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# **Snowball County Service Area- “County Service Area #6”**

## **Final MSR/SOI Municipal Service Review Sphere of Influence**

**March 27, 2006**



Sacramento River in Knights Landing

***LAFCO***

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**Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission**  
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**YOLO COUNTY LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION**  
**Resolution No. 2006-02**  
**(Resolution Adopting the Snowball County Service Area**  
**Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update)**  
**(LAFCO Proceeding S-20)**

**WHEREAS**, the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 set forth in Government Code Sections 56000 et seq. governs the organization and reorganization of cities and special districts by local agency formation commissions established in each county, as defined and specified in Government Code Sections 56000 et seq. (unless otherwise indicated all statutory references are to the Government Code); and

**WHEREAS**, Section 56425 et seq. provides that the local agency formation commission in each county 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 spheres of influence, as more fully specified in Sections 56425 et seq.; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 56430 requires that local agency formation commissions conduct a municipal service review ("MSR") prior to, or in conjunction with, consideration of actions to establish or update a sphere of influence ("SOI") in accordance with Sections 56076 and 56425; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2005, the Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) undertook to review and update, concurrently, the Spheres of Influence of the Snowball County Service Area (also known as County Service Area #6) and the Dunnigan County Service Area (also known as County Service Area #11); and

**WHEREAS**, in conjunction therewith, the LAFCO Executive Officer prepared a draft Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence for both the Snowball County Service Area and the Dunnigan County Service Area, and incorporated them into one document referred to as the Northern Yolo County Service Area Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence (hereafter collectively referred to as the Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence); and

**WHEREAS**, in connection therewith, the Executive Officer reviewed the project pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and determined that the project is exempt from CEQA because it has no growth-inducing impacts nor any potentially significant environmental impacts, and, based thereon, the Executive Officer prepared a Notice of Exemption; and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive Officer set a public hearing for January 23, 2006 for consideration of the draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence and Notice of Exemption, and caused notice thereof to be posted, published, and mailed at the times and in the manner required by law at least twenty-one (21) days in advance of the date; and

**WHEREAS**, on January 23, 2006, LAFCO continued the public hearing to February 27, 2006, to allow additional time for interested parties to review the draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence and submit comments; and

**WHEREAS**, thereafter, the LAFCO Executive Officer prepared a revised draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence based upon additional information provided by the County Service Areas and other interested parties; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 27, 2006 the revised draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence and Notice of Exemption came on regularly for hearing before LAFCO; and

**WHEREAS**, at said hearing, LAFCO reviewed and considered the draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence and Notice of Exemption and the Executive Officer's Report and Recommendations; each of the policies, priorities and factors set forth in Government Code Sections 56425 et seq. and LAFCO's Guidelines and Methodology for the Preparation and Determination of Spheres of Influence; and all other matters presented as prescribed by law; and

**WHEREAS**, at that time, an opportunity was given to all interested persons, organizations, and agencies to present oral or written testimony and other information concerning the proposal and all related matters; and

**WHEREAS**, LAFCO then determined that it was in the best interest of the public and the affected agencies to separate the draft Northern Yolo County Service Area Sphere of Influence into the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence and the Dunnigan County Service Area Sphere of Influence, to further deliberate on the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence while proceeding with the Dunnigan County Service Area Sphere of Influence; and

**WHEREAS**, thereafter, the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence and the Dunnigan County Service Area Sphere of Influence were separate, independent, and complete documents; and

**WHEREAS**, separating the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence and the Dunnigan County Service Area Sphere of Influence did not change or otherwise affect the environmental review or Sphere of Influence for the Snowball County Service Area; and

**WHEREAS**, on February 27, 2006, LAFCO continued the public hearing for the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence to March 27, 2006, to allow additional time for interested parties to review the draft Sphere of Influence and submit comments; and

**WHEREAS**, thereafter, the LAFCO Executive Officer prepared a revised draft Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence based upon additional information provided by the County Service Areas and other interested parties; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 27, 2006 the revised draft Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence and Notice of Exemption came on regularly for hearing before LAFCO; and

**WHEREAS**, at said hearing, LAFCO reviewed and considered the draft Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence and Notice of Exemption and the Executive Officer's Report and Recommendations; each of the policies, priorities and factors set forth in Government Code Sections 56425 et seq. and LAFCO's Guidelines and Methodology for the Preparation and Determination of Spheres of Influence; and all other matters presented as prescribed by law; and

**WHEREAS**, at that time, an opportunity was given to all interested persons, organizations, and agencies to present oral or written testimony and other information concerning the proposal and all related matters; and

**WHEREAS**, at that time LAFCO directed that the draft Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence be revised, to clarify and expand on issues of flood insurance and the formation of a citizens advisory committee in the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence; and

**WHEREAS**, LAFCO then approved and adopted the revised Snowball Sphere of Influence, in accordance with those changes; and

**WHEREAS**, at that time LAFCO also approved sending a letter to the Yolo County Board of Supervisors suggesting that consideration be given to flood insurance and the formation of a citizens advisory committee; and

**WHEREAS**, the revised Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence is attached hereto as Exhibit A, and the proposed Sphere boundary, comprised of ten and twenty-year lines as set forth therein, is coterminous with the existing boundary of the Snowball County Service Area.

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, ORDERED and FOUND** by the Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission as follows:

1. Each of the foregoing recitals is true and correct.
2. The Notice of Exemption prepared by the Executive Officer is approved as the appropriate environmental document for this project, because there are no growth-inducing impacts or potentially significant environmental impacts as a result of the adoption and implementation of the Snowball County Service Area Sphere of Influence.
3. The Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission adopts the Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence for the Snowball County Service Area as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference, including all written determinations and the ten and twenty-year lines as set forth therein.
4. The Executive Officer is instructed to:

- a. Mail a certified copy of this Resolution to the Snowball County Service Area and the County of Yolo; and
- b. Prepare and file a Notice of Exemption in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission,

County of Yolo, State of California, this 27th day of March 2006, by the following vote:

Ayes: Kristoff, Thomson, Sieferman, Pimentel, Woods  
Noes: None  
Abstentions: None  
Absent: None



Olin Woods, Chair  
Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission

Attest:



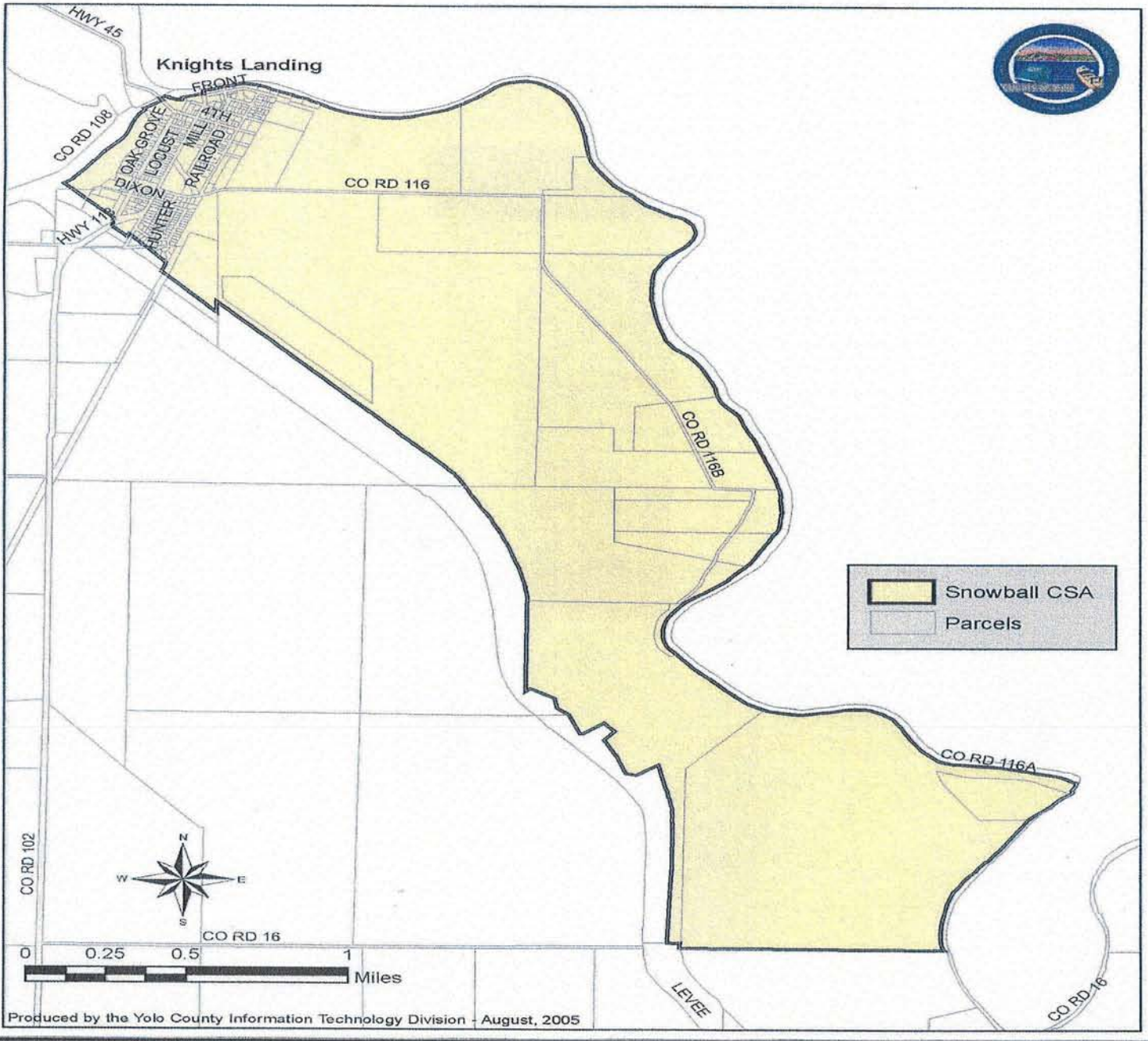
Elizabeth Castro Kemper, Executive Officer  
Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission

Approved as to form:

  
Stephen Nocita, Commission Counsel

Snowball CSA SOI 2006 Resolution (final)

# Snowball County Service Area





Snowball County Service Area  
(County Service Area #6)

Municipal Services Review and  
Sphere of Influence Study

*Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission*

*March 2006*



# ***YOLO COUNTY***

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## ***LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION***

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Artemio Pimentel, Vice-Chairman, City Member  
William Kristoff, City Member  
Frank Sieferman, Jr., County Member  
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Elizabeth Castro Kemper, Executive Officer  
José C. Henríquez, LAFCO Analyst  
Elisa Carvalho, LAFCO Analyst  
Stephen Nocita, Commission Counsel  
Terri Tuck, Commission Clerk

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## ***INTRODUCTION***

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This Municipal Service Review (MSR) and Sphere of Influence Update (SOI) is prepared for the Snowball County Service Area (CSA #6) located in the northern Yolo County towns of Knights Landing. The document analyzes an agency's ability to serve existing and future residents. The MSR and SOI were prepared to meet the requirements and standards of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH). The Service Review was prepared using the Service Review Guidelines prepared by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research.

The fundamental role of the Local Agency Formation Commission, LAFCO, is to implement the CKH Act (found at Government Code §56000, et seq.), consistent with local conditions and circumstances. The CKH Act guides LAFCO's decisions. The major goals of LAFCO as established by the CKH Act include:

- ▶▶ To encourage orderly growth and development, which are essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well being of the state;
- ▶▶ To promote orderly development by encouraging the logical formation and determination of boundaries and working to provide housing for families of all incomes;
- ▶▶ To discourage urban sprawl;
- ▶▶ To preserve open-space and prime agricultural lands by guiding development in a manner that minimizes resource loss;
- ▶▶ To exercise its authority to ensure that affected populations receive efficient governmental services;
- ▶▶ To promote logical formation and boundary modifications that direct the burdens and benefits of additional growth to those local agencies that are best suited to provide necessary services and housing;
- ▶▶ To make studies and obtain and furnish information which will contribute to the logical and reasonable development of local agencies and to shape their development so as to advantageously provide for the present and future needs of each county and its communities;
- ▶▶ To establish priorities by assessing and balancing total community services needs with financial resources available to secure and provide community services and to encourage government structures that reflect local circumstances, conditions and financial resources;

- » To determine whether new or existing agencies can feasibly provide needed services in a more efficient or accountable manner and, where deemed necessary, consider reorganization with other single purpose agencies that provide related services;
- » And effective January 2001, to update SOIs as necessary but not less than every five years; and
- » Conduct a review of all municipal services by county, jurisdiction, region, sub-region or other geographic area prior to, or in conjunction with, SOI updates or the creation of new SOIs.

To carry out State policies, LAFCO has the power to conduct studies, approve or disapprove proposals, modify boundaries, and impose terms and conditions on approval of proposals. Existing law does not provide LAFCO with direct land use authority, although some of LAFCO's discretionary actions indirectly affect land use. LAFCO is expected to weigh, balance, deliberate and set forth the facts and determinations of a specific action when considering a proposal.

### **Sphere of Influence Update Process**

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An important tool utilized in implementing the CKH Act is the adoption of a Sphere of Influence for a jurisdiction. An SOI is defined by Government Code 56425 as "...a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency or municipality..." An SOI represents an area adjacent to a jurisdiction where development might be reasonably expected to occur. The CKH Act further requires that a Municipal Service Review be conducted prior to or, in conjunction with, the update of a Sphere of Influence.

In addition, the Commission's methodology for sphere preparation is an essential part of updating the Sphere of Influence. In Yolo County, an SOI generally has two planning lines. One is considered a 20-year growth boundary, while the other is a 10-year, for immediate growth and projected service extension.

The CKH Act requires LAFCO to update the Spheres of Influence for all applicable jurisdictions in the County within five years or by January 1, 2006. The MSR/SOI document provides the basis for updating the Snowball CSA Sphere of Influence and shall be updated every five years.

Consequently, this MSR will be used to determine what type of services the district is expected to provide and the extent to which it is actually able to do so. The sphere for Snowball CSA will delineate the service capability and expansion capacity of each district based upon the findings from the MSR. The ten-year line will represent the ability of the agency to provide services within ten years. The twenty-year line will show the

long-term expectations of influence, impact, and control. The Sphere may have only one line depending on the projections for the agency and the ability to provide services.

The process of preparing these documents has several steps, as shown below.

#### **SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE PROCESS OUTLINE**

1. Concurrent preparation of a Draft Municipal Services Review and a Draft Sphere of Influence Update.
2. Completion of the environmental review process consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).
2. Public review of the Municipal Service Review, Sphere of Influence and environmental review documents.
4. Approval of the Municipal Service Review, Sphere of Influence Study, and the appropriate environmental document.

In order to update a Sphere of Influence, the CKH Act calls for LAFCO to prepare and consider written determinations for each of the following:

- » Present and planned land uses in the area, including agriculture, and open space lands;
- » Present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area;
- » Present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide; and
- » 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 FACTORS**

This Municipal Service Review has been prepared in accordance with Section 56430 of the California Government Code as a means of identifying and evaluating public services provided by the Snowball CSA and possible changes to the Sphere of Influence. The Service Review Guidelines prepared by the State Office of Planning and Research were used to develop information, perform analysis and organize this study.

The legislative authority for conducting Service Reviews is provided in the CKH Act. The Act states, "That in order to prepare and update Sphere of Influences in accordance with Section 56425, LAFCOs are required to conduct a review of the municipal services provided in the County or other appropriate designated areas..." A Service Review must

have written determinations that address the following factors in order to update a Sphere of Influence:

Factors to be addressed

- Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies
- Growth and Population
- Financing Constraints and Opportunities
- Cost-Avoidance Opportunities
- Opportunities for Rate Restructuring
- Opportunities for Shared Facilities
- Government Structure Options
- Evaluation of Management Efficiencies
- Local Accountability and Governance

Information regarding each of the above issue areas is provided in this document. Written determinations for each factor have also been prepared for the Commission's consideration. The Service Review will analyze the CSA's services consistent with the State's Guidelines for preparing such a study, serve as an information base to update the SOI and provide a basis for discussion concerning changes to the SOI for future proposals.

### **Sphere of Influence Guidelines**

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The Sphere of Influence guidelines adopted by Yolo County LAFCO provide direction in updating an agency's Sphere of Influence. Each of the following guidelines has been addressed in either the Sphere of Influence Update or the Municipal Service Review.

1. LAFCO will designate a sphere of influence line for each local agency that represents the agency's probable physical boundary and includes territory eligible for annexation and the extension or withdrawal of that agency's services within a twenty-year period.
2. The sphere of influence is delineated by a twenty-year line that projects necessary service coverage by a particular agency. A ten-year line represents

more immediate service area coverage needs. To preclude urban sprawl within an adopted sphere of influence, a request for a sphere amendment and approval of such a request, before changes in boundary, shall be considered.

3. LAFCO shall consider the following factors in determining an agency's sphere of influence.
  - a. Present and future need for agency services and the service levels specified for the subject area in applicable general plans, growth management plans, annexation policies, resource management plans, and any other plans or policies related to an agency's ultimate boundary and service area.
  - b. Capability of the local agency to provide needed services, taking into account evidence of resource capacity sufficient to provide for internal needs and urban expansion.
  - c. The existence of agricultural preserves, agricultural lands and open space lands in the area and the effect that inclusion within a sphere of influence shall have on the physical and economic integrity of maintaining the land in non-urban use.
  - d. Present and future cost and adequacy of services anticipated to be extended within the sphere of influence.
  - e. Present and projected population growth, population densities, land uses, land area, ownership patterns, assessed valuations, and proximity to other populated areas.
  - f. The agency's capital improvement or other plans that delineate planned facility expansions and the timing of that expansion.
  - g. Social or economic communities of interest in the area.
4. LAFCO may adopt a sphere of influence that excludes territory currently within that agency's boundaries. This occurs where LAFCO determines that the territory consists of agricultural lands, open space lands, or agricultural preserves whose preservation would be jeopardized by inclusion within an agency's sphere of influence. Exclusion of these areas from an agency's sphere of influence indicates that detachment is appropriate. These boundary changes may also occur when another agency can provide similar services better than an existing entity.



5. Where an area could be assigned to the sphere of influence of more than one agency providing a particular needed service, the following hierarchy shall apply dependent upon ability to service.
  - a. Inclusion within a city sphere of influence.
  - b. Inclusion within a multi-purpose district sphere of influence.
  - c. Inclusion within a single-purpose district sphere of influence.

In deciding which of two or more equally-ranked agencies shall include an area within its sphere of influence, LAFCO shall consider the agencies' service and financial capabilities, social and economic interdependencies, topographic factors, and the effect that eventual service extension will have on adjacent agencies.

6. Sphere of influence boundaries shall not create islands or corridors unless it can be demonstrated that the irregular boundaries represent the most logical and orderly service area of an agency.
7. Non-adjacent, publicly-owned properties and facilities used for urban purposes may be included within that public agency's sphere of influence if eventual annexation would provide an overall benefit to agency residents.
8. LAFCO shall review sphere of influence determinations every five years or when deemed necessary by the Commission. If a local agency or the county desires amendment or revision of an adopted sphere of influence, the local agency by resolution may file such a request with the Executive Officer. Any local agency or county making such a request shall reimburse the Commission based on the adopted fee schedule. The Commission may waive such reimbursement if it finds that the request may be considered as part of its periodic review of spheres of influence.
9. LAFCO shall adopt, amend or revise sphere of influence determinations following the procedural steps set forth in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, Government Code Section 56000 et seq.

The Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update documents have been compiled using information from a variety of sources, including the Knights Landing General Plan, the District Service Survey and Questionnaire, County of Yolo, Sacramento Council of Governments (SACOG), US Census Bureau and other governmental agencies.

## ***BACKGROUND***

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This section describes the California Government Code that regulates county service areas.

### ***County Service Area Law***

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The formation and operation of county service areas (CSAs) is governed by Government Code §25210.1 et seq. These provisions, also known as the “County Service Area Law”, allowed for CSAs to be an “alternative method” for the provision of governmental services in the unincorporated areas. The Declaration of Purpose in the County Service Area Law declares:

The Legislature recognizes the duty of counties as instrumentalities of State Government to adequately meet the needs of such areas for extended governmental services and also recognizes that such areas should pay for the extended services which are provided.

Consequently, the Legislature gave CSAs the ability to provide a broad range of services. CSAs throughout the State vary from a single purpose agency to an agency providing most of the services listed in the CSA Law. The powers possessed by an individual CSA is dependent upon the powers specified in its formation proceedings or by any subsequent extension of authorized services. The following is a list of services as specified in Government Code §§25210.4, 25210.4a and 25210.4d.

- Extended police protection.
- Structural fire protection.
- Local park, recreation, or parkway facilities and services.
- Miscellaneous extended services (defined in §25210.4a):
  - Water service, including the acquisition, construction, operation, replacement, maintenance, and repair of water supply and distribution systems, including land, easements, rights-of-way, and water rights.
  - Sewer service, including the acquisition, construction, operation, replacement, maintenance, and repair of sewage collection, transportation, and disposal systems, including land, easements, and rights-of-way.
  - Pest or rodent control.

- Street and highway sweeping.
- Street and highway lighting, including the acquisition, construction, replacement, maintenance, and repair of a street or highway lighting system, including land, easements, and rights-of-way.
- Refuse collection.
- Garbage collection.
- Ambulance service.
- Area planning.
- Soil conservation and drainage control.
- Animal control.
- Services provided by a municipal advisory council established pursuant to Government Code §31010.
- Transportation services.
- Geologic hazard abatement on public or private property or structures.
- Street, highway, and bridge construction, improvement and maintenance, including related drainage facilities and structures, necessary design and engineering services, and the acquisition of land, easements, and rights-of-way needed for the work.
- Interments pursuant to the Public Cemetery District Law.
- Extended library facilities and services.
- Television translator station facilities and services.
- Low-power television services.
- Flood or inundation protection services in counties exceeding 20,000 square miles in area, including the acquisition, purchase, construction, repair, and maintenance of dams and of all land, easements, structures, facilities, and equipment.

In addition, the CSA Law provides:

- For the levying and collection of assessments and/or taxes to fund the capital outlays and ongoing costs of providing these services and the contingency funds for the agency as the law permits and given the specific circumstances of the provision of services within the CSA, such as the existence of “zones of benefits” (Sections 25210.1, 25210.6 25210.6a, 25210.7 and 25210.8);
- For the Board of Supervisors acts as the governing board of CSAs (Section 25210.3 referencing Government Code §54900 et seq.); and
- That no CSA may be established without the approval of LAFCO pursuant to the CKH Act (Section 25210.3a) and that LAFCO must approve the annexation or detachment of territory or the dissolution, consolidation or reorganization of a CSA pursuant to the CKH Act (Section 25210.3b).

Under LAFCO Law, CSAs are classified as “special districts”; however, CSAs differ from other types of special districts in that they have no political “existence” outside of the governmental structure of the county within which they are located.

## ***MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW***

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The following is the Municipal Service Review for the Snowball County Service Area (CSA #6). This Municipal Service Review has been prepared in accordance with California Government Code §56430 as a means of identifying and evaluating public services provided by the CSA in question and possible changes to the Sphere of Influence. The Service Review Guidelines prepared by the State Office of Planning and Research were used to develop information, perform analysis and organize this study. This section also provides a brief background on the areas of interest and describes the CSA reviewed and discussed in this document.

### ***SNOWBALL CSA – “COUNTY SERVICE AREA #6”***

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#### ***District Background***

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##### District Topography and Demographic Features

Snowball County Service Area (CSA #6) is located in northeastern Yolo County. It is bounded by the Sacramento River on the east, Sycamore Slough on the north, Knights Landing Ridge Cut on the west, and the channel of the Old Sacramento River on the south. It encompasses approximately 2500 acres (refer to Map 1). Reclamation District 730 provided levee maintenance services to this area until 1954, when the State Department of Water Services (DWR) assumed responsibility for the levee because DWR determined RD 730 was inadequately maintaining it. In 1975, DWR transitioned the levee maintenance duties to the County, prompting the creation of Snowball CSA.

The area within the CSA is generally flat, agricultural land with high ground, known as Knights Landing Ridge, located in the northwesterly section of the area. The town of Knights Landing, which holds the only concentrated populated area within its jurisdiction, is located in the northeasterly corner of the CSA at the intersection of the Sacramento River and Sycamore Slough. The remainder of Snowball CSA contains only scattered farmhouses.

The land use within the CSA is almost exclusively agricultural, with the exception of the town of Knights Landing. The town, comprising approximately 10% of the CSA's area, contains the only non-agricultural land-use in the CSA; most of the land use is residential, with a few commercial parcels and a cemetery. Outside of the town, only a few areas can be found containing agricultural support facilities and agricultural housing. Of the 2,500 acres within Snowball CSA, approximately 65% of them are under the Williamson Act contract (refer to Map 2).

### District History and Powers

State Maintenance Area #6, the forerunner of CSA #6, was formed in July 1954 to maintain the river levee due to the inadequate performance of Reclamation District 730, the first provider of such services in the area. CSA #6 was formed in August 1975, in response to the rising cost of State services. Reasons for this transition include the State's concern over its increased maintenance costs; fear from local owners that these costs would result in higher fees, taxes, or assessments; and the County's belief that it could provide comparable services at a lower price. Snowball CSA is a single function special district responsible only for repair, operation, control, and maintenance of the Sacramento River levee within its jurisdiction (Government Code §25210.4d). Snowball CSA's boundaries have remained static since its creation.

Snowball CSA is under the direct supervision of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors and its administration is functionally located within the County Department of Planning Resources & Public Works (PRPW). County employees are sometimes utilized for agency services, including the coordination of any necessary repairs and maintenance to the levee, which in turn are based upon the results of the State Department of Water Resources' inspection of the levee.

### Infrastructure Needs and Deficiencies

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Snowball CSA provides a single function within definite, natural boundaries: maintenance of the Sacramento River levee from Knights Landing to Grays Bend. The State Department of Water Resources (DWR) is the State agency charged with setting maintenance standards for all levees throughout the State. To that end, DWR rates the condition of the Snowball CSA levee twice annually; however, in 2004 DWR conducted three inspections of it. After their review, DWR provides Snowball CSA with a list of tasks that must be completed in order to secure or strengthen the integrity of the levee.

A levee's condition is contingent upon a variety of factors, including the level of maintenance provided to it, the river current, water levels, and any extemporaneous effects caused by people (such as the wake from boats, fishing activities along the levee, etc.). Given that many of the factors described above that can both imperil the levee and be difficult to predict, there are few opportunities to forecast systematically the CSA infrastructure needs. Consequently, practically the entire infrastructure needs for Snowball CSA are driven by the results of the DWR inspection.

The County has a full-time CSA Coordinator to oversee the administrative matters of all Yolo County CSAs, including, among other things, the coordination of any maintenance needed for Snowball CSA to comply with the results of the DWR review. The CSA Coordinator is the only dedicated staff for Snowball CSA and this role will be discussed in greater detail later in the report.

All proactive, preventative or maintenance services are outsourced to various public or private entities, including:

- Department of Water Resources – Levee inspection, review and maintenance.
- County Planning, Resources & Public Works Department (PRPW) – Levee patrol, maintenance and repairs.
- County Agriculture Department – Spraying and controlling invasive weeds and plants.
- Knights Landing Fire Protection District – Burning and hauling of excess or overgrown plants.
- A&L Excavation (private sector contractor) – Clearing of sloughs and debris along the levee.

Below is a description of how DWR determines its ratings and the ratings for Snowball CSA on the condition of the levee.

#### District Rating

As prescribed by the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Operations and Maintenance Manual (USACE O&M Manual), DWR staff inspects the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Flood Control System up to four times each year. During the months of April through June, the Spring Joint Inspection takes place for the purpose of informing the levee-maintaining agency (LMA) of the required maintenance needed prior to the next flood season. The Fall Joint Inspection, conducted during the months of September through December, similarly records what maintenance has been accomplished since the Spring Inspection. The rating standards are derived from the USACE O&M Manual and State regulations. The ratings are listed as follows:

- Compliant (C) – Defined as “maintenance that essentially conforms to Federal and State standards”.
- Improvement Needed (I) – Defined as “maintenance that varies considerably from Federal and State guidelines”. Improvement needed describes the maintenance activity where an attempt has been made, but the effort needs to be continued, increased or improved. The present state of maintenance fails to meet the designated criteria as set forth in the USACE O&M Manual. The LMA has 12 months from the date of the report to comply with the USACE standards, or it will receive a rating of non-compliant.

- Non-Compliant (N) – Non-compliant LMAs demonstrate that little or no maintenance has been performed or the level of maintenance is significantly out of compliance with Federal and State guidelines. Districts and agencies rated “non-compliant” are given official notice to improve the maintenance effort to a “compliant” rating within the maintenance year or execute an approved plan to correct the deficiencies. If an LMA is found to be lacking in its levee maintenance or failing to adhere to its approved plan, DWR’s next step can be to recommend to the State Reclamation Board that the LMA should be turned into a State Maintenance Area.

### Levee Criteria

The Snowball CSA provides for maintenance that tries to ensure compliance with the Department of Water Resources inspections reports. The following factors pertaining to levee maintenance are considered when determining the overall LMA rating. A rating of “Compliant”, “Improvement Needed”, or “Non-Compliant” is given for each of the following. Then, based upon DWR’s findings for all of the factors, the levee-maintaining agency (LMA) is given a cumulative rating.

- Readiness for Flood Emergency – Each LMA must have an organized plan to respond to a flood situation effectively. This should include the appointment of a Superintendent to supervise and execute the plan, stockpile standard flood-fighting equipment and materials, and have available a network of hand held radios or cellular telephones for communication while patrolling during a flood emergency.
- Adequate Levee Section and Grade – Each LMA must perform the work necessary to maintain levee side-slopes, grade, and crown width to meet standards for its particular reach of the levee system. Crown widths for Federal project levees within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Flood Control System and levee design standards must comply with the USACE O&M Manual.
- Presence of Encroachments – Each LMA is held responsible for the prevention or removal of any existing structures on the levee or within the ten-foot regulatory easement at the landward toe of the levee. The LMA must stop any modifications or alterations to the levee. An encroachment permit from the Reclamation Board is needed for any construction or modification within the levee regulatory easement.
- Control of Wild Vegetation Growth – Because vegetation may hinder visibility during inspections and patrols and may interfere with flood-fighting activities, each LMA must have a program to control vegetation on the levee slopes and in rock revetments. Oversized levees, as defined by the State, may have some vegetation.
- Rodent Control – Each LMA must have a rodent control program to prevent or eradicate burrowing animals in order to ensure the safety of the levee during flood



periods. LMAs must also have a program to backfill abandoned burrows to discourage recurring infestations.

- Repair of Cracks, Erosion and Caving – Each LMA must repair cracks, current or wave erosion, caving or other structural problems. Because these problems can threaten the integrity of the levee, and possibly lead to its failure, an LMA's inability to report and/or take the necessary steps to repair the structural problems are sufficient cause to downgrade the overall rating.
- Repair of Access Gates – All gates will be maintained and repaired to provide easy access for authorized personnel and to control unauthorized access.
- Condition of Rock Revetment – Each LMA must make rapid repairs to any failed portion of the rock revetments.
- Condition of Levee Crown – Each LMA is required to keep crown roadways shaped and graded to provide proper drainage and all-weather access.
- Control of Livestock Grazing – The LMA will control livestock grazing on levee slopes in such manner as to permit normal maintenance activities and to minimize damage to the slope. Damage to the slope must be repaired. Controlled livestock grazing may be used as a vegetation management tool.
- Condition of Pipes and Appurtenances – Each LMA must annually examine and record its observations on the stability and structural soundness of all structures situated through, in or on the levee. All component parts must be examined for proper operation and reliability before the start of each flood season. Defective structures must be repaired, replaced or removed immediately. New structures should installed or older structures repaired only in accordance with adopted standards by the State Reclamation Board and under the supervision of qualified Reclamation Board personnel.
- Overall Rating – Overall Ratings are given by the Chief of the Flood Project Inspection Section and are based upon each inspector's observations as reported on the project in the Fall Joint Inspection. The inspector weighs the condition of the levee as a whole based upon the factors above to give the LMA its rating.

As indicated immediately above, the overall LMA rating is determined in the fall and given to the LMA in the spring of the following year. Consequently, ratings are at least one year behind.

Snowball CSA has had "Compliant" rating for three years in a row. The following table contains the CSA's rating for the last ten years.

**Table A1 – Snowball CSA Levee Maintenance Ratings 1994-2003**

Year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Rating	I	I	N	N	N	N	I	C	C	C

**Flood Zone**

Flood zones are geographic areas that FEMA has defined according to varying levels of flood risk. Residents in FEMA designated Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs) or high risk areas are required to purchase flood insurance. FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) makes Federally backed flood insurance available to homeowners, renters, and business owners. In exchange for the availability of subsidized insurance for existing buildings, communities are required to protect new construction and substantially improved structures through adoption and enforcement of community flood-plain management regulations, which may include measures such as elevated floors, dry-floodproofing (water tight buildings), use of flood resistant materials, etc. to reduce future flood damage.

In the Snowball CSA, Knights Landing residents are currently located in a Moderate to Low Risk area (between limits of the 100-year and 500-year flood) and are not required to purchase flood insurance; however, FEMA recommends residents in these areas purchase flood insurance, because roughly 25-percent of all claims paid by FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program are for policies in the Low to Moderate risk areas.

According to Ricardo Pineda of the State Reclamation Board, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is currently remapping the floodplains along the levees of the major Central Valley rivers, including the Sacramento River. FEMA's findings will yield the probability of flooding in the areas immediately adjacent to the levees, as a result of the possibility of levee failure under certain circumstances. The integrity of the Snowball CSA levee will be reevaluated as a component of the remapping process and a new FEMA designation could be established. This remapping will probably yield additional information about the condition of the Snowball CSA levees, which may in turn require an amendment or revision to this MSR/SOI. Until the remapping is completed, however, areas in the Snowball CSA will retain their current flood zone designations.

**Growth and Population**

According to the 2000 US Census, Snowball CSA serves at least 1,000 people. According to SACOG projections, the unincorporated areas within the County are expected to increase 3.6% per year until 2010.

According to the Knights Landing General Plan, Knights Landing has experienced an average annual growth in population of 3.74-percent over a twenty-year period (1969-1999). If this annual growth rate continues over the next twenty years, Knights Landing population will increase to approximately 2,080, double the existing population. The current Knights Landing General Plan (1999) recommends, "Future residential expansion could allow for a population expansion to about 2,000 over the next 20 years" (III-4).

Yolo County is currently working on a comprehensive Yolo County General Plan update and is exploring several different growth alternatives. The most intensive growth alternative (Preferred Alternative 2.A – Rural Sustainability), put forth in a June 7, 2005 Board letter from Planning, Resources and Public Works, indicates the town of Knights Landing would have an estimated population of 4,202 by the year 2025. This is a substantially greater increase than SACOG's projections and the current Knights Landing General Plan.

New growth within Knights Landing would occur through infill within the existing town and in the area east of town, between Road 116 and the Sacramento River, as allowed in the current Knights Landing General Plan. Between 1,000 and 1,250 homes would be added, with 15 percent provided through existing infill and 85 percent through new development. This would increase the town's population from 1,002 in 2004 to between 3,500 and 4,200 in 2025. The target density of 8 units per acre would require 120-155 acres of new residential development. This would be complemented by 20 acres of commercial retail development. A second school site of 40 acres would be set aside, along with five acres for public parks. Approximately 40 acres of additional land may be required to expand the sewage treatment plant. This means that a total of 225 to 260 acres of farmland would be converted from agricultural to urban use. The waterfront and downtown area would be considered as a potential redevelopment zone.

In a more immediate and direct impact to Snowball CSA, one of the areas of growth is expected to be the White Subdivision, which will entail building 63 homes in a subdivision immediately adjacent to the northern levee. As a way to minimize the impacts of the White Subdivision, Snowball CSA should create a "zone of benefit" encompassing the project area. This will allow the County to levy an additional assessment to finance more levee security, maintenance, and landscaping services to protect this neighborhood.

Any future development plans for this area beyond those addressed in this report will require a review of this Municipal Services Review.

## ***Financing Constraints and Opportunities***

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### **Agency Assessed Value and Budget**

According to the Yolo County Auditor's Office, an agency's assessed value is the combined secured, unsecured and utility assets as well as the total homeowner property tax exemptions within an agency. The assessed value is a tool to measure the amount of development within an agency in addition to its property tax income. A lower assessed value means that the agency will receive a lower amount of property tax revenues. The total assessed value for Snowball CSA in the 2004-2005 Fiscal Year was \$33,375,833. This amount is a steady increase from the amounts of \$31,036,122 in FY 2003-2004 and of \$29,309,508 from FY 2002-2003.

The chart below contains the revenues, expenditures and net amounts for Snowball CSA during the 2001-2002, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 fiscal years. The numbers reflect actual dollars, not budgeted amounts.

**TABLE A2 – DISTRICT REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES (ACTUAL)**

<b>Budget Year</b>	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Net Amounts</b>
2001-2002	\$29,017	\$20,924	\$8,093
2002-2003	\$28,013	\$24,136	\$3,877
2003-2004	\$26,487	\$25,283	\$1,204
2004-2005	\$28,487	\$5,003	\$23,484

The District has no outstanding bonds. The District outsources all of its maintenance services to entities such as the DWR, PRPW, Yolo County Agricultural Department, Knights Landing FPD, and A&L Excavation; it has no equipment or facilities that are subject to any sort of financing schedule or depreciation. Without major encumbrances, the District is able to accrue funds by rolling over its reserve fund and fund balance to the next fiscal year. In addition, because it is essentially a housekeeping function of County government, Snowball CSA cannot spend more than it is allocated in the budget.

Snowball CSA has approximately \$155,000 in its "Cash in Treasury" account. Approximately half of these funds (\$80,000) are earmarked for the Mid-Valley Phase III Levee Reconstruction Project (discussed in the Financing Constraints and Opportunities section of this report). In November 1999, the Board of Supervisors approved Resolution No. 99-172, authorizing agreement B-8131/165851 for local cost sharing funds for the Mid-Valley project. The remaining funds include \$10,000 from interest; \$35,000 for annual road crew levee patrol, which is required by the Department of Water Resources after water reaches a certain level; \$27,712.54 for annual

maintenance, administration, and professional service costs; and the remainder for the Snowball CSA's spray program, pruning, clearing, burning, and excavation.

The CSA's expenditures largely represent maintenance and repair costs. Maintenance needs can fluctuate significantly from year to year, because the integrity of the levee can be influenced by a variety of factors. In FY2000-01 through 2003-04, expenditures ranged between \$20,000 and \$26,000 (table A2). In FY 2004-05, the CSA's expenditures were only \$5,003, approximately \$20,000 less than the previous year's expenditures.

Property tax is the CSA's only source of ongoing revenue. Although stable and collected annually, the relative value of property taxes decreases slowly over time because they do not automatically increase with inflation. The Snowball tax rate area includes 362 parcels. In California, the maximum property tax assessed on any land is generally 1% of the said property's value. Of that 1%, Snowball CSA receives approximately \$0.07 for every property tax dollar collected. As noted earlier, most of the properties in Snowball CSA's jurisdiction are under Williamson Act contract and their assessed values are suppressed.

A revenue option Snowball CSA should institute in the near future is the creation of a "zone of benefit" encompassing the White Subdivision in order to create an area with a varying benefit assessment for the provision of additional levee maintenance and security as well as landscaping services within this zone.

#### Mid-Valley Area Phase III Project

The Snowball CSA maintains 5.97 miles of Sacramento River Flood Control Project (SRFCP) levees that protect the town of Knights Landing. As part of a system-wide analysis of structural deficiencies in the Sacramento River Flood Control Project initiated after the 1986 flood, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) identified needed repairs to the Snowball CSA levees. These repairs are known as the Mid-Valley Area Phase III Project (Project).

The Project involves six local levee maintenance districts, including the Snowball CSA. The Project includes seepage stability berms, levee crown restoration, slurry walls, and drains. The Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for the design of the Project and the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) is responsible for construction, subject to the local agencies providing a share of the Project funding. According to the Corps' estimate in February 2006, the full cost of the Project is \$12,960,000. Of this amount, the federal government must pay \$9,744,000, the State Reclamation Board must pay \$2,251,000 and the six local levee maintenance districts must split the remaining cost of \$964,800.

The Yolo County Board of Supervisors has designated the Project as one of its top flood management priorities. In addition to funding for the Project, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors is seeking funding to fix a critical erosion site at River Mile 85.6 in the Snowball CSA maintenance area. Governor Schwarzenegger has included this site on a list of critical erosion sites he sent to President Bush on February 16, 2006. The Yolo County Board of Supervisors is also seeking funding for levee integrity studies to determine the potential for levee weaknesses resulting from under-seepage conditions. Levee integrity studies cost approximately \$50,000 per mile.

The Snowball CSA, through the work of CSA Coordinator Regina Espinoza, is also trying to secure emergency funds to repair the critical erosion site. Since CSA #6 is a part of the Sacramento River Flood Control Project, it is eligible to receive funds to repair damage resulting from the severe weather storms in January 2006. CSA #6 applied to the Department of Water Resources Reclamation Board, which will have to make a formal request to the Army Corps of Engineers for rehabilitation assistance through FEMA.

According to Yolo County Water Resources Coordinator Petrea Marchand, the federal and state government may not rank the Snowball CSA levees as a high priority for improvement because they protect fewer people and property relative to the City of Sacramento and other areas in need of improved flood protection. Snowball CSA may need to consider requesting assistance from Yolo County or raising assessment within the District to pay for needed improvements. In addition, the Corps is doing a reevaluation of the Mid-Valley Project, which may increase project costs.

It is also worth noting that FEMA has begun remapping levees in Yolo and Sacramento County to reflect the Corps' new knowledge of the potential for under-seepage conditions and other levee weaknesses. As part of the mapping process, FEMA is requiring levee maintenance areas to fund levee integrity studies (as previously discussed). According to the Water Resources Coordinator, levees within the maintenance areas that do not provide the levee integrity studies will be automatically mapped by FEMA into the 100-year floodplain. As a result, affected residents will be required to buy flood insurance.

The Snowball CSA should consider creating a dialogue with residents in the Knights Landing community about participating in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). As previously discussed, communities that protect new construction and substantantally improved structures, through adoption and enforcement of community flood-plain management regulations, may be eligible to receive subsidized insurance for existing buildings.

### ***Cost-Avoidance Opportunities***

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Snowball CSA outsources virtually all of its functions to other entities, thereby avoiding the cost of purchasing, maintaining and storing large equipment such as trucks, sprayers and earthmovers. Most of Snowball CSA's expenditures are delineated by the budget and the agency does not stray too much from the budgeted funds. The Board of Supervisors must approve any request for moving monies between allocated funds or for funding in excess of the base budget, although the CSA Coordinator may make discretionary spending purchases up to \$500 without prior approval from the PRPW Director or the Board of Supervisors.

Snowball CSA also uses the County Administrative Policy Manual, which contains guidelines for other cost-saving procedures such as competitive bidding. According to the CSA Coordinator, sole source procurement is rarely used; competitive bidding is used for expenses that have no standing purchase orders or claims. However, because a significant portion of the CSA's purchases is for small items, an informal bid process is the most common method used.

By all accounts, the current system of outsourcing its functions is fiscally beneficial to both the CSA and the County. In order to ensure that this remains the case in the future, the CSA or the County should study the costs of owning and maintaining its own equipment and hiring its own personnel to perform these functions. This could help establish a benchmark that will alert the CSA when the costs of outsourcing cease to be fiscally beneficial.

### ***Opportunities for Rate Restructuring***

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Property taxes are the CSA's primary revenue source, but there are inherent constraints that prevent their restructuring because of State law limitations and because property taxes are tied to the assessed value of the lands within the CSA. In addition, a significant portion of the parcels within Snowball CSA are under the Williamson Act contract. However, to enhance its revenue streams in order to cover the costs associated with a higher level of maintenance, landscaping and security services that the White Subdivision will certainly require, Snowball CSA is considering creating a "zone of benefit" encompassing the subdivision.

### ***Opportunities for Shared Facilities***

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Snowball CSA outsources nearly all of its services and uses the County's single Coordinator for all of its administrative needs. Beyond these, there are no other short-term feasible opportunities to share facilities. However, there is an opportunity for Snowball CSA to consolidate with either Reclamation District 730 (RD 730, an agency that currently only provides drainage services), or with the Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District (KLRDD, an agency that maintains the Knights Landing Ridge Cut and

adjacent levees). Consolidation between Snowball CSA and either District should be explored because the benefits of a consolidated agency would include:

- Achieving economies of scale in purchasing;
- Reducing redundancy in government and simplifying boundaries;
- Fostering stronger community ties in the service area;
- Sharing facilities, staff, internal services and insurance costs; and
- Accessing a larger revenue base and combining shares of the property tax dollar.

#### Reclamation District 730

As indicated earlier, Snowball CSA was created in 1975 for the County to assume the levee maintenance duties from DWR, which had assumed the duties of levee maintenance in 1954 because it found RD 730's ability to maintain the levee inadequate. As can be seen from Map 3, the Snowball CSA service area overlaps the north and eastern half of RD 730's service area. It must be noted, however, that LAFCO's "Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Study for the Yolo County Public Water and Reclamation Districts" (adopted by the Commission in March 2005, hereafter referred to "Water MSR/SOI") indicated various circumstances facing RD 730 that may make consolidation difficult:

- RD 730 currently operates with a net operating revenue loss;
- RD 730 may be reluctant to re-assume levee maintenance duties given the increase in costs in order to be in compliance with regulatory laws, including but not limited to CEQA and the Endangered Species Act.

#### Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District

KLRDD was formed in 1913 under a special act of the Legislature to maintain the Knights Landing Ridge Cut and its adjacent levees. At the same time, the Sacramento River Westside Levee District was formed to maintain the 50 miles of levee on the west side of the Sacramento River from Colusa to Knights Landing. The service area of the Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District (KLRDD) (refer to Map 4) includes the southern Colusa Basin and extends south, overlapping Snowball CSA and Reclamation District 730 on the southeast portion of its service area, and its boundaries extend to the western edge of the Yolo Bypass. KLRDD shares facilities, services, and staff through a contract with Reclamation District 108 (RD 108).



On the subject of KLRDD merging with other agencies, the Water MSR/SOI indicated that, "any reorganization would have to assess and calculate all cost inputs such as the cost of reorganization, of merging staffs, of retirement obligations or of upgrades to systems, etc. Sometimes the actual savings as a result of reorganization are modest enough that it is not cost-efficient to pursue. There may also be little improvement in service efficiency since the agencies are currently operating efficiently. Finally, pursuing any reorganization without the support of residents and of the governing board typically increases the time, cost and effort involved." Consequently, the Water MSR/SOI found that there were sufficient grounds for maintaining KLRDD as a separate entity.

In addition, the Water MSR/SOI noted that any reorganization involving KLRDD would also have to involve RD 108 because of the inter-relationship between the agencies. Since RD 108 is the purview of Colusa LAFCO, the need for coordination between Yolo County LAFCO and Colusa LAFCO in a consolidation attempt would introduce an additional level of complexity into the effort.

### ***Government Structure Options***

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Snowball CSA is a dependent special district. The Yolo County Board of Supervisors acts as Snowball CSA's governing body and holds an annual meeting to adopt the CSA's budget. The Board designates the CSA Coordinator as the administrator of the CSA's day-to-day affairs. The Coordinator is responsible for and manages the control, operation, maintenance, and repair of the levee.

Unlike other CSAs, Snowball does not have a Citizen's Advisory Committee. This may be because levee maintenance is not a municipal service directly tied to individual service users, and, therefore, committee representation has not previously been requested. However, given recent issues of erosion and seepage berms along the Snowball CSA levee, the County should consider establishing an advisory committee. Appointment of an advisory committee should also be considered if the County creates a CSA "zone of benefit" for the White Subdivision.

The County should also consider re-opening a dialogue with the State on whether the current delegation of responsibilities among State and local governments is proper. Levee infrastructure involves layers of regulatory authority for constructing, maintaining and repairing levees and flood control facilities. Throughout the years, the function of levees and the roles, responsibilities, regulations (and in some cases, the land uses behind those levees) have changed significantly. The levee maintenance process has evolved into an often complicated and costly process of regulatory agency approvals and mitigation. For example, LMAs have had to adjust their maintenance programs and bear the cost of complying with the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act, legislation whose requirements have grown since Snowball CSA's creation. The end result is that LMAs in general, and Snowball CSA in particular, may be required to mitigate for environmental damage that has happened over decades throughout the

Sacramento River region. What has not changed is that the oversight authority still rests with the State, and the LMAs must be found to be in compliance with the State's requirements.

However, no funding mechanism or revenue sharing agreement exists between the levels of government to help an LMA cope with the costs associated with meeting the State's ever-increasing requirements. While some local districts responsible for maintaining these levees are reimbursed for a portion of the costs under the Delta Levees Subvention Program established in 1973 and the Delta Flood Protection Act of 1988, both added a major environmental mandate to ensure no net long-term loss of habitat. This requirement adds costs that result in further reducing the money available for maintenance. Other funding programs also require a higher maintenance standard, which adds to costs, or presuppose an unusual amount of working capital.

Beyond budgetary constraints on the local, State, and federal levels, the conflict inherent between natural resource protection (endangered species and wetlands, in particular) and the need to maintain levees has also created problems and delayed both appropriations and repairs. The reconstruction of failed levees is a complicated and costly process, including not only the US Army Corps of Engineers, but also the State Reclamation Board, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the LMA. According to Keith Swanson, chief of the Flood Maintenance Branch for DWR, costs for levee repairs have now reached \$5,000 a lineal foot. But, of the 6,000 miles of levee in the Sacramento-San Joaquin system, only about 1,700 miles are designated as priority flood control projects that are eligible for State and federal assistance. The remainder (approximately 4,300 miles) must be maintained and repaired by the LMAs and private landowners.

Under the current system, the cost of maintenance primarily becomes the responsibility of the individual landowners within each LMA, even though the service provided by the LMAs is of benefit to the region and ultimately to the large portion of California dependent on the Delta for water supply. Because issues of benefit and financial equity arise, the County should broach the subject of having the State re-assume the responsibility for levee maintenance. The State may find that it would be more cost effective to assume the maintenance costs than to risk the funding of a levee breach repair, either partially or completely.

Upon request, an LMA can enter into an agreement with the State Department of Water Resources (DWR) for DWR to assume levee maintenance and operation (California Water Code section 12878). The DWR would identify the scope of work required to comply with federal government standards, and a corresponding cost estimate for the current and following fiscal year. The DWR's cost estimate is based on a benefit assessment formula, applied to residents in the LMA. If there are no protests, the DWR can adopt its levee maintenance cost estimates and establish a maintenance area by

order or resolution. According to Mr. Swanson, DWR's adherence to federal government standards will likely translate into higher costs for Snowball CSA residents.

### **Management Efficiencies and Local Accountability**

Snowball CSA has a management and accountability structure in place that adequately provides maintenance of the levee within its service boundaries. In 2004, PRPW, in conjunction with the Yolo County Employee Relations Officer and the Board of Supervisors, reorganized the position of CSA Coordinator. The CSA Coordinator's role had become, among other things, a critical interface with contractors and the public and consequently is required to maintain a certain level of discretion because of exposure to political and sensitive matters. The County found it necessary to make the CSA Coordinator an at-will position to ensure accountability and responsiveness to elected representatives and their constituents, the public in general, and PRPW. The County now believes it has a management and accountability structure in place to adequately oversee the increase in demand for services in the unincorporated areas.

For its meetings as the governing board, the County also encourages public participation during the annual budget hearings by posting notices in accordance with the Brown Act. Snowball CSA's finances are held in the County Treasury and audited by the County Auditor-Controller annually, thus ensuring that the agency's finances are properly managed.

### **Written Determinations – Municipal Services**

Currently, the Snowball CSA adequately provides levee maintenance within its service area. By outsourcing its levee maintenance and repair services to other public or private entities, the CSA is in a fiscally satisfactory situation. Questions remain regarding the CSA's long-term financial situation. If Knights Landing continues to grow, there will be an increase in demand for services without a commensurate increase in property tax revenues. Future reviews should evaluate whether a single purpose county agency is the most logical means to provide levee maintenance, security and repairs.

LAFCO staff recommends the following findings:

1. Snowball CSA is in compliance with all State laws and regulations.
2. Snowball CSA has been entrepreneurial in outsourcing its services to other agencies, thus maximizing its ability to apply for and secure a FEMA grant that allowed the County to procure the necessary equipment to perform its mission.

3. Snowball CSA should seek new funding mechanisms so that upgrades or more comprehensive maintenance could be performed on the levee to better serve the residents within its service area.
4. Snowball CSA should initiate a study to determine the current costs of levee maintenance.
5. Snowball CSA should attempt to initiate discussions with the State to have the latter re-assume maintenance of the levee.
6. Snowball CSA should discuss the feasibility of consolidation with RD 730 or Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District (KLRDD) to determine the possibility of increased service efficiencies and cost savings.
7. Snowball CSA should consider a Citizen's Advisory Committee to advise the Board and help educate the public about necessary levee facilities, services, costs, and potential risks.
8. Snowball CSA should establish a Snowball CSA zone of benefit for all new development in the CSA for additional levee repairs and maintenance.
9. Snowball CSA should consider participating in FEMA's (NFIP) Insurance Program as a community to obtain insurance at a reduced rate.
10. Snowball CSA should investigate the feasibility of establishing a Snowball CSA zone of benefit to collect flood insurance premiums for all new development in the CSA.

## ***SPHERE OF INFLUENCE***

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This Sphere of Influence Update section addresses the criteria required by the CKH Act and refers to information contained in the Municipal Service Review. This section is organized by key factors, stating general observations that apply to the CSA and then identifying specific circumstances worth noting.

### ***Sphere Of Influence History***

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The last comprehensive Sphere of Influence Study for Snowball CSA was completed in 1984. In the adopted SOI, LAFCO determined that the CSA's Sphere of Influence should be coterminous with the CSA's boundaries. Since 1984, no proposals to alter the service area have been submitted to or considered by LAFCO.

At this time, LAFCO is being asked to consider the following actions as a part of this Sphere of Influence Update:

- Consider the Municipal Service Review for Snowball County Service Area (CSA #6);

- Approve and adopt the Sphere of Influence Update for Snowball County Service Areas (CSA #6); and
- Accept the General Exemption (CEQA Guidelines section 15061(b)(3)) as the appropriate environmental determination pursuant to CEQA.

LAFCO has generated the following analysis to evaluate issues and address the factors unique to LAFCO's role and decision-making authority pursuant to the CKH Act.

### ***STATEMENT OF INTENT***

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- 1) LAFCO intends that its Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence determinations will serve as a guide for the future organization of local governments within Yolo County.
- 2) Spheres of Influence shall be used to discourage urban sprawl and the unnecessary proliferation of local governmental agencies, to encourage efficiency, economy, and orderly changes in local government, and to prevent the premature conversion of agricultural land.
- 3) The adopted Sphere of Influence shall reflect the appropriate general plans, growth management policies, annexation policies, resource management policies, and any other policies related to ultimate boundary and service area of the affected CSA, unless those plans or policies conflict with the legislative intent of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act (Government Code §56000 et seq.).
- 4) Where inconsistencies between plans or policies (or both) exist, LAFCO relies upon that plan or policy which most closely follows the legislature's directive to discourage urban sprawl, direct development away from prime agricultural land and open-space lands, and encourage the orderly formation and development of local governmental agencies based upon local conditions and circumstances.
- 5) The Sphere of Influence lines are a declaration of policy to guide LAFCO in considering any proposal within its jurisdiction.
- 6) Future LAFCO decisions shall be consistent with the Sphere of Influence of the affected district.
- 7) Future proposals that are inconsistent with a CSAs' Sphere of Influence shall not be approved unless LAFCO, at a noticed public hearing, has considered and approved a corresponding amendment or revision to that CSA's Sphere of Influence.

## **SPHERE OF INFLUENCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Government Code §56425 of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act 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.

It further indicates:

(e) 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.

### Written Determinations

The Commission, in establishing the Sphere of Influence for the Snowball Yolo County Service Area, has considered the following.

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

There is no change in the planned land uses in the County Service Area as a result of this review. Snowball County Service Area (CSA #6) provides only levee maintenance. This service by itself will not inherently induce growth nor will it lead to the conversion of open space or agricultural land uses.

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

Yolo County's policy is to channel development to existing towns. Consequently, service demand upon the Snowball CSA will increase if the planned growth for the service area materializes.

The White Subdivision, located on the western edge of the town of Knights Landing, will likely lead to the need for expanded levee services in the service area. Consequently, the County should consider the option of turning this subdivision into a "zone of benefit" in order to recover sufficient revenues to fund the additional levee maintenance, security, and landscaping services that will be required on this portion of the levee.

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

Snowball CSA provides adequate services inside its service area.

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.

The town of Knights Landing is the largest and most dense social community of interest in the District. The rest of the CSA's population is spread throughout the service area in rural, agricultural residences, forming what could be considered a social and economic community of interest of its own. The population growth rate in both communities is expected to remain relatively constant and stable, albeit at different rates. The communities are expected to retain their character and identity because new growth will be directed into the town, and Williamson Act contracts and zoning will ensure that most of the surrounding land remains in agriculture.

#### Agricultural Lands

The final mandatory factor to address is the agency's impact on agricultural land. The land within Snowball CSA is primarily agricultural and its levee maintenance service does not induce urban growth or the premature conversion of agricultural land to urban uses.

#### Sphere of Influence Recommendation

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that the 10 and 20 year Sphere of Influence lines for Snowball CSA be coterminous with its current boundaries (refer to Map 5).

## ***ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW***

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The California Environmental Quality Act requires that an environmental review be undertaken and completed for the Commission's Municipal Services Review and Sphere of Influence Study. This MSR/SOI qualifies for a General Exemption from further CEQA review based upon CEQA Regulation §15061(b)(3), which states:

"The activity is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA."

Since there are no boundary changes or possible environmental impacts associated with this MSR/SOI, a Notice of Exemption is the appropriate environmental document.

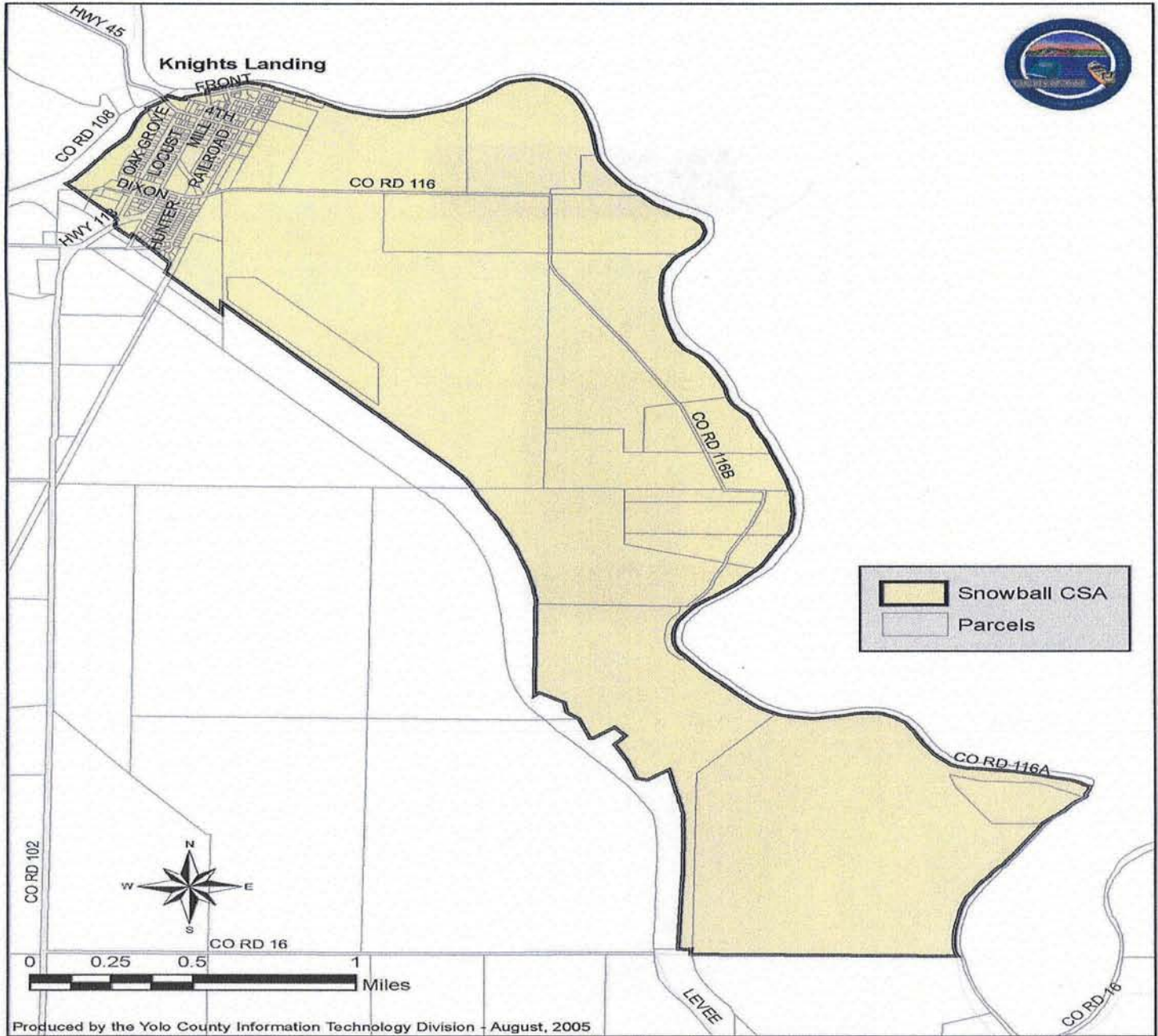


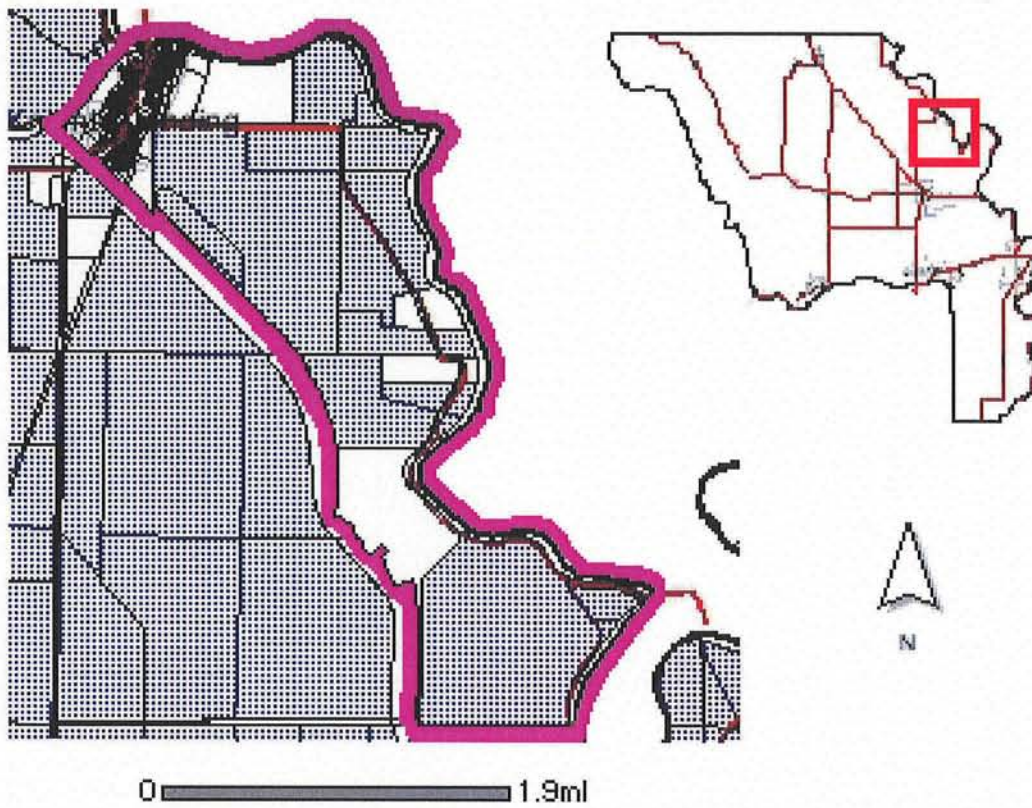
## ***REFERENCES***

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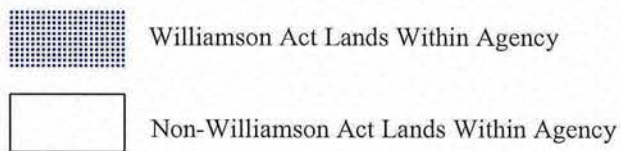
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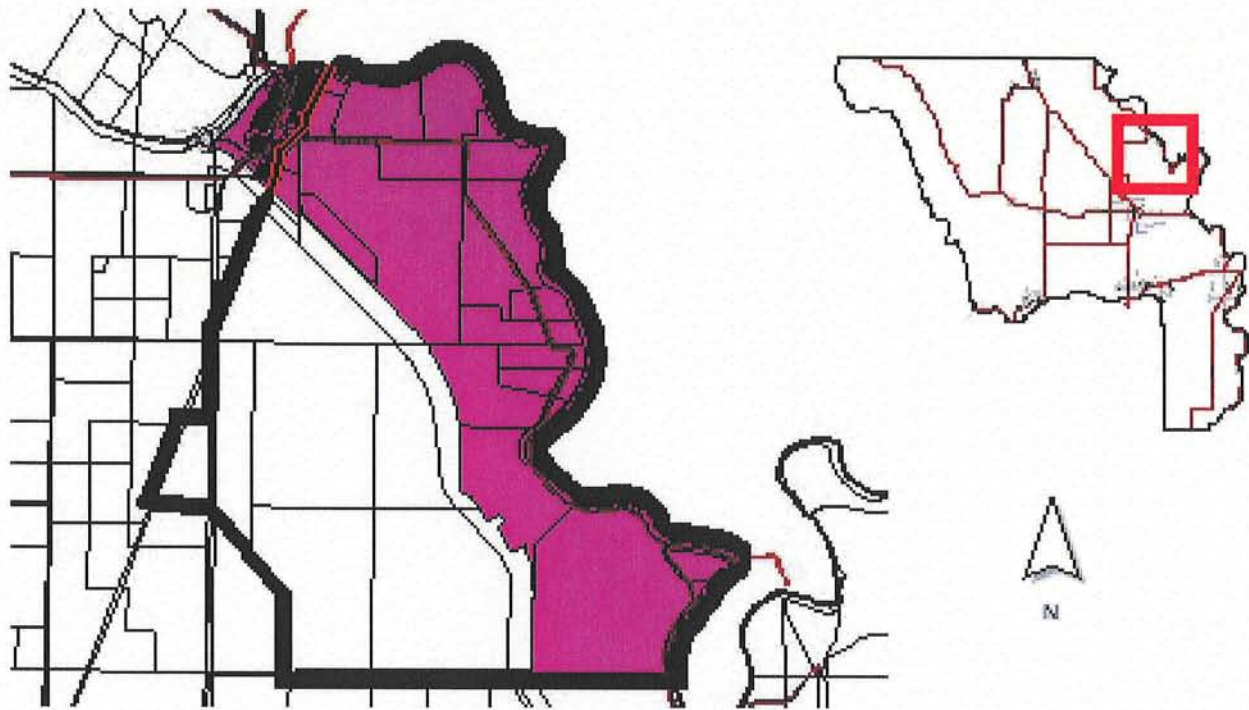
# Snowball County Service Area







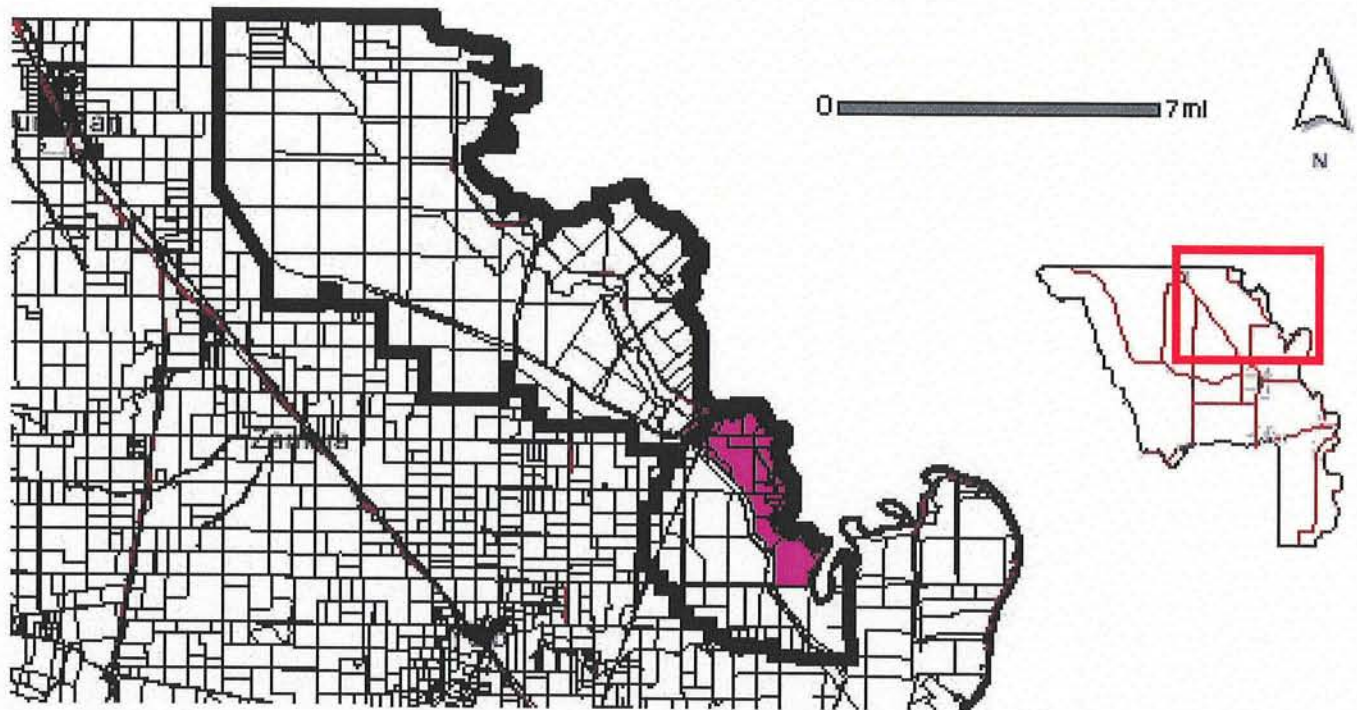
## Williamson Act Lands in Snowball County Service Area







### **Snowball County Service Area and Reclamation District 730**

-  Snowball County Service Area
-  Boundary of Reclamation District 730



## Snowball County Service Area and Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District

-  Snowball County Service Area
-  Boundary of Knights Landing Ridge Drainage District

# Snowball County Service Area

