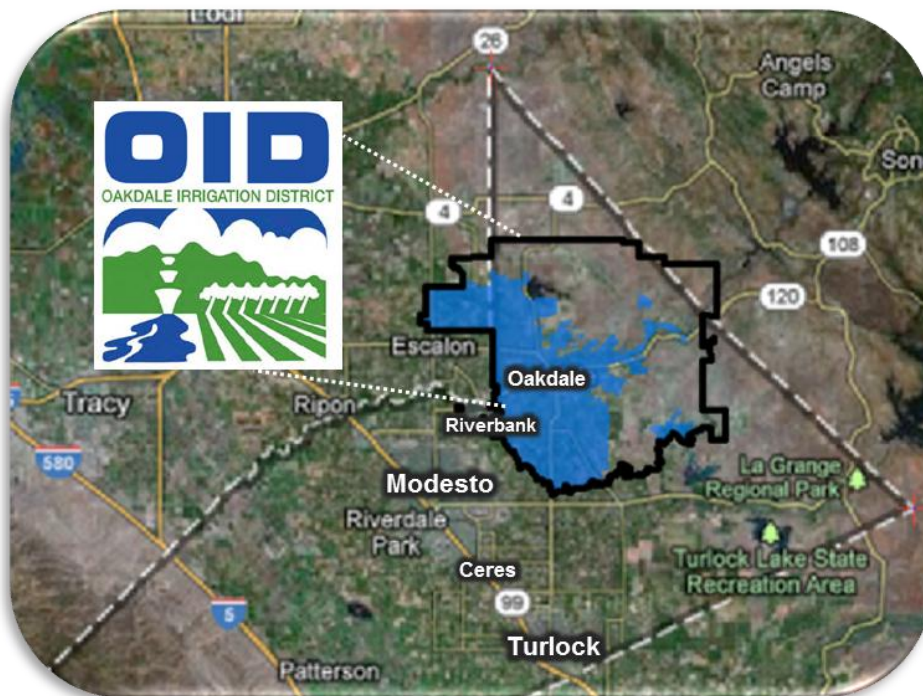


**MUNICIPAL SERVICE REVIEW AND  
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE UPDATE FOR THE:**



**OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

*Prepared By:*

**Stanislaus Local Agency Formation Commission  
1010 Tenth Street, Third Floor  
Modesto, CA 95354  
Phone: (209) 525-7660**

**Adopted: July 24, 2013**

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# **Municipal Service Review and Sphere of Influence Update For the Oakdale Irrigation District**

## **Introduction**

The Cortese/Knox/Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 Act (CKH Act) requires the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to update the spheres of influence (SOI) for all applicable jurisdictions in the County. A sphere of influence is defined by Government Code 56076 as "...a plan for the probable physical boundary and service area of a local agency, as determined by the Commission." The Act further requires that a municipal service review (MSR) be conducted prior to or, in conjunction with, the update of a sphere of influence (SOI).

The legislative authority for conducting a municipal service review is provided in Government Code Section 56430 of the CKH Act. The Act states, that "in order to prepare and to update spheres of influence in accordance with Section 56425, the commission shall conduct a service review of the municipal services provided in the county or other appropriate area..." MSRs must have written determinations that address the following factors in order to update a Sphere of Influence. These factors were recently amended to include identification of disadvantaged unincorporated communities<sup>1</sup> within or contiguous to the sphere of influence of an agency.

## **Municipal Service Review Factors to be Addressed**

1. Growth and population projections for the affected area
2. The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
3. Present and planned capacity of public facilities, adequacy of public services, and infrastructure needs or deficiencies including needs or deficiencies related to sewers, municipal and industrial water, and structural fire protection in any disadvantaged, unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
4. Financial ability of agencies to provide services
5. Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities
6. Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies
7. Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy

State Guidelines and Commission policies encourage cooperation among a variety of stakeholders involved in the preparation of a municipal service review. This MSR will analyze the existing and future services for the Oakdale Irrigation District, located in the northeastern portion of the County. The MSR will also provide a basis for the District and LAFCO to evaluate, and if appropriate, make changes to the District's Sphere of Influence.

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<sup>1</sup> Under Government Code Section 56033.5, "disadvantaged unincorporated community" is defined as an inhabited territory (12 or more registered voters), or as determined by commission policy, with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income.

## **Sphere of Influence Update Process**

A special district is a government agency that is required to have an adopted and updated sphere of influence. Section 56425(g) of the CKH Act calls for spheres of influence to be reviewed and updated every five years, as necessary. Stanislaus LAFCO processes municipal service reviews and sphere of influence updates concurrently to ensure efficient use of resources. For rural special districts, which do not have the typical municipal-level services to review, this document will be used to determine what type of services each district is expected to provide and the extent to which they are actually able to do so. For these special districts, the spheres will delineate the service capability and expansion capacity of the agency, if applicable.

The previous sphere of influence update for the Oakdale Irrigation District was completed in 2010, as part of the 5-year review cycle to re-affirm the District's Sphere of Influence. The current update is in response to a proposed expansion of the Sphere of Influence.

## **Background**

Throughout the years, water and California have been linked. No resource is more vital to California than water, from the agricultural areas, urban centers, and industrial plants, to open space and recreational areas, the distribution of water has been critical to all land uses.

In California, there are hundreds of special water districts with a great diversity of purposes, governance structures, and financing mechanisms. Some districts are responsible for one type of specific duty, while other districts provide multiple public services, as is the case for the Oakdale Irrigation District.

## **Authority**

The Oakdale Irrigation District was organized under the Wright Act and operates under Irrigation District Law, Division 11 of the Water Code, Section 20500 et. seq. In addition, the District is considered to be a "registered voter district", as the board of directors is elected by registered voters from five geographical divisions within the District's boundaries.

## **Purpose**

Irrigation districts are formed for the provision of sufficient water in the district for any beneficial use. An irrigation district has the power to control, distribute, store, spread, sink, treat, purify, recapture, and salvage any water including, but not limited to, sewage waters for beneficial use of users of the district or its inhabitants. A district may also provide for flood control and can engage in the generation, transmission, distribution, sale and lease of electric power (Water Code Section 22075-22186).

## **Classification of Services**

As part of the initial service review adopted for the Oakdale Irrigation District, the District provided a listing of the services currently provided within its boundaries. The District is authorized to provide the functions or classes of services (e.g. irrigation, domestic water, and electrical power) as identified in this report. Due to recent changes in the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Act, the District would have to seek LAFCO approval to exercise other latent powers (i.e. services) not currently provided by the District.

## **Municipal Service Review – Oakdale Irrigation District**

### **Formation**

The Oakdale Irrigation District (OID) was formed on November 1, 1909.

### **Services**

OID currently provides agricultural irrigation and domestic water services to its customers. The District's water supply comes from the Stanislaus River (under well-established water rights), recapture of drainage water, and pumping from deep groundwater wells. The District's distribution systems include the Goodwin Diversion Dam on the Stanislaus River below the Tulloch Dam, at which point water is diverted into the District's main canal systems.

The District is also a wholesale power distributor through its Tri-Dam Project. The Oakdale Irrigation District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) jointly own and operate storage reserves (Tri-Dam Project) and have storage rights in the federally-owned New Melones Reservoir. The two Districts, under the Tri-Dam Project, own, operate, and maintain three hydro-electrical power facilities: one each at Donnell's Reservoir, Beardsley Lake, and Tulloch Lake. The Tri-Dam Project's principal activities are the storage and delivery of water to each District and the hydraulic generation of power. As of January 1, 2009, the Districts market the power through a consultant, Shell Energy North America.

Additionally, through the Tri-Dam Power Authority, the two Districts own, operate, and maintain the Sand Bar Project, a hydro-electric facility downstream of Beardsley Lake which became operational in 1986. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) has contracted to purchase all of the power produced by this facility.

The District also manages several domestic water systems, which are part of nine private and publicly-owned systems that exist in an unincorporated area east of the City of Oakdale. Two of the systems are owned by OID, while seven of the systems are owned by homeowner groups who have entered into an "improvement district" arrangement with OID to manage their water systems for State compliance.

### **Location and Size**

The majority of the District is located in northeastern Stanislaus County. The District also covers territory in San Joaquin County. The District boundaries comprise approximately 73,660 acres. The District maintains more than 330 miles of laterals, pipelines, and tunnels, 25 production wells, and 43 reclamation pumps.

### **Sphere of Influence**

The District's existing Sphere of Influence incorporates approximately 159,595 acres (or 86,667 acres beyond the existing District boundaries). The city limits of Oakdale and the unincorporated communities of Knights Ferry and Valley Home are located within the District's Sphere of Influence. However, the city limits of Riverbank are excluded from the westerly portion of the District's SOI, as these areas were detached upon annexation to the City. On the eastside, the District is proposing a 1,202-acre expansion to its Sphere of Influence in order to accommodate a portion of the Trinitas Change of Organization proposal that extends beyond the existing Sphere of Influence. A map outlining the District's boundaries, SOI, and proposed

SOI expansion area is attached under Appendix “B”. This Service Review is intended to cover the District’s existing boundary and Sphere of Influence area, as well as the additional territory proposed for the expansion.

### **Governance**

A five member Board of Directors governs the District. Registered voters within a geographical area or “Division”, elect the board members. Meetings are held on the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 9:00 a.m. in the District office located at 1205 East “F” Street in Oakdale. All meetings are open to the public. Agendas are prepared and posted by 9:00 a.m. on the Thursday before each meeting on the bulletin board in the lobby of the District office. The District also has a website ([www.oakdaleirrigation.com](http://www.oakdaleirrigation.com)) that is user-friendly and provides information such as the history of the District, current Board agendas, water updates, and quarterly newsletters.

### **Personnel**

The District currently has 69 full-time and 1 part-time employees.

### **Mission Statement**

“To protect and develop Oakdale Irrigation District water resources for the maximum benefit of the Oakdale Irrigation District community by providing excellent irrigation and domestic water service.”

### **Partnership Agencies**

The District maintains positive and collaborative relationships with other agencies, such as: South San Joaquin, Merced, Modesto, and Turlock Irrigation Districts, Stockton East Water District, Stanislaus County, City of Oakdale, Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District, City of Riverbank, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), State Water Resources Board, Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Water Resources (DWR), Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), California Special Districts Association (CSDA), San Joaquin River Group Authority, and the Tuolumne/Stanslaus Groundwater Management Group.

### **Funding Sources**

The majority of the District’s revenue is from power sales as a result of OID and South San Joaquin Irrigation District’s Tri-Dam Project and Tri-Dam Power Authority. Other sources include income from water transfers, irrigation water sales, County property tax appropriations, interest revenue, and domestic water revenue.

### **Determinations**

The following provides an analysis of the six categories or components required by Section 56430 for a Service Review for the Oakdale Irrigation District:

#### **1. Growth and Population Projections for the Affected Area**

The Oakdale Irrigation District currently serves over 2,900 customers with irrigation water for agricultural purposes and approximately 762 customers with domestic water for residential purposes. On an annual basis, the District provides irrigation water for 20 to 30 out-of-



district agreements, depending on water availability.

The District updates its customer records as necessary for billing purposes. Part of that update includes parcel size, location, and crop type of lands served with OID water. As land use conversions take place, the water needs of OID's customer base can substantially change. This information, combined with data from the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Finance, and the U.S. Census Bureau allows the District to develop land use trends and forecasts. The District projects that by 2025, approximately 10 percent of the total current OID lands will likely be lost due to urbanization by the City of Oakdale. The District also projects an increase in irrigated agriculture outside the current District boundaries, which may provide opportunities for District expansion.

## **2. The Location and Characteristics of Any Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

Under Government Code Section 56033.5, "disadvantaged unincorporated community" is defined as an inhabited territory (12 or more registered voters), or as determined by commission policy, with an annual median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual median household income. Upon review of available Census data, and identified communities in the County, no disadvantaged unincorporated communities were found within or contiguous to the District's Sphere of Influence.

## **3. Present and Planned Capacity of Public Facilities, Adequacy of Public Services, and Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies Including Needs or Deficiencies Related to Sewers, Municipal and Industrial Water, and Structural Fire Protection to Any Disadvantaged, Unincorporated Communities Within or Contiguous to the Sphere of Influence**

OID's existing and planned public facilities and services are designed to supply irrigation and related drainage with the priority of serving those properties within District boundaries prior to out-of-district approvals. In late 2005, the District completed a Water Resources Plan (WRP). The WRP evaluated the District's water resources, facilities, and operations. It also prioritized recommendations for future OID facility improvements.

The District's WRP concluded that many of its conveyance systems are in poor condition and must be replaced or modified to meet water delivery service needs. The WRP anticipated that over the next 20 years the District would need to invest \$168 million on rehabilitation and improved service projects including, main canal and tunnel major improvements, additional flow-control and measurement structures, additional groundwater wells, and accelerated irrigation service turn-out replacements.

As indicated previously, there are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the City's Sphere of Influence.

## **4. Financial Ability of Agencies to Provide Services**

In 2009, power generation from both the Tri-Dam Power Project and the Tri-Dam Power Authority accounted for approximately 38 percent of the District's total revenue. Water transfer agreements and agricultural water delivery charges contribute approximately 49 percent of the net revenue, while domestic water charges and taxes provide only a slight contribution to the total revenue.

The District's adopted Water Resources Plan (WRP) includes a financial plan to achieve infrastructure and modernization needs currently identified by the District. In 2009, the District issued \$32 million in bonds to assist in financing several components of the WRP, including the North Side Regulating Reservoir (completed in 2010), a water reclamation project, and repairs to high hazard areas on its main canal and tunnels.

OID appears to be financially sound with strong and stable sources of revenue, substantial reserves, and a superior credit rating. The District's long-range planning programs allow the District to plan and budget for needed improvements to services and facilities in a balanced way that is consistent with its anticipated revenue. The District's budget process is designed to screen out unnecessary costs and is submitted to the Board of Directors for review and approval.

#### **5. Status of, and Opportunities for, Shared Facilities**

The District and the South San Joaquin Irrigation District jointly own and operate three storage reservoirs (Tulloch, Beardsley, and Donnells). The District also jointly owns, operates, and maintains the Donnells, Beardsley, and Tulloch power plants along with a separate power facility (Sand Bar Project) with the South San Joaquin Irrigation District. In addition, both Districts own, operate and maintain the Joint Main Canal running along the north side of the Stanislaus River Canyon. This canal carries 100% of South San Joaquin Irrigation District's water to its service area and provides 40% of OID's deliveries for those lands within its boundaries along the north side of Stanislaus River.

The District has also contributed funding to the City of Oakdale for water safety and water conservation programs; to the Oakdale Fire Department for water rescue training and materials; and to the Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District for a new water rescue boat. Under a development agreement, the District shares eight water wells with the Oakdale Rural Fire Protection District, which allows the fire district to refill their fire trucks during emergencies. The District also has a joint easement with the City of Oakdale for the Burchell Hills Specific Plan Area Bike Path.

#### **6. Accountability for Community Service Needs, Including Governmental Structure and Operational Efficiencies**

A five-member Board of Directors governs the District. Registered voters within a geographical area or "Division", elect the board members. The Board conforms to the provisions of the Brown Act requiring open meetings. The District also has established a website ([www.oakdaleirrigation.com](http://www.oakdaleirrigation.com)) that is user-friendly and provides information such as the history of the District, current Board agendas, water updates, and quarterly newsletters.

The District has the necessary resources and staffing levels to operate in a cost-efficient and professional manner. It is reasonable to conclude that the District has the organizational capability to adequately serve the areas under its jurisdiction.

#### **7. Any Other Matter Related to Effective or Efficient Service Delivery, as Required by Commission Policy**

In 2010, the District completed construction on the North Side Regulating Reservoir. (This is in addition to two other regulating reservoirs serving other parts of the District.) The efficiencies of the North Side Regulating Reservoir are expected to better manage mismatches in supply and demand. Other efficiencies are being achieved through

automation of water control gates. The District has installed 31 of these gates, which substantially eliminate lateral canal spill and assist in better on-farm control and higher on-farm efficiency.

## **Sphere of Influence Update**

In determining a sphere of influence (SOI) of each local agency, the Commission shall consider and prepare determinations with respect to each of the following factors, pursuant to Government Code Section 56425:

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.
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.

The District has proposed an expansion of its Sphere of Influence in order to accommodate the Trinitas Change of Organization application. (See map attached as Appendix "B".) This expansion area consists of approximately 1,202 acres, located just east of the existing Sphere of Influence, along Warnerville Road.

The following determinations for the Oakdale Irrigation District's Sphere of Influence update are made in conformance with Government Code Section 56425 and local Commission policy.

### **Determinations:**

#### **1. Present and Planned Land Uses in the Area, Including Agricultural and Open-Space Lands**

The Oakdale Irrigation District's current boundary is comprised of approximately 73,660 acres, with a Sphere of Influence (SOI) area that encompasses 85,935+/- acres beyond the existing District boundary. The land uses within the District's existing boundaries and Sphere of Influence consist of agricultural, rural residential, suburban and urban land use areas. Territory within the proposed expansion area (approximately 1,202 acres) consists primarily of agricultural land uses. These uses are not expected to change, except in the Spheres of Influence of the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank. In addition, the District does not have the authority to make land use decisions, nor does it have authority over present or planned land uses within its boundaries. The responsibility for land use decisions within the District boundaries is retained by Stanislaus, Calaveras, San Joaquin counties, and the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank.

## **2. Present and Probable Need for Public Facilities and Services in the Area**

The District has developed a Water Resources Plan (WRP) to address the District's water resource needs into the future. Components of the Plan include: public outreach, resource inventory (surface, groundwater), water balance, infrastructure plan, and water rights portfolio. The WRP also projects the reasonable number of acres within the SOI that could be annexed to OID's boundaries while maintaining service levels to existing lands within the District's boundaries.

The present and probable need for the District's ability to continue to provide public facilities and services in the area is affected by the fact that the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank's Spheres of Influence overlap into the District. In addition, the District has a diminishing Sphere of Influence in that as territory annexes to the City of Riverbank, it detaches from the District.

The District's Sphere of Influence excludes territory within the current city limits of Riverbank, at the District's request. This is because the distribution system in the Riverbank area is old and some of the areas were being subdivided into very small ranchettes, which are difficult to serve. In order to avoid dual water systems as territory is annexed to the City, it is detached from the District, and as a result of the above it is getting more difficult to move irrigation water through the urban area to the District's territory to the west. These problems are not as severe in Oakdale where the system has been designed to better serve lands around the City and not be disrupted by City growth. However, a policy of detaching City territory and City annexations from the District may be considered in the future.

Continued urban development within the District's current service area may lead to future annexations within the Sphere of Influence area as appropriate. Consistent with LAFCO policies, in order to annex additional territory, the District must provide and/or demonstrate that there are sufficient quantities of water to serve additional territory without affecting the present service area and/or existing customers. The availability of current water supplies each year is affected by numerous factors, including annual rainfall and snowfall, and environmental factors such as: climate demand, water conservation efforts, crop changes, contractual obligations for water transfers, etc.

## **3. Present Capacity of Public Facilities and Adequacy of Public Services that the Agency Provides or is Authorized to Provide**

The District has strong surface water rights, including annual diversion rights from the Stanislaus River of 300,000 acre-feet (normal year). The District utilizes a Surface Water Shortage Policy in order to address service delivery issues during times when the quantity of water right available to the District is insufficient to meet the water demands of the crops grown.

As part of the Water Resources Plan (WRP), the District selected an alternative which focuses on maximizing improvements in the District and provides for moderate expansion in the SOI. Since the WRP's adoption in late 2005, the District has been actively reinvesting in its canal system based on improvement needs, as prioritized in the WRP. The improvements are intended to enhance customer service, use water more efficiently, increase drought protection, and reduce the amount of water leaving the District without benefiting OID customers.

Through implementation of the WRP and through projected land use changes, the District has identified up to 67,000 acre feet per year of water that will be available for water transfers and annexations over the next 20-year period.

**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 following jurisdictions can be categorized as communities of interest in the area: the cities of Oakdale and Riverbank, and the unincorporated communities of Knights Ferry, Valley Home, and the rural residential area known as East Oakdale. The Spheres of Influence for both the City of Oakdale and Riverbank overlap into the District's boundaries, which may affect the District's ability to provide services to these areas as urbanization occurs.

**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**

The District manages several domestic water systems, which are part of nine private and publicly-owned systems that exist in an unincorporated area east of the City of Oakdale. However, as discussed in the District's Municipal Service Review, there are no identified disadvantaged unincorporated communities within the existing Sphere of Influence or the proposed expansion area.

**APPENDIX "A"**  
**DISTRICT SUMMARY PROFILE**



District: **OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT**

Formation: November 1, 1909

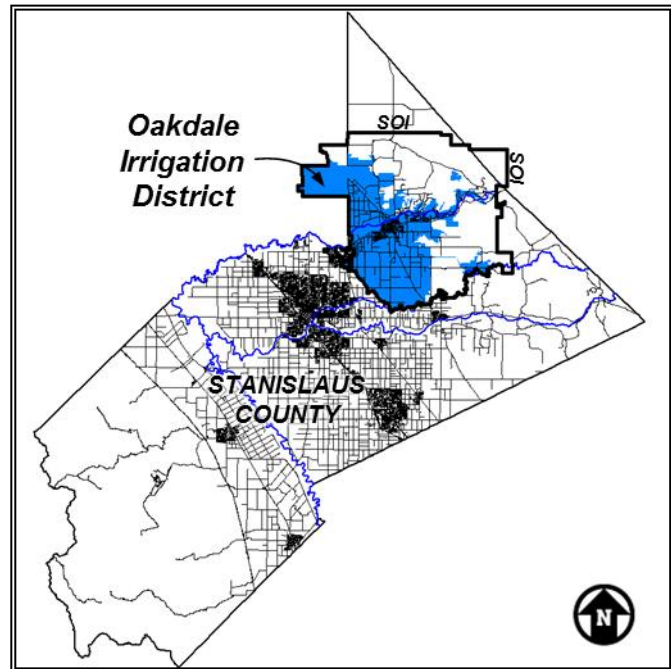
Location: Majority of the District is located in northeastern Stanislaus County. The District also covers territory in San Joaquin County, with portions of its Sphere of Influence also extending into Calaveras, and Tuolumne Counties

Boundary: 73,660+/- acres

Sphere of Influence: 159,595+/- acres total, including the existing district boundary (with an additional 1,202 acres proposed, as shown in Appendix "B").

Customers: 2,900+ agricultural, 762+ domestic accounts

Land Use: Agricultural, rural residential, suburban and urban



District Services: Irrigation water, domestic water, and wholesale electrical power

Enabling Act: California Water Code, Division 11, Irrigation Districts, §20500-29978

Governing Body: Five Board of Directors, elected by registered voters within five divisions of the District boundaries

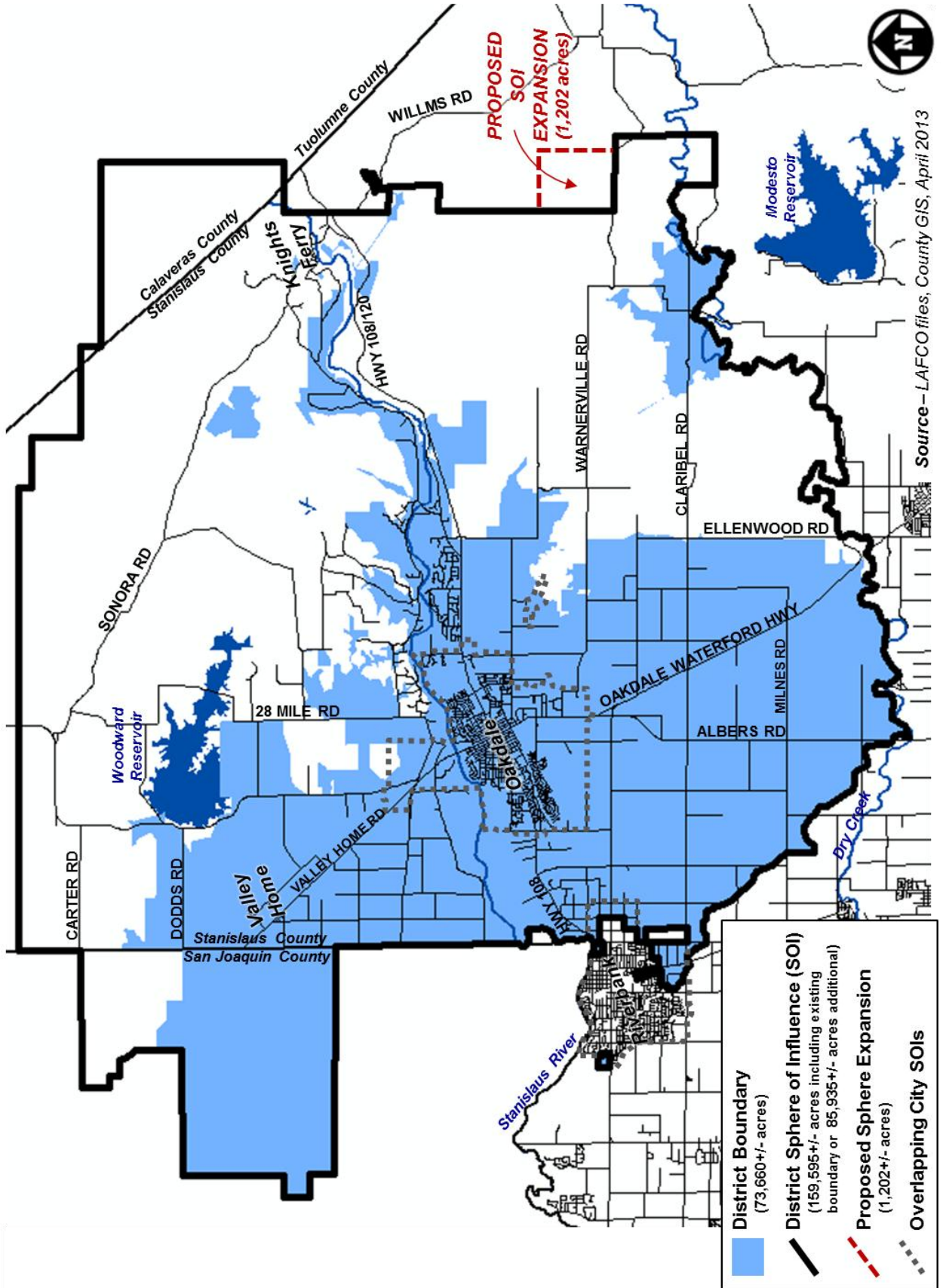
Administration: 70 Employees: 69 full-time and 1 part-time

Budget: Calendar Year 2010  
 Revenues: \$25.1 million (including bond proceeds)  
 Expenditures: \$24.9 million (including bonded projects)  
 Capital Improvements: \$10 million

Revenue Sources: Wholesale power, irrigation water sales, water transfers, County property tax appropriations, and domestic water sales

APPENDIX "B"

**OAKDALE IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
BOUNDARY AND SPHERE OF INFLUENCE**



Source – LAFCO files, County GIS, April 2013

## APPENDIX “C”

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### REFERENCES

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- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ([www.usbr.gov](http://www.usbr.gov)).