



***MENDOCINO COUNTY
RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW***

Adopted August 4, 2014

Prepared for the
Local Agency Formation Commission of Mendocino County
by
Policy Consulting Associates, LLC.

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1. AGENCY OVERVIEW

Mendocino County Resource Conservation District (MCRCD) is a non-regulatory agency with the mission of advising and assisting individuals and public agencies in the prevention of soil erosion, soil conservation, rural road assessment, watershed education, land use planning, and conservation of wildlife and other related natural resources. The District accomplishes its mission by promoting public awareness of the continuing need for resource conservation through educational workshops, informational fliers and papers, planning partnerships, hands on cleanup or restoration projects, and as a conduit for or source of grant financing. Additionally, MCRCD conducts biological surveys and assessments and manages projects by assisting landowners with permitting and implementation.

The District serves all territory within Mendocino County except for the Jackson Demonstration State Forest and some parcels of land within the Noyo Watershed owned by the Mendocino Redwood Company.¹ Additionally, MCRCD does not provide services within the incorporated cities.

FORMATION

MCRCD was formed as an independent special district under the provisions of the California Soil Conservation District Act, and was established by election on May 14, 1945. At that time, it was named the Willits Soil Conservation District and was comprised of 146,000 acres in the Little Lake Valley. In 1956, the District became essentially countywide with the exception of the territory within the cities and some State forest and private timber lands which were excluded. At that same time, the District's name was changed to Mendocino County Soil Conservation District. The District is now comprised of 1,888,894 acres. In fiscal year (FY) 1972-73, the name was changed to the current one—Mendocino County Resource Conservation District. The range of services has been expanded to include watershed-related programs in keeping with the District's authorizing legislation.

The principal act that governs the District is Division 9 of the California Public Resources Code.² The principal act empowers resource conservation districts to control runoff, prevent and control soil erosion, protect water quality, develop and distribute water, improve land capabilities, and facilitate coordinated resource management efforts

¹ Mendocino Redwood Company was created in July 1998. MRC consists of approximately 350 square miles (228,800 acres) of forestland spanning across over 75 Northern California coastal watersheds with 1,500 miles of year-round streams. The forestlands are located about two hours north of the Golden Gate Bridge in Mendocino and Sonoma counties.

² Public Resources Code §9001 et seq.

for watershed restoration and enhancement.³ Districts must apply and obtain LAFCo approval to exercise services authorized by the principal act but not already provided (i.e., latent powers) by the district at the end of 2000.⁴

BOUNDARY

Mendocino County RCD's bounds encompass 84 percent of Mendocino County and include approximately 1,888,894 acres. Jackson Demonstration State Forest, located on the central western end of Mendocino County, some parcels of land in the Noyo Watershed owned by the Mendocino Redwood Company, and incorporated cities are not included in the District's bounds.⁵ MCRCD is bordered on the north by Humboldt and Trinity Counties, on the east by Lake County, on the south by Sonoma County, and on the west by the Pacific Ocean.

The District has undertaken nine annexations since its formation. The District's bounds and sphere of influence are shown in Figure 1.

Extra-territorial Services

The District does not provide any services outside of its boundary area.

Unserved Areas

MCRCD reported that a small portion of the Gualala watershed in the southern part of Mendocino County is the only area that is not served by the District, as Sonoma RCD has accepted responsibility for that area through an informal agreement.

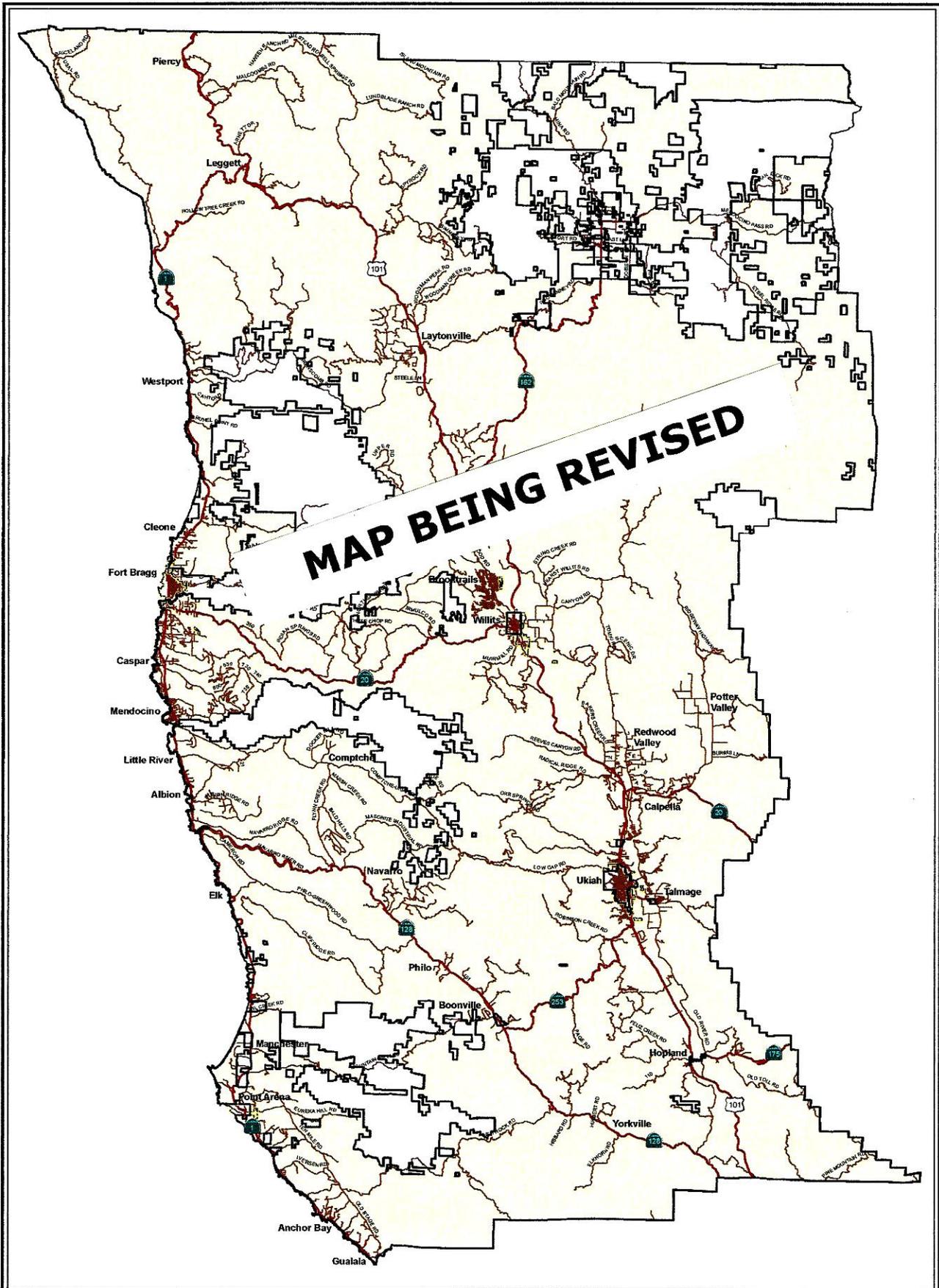
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

The sphere of influence (SOI) for the District is assumed to be coterminous with its boundaries, based on limited records.

³ Public Resources Code §9001.

⁴ Government Code §56824.10.

⁵ Interview with Janet Olave, MCRCD Executive Officer, December 3, 2013.



Mendocino County Resource Conservation District

- Resource Conservation District
- Incorporated Cities
- Highways
- Roads

Source: This map was prepared by the Mendocino County Department of Information Services GIS Program, September 2013.
 Note: This map is not a survey product.



ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

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

The Board of Directors consists of five members who are appointed to four-year terms by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. There is currently one vacancy on the Board. Board directors are supplemented by associate directors who do not vote, but participate in policy discussions on the same basis as directors. Associate directors are given priority consideration for promotion to director when openings occur. Presently, the District has one associate director. Current board member names, positions, and term expiration dates are shown in Figure 2.

The Board meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 410 Jones St., Suite C-3 in Ukiah, California. Agendas and minutes are available as board packets at the district office, as well as on the District’s website.

Figure 2: Mendocino County RCD Governing Body

Mendocino County Resource Conservation District			
Governing Body			
	Name	Position	Term Ends
<i>Members</i>	Craig Blencowe	Chair	2016
	Vacant	Director	2014
	Jerome Dix	Director	2016
	Peter Braudrick	Director	2014
	Dave Koball	Director	2016
<i>Manner of Selection</i>	Appointment by the Board of Supervisors		
<i>Length of Term</i>	4 years		
<i>Meetings</i>	Every third Tuesday of the month at 9:00 AM	410 Jones St., Suite C-3, Ukiah CA 95482	
<i>Agenda Distribution</i>	Available online and as board packet at the office		
<i>Minutes Distribution</i>	Available online and as board packet at the office		
Contact			
<i>Contact</i>	Patricia Hickey, Executive Director		
<i>Mailing Address</i>	410 Jones Street, Suite C, Ukiah CA 95482		
<i>Phone</i>	707-462-3664		
<i>Fax</i>	N/A		
<i>Email/Website</i>	info@mcrcd.org/www.mcrcd.org		

In addition to the required agendas and minutes, the District undertakes several outreach and educational programs in an effort to keep constituents informed of services provided and district activities. As previously mentioned in the *Overview Section*, the District makes informational brochures, that are handed out at fairs and staffs tables at farmer markets, to interact with the public. MCRCO also hosts or sponsors several workshops and landowner meetings. The District reaches out to landowners directly by contacting them if any issues are identified on their lands. The District maintains a website where documents are made available and information on various events and conservation opportunities is publicized.

If a customer is dissatisfied with the District's services, complaints may be submitted to the Board of Directors. The District's executive director is responsible for handling all complaints to resolution. The District reported that it had not received a complaint to date.

District board members are not compensated for services but receive reimbursement for travel expenses. Government Code §53235 requires that if a district provides compensation or reimbursement of expenses to its board members, the board members must receive two hours of training in ethics at least once every two years and the district must establish a written policy on reimbursements. It was reported that the District's board members last received ethics training in 2013. The District appropriately maintains a policy on reimbursements in its personnel policies.

The Political Reform Act (Government Code §81000, et seq.) requires state and local government agencies to adopt and promulgate conflict of interest codes. The Fair Political Practices Commission has adopted a regulation (California Code of Regulations §18730), which contains the terms of a standard conflict of interest code, which can be incorporated by reference in an agency's code. The District has adopted a conflict of interest code as required.

Government Code §87203 requires persons who hold office to disclose their investments, interests in real property and incomes by filing appropriate forms with the Fair Political Practices Commission each year. All Directors have submitted the required Form 700s for 2014.

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

MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

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

The District has four full-time staff and supplements services with two part-time employees working 32 and 20 hours respectively, and one summer intern who works approximately 260 hours per year. The District recruits volunteers for Director and Associate Director positions on its website. MCRCO does not recruit volunteers for its programs, but has been asked to coordinate volunteers for certain programs offered by other organizations.

The District is managed and operated by the executive director who reports to the Board of Directors. The executive director oversees five employees including the conservation programs manager, the fisheries biologist, the Navarro watershed coordinator, the Russian River watershed coordinator, and the contracts administrator/bookkeeper. Managers and coordinators are responsible for specific projects and various tasks including permitting, planning, surveys, outreach education, and workshops. The contracts administrator manages the office and handles invoicing. The executive director is also responsible for the District's interests in the Willits Bypass Mitigation Project, as the District is the designated land owner and land manager of those properties.

The District tracks its employees' workload through timesheets detailed with subtask by project. Employee evaluations are not performed regularly. The most recent staff evaluation took place about two years ago. The executive director presents an annual project update report to the Board of Directors.

The operations and productivity of the District are evaluated as part of the annual project update and long range plan. MCRCO reported that it follows other resource conservation districts' outreach and dissemination practices to enhance its performance. The District has used different criteria to determine successful completion of a project. For example, road implementation projects are considered successful if the estimated level of sediment reduction is delivered. Similarly, the optimal completion of a dam project is measured in terms of miles of habitat made accessible to fish in the upper reaches of a creek or river.

The District sets and adopts five-year goals in its long range plan. The District's current long range plan is for the period 2014 to 2019. Division 9 of the Public Resource Code outlines the functions of the long range plan and annual work plan.⁶ The District continues to improve upon its long range plan by ensuring that it is updated on a regular basis.

The District's financial planning efforts include an annually adopted budget and financial statements. The District does not conduct capital improvement planning as it neither owns nor shares any facilities.

⁶ Public Resources Code §9413.

All special districts are required to submit annual audits to the County within 12 months of the completion of the fiscal year, unless the Board of Supervisors has approved a biennial or five-year schedule.⁷ In the case of MCRCD, the District must submit audits biennially. The District reported that it had performed audits annually and that it had not begun the audit for FY 12-13 as of the drafting of this report. MCRCD submitted its audit to the County for FY 11-12 within the required 12-month period.

To improve its operational efficiency, the District reported that it has moved to a more spacious and cost effective office.

GROWTH AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

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

Land Use

Land use authority within the District Boundary lies with the County of Mendocino. Land uses within the District consist of rural residential, industrial, manufacturing, agricultural, timber, and grazing. The District's bounds encompass approximately 2,951 square miles.

Existing Population

There are approximately 59,156 residents within the District, based on census block group population in the 2010 Census.⁸ This population estimate does not include the population of any incorporated city. The population density within the District is 20 people per square mile.

Projected Growth and Development

The State Department of Finance (DOF) projects that the population of the unincorporated portion of Mendocino County will grow by 4.6 percent from 2010 to 2020. Thus, the average annual population growth in the unincorporated portion of the County is anticipated to be approximately 0.4 percent. Based on these projections, the District's population would increase from 59,156 in 2010 to approximately 61,877 in 2020. It is

⁷ Government Code §26909.

⁸ Population is for the entire unincorporated area of the county.

anticipated that demand for service within the District attributable to population will increase minimally, based on the DOF population growth projections through 2020.

While MCRCDD anticipates minimal growth in population within the District in the next five years, the District anticipates that demand for services will most likely increase, due to various regulations and conservation programs. The District projects that impaired waters and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)⁹ regulations will have to be implemented, especially in the Navarro River watershed. Additionally, the Irrigated Lands Program will require each landowner to have a farm or ranch conservation plan to meet agricultural waivers. Although this program is still under development, the District anticipates that, once it is adopted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), the need for landowner services will significantly increase. MCRCDD reported that illegal water diversions from creeks have caused areas to dry up and will continue to be a problem requiring further intervention in the future.

MCRCDD does not make formal population projections. The District was not aware of specific planned or proposed developments within its bounds. MCRCDD currently forecasts its service needs through its long range plan. Although population growth has been minimal and more concentrated in the Navarro River and Russian River areas, the District reported that it has experienced a general increase in demand in recent years due to various factors. The District attributes the growth in service demand to water quantity and water quality issues, the increase in threatened and endangered fish problems, and broader regulatory compliance. Additionally, a greater public perception and awareness, particularly with regard to water quality and quantity and other land conservation practices, have also contributed to greater service demand.

DISADVANTAGED UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

LAFCo is required to evaluate disadvantaged unincorporated communities as part of this service review, including the location and characteristics of any such communities. A disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) is defined as any area with 12 or more registered voters, or as determined by commission policy, where the median household income is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median.¹⁰

Mendocino LAFCo has utilized census data to identify which communities (census designated places) meet the disadvantaged community median household income

⁹ Under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, states, territories, and authorized tribes are required to develop lists of impaired waters. These are waters that are too polluted or otherwise degraded to meet the water quality standards set by states, territories, or authorized tribes. The law requires that these jurisdictions establish priority rankings for waters on the lists and develop TMDLs for these waters. A Total Maximum Daily Load, or TMDL, is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a water body can receive and still safely meet water quality standards.

¹⁰ Government Code §56033.5.

definition.¹¹ There are several communities that meet the definition of a DUC in Mendocino County, including Anchor Bay (population 319), Manchester (222), Hopland (874), Boonville (1,048), Philo (244), Albion (224), Comptche (96), Brooktrails (3,495), Cleone (701), Laytonville (1,275), Covelo (1,347), Talmage (1,040), and Leggett (68).

The criteria for the provision of adequate services to a DUC is limited to water supply, sewage disposal, and structural fire protection. Because the Resource Conservation District does not provide these services, the District is not responsible for assuring that these services are adequately provided to the communities that meet the DUC thresholds.

FINANCING

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

MCRCD reported that current financial levels are adequate to deliver services. The District has been particularly successful at procuring grant funding for its programs. MCRCD was able to more than double its revenues between FY 10-11 and 12-13 through grant funds, as shown in Figure 3. Grant funding can be cyclical in nature, meaning that the availability of funding is greatly dependent on economic conditions at the time. As a result, many RCDs in the State have faced challenges in ensuring sufficient funding to maintain staff and minimum service levels. The California Association of Resource Conservation Districts is promoting legislation to ensure a minimum funding level through water bonds for RCDs to guard against these funding fluctuations.

¹¹ Based on census data, the median household income in the State of California in 2010 was \$57,708, 80 percent of which is \$46,166.

Figure 3: Revenues and Expenditures, FYs 10-11 and 11-12

	<i>FY 10-11</i>		<i>FY 11-12</i>		<i>FY 12-13</i>	
<i>Income</i>						
Grants and Contributions	\$910,778	96%	\$1,952,780	98%	\$2,186,312	98%
Admin Fees	\$31,028	3%	\$26,465	1%	\$39,468	2%
Sales	\$2,024	0%	\$527	0%	\$822	0%
Miscellaneous Income	\$8,750	1%	\$4,108	0%	\$75	0%
Interest	\$673	0%	\$1,010	0%	\$1,310	0%
Total Income	\$953,253	100%	\$1,984,890	100%	\$2,227,986	100%
<i>Expenses</i>						
Total Expenses	\$993,625		\$1,998,387		\$2,187,152	
<i>Net Income or loss</i>	-\$40,372		-\$13,497		\$40,835	

Revenues

The District's primary revenue source is grants for specific projects, which constituted approximately 98 percent of revenue sources in FY 12-13. District funding also came from administrative fees/service charges (two percent), and minimal amounts of funding came from sales of products such as videos, miscellaneous income, and interest on invested funds. The District does not receive a portion of the local one percent property tax.

Mendocino County enters into a contract with the District annually for approximately \$25,200. Those funds provide financial assistance to the MCRCD to enable the District to work with landowners and develop projects.

Expenditures

Expenditures in FY 12-13 totaled \$2.2 million. The most substantial costs in that year were professional fees \$1.4 million (64 percent), payroll expenses \$0.35 million (16 percent), and construction materials \$0.25 million (11 percent). While revenues covered expenses in FY 12-13, expenditures slightly exceeded revenues in FYs 10-11 and 11-12, as shown in Figure 1-3.

Liabilities and Assets

The District did not have any long term debt at the end of FY 12-13.

MCRCD has an informal goal of maintaining approximately \$200,000 in its reserve for contingency purposes. The District has been forced to utilize this fund in previous fiscal years when expenditures exceeded revenues. In FY 13-14, the District anticipates being able to add funds to the reserve fund to meet its goal amount. At the end of FY 12-13, the District maintained approximately \$178,534 in its unreserved cash balance.

Financing Efficiencies

The District takes part in joint financing through a joint powers authority related to insurance. The District is a member of the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA), which provides property/liability, workers' compensation, and health insurance.

2. MUNICIPAL SERVICES

RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICES

Service Overview

MCRCO is a non-regulatory agency with the mission of achieving conservation of resources. The District has established a series of long range goals related to watersheds, streambanks protection and restoration, road sediment reduction, dam removal, erosion prevention, land management, coordinated permitting, education and information, river and creek cleanups, invasive species control, habitat preservation, and biological surveys.

The District's efforts to achieve long-range goals require numerous tasks that are identified in detail in the District's annual project updates. Projects for which MCRCO has or intends to sponsor, directly provide, or partner with other organizations to provide are as follows:

- ❖ **Watershed Assessments:** MCRCO completed the Russian River Integrated Water Management Plan through funding provided by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR). The Forsythe Creek Watershed Assessment was also completed with partial funding from DWR. The District plans and meets watershed conservation goals through public outreach and project development.
- ❖ **Navarro River Watershed Programs:** The Navarro Watershed Working Group (NWWG), the Navarro River Resource Center, and MCRCO collaborated on a sign project to develop watershed awareness in the Navarro, through a grant from the State Coastal Conservancy.
- ❖ **Stream Bank Protection and Stabilization of Stream Banks:** MCRCO uses a riparian design to protect and restore stream banks. The District replants native plants with funding from grants that are designated contracts for service and not donation.
- ❖ **Road Sediment Reduction Treatments:** The District assessed approximately 69 miles of roads in the Garcia River watershed and installed the Mill Creek Bridge on Forsythe Creek. The bridge was built in partnership with the County Department of Transportation to provide safe passage to car traffic across the span of the river, and fish and wildlife movements below it. The Mill Creek Bridge reduces sediment delivery to the creek, thus improving water quality.

- ❖ **Dam Removal:** MCRCDC cooperated with the County and with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to remove the failing Feliz Dam. The removal of the dam opened approximately 10 miles of salmonid habitat, and contributed to the strengthening of the fisheries in Mendocino County.
- ❖ **Erosion Control Plans:** The District assists landowners in meeting TMDL requirements. MCRCDC helps landowners plan for nonpoint source pollution and erosion control.
- ❖ **Land Management:** As part of the Willits Bypass Mitigation Project, the District will care for approximately 2,000 acres being protected for endangered species and wetlands in perpetuity.
- ❖ **Coordinated Permitting:** The Mendocino County Permit Coordination Program will provide a platform for high-quality erosion control and habitat restoration throughout the watersheds of Mendocino County. The program, based on a model of coordinated, multi-agency regulatory review, ensures the integrity of agency mandates, while making permitting more accessible for working landscapes than the current process. RWQCB provided the funding for countywide California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documents in order to finalize the study and implement the project. Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) also participates in conjunction with MCRCDC.
- ❖ **Education:** The District has been sponsoring and hosting many workshops on hedgerows, healthy forests, large woody debris, invasive plants, and seed collection. Additionally, MCRCDC offers 'Connecting to Creeks', a stream ecology program designed to let middle and high school students have hands-on experience to identify species and understand the need for conservation. This program was launched by Anderson Valley Unified School District and MCRCDC through a Tobacco Settlement grant in 2008.
- ❖ **River and Creek Cleanups:** The District assists with the cleanups of the Russian River and the Robinson Creek Trail.
- ❖ **Invasive Species Control:** MCRCDC has been removing *Arundo donax* along the Russian River watershed. The removal was necessary since *Arundo donax* is a highly invasive plant species that displaces native vegetation and consumes three times more water than native plants, is a fire hazard, and creates flood control problems.
- ❖ **Vegetation/Habitat Preservation:** The District works to preserve habitats for special status species and to educate the public on the importance of species diversity and the protection of habitat for all species. The District is collaborating with NRCS to protect and enhance salmonid habitat.
- ❖ **Biological Surveys:** The District conducts snorkel surveys and fish relocation, and biological surveys, including for threatened or endangered raptors and the California red legged frog.

Many of the conservation agencies work closely together to promote communication, coordination, and greater leveraging of resources. Like many other RCDs, MCRCDC operates under Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State of California. The latter agreement recognizes a commitment from the State in aiding administration, coordination, financing and delivery of the conservation programs through local conservation districts. Through another cooperative work agreement, MCRCDC, NRCS, the California Association of RCDs, and the California Department of Conservation agree to share information and resources, when available, to capitalize on synergies in program effectiveness and reduce duplication of efforts and contradictory mandates.

Demand for Services

While not easily quantifiable, the District appears to have experienced an increase in demand for its services over the last three fiscal years, as indicated by the increase in grant funding for specific projects.

Also, as mentioned in the *Growth and Population* section of this report, the District reports that certain factors have led to an apparent increase in need for its services—water quantity and water quality issues, the increase in threatened and endangered fish problems, and broader regulatory compliance.

Infrastructure and Facilities

MCRCDC operates out of leased office space and does not own or maintain any facilities.

Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies

The District currently does not own or maintain any facilities and consequently does not have any infrastructure needs or deficiencies attributed to district-owned assets.

Shared Facilities and Regional Collaboration

The District does not share facilities with other agencies or organizations. At present, there do not appear to be any opportunities for future facility sharing.

MCRCDC regularly collaborates with other agencies on programs to maximize its outreach and education efforts. As mentioned in the *Service Overview* section, the District collaborates with Anderson Valley Unified School District to provide the “Connecting to Creeks” educational program to middle and high school students. MCRCDC engages in several other collaborative efforts with agencies and organizations including the California Department of Water Resources, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Mendocino County Department of Transportation, the Navarro Watershed Working Group, and the Navarro River Resource Center.

The District is a member of the North Coast Resource Partnership, the North Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council, and the California Special Districts Association. MCRCDD also participates in regional planning activities. The North Coast Resource Partnership was formed with the intent of integrating county plans from each of the North Coast counties into regional plans. Presently, the District is collaborating with Mendocino County on the Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (IRWMP). The purpose of the study is to integrate the County's plans with the North Coast Resource Partnership's plans.

Service Adequacy

This section reviews indicators of service adequacy. The California Conservation Partnership and California Department of Conservation developed the *Resource Conservation District Guidebook* in 1999, which outlines best management practices for RCDs. Many of these practices are difficult to assess for adequacy, and almost all indicators of service levels are not easily quantifiable when compared with a defined industry standard; consequently, a relatively subjective judgment of adequacy is necessary. In order to evaluate the adequacy of MCRCDD the following criteria were considered:

- ❖ Long-range and strategic planning practices,
- ❖ Project evaluation practices (i.e., annual reports), and
- ❖ Grant writing success.

A strategic plan provides a road map to agencies by setting priorities and identifying means to meet those goals. Priority setting helps a district determine which needs deserve attention first and enables it to focus its limited resources on addressing those needs. District priority setting is accomplished through creating a mission statement, identifying goals that support its mission, and then crafting objectives that help the district reach its goals. Also, having a clear mission, goals, and objectives—a strategic plan—helps identify shared interests an agency may have with other groups, agencies, or individuals and helps to avoid duplicating the work of other groups. Beyond these practical reasons for planning strategically, long-range planning is one of the provisions outlined in Division 9 of the Public Resources Code for the administration of a resource conservation district. Additionally, districts wishing to take advantage of state grant programs through the California Department of Conservation will only be able to do so if they maintain long- and short-range plans and publish annual progress reports. As identified in §9413 of Division 9, long-range plans shall:

- ❖ Establish long-range goals,
- ❖ Be five-year plans,
- ❖ Address the soil and related resource problems found to occur within the district,

- ❖ Identify resource issues within the district for local, state, and federal resource conservation planning,
- ❖ Involve other agencies in the strategic planning process,
- ❖ Provide a framework for setting annual priorities,
- ❖ Create a basis for evaluating annual work plan achievements and allocating state funds to the district, and
- ❖ Provide for disseminating information concerning district programs and goals to local, state, and federal government agencies and the public.

The District's long range plan from 2014 to 2019 meets these requirements. Improvements could be made to identify additional resource issues within the District for local, state, and federal conservation planning.

Additionally, §9413 of Division 9 also requires that in order to receive grant funding through the Department of Conservation, RCDs must publish annual reports to summarize the District's progress toward meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the long range plan. Annual reports can be used to 1) provide a summary of the work accomplished over the previous year and set priorities for the coming year, 2) provide a means to track district activities from year to year, 3) offer a reference regarding project specifics in later years, 4) inform long-range planning efforts, 5) provide a useful introduction to the District's efforts for new employees and stakeholders, and 6) supplement grant applications to provide information on district programs and goals. MCRCD produces an annual report each fiscal year. The report outlines the various district projects, status, funding sources, and partner agencies. It appears that the District's annual report generally meets the intent as outlined in the law. It is recommend that the District continue this practice and incorporate these reports to the extent feasible in its current long-range planning.

RCDs generally are limited or constrained by available funding sources. MCRCD does not receive a constant and reliable funding source, such as a portion of the one percent property tax, and as such is forced to rely almost entirely on grant funds. MCRCD has had particular success in receiving grant funds through its grant writing program, as evidenced by the doubling of its grant revenues over the last three fiscal years.

4. MSR DETERMINATIONS

Growth and Population Projections

- ❖ There are approximately 59,156 residents within the District, based on Census data.
- ❖ It is projected that the District's population will increase from 59,156 in 2010 to approximately 61,877 in 2020, according to the California Department of Finance.
- ❖ While MCRCO anticipates minimal growth in population within the District in the next five years, the District anticipates that demand for services will most likely increase, due to various regulations and conservation programs.

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

- ❖ Disadvantaged unincorporated communities within MCRCO include Anchor Bay (population 319), Manchester (222), Hopland (874), Boonville (1,048), Philo (244), Albion (224), Comptche (96), Brooktrails (3,495), Cleone (701), Laytonville (1,275), Covelo (1,347), Talmage (1,040), and Leggett (68). However, additional smaller communities that meet LAFCO's definition of a disadvantaged unincorporated community may exist that are not identifiable at this time due to data limitations.
- ❖ Because MCRCO does not provide water, sewer or structural fire protection services, the District is not responsible for assuring that these services are adequately provided to the disadvantaged urban communities within the District boundaries.

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

- ❖ The District reported that it has sufficient capacity to handle present demand for services. Short-term projects are challenging to complete, due to time constraints and need for additional temporary staff. Any increase in demand would require proper project planning with a two-year window, as well as additional staffing to address any increase in need for personnel time.
- ❖ The District is providing adequate services given financial constraints, based on the professional management practices, including long-term landowner conservation planning and annual reports, as well as a successful grant writing program.

- ❖ MCRCDD is a professionally managed agency that tracks employee and district workload, maintains up-to-date financial information and budgets, and conducts annual and long-term planning for future service needs. The District conducts annual employee evaluations.
- ❖ MCRCDD does not own facilities or infrastructure; consequently, there are no needs associated with district-owned infrastructure.

Financial Ability of Agency to Provide Services

- ❖ The District has been particularly successful at procuring grant funding for its programs.
- ❖ MCRCDD was able to more than double its revenues between FY 10-11 and 12-13 through grant funds and cooperative agreements with state agencies.
- ❖ While the District's revenues sources have increased in recent years, and they were reported to be generally adequate to deliver services, any additional projects and programming would likely require supplementary funds and staff.

Status and Opportunities for Shared Facilities

- ❖ The District does not share facilities with other agencies or organizations. At present, there do not appear to be any opportunities for future facility sharing.

Accountability for Community Services, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies

- ❖ Accountability is best ensured when contested elections are held for governing body seats, constituent outreach is conducted to promote accountability and to ensure that constituents are informed and not disenfranchised, and public agency operations and management are transparent to the public although all directors are appointed. MCRCDD appears to generally be accountable to the public based on these indicators.
- ❖ A governance structure option identified over the course of this MSR is the potential for annexation of the remaining unincorporated land and/or incorporated territory in the County by MCRCDD. The District has indicated interest in annexing the remainder of the unincorporated territory. Discussions with the cities regarding the potential for annexation have not occurred.