



VENTURA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION  
**STAFF REPORT**

Meeting Date: November 16, 2022

**TO:** LAFCo Commissioners

**FROM:** Andrea Ozdy, Deputy Executive Officer *Andrea Ozdy*

**SUBJECT:** Sphere of Influence Review:  
 LAFCo 22-22S Casitas Municipal Water District

**Recommendations:**

- A. Determine that the action to review the sphere of influence for Casitas Municipal Water District (District) is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines.
- B. Adopt Resolution LAFCo 22-22S (Attachment 2) making determinations and reviewing the sphere of influence for the District pursuant to Government Code Section 56425(g), including that a sphere of influence update is not necessary.

**Background:**

Pursuant to the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.), the Commission was required to determine and adopt a sphere of influence (or “sphere”) for each city and special district on or before January 1, 2008. A sphere of influence is defined in Government Code Section 56076 as the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Commission. Every five years thereafter, the Commission must, as necessary, review and update each sphere of influence (Government Code Section 56425(g)).

In compliance with Government Code Section 56425(g), the Commission accepted a Municipal Service Review (MSR) report on December 12, 2003, for the District, entitled *Water and Wastewater Municipal Service Review Report*.

LAFCo’s past sphere of influence reviews resulted in no modifications of the sphere in 2006, 2011, and 2016.

COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

COUNTY	CITY	DISTRICT	PUBLIC
Linda Parks	Claudia Bill-de la Peña	Elaine Freeman	Pat Richards, Vice-Chair
Vacant	Janice Parvin	Mary Anne Rooney	
<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>	<i>Alternate</i>
Matt LaVere	John C. Zaragoza	John R. (Jack) Curtis	David J. Ross
<b>Executive Officer</b>	<b>Deputy Executive Officer</b>	<b>Office Manager/Clerk</b>	<b>Legal Counsel</b>
Kai Luoma	Andrea Ozdy	Richelle Beltran	Jeffrey Barnes

## **Discussion:**

### *District Information*

The Casitas Municipal Water District is an independent special district formed in 1952 that provides both wholesale and retail water service to municipal and individual customers, water conservation programs, recreation services at Lake Casitas (i.e., a reservoir operated by the District), and limited wastewater collection services for portable wastewater facilities. A 5-member board of directors governs the District. The District's sphere of influence covers approximately 87,438 acres (about 136 square miles), and its jurisdictional boundary is coterminous with its sphere (Attachment 1)<sup>1</sup>.

### *Current Sphere of Influence Review*

LAFCo staff consulted with the District's general manager to discuss the District's sphere of influence, and to determine: (1) if the District has experienced any changes to its service needs or areas since LAFCo's most recent evaluation of its sphere of influence, and (2) if the District staff anticipates any service changes that would warrant adjustment of the sphere boundaries. The existing sphere of influence boundary continues to reflect the District's current and probable service area, and is justified based on the MSR report provided for the Commission's consideration as part of Agenda Item 17 of the November 16, 2022, meeting. The MSR demonstrates that the District has the ability to provide services at acceptable levels. Therefore, no changes to the sphere of influence for the District are recommended.

### *Written Determinations*

Government Code Section 56425(e) requires that, in determining the sphere of influence of an agency, the Commission 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.* (Section 56425(e)(1))

The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. However, growth within the overall District area is expected to be approximately 6.3 percent (e.g., approximately 4,040 additional residents) during the 20-year period spanning from 2020 to 2040. Based on the land use designations and

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<sup>1</sup> The size of the District's jurisdictional area and sphere of influence represents only the land area, and excludes the area located within the Pacific Ocean.

characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, existing land uses are expected to remain unchanged.

- (2) *The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area.* (Section 56425(e)(2))

The District provides both wholesale and retail water service, recreation services at Lake Casitas (i.e., a reservoir operated by the District), and limited wastewater collection services for portable wastewater facilities. The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately 1/3 of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. The need for services provided by the District will remain unchanged, and additional demand for services (through the addition of approximately 4,040 residents between 2020 and 2040) is expected, primarily within and in the vicinity of the City of San Buenaventura.

- (3) *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide.* (Section 56425(e)(3))

The District provides both wholesale and retail water service, recreation services at Lake Casitas (i.e., a reservoir operated by the District), and limited wastewater collection services for portable wastewater facilities. The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately 1/3 of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. While the addition of approximately 4,040 residents is anticipated between 2020 and 2040 (primarily within and surrounding the City of San Buenaventura), based on the evaluation contained in the MSR considered by the Commission on November 16, 2022, the District has the ability to continue to provide municipal services within its service area and sphere of influence, and additional demands would not adversely impact the present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the District 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.* (Section 56425(e)(4))

The District's sphere of influence does not include territory that is known to be a community of interest. No disadvantaged unincorporated communities (defined in Government Code Section 56033.5 as communities having an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income), are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

- (5) *For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire*

*protection. . . the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence.*  
(Section 56425(e)(5))

The review of the District's sphere of influence is not considered an update (i.e., a modification) to the sphere. Additionally, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

#### *California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)*

A project is defined in CEQA Section 21065, in part, as "an activity which may cause either a direct physical change in the environment, or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment." Staff recommends that the Commission find that the review of the District's sphere of influence is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, because "it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment." No change in regulation, land use, or development will occur as a result of the recommended sphere of influence review.

#### *Notice of Public Hearing*

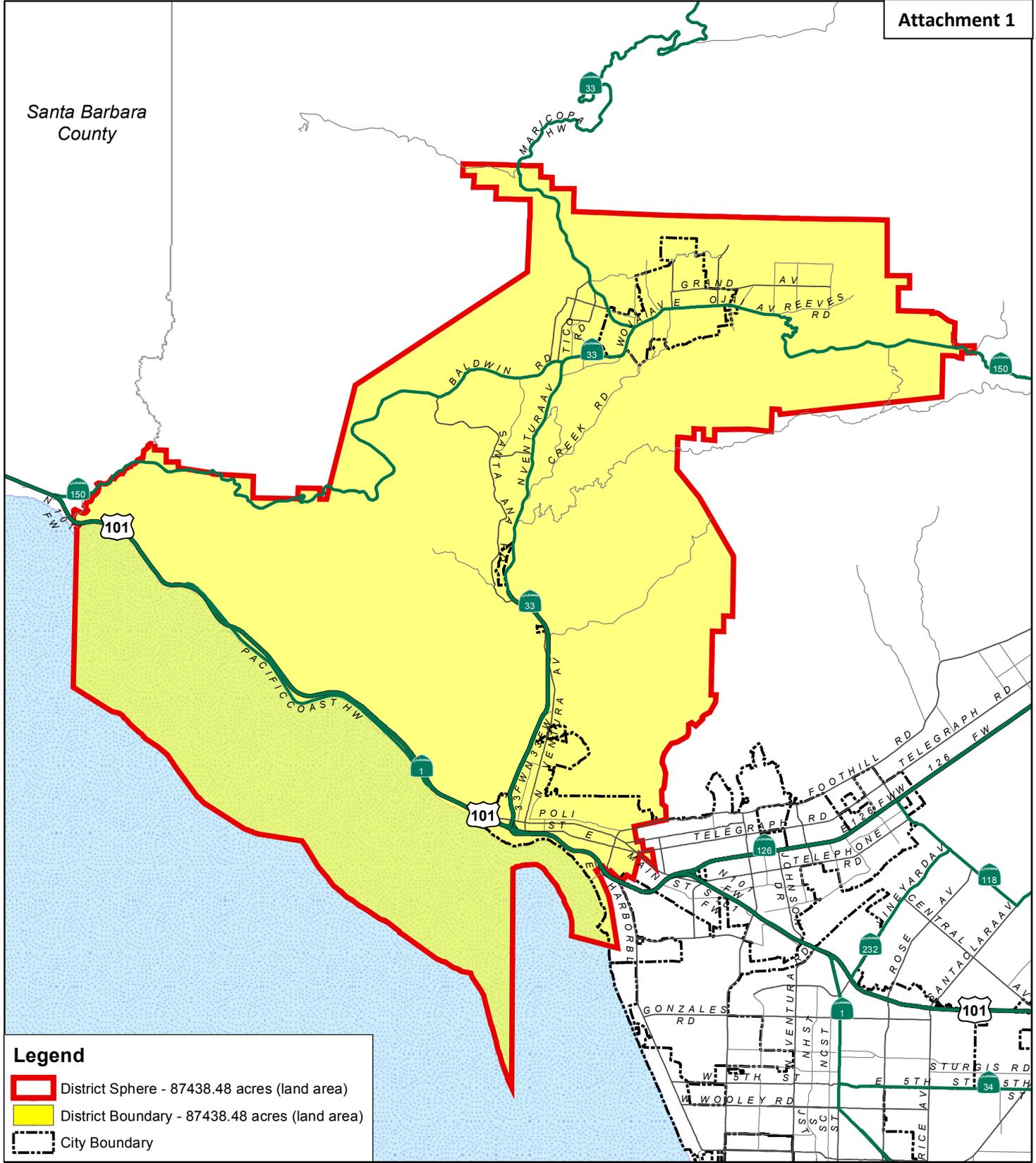
This matter has been noticed as a public hearing pursuant to Government Code Section 56427. Additionally, all affected agencies have been notified of the public hearing.

#### Attachments:

1. Existing Sphere of Influence Map for the Casitas Municipal Water District
2. LAFCo 22-22S Resolution

LAFCo makes every effort to offer legible map files with the online and printed versions of our reports; however, occasionally the need to reduce oversize original maps and/or other technological/software factors can compromise readability. Original maps are available for viewing at the LAFCo office by request.

Santa Barbara County

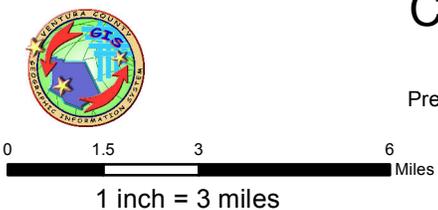


**Legend**

- District Sphere - 87438.48 acres (land area)
- District Boundary - 87438.48 acres (land area)
- City Boundary

## Casitas Municipal Water District Current as of January 20, 2016

Prepared by County of Ventura - IT Services Department - GIS Division  
State Plane Coordinate System California Zone V - NAD 27  
This map was compiled from records and computations



LAFCO 22-22S

**RESOLUTION OF THE VENTURA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION  
COMMISSION MAKING DETERMINATIONS AND REVIEWING  
THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE FOR THE CASITAS MUNICIPAL  
WATER DISTRICT**

WHEREAS, Government Code § 56425 et seq. requires the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo or Commission) to develop and determine the sphere of influence of each local governmental agency within the County; and

WHEREAS, Government Code § 56425(g) requires that on or before January 1, 2008, and every five years thereafter, the Commission shall, as necessary, review and update the sphere of influence of each city and special district; and

WHEREAS, the Commission updated the sphere of influence for the Casitas Municipal Water District (District) in 2006, 2011, and 2016;

WHEREAS, the Commission desires to review the sphere of influence for the District; and

WHEREAS, no change in regulation, land use, or development will occur as a result of reviewing the sphere of influence for the District; and

WHEREAS, at the times and in the manner required by law, the LAFCo Executive Officer gave notice of the consideration of this item by the Commission; and

WHEREAS, the sphere of influence review item was duly considered at a public hearing on November 16, 2022, as specified in the notice of hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Commission heard, discussed, and considered all oral and written testimony for and against the sphere of influence review including, but not limited to, the LAFCo Staff Report dated November 16, 2022, and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Commission accepted the Municipal Service Review (MSR) report for the District dated November 16, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, DETERMINED, AND ORDERED by the Commission as follows:

- (1) The LAFCo Staff Report dated November 16, 2022, and recommended review of the sphere of influence for the District are adopted; and
- (2) The subject sphere of influence review is assigned the following distinctive short form designation:  
**LAFCO 22-22S CASITAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT SPHERE OF INFLUENCE REVIEW;**  
and
- (3) An update (modification) to the sphere of influence for the District is not necessary; and
- (4) The sphere of influence review for the District is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to § 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, and LAFCo staff is directed to file a Notice of Exemption as the lead agency pursuant to § 15062 of the CEQA Guidelines; and
- (5) The Commission has considered the criteria set forth in Government Code § 56425(e) and determines as follows:

**a. *The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open-space lands. (§ 56425(e)(1))***

The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately 1/3 of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. The Ojai area is not projected to experience notable population growth and no significant development projects are anticipated within the District's sphere. However, growth within the overall District area is expected to be approximately 6.3 percent (e.g., approximately 4,040 additional residents) during the 20-year period spanning from 2020 to 2040. Based on the land use designations and characteristics of the land contained within the District's sphere, existing land uses are expected to remain unchanged.

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

**(§ 56425(e)(2))**

The District provides both wholesale and retail water service, recreation services at Lake Casitas (i.e., a reservoir operated by the District), and limited wastewater collection services for portable wastewater facilities. The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. The need for services provided by the District will remain unchanged, and additional demand for services (through the addition of approximately 4,040 residents between 2020 and 2040) is expected, primarily within and in the vicinity of the City of San Buenaventura.

**c. *The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide. (§ 56425(e)(3))***

The District provides both wholesale and retail water service, recreation services at Lake Casitas (i.e., a reservoir operated by the District), and limited wastewater collection services for portable wastewater facilities. The District's sphere of influence consists of a range of uses, including urban development within the City of Ojai, the western approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the City of San Buenaventura, and unincorporated residential, commercial, rural, agricultural, and open space land surrounding and between these cities. While the addition of approximately 4,040 residents is anticipated between 2020 and 2040 (primarily within and surrounding the City of San Buenaventura), based on the evaluation contained in the MSR considered by the Commission on November 16, 2022, the District has the ability to continue to provide municipal services within its service area and sphere of influence, and additional demands would not adversely impact the present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the District provides or is authorized to provide.

**d. *The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency. (§ 56425(e)(4))***

The District's sphere of influence does not include territory that is known to be a community of interest. No disadvantaged unincorporated communities (defined in Government Code Section 56033.5 as communities having an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income), are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

**e. *For an update of a sphere of influence of a city or special district that provides public facilities or services related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, or structural fire protection. . . the present and probable need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing sphere of influence. (§ 56425(e)(5))***

The review of the District's sphere of influence is not considered an update (i.e., a modification) to the sphere. Additionally, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities are located within or contiguous to the District's sphere of influence.

- (6) The sphere of influence for the District is hereby reviewed and is generally depicted in Exhibit A, "Casitas Municipal Water District," attached hereto; and
- (7) LAFCo staff is directed to have the official Geographic Information System (GIS) sphere of influence data maintained for the Ventura LAFCo by the Ventura County Information Technology Services Department as the official sphere of influence record for the District updated consistent with this action.

This resolution was adopted on November 16, 2022.

	AYE	NO	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Commissioner Bill-de la Peña	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Freeman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Parks	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Parvin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Richards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Commissioner Rooney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Curtis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner LaVere	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Ross	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alt. Commissioner Zaragoza	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

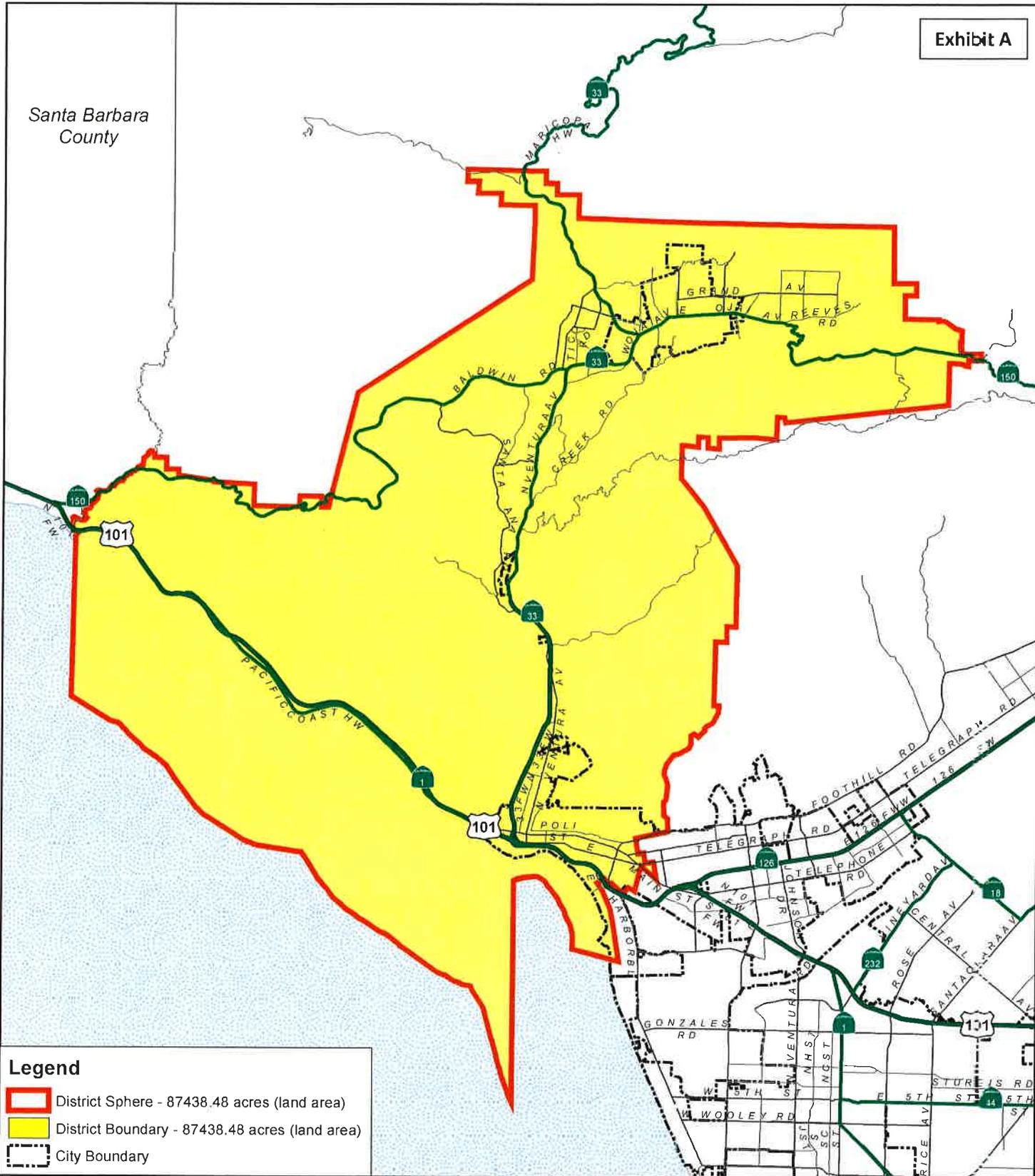
11/16/2022  
Date

Linda Parks  
Chair, Ventura Local Agency Formation Commission

Attachment: Exhibit A

c: Casitas Municipal Water District  
Ventura County Information Technology Services Department

Santa Barbara County



Legend

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- District Boundary - 87438.48 acres (land area)
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# Casitas Municipal Water District

## Current as of January 20, 2016

Prepared by County of Ventura - IT Services Department - GIS Division  
 State Plane Coordinate System California Zone V - NAD 27

This map was compiled from records and computations



1 inch = 3 miles