

Mosquito Abatement District  
Municipal Service Review & Sphere of Influence Review  
May 16, 2003

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**To:** Members, Formation Commission

**From:** Martha Poyatos, Executive Officer

**Subject:** Preliminary Report - Sphere of Influence and Municipal Service Review for the San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District

### **Introduction**

The Cortese Knox Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 requires that the Local Agency Formation Commission prepare a municipal service review prior to amending or updating the sphere of influence of a city or special district. The San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District currently serves the bayside communities from East Palo Alto to Millbrae, bounded by Skyline Ridge on the west. The District has applied to amend their sphere of influence and annex the balance of the County in order in respond to West Nile Virus, which is anticipated to affect California in November of 2003. The District's annexation application cannot be certified as complete at this time because property tax negotiations between the District, affected cities and the County are not complete. This sphere of influence study and municipal service review is in response to the Mosquito Abatement District's application to expand their boundaries. In addition, the District is included in the group of districts to be reviewed in the first phase of the Commission's sphere of influence/service review work program. Staff recommends that the Commission consider this report at the May 21 meeting and continue consideration to allow for additional input from affected agencies and residents.

### **Sphere of Influence**

Sphere of influence is defined in Government Code Section 56425 as a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency or municipality. Section 56425 states: (a) In order to carry out its purposes and responsibilities for planning and shaping the logical and orderly development and coordination of local governmental agencies so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of the county and its communities, the commission shall develop and determine the sphere of influence of each local governmental agency within the county and enact policies designed to promote the logical and orderly development of areas within the sphere. In determining the sphere of

influence of each local agency, the commission shall consider and prepare a written statement of its determinations with respect to each of the following:

- (1) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.
- (2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.
- (3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.
- (4) The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.

#### **Municipal Service Review**

Municipal service review as required by Government Code Section 56430 is an analysis of public services in which determinations are made regarding adequacies or deficiencies in service, cost effectiveness and efficiency, government structure options and local accountability. Section 56430 requires that in order to prepare and to update spheres of influence in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area. In this case, the service review will examine mosquito abatement services provided within district boundaries and in the balance of the county. Analysis will therefore focus on the Mosquito Abatement District and on the nine determinations listed below:

- (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, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers
  - (8) Evaluation of management efficiencies.
  - (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.

#### **San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District**

San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District was formed in 1953 as the result of the consolidation of Three Cities Mosquito Abatement District (San Mateo, Hillsborough and Burlingame) and Pulgas Mosquito Abatement District. The District's current boundaries include the bayside cities of East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, Redwood City, San Carlos, Belmont, San Mateo, Foster City, Hillsborough, Burlingame and Millbrae and surrounding unincorporated communities. The following is a profile of the District.

**San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District Profile**

**District Offices:** 1351 Rollins Road, Burlingame, CA 94010  
(650) 344-8592

**Board Membership:** Board of trustees consisting of residents appointed by city councils of member cities and one trustee appointed by the Board of Supervisors

Burlingame: Dennis Preger, President  
Foster City: Ronald Anderson, Vice President  
Millbrae: Leon Nickolas, Secretary  
Woodside: Richard Tagg, Secretary  
Atherton: Doris Kellett  
Belmont: Robert Blake  
Hillsborough: Lawrence Peterson  
Menlo Park: Herbert Hammerslough  
Portola Valley: Joseph Fil  
Redwood City: Robert Bury  
San Carlos: Gerald Schneider  
San Mateo: Roland Finley  
San Mateo County: Paul Dana

**Staff:** Administration: 3  
Laboratory: 2  
Operations: 7

**Boundaries:** Bayside San Mateo County from East Palo Alto to Millbrae with the eastern boundary along the skyline ridge (163 square miles)

**Sphere of Influence:** coterminous with current boundaries

**Population:** 428,472 (Based on ABAG Projections 2002 Census 2000 data)

**Land Use:** Varied land use from high density residential to commercial, residential estate, institutional, and open space.

**Enabling Legislation:** Health & Safety Code Section 2000 et seq

**Services permitted by enabling legislation:** Conduct surveillance programs and other appropriate studies of vectors<sup>1</sup> and vector-borne diseases

- a. Take any and all necessary or proper actions to prevent the occurrence of vectors and vector borne diseases.
- b. Take any and all necessary or proper actions to abate the occurrence of vectors and vector borne diseases

**Services Provided by District:** Surveillance programs, studies, prevention and abatement of vectors and vector-borne diseases, except that the District does not perform rodent/animal abatement service

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<sup>1</sup> Vector means any animal capable of transmitting the causative agent of human disease or capable of producing human discomfort or injury, including but not limited to mosquitoes, flies, mites, ticks other arthropods and rodents and other vertebrates (Health & Safety Code Section 2002[k])

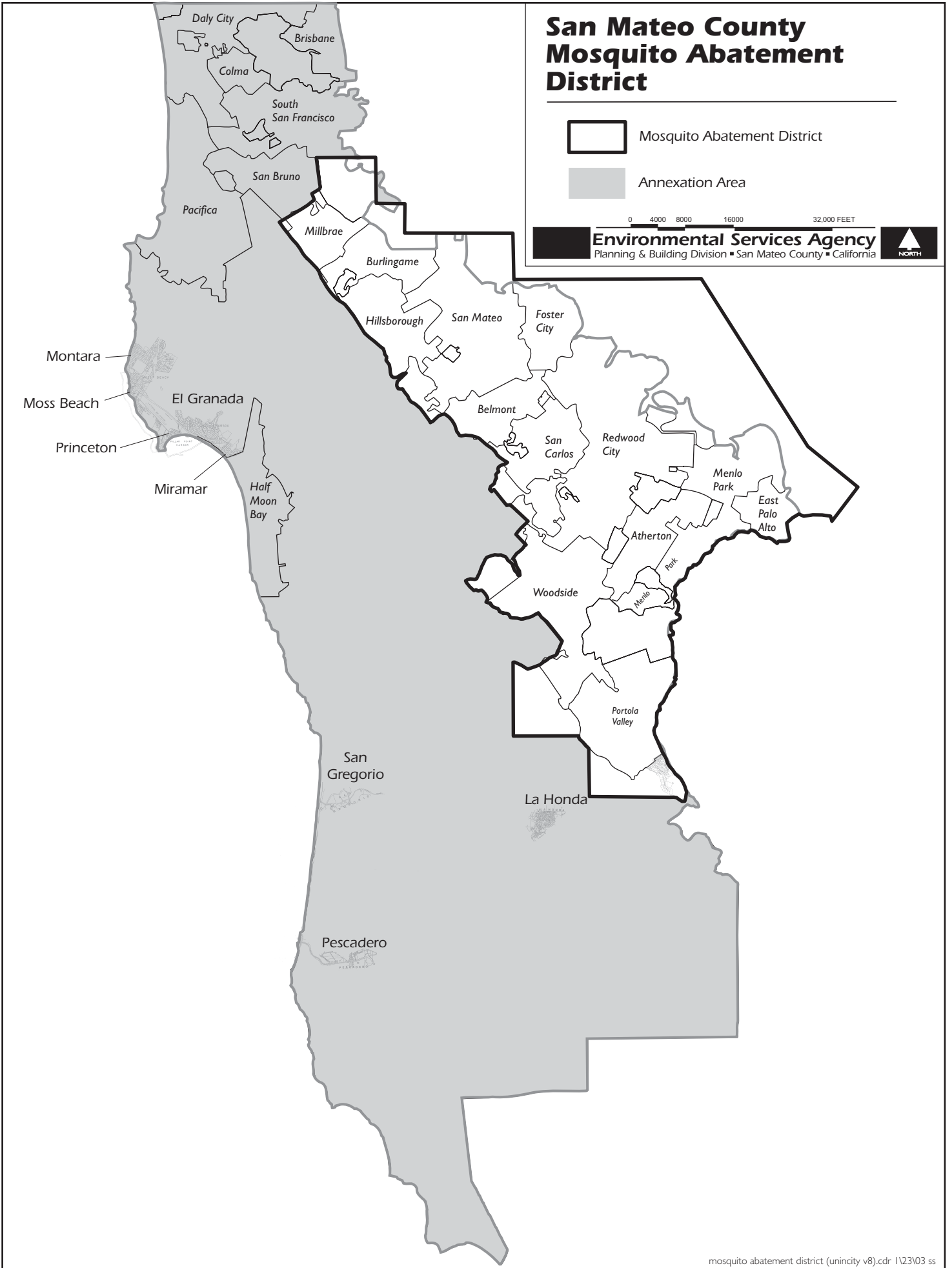
# San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District

 Mosquito Abatement District

 Annexation Area

0 4000 8000 16000 32,000 FEET

**Environmental Services Agency**  
Planning & Building Division • San Mateo County • California



**Unserved Areas**

Areas in San Mateo County outside district boundaries include the following cities and their unincorporated spheres of influence: San Bruno, South San Francisco, Brisbane, Colma, Daly City, Pacifica and Half Moon Bay along San Francisco Airport, Hetch Hetchy lands and all unincorporated areas west of the District's current boundaries as shown on the map on the previous page. Census 2000 population of this area is 278,689.

**District Budget**

The District's Adopted 2002/2003 Budget is summarized in the tables below:

<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	
Salaries & Benefits	939,100
Services & Supplies	340,283
Fixed Assets	1,100
Subtotal Operations	1,280,483
Contingencies	115,243
General Reserves	768,290
Total Adopted Budget	\$2,164,016

<b>PROJECTED REVENUES</b>	
Property tax	\$1,133,177
Interest	35,000
Inspection Service	20,000
Miscellaneous	5,000
Special Parcel Tax	458,000
Total Projected Revenues	\$2,712,325

The District's capital project fund for the 2002/2003 fiscal year totaled \$437,000 with \$310,000 in Certificate of Participation Payment related to construction of the new facilities and \$127,000 for equipment structures and improvements.

**Agencies Providing Related Services:**

San Mateo County Public Health and Environmental Protection Division of the Health Services Agency, the County of San Mateo Division of Agriculture/Weights and Measures and University of California Cooperative Extension each provide assistance in the areas of identification, advice and education regarding pests and vectors. None of these agencies provide actual vector control services such as those provided by the San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District. The San Mateo County Department of Public Health has recommended that the District boundaries be expanded to cover all of San Mateo County in order to respond to West Nile Virus.

**Discussion of Municipal Service Review Determinations**

As noted above, the Commission is required to make determinations regarding the nine considerations set forth in Government Code Section 56430. The following discussion includes the Districts comments in *italic* and discussion of basis for determinations that could be made by the Commission. Recommended language for determinations would be provided for consideration at your May meeting.

**(1) Infrastructure needs or deficiencies.**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District reports that there are no infrastructure needs or deficiencies related to the services proposed for the sphere amendment and annexation.*

In June of 2002, the San Mateo County Mosquito Abatement District completed construction of new facilities, which include laboratory and conference facilities. The District would need to add vehicles and associated equipment in order to serve the balance of the county.

**(2) Growth and population projections for the affected area.**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District reports that growth and population projections for the sphere expansion area are not relevant to the proposed annexation, nor does future population growth depend on the completion of the annexation. The services are intended to benefit the existing population and any future population in the affected area.*

ABAG Projections 2002 are summarized for San Mateo County in the following table:

2000	2010	2015	2020	2025
707,161	754,600	775,900	795,100	813,300

ABAG projects that between 2010 and 2025, the Cities of San Mateo, Redwood City, East Palo Alto, Daly City and South San Francisco will lead the county in growth with over 40% of the County's household growth during this period. Staff believes that the District is capable of providing services that can accommodate the growth and population projections for the affected territory.

**(3) Financing constraints and opportunities**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District reports that the District's ability to provide adequate levels of service, similar to those provided within the existing District, is dependent upon sufficient revenues. It is proposed that the District receive in the annexation area a portion of the general property tax and revenues from the District's special tax, which exists within the current District.*

District funding includes 0.0018 of the 1% property tax within District's boundaries along with a \$3.74 parcel tax for each parcel within the District as noted above. The District's property tax share was determined upon implementation of Proposition 13 at which time property taxes were reduced proportionally for all agencies (cities, school district, fire, etc.) that levied property tax at the time.

Transfer of a portion of the 1% property tax from cities to the District for areas annexed as proposed is problematic for several reasons. First, a property tax transfer assumes that there is a transfer of service responsibility (e.g. Unincorporated area transferred to a city would be removed from county sheriff and fire jurisdiction, therefore property tax revenue is transferred to the city to fund these services). Secondly, the property tax transfer is a discretionary action by cities and the County. Cities proposed for annexation to the District find the timing of transferring general fund revenues during the current fiscal crisis would have a negative effect on basic city service such as police and fire. Cities also find the methodology of exchanging all of the District's average tax share from cities only, flawed given the fact that implementation of Proposition 13 required that all taxing agencies share in the distribution of the 1% tax with the District. Staff believes that before a finding can be made on financing constraints, more discussion is needed between the District, cities and the County on financing alternatives in order to fund services countywide.

**(4) Cost avoidance opportunities.**

Comments from SMCMD:

*The District comments that District services do not overlap with any agency that provides the same range of vector control services. The District notes that while the County and UC Cooperative offer education and information service, there is a working arrangement and cooperation between the District and the County that avoids duplication of service. The District states that expansion will not result in a negative effect on service within existing or expanded territory as long as there is sufficient revenue provided and that there will be no negative effects on any cities or special districts.*

Staff believes that the District makes its best efforts to take advantage of costs avoidance opportunities. However, given that San Mateo County Public Health and Environmental Protection Division of the Health Services Agency, the County of San Mateo Division of Agriculture/Weights and Measures and University of California Cooperative Extension each provide assistance in the areas of identification, advice and education regarding pests and vectors, an opportunity for cost avoidance opportunities may exist in publication and distribution of educational materials and services.

**(4) Opportunities for rate restructuring**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District comments that the special tax is predicated on the current level of service and available property tax revenue. If the annexation occurs and there is sufficient economy of scale for the District to provide Countywide services as a lower per capita cost than at present, the potential exists to lower the current \$3.74 parcel tax to an amount that is lower.*

In addition to examining financing alternatives as noted in financing constraints above, it appears that there is an opportunity for cost recovery in fees for services when the District provides a special abatement service to cities or other public agencies such as San Francisco International Airport or sewage treatment facilities.

**(6) Opportunities for shared facilities.**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District occupies an office and maintenance yard in Burlingame, which is sufficient for the District's purposes but is not sized for sharing with other public or private agencies, nor does the District foresee at this time a need to share other agency facilities in providing services.*

It does not appear that there is a need for sharing of facilities by the District at this time.

**(7) Government structure options, including advantages and disadvantages of consolidation or reorganization of service providers.**

Comments from SMCMAAD:

*The District states that the District is the only local agency that provides vector control services in the County. Mergers or other reorganizations do not appear to be indicated by the current situation.*

No other agency in San Mateo County provides vector or pest abatement service therefore, overlap of service boundaries does not exist. The San Mateo County Health Services Agency comments that currently services provided by the District within their current boundaries are not provided by any agency in the proposed sphere amendment area and that such services are essential in the efficient suppression of mosquitoes and the various diseases they transmit to humans. San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner concurs that the Division of Agricultural Weights and Measures does not provide abatement services.

Based on the fact that the District's service addresses a problem that does not respect political boundaries, staff believes that any organizational structure should be countywide in nature. Alternatives



would include dissolution of the district and transfer of service to a county-governed special district such as a county service area or transfer of services to County Department of Public Health. However, a clear advantage of independent special districts is that they focus on a single mission such as mosquito abatement whereas general-purpose government by definition must provide a wide array of services. Staff believes that based on general satisfaction with level of services provided by the District within their boundaries, at this time the advantage of focused mosquito control services outweighs any benefits that might be achieved in dissolution and transfer of service to county-governed agency.

**(8) Evaluation of management efficiencies.**

*The District reports that it operates with a staff of three administrative, two laboratory and seven operations providing service in six zones. Upon expansion of the District's boundaries, operations staff would be increased by four to accommodate new service area for a total of eleven zones.*

Based on comparison with other Bay Area mosquito abatement agencies and the unique service demands posed by the variety of lands use within district boundaries and the need to provide detection and abatement service to areas including residential development, utility vaults, waste water treatment plans and marshes, staff believes that the District operates with a high degree of efficiency.

**(9) Local accountability and governance.**

*The District Board of Trustees consists of 13 members, each appointed by the council of member cities and one appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Board meets monthly The District operates a public information education program with presentations to high schools, local community events and fairs. The District also maintains a website at [www.smcmad.org](http://www.smcmad.org) and distributes an Annual Report describing District activities and services.*

Staff believes that the District provides for an adequate level of public accountability and public participation through the District's board meetings, website and education program.

**Sphere of Influence Considerations**

The following summarizes sphere considerations that could be adopted by the Commission in reaffirming or amending the district's sphere.

**(1) The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands.**

Territory within and outside the District boundaries consists of urbanized residential, commercial, industrial and open space uses. While some areas are projected to experience more development and growth than others, the need for mosquito abatement service will not diminish.

**(2) The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.**

The need for mosquito abatement service within and outside the District's boundaries is necessary in order to protect residents from mosquito borne diseases now and in the future.

**(3) The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.**

The present capacity and adequacy of mosquito abatement service within district boundaries are at levels necessary to protect the residents. Currently no mosquito abatement program, other than limited contract services, is provided outside district boundaries.

**(4) The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency.**

Based on recommendations from County Health Officials, there is a general community of interest countywide that all county residents receive the same level of mosquito abatement service and protection against mosquito borne diseases.

**Conclusion and Recommendation:**

Staff believes that based recommendations of local and state health officials which support expanding the sphere of influence of the district to include all of San Mateo County, the key issue is not the level of service provided by the Mosquito Abatement District or the capacity for the District to provide an adequate level of service county-wide, rather, how financing the expansion of mosquito abatement service can be achieved without impacting other vital services currently provided to county residents. Staff further believes that financing alternatives have not been thoroughly explored by the District and affected agencies. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission consider this report and any oral or written testimony and continue the public hearing to allow affected agency additional time to comment on this report before adopting service review and sphere determinations.