Department, SRFPD, the Aromas Fire District, and the City of Marina Fire Department. NCFD currently serves a population of 40,000 and averages 2,600 emergency responses per year.

### **Salinas Rural Fire District**

The southern, southeastern, and southwestern portions of the project area are within the Salinas Rural Fire District (SRFPD) service boundary. SRFPD and the City of Salinas signed an Emergency Services Agreement to provide fire and EMS service through the Salinas Fire District (SFD) for approximately 30 miles of land within the SRFPD directly north of the City of Salinas including the proposed southern portion of Rancho San Juan Specific Plan area. The Rancho San Juan Fire Protection Plan created for the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District by Citygate Associates, Inc. in September of 2004 states that the closest fire station to the proposed Rancho San Juan development area is the Salinas Fire Station #6. North County Fire District also has facilities in proximity to the proposed development. The report developed nine recommendations for the proposed development. Several of these are applicable to the MSR including the recommendation for the continuation of the contract with the Salinas Fire Department to provide response assistance, the continuance for the development of automatic aid with North County and Salinas Fire Departments, and the consideration of a jointly staffed station with the North County Fire Protection District. Please see Figure 3 shows the location of this area.

### **City of Salinas Fire District**

The primary station that would respond is City Fire Station #6; located on East Bolivar Street, 1.6 miles from the intersection of San Juan Grade Road and Rogge Road. Travel time from the station to this intersection is approximately three minutes. The station is staffed by a three-person paramedic engine company and has one fire engine for structural fires and a patrol vehicle for wildland fires. This station is backed-up by the City's five other stations,

second alarm apparatus from Salinas Rural and mutual aid. The response to a structure fire in the Rancho San Juan Specific Plan area would be three engine companies, one truck company, one rescue company and a Battalion Chief with a total of 14 suppression personnel.

Development of the Specific Plan area would result in a significant demand for fire protection services due to the change from undeveloped rural land to a variety of uses including: residential, industrial, commercial, and public facilities. Although fire stations maintained by the NCFD and SFD are within five minutes of the Specific Plan area, the additional development resulting from implementation of the Specific Plan would exceed the capacity of the two existing stations serving the Specific Plan area.

Development of the Specific Plan would impact both County fire districts and indirectly SFD. The impact of the Specific Plan can be offset by a minimum of one new fire station, within the Specific Plan area, with a minimum of one staffed engine company with three personnel. The Specific Plan includes a minimum of one new fire station within the Specific Plan area, with a minimum of one staffed engine company with three personnel.

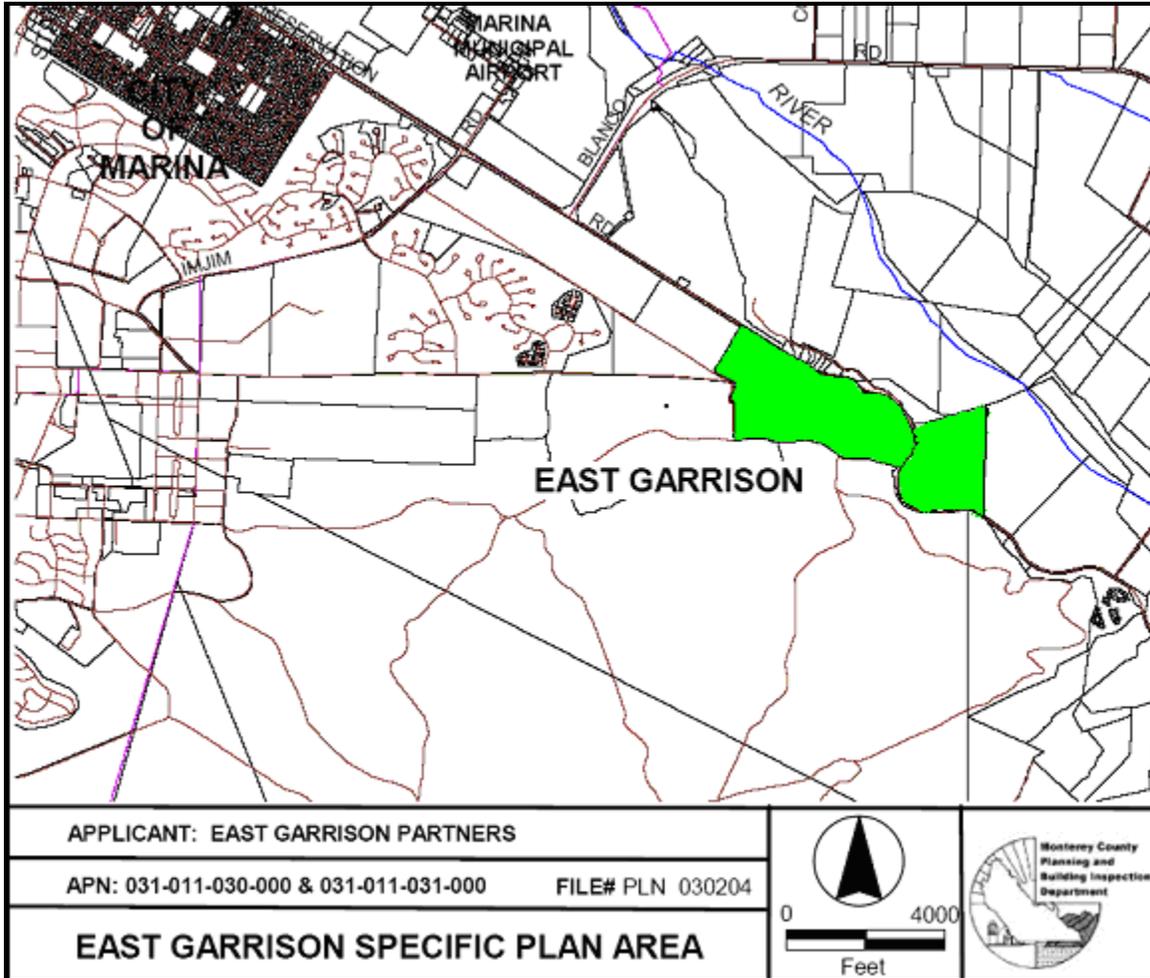
It has not been determined at this time if there would be a joint station serving each County District; two separate stations, one for each District; or if one of the existing fire districts would serve the entire area. Construction of the fire station(s) would be funded through a Fire Mitigation Fee or a similar method agreed upon by the fire district. Coverage for the Specific Plan area within SRFPD boundaries would continue to be provided by the City of Salinas through the Emergency Services Agreement, or a re-negotiated agreement.

The Draft EIR for the Rancho San Juan Specific Plan stated that “the additional fire station(s) proposed as part of the Specific Plan, if provided concurrently with need, would allow the affected fire districts to maintain their response times.”

#### Handley Ranch Quarry

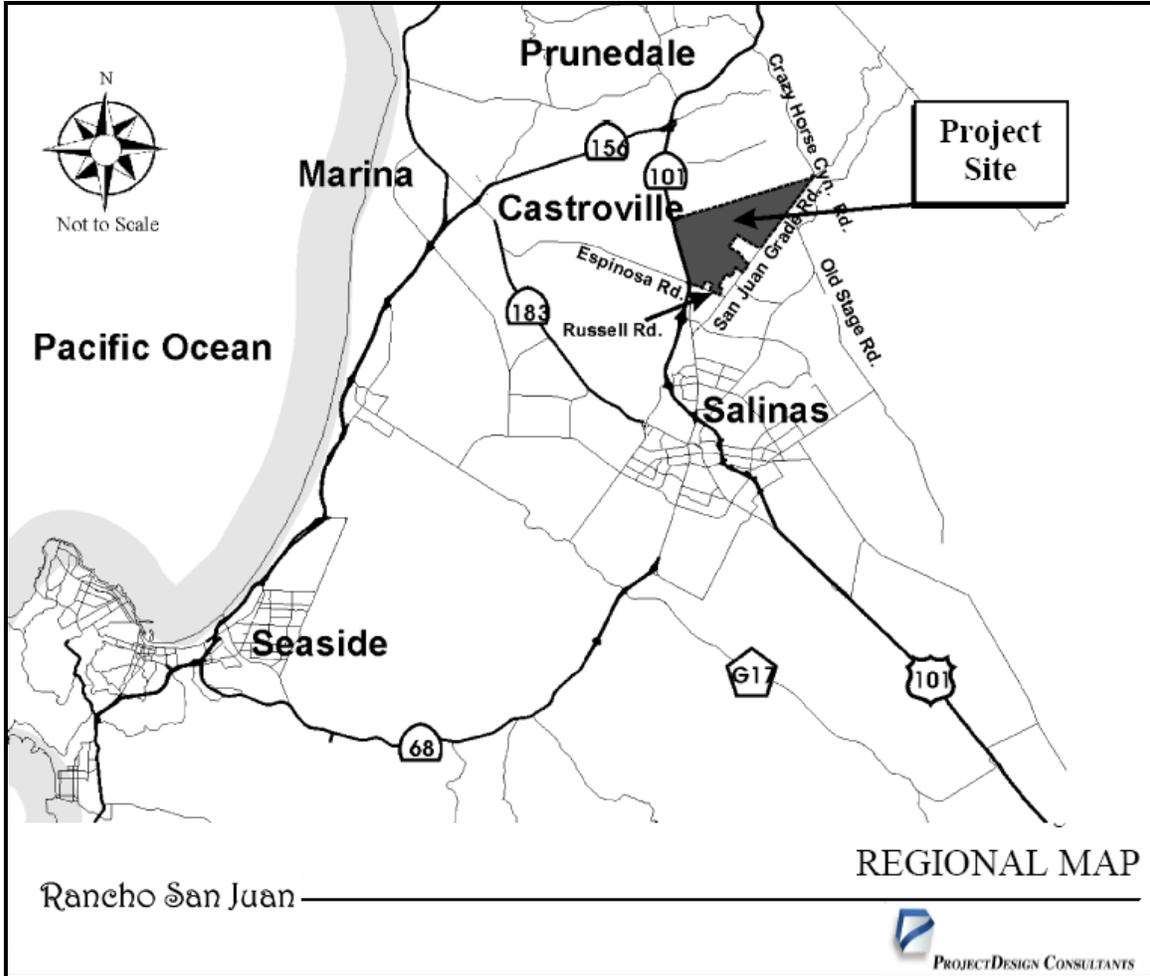
Handley Ranch Quarry just south of the District is being considered for potential annexation into the District. The Handley Quarry is a granite quarry with associated structures, onsite rock processing plant, Asphaltic concrete batch plant, Portland cement concrete batch plant and asphalt and concrete recycling facility. It is located on approximately 330 acres of the 1,230 acre Handley Ranch. Anticipated lifespan of the operation including reclamation is approximately 120 years. Figure 4 shows the location of this area.

**Figure 2  
East Garrison Community Services District Location**



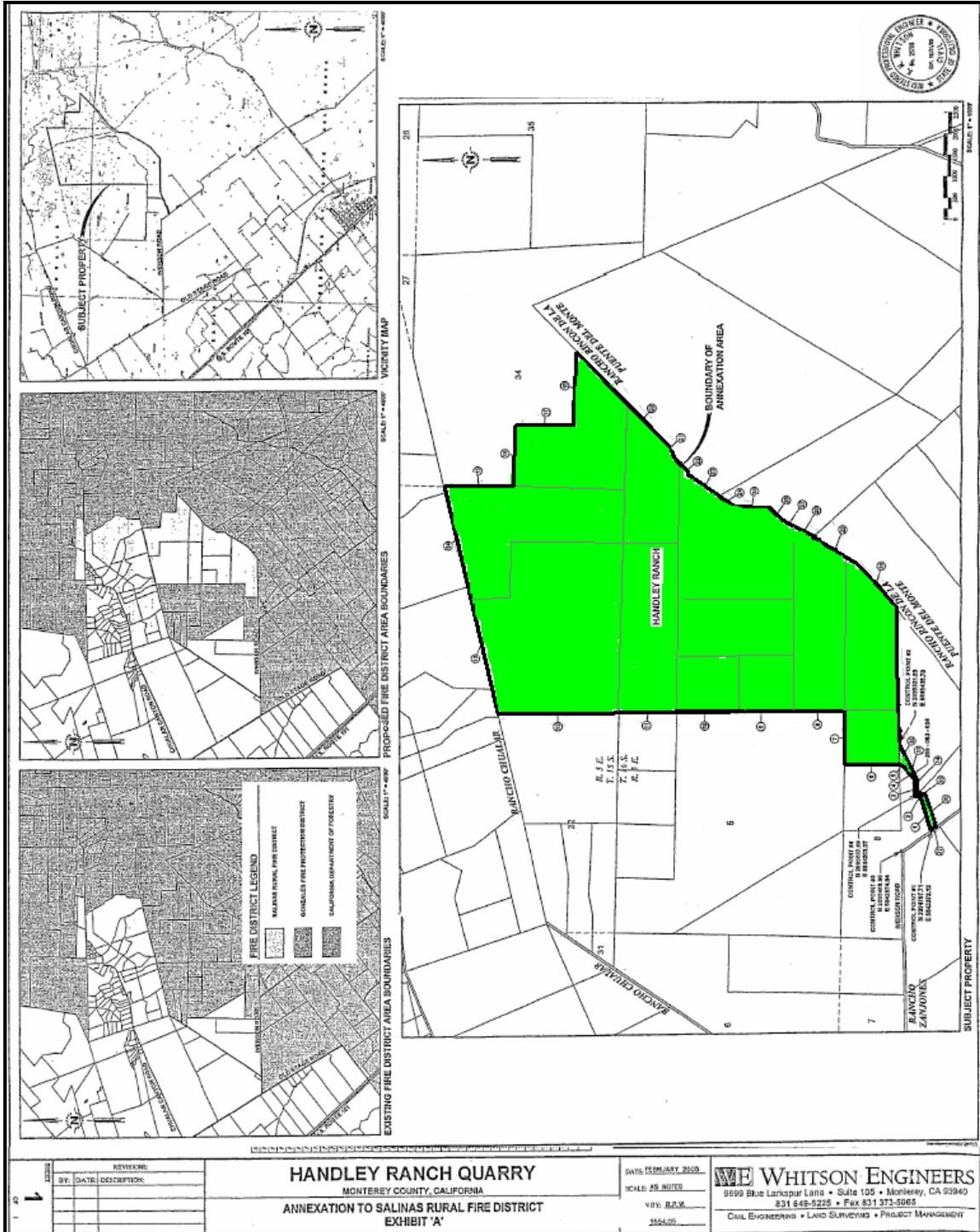
Source: Monterey County Planning and Building Inspection Department & LAFCO Monterey County

Figure 3  
Rancho San Juan Location



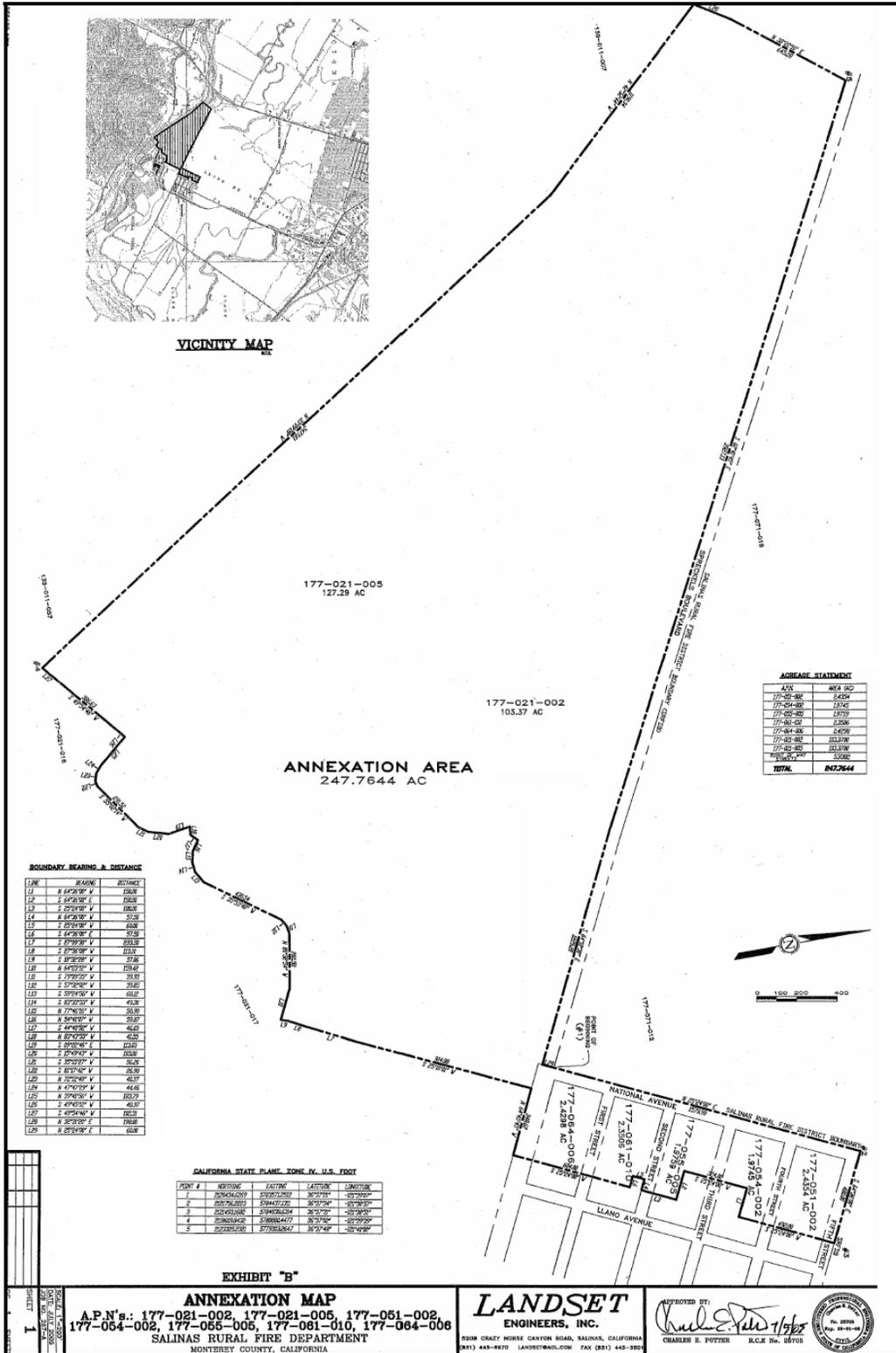
Source: Rancho San Juan Specific Plan

Figure 4  
Handley Ranch Quarry Location



Source: Salinas Rural Fire Protection District

Figure 5  
Spreckels Annexation Boundary



Source: Salinas Rural Fire Protection District

## Spreckels

Monterey County supervisors approved the Tanimura project in Spreckels in 2004 that includes 73 home lots. The Tanimura project is not located within the Salinas Rural Fire District or in the area served by Spreckles Volunteer Fire Company. A condition of the project is that they must be annexed into a Fire Protection Service provider. In April of 2005 the owners of the Tanimura project requested to be annexed into the Salinas Rural Fire District. Please see Figure 5 for the location of this area.

## **8. & 9. LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT EFFICIENCIES**

### Governing Board

The Board follows the Ralph M. Brown Act and also allows the chain of command to filter comments that may be routed to them. The employees may speak to the Board during the public comment period of a Board meeting, which allows for appropriate regulation of the communication between elected officials and employees.

For employees, the incentive policy (Educational Incentive) is contained within the Memorandum of Understanding between the Salinas Rural Fire Board of Directors and the Labor Organizations. For contractors, any performance incentives would be built into the contract.

Public Notices of Board meetings are sent to the two local newspapers and the local television station and a local radio station. The notice is also posted at each fire station and the District's Administrative office.

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District Board of Directors adopted Resolution 91-09, a resolution establishing policies governing purchases of supplies and equipment. Standard Operating Procedure ADM013, establishes the procedure for expending District funds and processing purchase orders, invoices and vendor receipts.

Salinas Rural Fire Protection District in response to day-to-day emergencies operates under Standard Operating Procedures. In May 2001 the District Board of Directors adopted an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The EOP outlines the District's response to natural and man-made disasters, i.e. Earthquake and floods. Fire stations are self sufficient for major disasters up to 72 hours for food, fuel, back-up power, and water.

### Personnel and Staff Training

The 35 full-time employees are supported by 14 volunteer firefighters. The full-time firefighters are trained as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and are certified in the use of semi-automatic defibrillators and an advanced airway device called a combi-tube. The volunteer firefighters working with the Department are all fully trained as "First Responders."

Salinas Rural Fire Protection District firefighters are trained in firefighting, rescue, and EMS. All chief officers have received either Bachelors or Masters Degrees and are state Certified

Chief Officers and Fire Officers. Eight of the nine Fire Captains are State Certified Fire Officers. All personnel receive specific training on wildland fire control. Many attend the annual Wildland Fire School at Fort Hunter Liggett.

The Salinas Rural Fire Protection District has 35 employees and 14 volunteer firefighters. Terminations, retirement, or resignations that have occurred in the past three years include:

- 2002 Division Chief Henry Ramirez (service retirement)
- 2003 Division Chief Rich Foster (service retirement)
- 2003 Lieutenant Dick Sardina (service retirement)
- 2004 Captain Bill McClure (service retirement)
- 2005 Captain Randy Gillenwater (service retirement)

#### Awards Received by the District

Department of the Army "Certificate of Achievement" in recognition of the Eucalyptus fire that raged over 75 hours and damaged approximately 835 acres of federal property. July 17, 2003.

City of Marina "Citation of Meritorious Service" Salinas Rural assisted in the evacuation of several families that were threatened by fire. May 6, 2003.

Resolution No. 03-04/09 from the Spreckels union School District for the exemplary service in the face of possible disaster on September 9, 2003 as a brush fire raced through the hills of the Spreckels School District.

## SUMMARY & DETERMINATIONS

1. In 2004, Salinas Rural Fire responded to 1,287 incidents. Approximately 41% of these responses were medical emergencies.
2. Overall response time for emergencies within the District includes:
  - a. One minute to receive a 911 call at the dispatch center and dispatch a fire unit to the scene of the emergency;
  - b. One to two minutes turnout time (the time for the firefighters to put on their protective clothing, board the engine, and exit out of the station);
  - c. An average of six minutes travel time to the emergency.The overall response time may vary depending on the location of the emergency and traffic congestion.
3. Service needs are determined as planning occurs. In conjunction with the Monterey County General Plan and through the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) process the District strives to maintain its current level of service in terms of response times and the ISO grading schedule.
4. Based on two major developments planned in or adjacent to the District, Citygate and Associates conducted a comprehensive study of future service needs. The "Threshold Analysis" and "Decision Process for Deployment Review" contained in those reports will provide the basis for future service studies. The two proposed developments are the East Garrison area, specifically the East Garrison Community Services District proposed in the former Fort Ord, and the Rancho San Juan Development proposed north of Salinas.
5. In March 2004 the Monterey County Board of Supervisors approved the Granite Quarry project located 5 miles east of Chualar. Currently, the property lies outside the boundaries of any Fire District. The approval of the project requires that the Handley Ranch Property be annexed into a fire district. The applicant officially requested to be annexed into the Salinas Rural Fire District on September 14, 2004.
6. The District currently responds to all fires, EMS, and service calls within the Spreckels Community Services District (CSD) **under an automatic aid agreement with the Spreckels Volunteer Fire Company**. The Spreckels Volunteer Fire Company contracts with the District to provide fire prevention plan checks and inspections.
7. The District currently contracts with the City of Salinas for emergency fire services in the northern portion of the District. If the Rancho San Juan Development north of Salinas is built, there would be a requirement of an additional fire station in that area that would be constructed using developer impact fees. Development of the Specific Plan would impact both the North County Fire District and the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District and indirectly the Salinas Fire District. The impact of the Rancho San Juan Specific Plan can be offset by a minimum of one new fire station, within the Specific Plan area, with a minimum of one staffed engine company with three personal. The Rancho San Juan Specific Plan includes a minimum of one new fire station within the Specific Plan area, with a minimum of

one staffed engine company with three personnel. It has not been determined at this time if there would be a joint station serving each County District; two separate stations, one for each District; or if one of the existing fire districts would serve the entire area. Construction of the fire station(s) would be funded through a Fire Mitigation Fee or a similar method agreed upon by the fire district. Coverage for the Specific Plan area within SRFPD boundaries would continue to be provided by the City of Salinas through the Emergency Services Agreement, or a re-negotiated agreement.

8. The District is concerned with detachments from the District that result in the loss of property tax dollars. The District requests that, in its review of any proposed annexations by neighboring jurisdictions, LAFCO considers the loss or cumulative loss of property tax and its effect on the level of service to the remaining District. The District also requests participation in the negotiation of any tax transfer agreements between the County and the annexing jurisdiction.
9. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, areas were annexed into the District with no portion of the property tax base being provided to the District. Currently, the County will only allow a portion of growth associated with an annexation to be shared with the District but none of the base.
10. The District is part of the Monterey County Fire Service Mutual Aid system. The District provides and receives assistance from others when the responsible Districts cannot handle an emergency situation.

## REFERENCES

### Documents and Websites Used:

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG), 2004 Population Forecasts.

Cypress Environmental and Land Use Planning: Draft Municipal Services Review for the North County Area of Monterey County. June 2004.

Governor's Office of Planning and Research: Local Agency Formation Commission Municipal Services Review Guidelines. August 2003.

Pacific Municipal Consultants. Draft Municipal Service Review for the Salinas Rural Fire Protection District. July 2005.

Pacific Municipal Consultants. Draft Municipal Services Review for the South and Central Monterey County Area. June 2005.

### Contacted Via Questionnaire or Personal Interviews:

Caraker, Elizabeth. Contract Staff, LAFCO Monterey County.

McCoy, Keith. East Garrison Project Manager. Urban Community Partners.

McKenna, Kate. Executive Director, LAFCO Monterey County.

Negro, Steven. Fire Chief, Salinas Rural Fire Protection District.

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Sargenti, David.. Division Chief, Salinas Rural Fire Protection District.