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# 2023 Municipal Service Review Triangle T Water District

Adopted by the Commission on February 22, 2023



Prepared for:  
Triangle T Water District  
Madera County, California

Prepared by:  
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# Abbreviations

ADA.....	Americans with Disabilities Act
CEQA.....	California Environmental Quality Act
CKH.....	Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000
GSP.....	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
LAFCO.....	Local Agency Formation Commission
MSR.....	Municipal Service Review
OPR.....	Governor’s Office of Planning and Research
TTWD.....	Triangle T Water District
SB.....	Senate Bill
SGMA.....	Sustainable Groundwater Management Agency
SOI.....	Sphere of Influence
WC.....	(California) Water Code

## I. Introduction

The law governing Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCo) was substantially modified effective January 1, 2001 following the adoption of the Cortese-Knox-Hertzberg Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CKH). Among the changes introduced with the adoption of CKH is the requirement that each LAFCo, as necessary, review and update the sphere of influence (SOI) of each city and special district within its county every five (5) years. In August 2003, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) adopted *Local Agency Formation Commission Municipal Service Review Guidelines* as required by the then current version of Government Code Section 56430.

In order to establish an SOI, LAFCo must make written determinations regarding the following:

- The present and planned land uses in the area, including agricultural and open space lands
- The present and probable need for public facilities and services in the area
- The present capacity of public facilities and adequacy of public services that the agency provides or is authorized to provide
- The existence of any social or economic communities of interest in the area if the commission determines that they are relevant to the agency
- 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 that occurs after July 1, 2012, the present and probable future need for those public facilities and services of any disadvantaged unincorporated community within the existing sphere of influence

Additionally, CKH provides that no sphere of influence (SOI) can be updated until the local LAFCo conducts a municipal service review (MSR) for the agency in accordance with Section 56430 to determine that the proposed update promotes the logical and orderly development of the city or district. In November of 2011, Section 56430 was amended by the adoption of Senate Bill (SB) 244 to provide that an MSR consist of a written statement on the LAFCo's determinations with respect to each of the following:

- Growth and population projections for the affected area
- The location and characteristics of any disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or contiguous to the sphere of influence
- 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 adjacent contiguous to the sphere of influence
- Financial ability of agencies to provide services
- Status of, and opportunities for, shared facilities
- Accountability for community service needs, including governmental structure and operational efficiencies
- Any other matter related to effective or efficient service delivery, as required by commission policy.

Specifically, SB 244 modified LAFCo law to require that LAFCos consider effects to disadvantaged unincorporated communities when either property adjacent to one of said communities is annexed or during preparation of an MSR for an SOI amendment after July 1, 2012. The written determinations in the MSR are

# Section One: Introduction – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

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intended to provide LAFCo sufficient information to allow it to make the written determinations needed to establish an agency's SOI. Madera County LAFCO (LAFCO) generally follows the procedures adopted in the OPR guidelines, as amended by recent statutory changes.

## II. Agency Profile – Triangle T Water District

### A. Background

Triangle T Water District (District; TTWD) is a California water district formed in 2017 pursuant to the California Water District Law (California Water Code (WC) Section 34000, *et seq.*). The District was formed to provide surface water supplies for irrigation to the approximately 14,687 acres of land within the District. The initial purposes also included:

- Facilitate contracting with adjacent irrigation and water districts for delivery of supplemental surface water supplies from newly installed facilities delivering water wheeled by the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors;
- Facilitate any potential projects undertaken pursuant to Proposition 1 and/or the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) for groundwater recharge;
- Obtain surplus waters, if any, from neighboring sources, for irrigation use and groundwater recharge on District lands; and,
- Coordinate and monitor the use of shallow and deep groundwater wells to minimize subsidence impacts from groundwater pumping for irrigation.

WC Section 35401 provides that the District “may acquire, plan, construct, maintain, improve, operate, and keep in repair the necessary works for the production, storage, transmission, and distribution of water for irrigation, domestic, industrial, and municipal purposes, and any drainage or reclamation works connected therewith or incidental thereto.” WC Section 35500 further states: “A district may acquire, construct, operate, and furnish facilities and services, within or without the district, for the collection, treatment, and disposal of sewage, waste, and stormwater...”

The District is located north of the San Joaquin River, between Avenues 12 and 20 ½, and between Roads 1 and 8 in western portion of Madera County (**Figure II-2**). The District boundary is coterminous with its sphere of influence (SOI). The District has adopted a resolution requesting that LAFCo initiates proceedings to expand the District’s SOI by 11,293 acres and to annex approximately 3,064 acres; the expanded SOI would allow for future annexation of up to an additional 8,229 acres. The current proposal for annexation includes the groups of parcels described in **Figure II-1. Subsidence Map**



## Section Two: Agency Profile – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

**Table II-1** Project Location below. The District prioritized the following when considering which lands to annex:

- *Land value to be added to the District*
- *Potential for land to be used for recharge or fallowing*
- *Access to shallow wells, or ability to minimize deep aquifer pumping*
- *Proximity to current and future district infrastructure*

Ultimately the decision on which lands to annex (shown on **Table II-1**) was based on which land was net neutral in terms of groundwater extraction, to keep in line with the District's values on subsidence. The San Joaquin Valley, including the District, is an area that has experienced ground subsidence due to a reliance on groundwater pumping, resulting in the underlying aquifers to become overdrafted. As shown in **Figure II-1** the District has experienced subsidence in portions of its boundaries that have reached loss rates of 0.45 to 0.6 feet per year. To reduce the impacts of subsidence on the conveyance capacity for the region's existing water infrastructure, specifically to Central California Irrigation District's (CCID) Poso Canal and San Luis Canal Company's (SLCC) Arroyo Canal and Sack Dam, the landowners in Triangle T Water District and a neighbor (Landowners) entered into a voluntary mitigation agreement with CCID and SLCC in 2017. This mitigation agreement states that the Landowners will complete the construction of infrastructure to move water from CCID and SLCC to the Landowners and their lands. This construction of infrastructure has been completed. The mitigation agreement also states that the Landowners will reduce lower aquifer pumping to 0.6 AF/acre. In return CCID and SLCC will serve as a wheeling agent for purchased surface water and will make excess supplies available for the Landowner's to purchase. All annexation applicants would be required to adhere to the same mitigation requirements. The TTWD Mitigation Subsidence Agreement is contained in **Appendix A: TTWD Subsidence Control Measures Agreement**. An extension to the agreement is contained in **Appendix B: TTWD Subsidence Control Measures Agreement Extension**.

The District continues to take a proactive approach to SGMA and combatting subsidence. Since 2017, TTWD has purchased 28,400 acre-feet of water for the purpose of reduced groundwater pumping, in-lieu and groundwater recharge. The District along with other landowners in the Red Top area have applied for an Appropriative Water Right to take floods flows off the Eastside By-Pass during flood events. During the most recent flood events within the area (2017), TTWD was able to divert 68,000 acre-feet of floodwater into areas where it could be used for crop production or groundwater recharge. By 2021, floodwater diverted from the bypass had increased by about 18 percent to 80,000 acre-feet.

## Section Two: Agency Profile – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

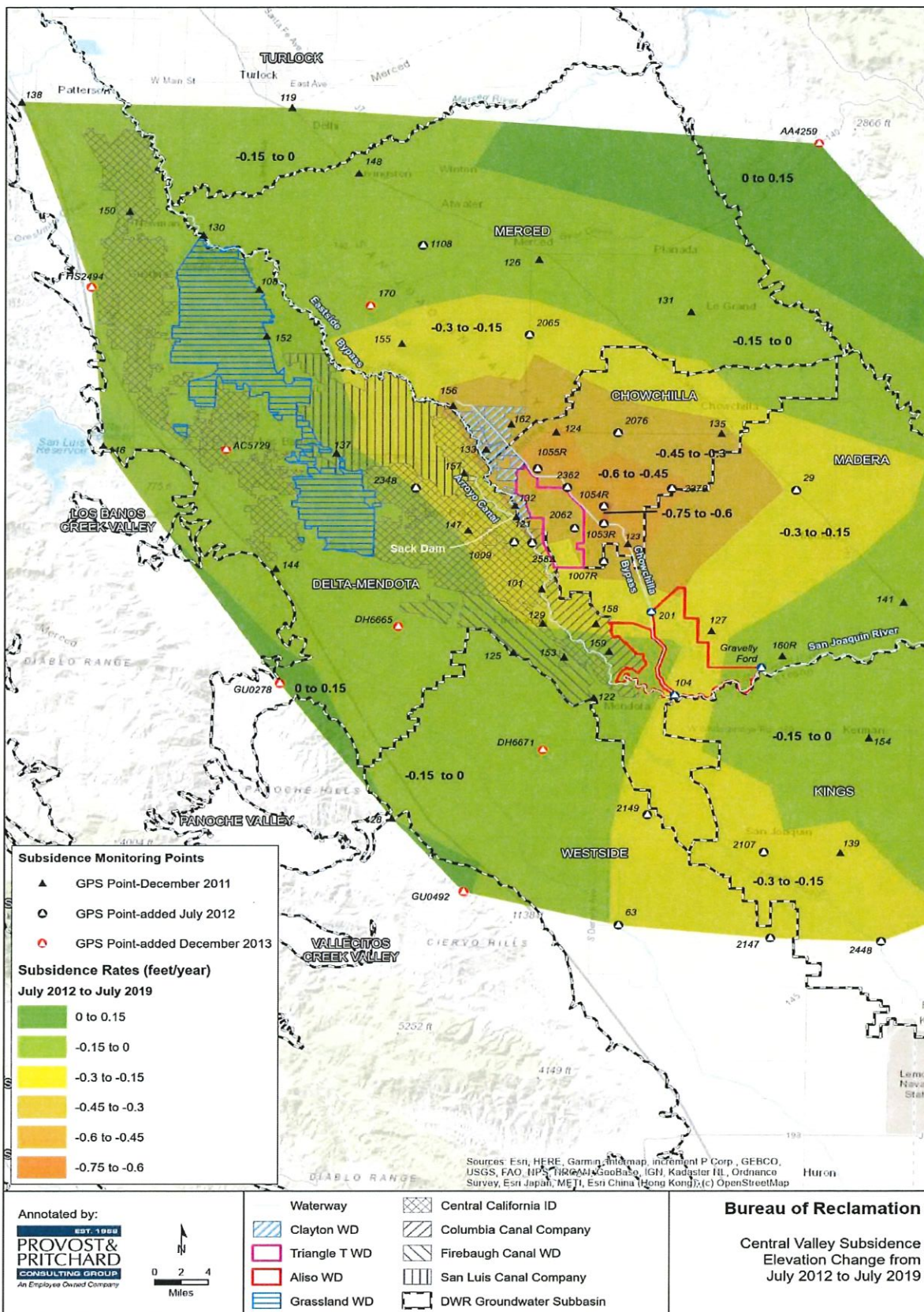


Figure II-1. Subsidence Map

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Table II-1 Project Location

Group	Assessor's Parcel Numbers	General Location
Haynes	020-150-007, 020-150-008, 020-150-014, 020-180-010	Inner elbow of the Chowchilla Bypass
Talley	021-130-004, 021-130-010, 021-140-019	Near the intersection of the Chowchilla Bypass and Avenue 18 ½
Hancock	020-200-004, 020-200-005, 020-200-007	Adjacent to the San Joaquin River at the Road 1 terminus
BB Limited	022-160-003, 022-170-001, 043-011-001, 043-013-001	East of the San Joaquin River and Arroyo Canal
FNS	041-010-007, 041-070-009, 041-021-002, 041-081-001, 041-070-008	East of Road 5 ½ and North of the Buttonwillow Slough
Western Farmland	041-070-013, 041-070-012, 041-081-004, 041-081-005	East of Road 5 ½ and North of the Buttonwillow Slough
Vlot	020-140-004	South of Avenue 21 and east of Flanagan Road

## B. Agency Profile

Contact: Lucas Avila, President of the Board

Physical Address: 4400 Hays Drive  
Chowchilla, CA 93610

Telephone Number: (209) 665-1788

Types of Services: Irrigation water

Date Formed: 2017

Board of Directors: The Directors are elected to four-year terms in accordance with the provisions of the California Water District Law.

As of February 2023, the Board of Directors is constituted as follows:

**Table II-2. Board of Directors**

Board of Directors		
Member	Term Began	Term Ends
Lucas Avila, President	September 1, 2020	September 21, 2023
Dirk Vlot, Vice President	September 1, 2021	September 21, 2025
Jose Ochoa	September 1, 2020	September 21, 2023
Michael York	September 1, 2020	September 21, 2023
Molly Saso Thurman	September 1, 2021	September 1, 2025

**Table II-3. District Information**

District Information		
Statistics	Existing	Proposed
Area in District:	14,687 acres (22.9 square miles)	17,751 (27.7 square miles)
Area in Sphere of Influence:	14,687 acres (22.9 square miles)	26,620 (41.6 square miles)

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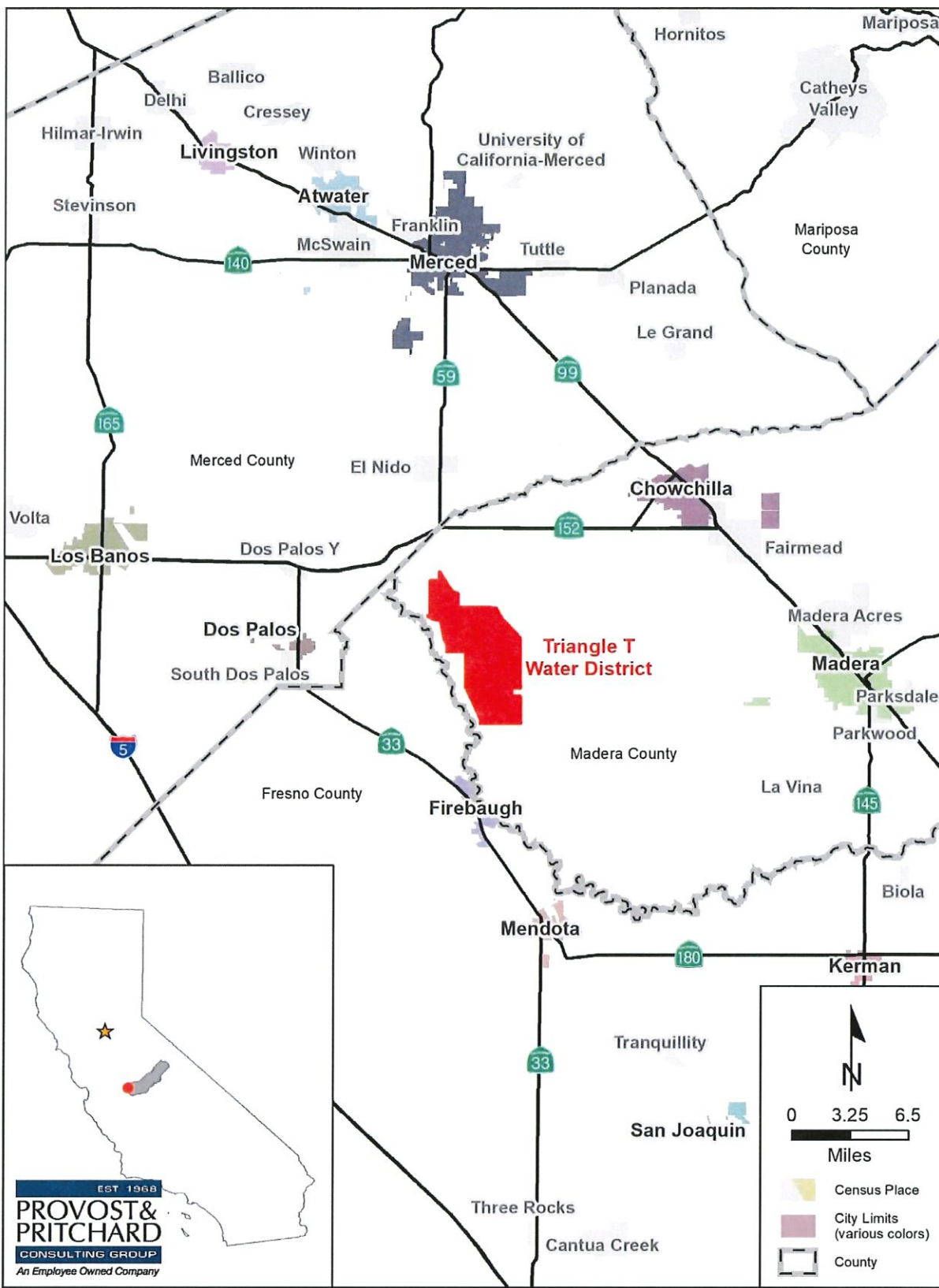


Figure II-2. Regional Location

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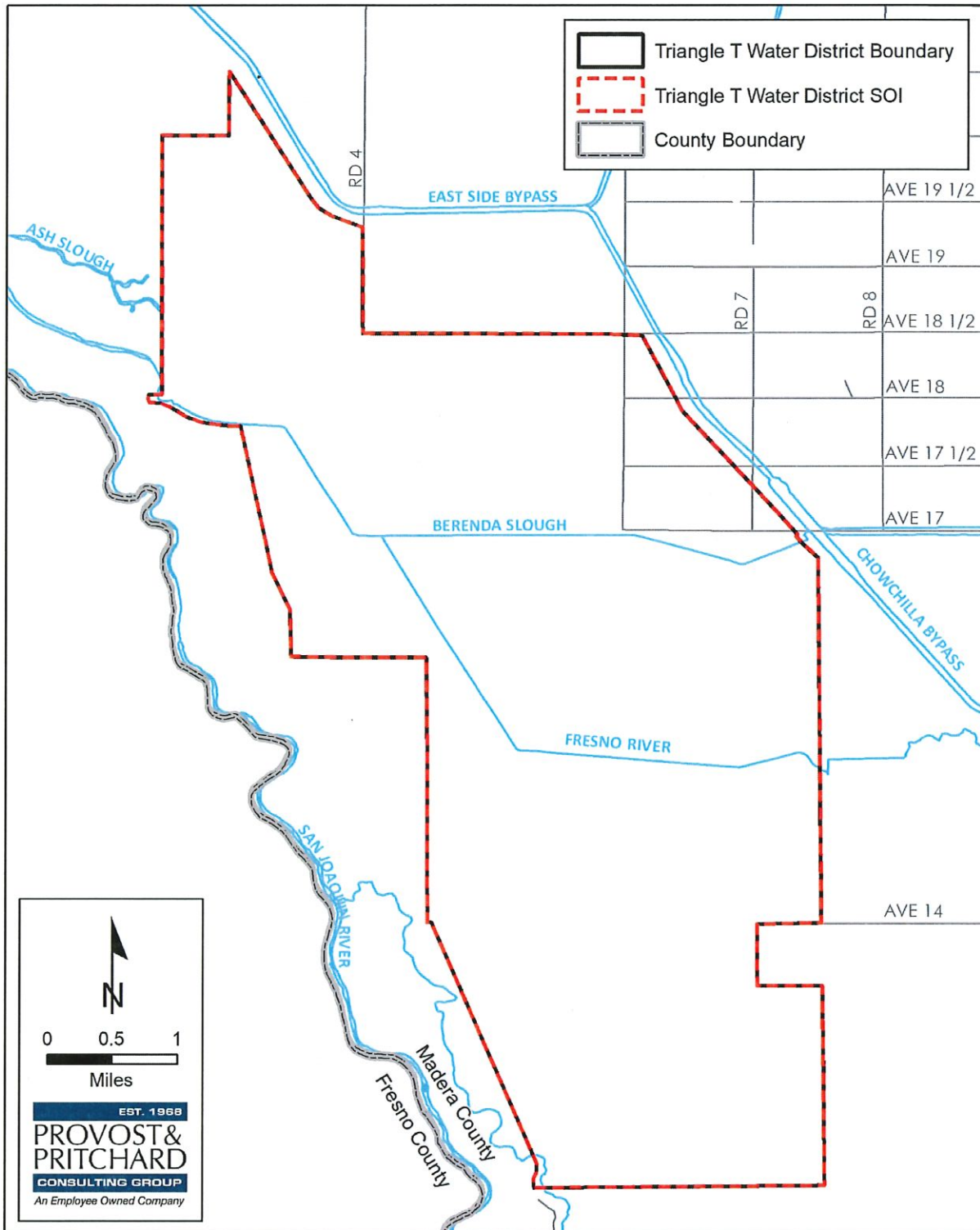


Figure II-3. Boundary & Sphere of Influence

## Section Two: Agency Profile – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

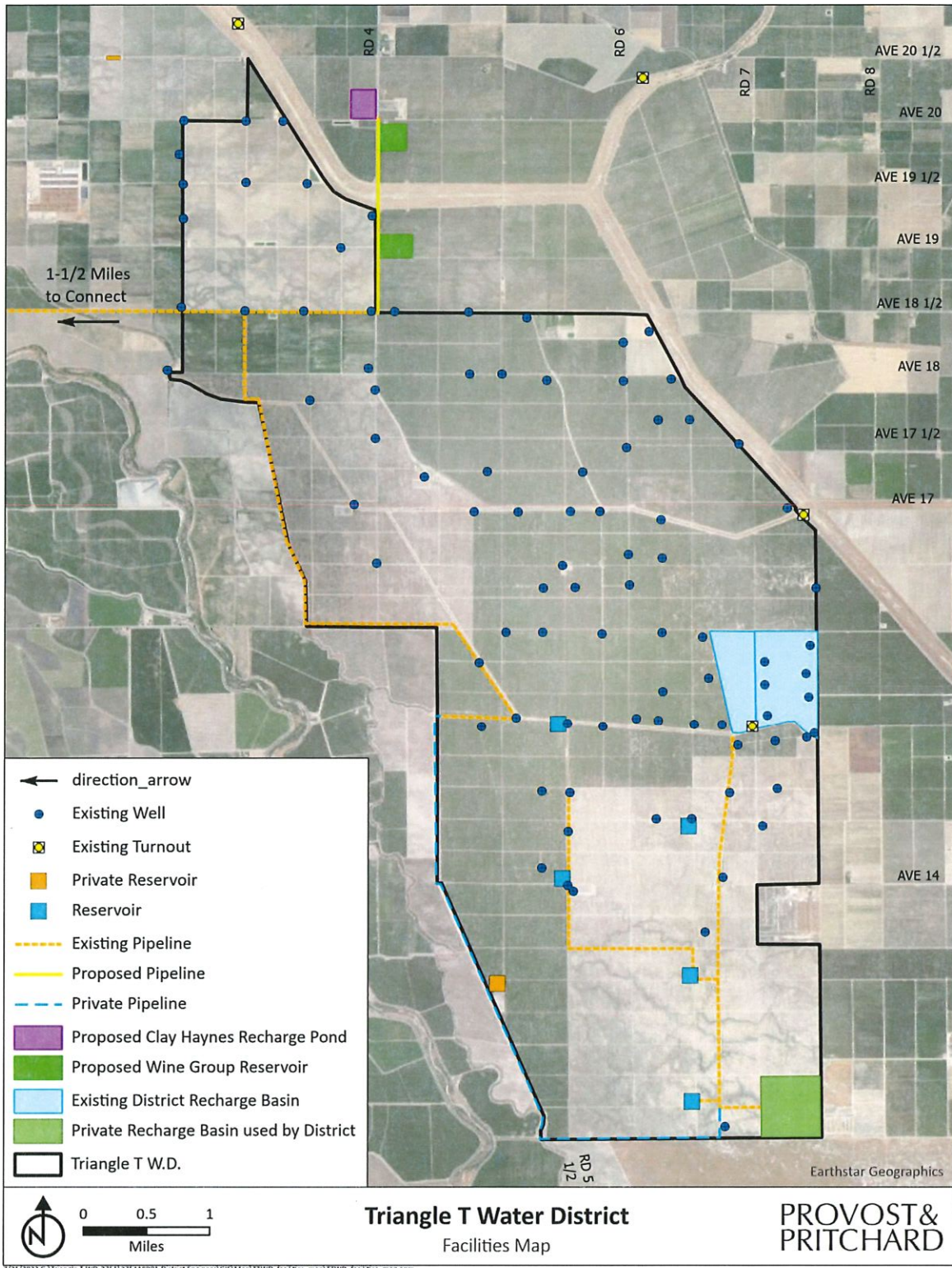


Figure II-4. Facilities Map

## III. Municipal Service Review

### A. Growth and Population

The territory within the proposed Triangle T Water District is not urbanized; all properties within the proposed District are zoned varying levels of Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (ARE-20 and ARE-40), which allows at most one dwelling unit per 18 and 36 acres, respectively. The landowners within its boundary are committed to agriculture for the long term, and therefore the District is unlikely to grow in population.

### B. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

Pursuant to SB 244, a disadvantaged unincorporated community (DUC) is defined as any area comprising 10 or more dwelling units in close proximity to one another; is either within a city SOI, is an island within a city boundary, or is geographically isolated and has existed for more than 50 years; has a median household income that is 80 percent or less than the statewide median household income. The primary intent of the new legislation is for LAFCOs to encourage investment in communities that often lack necessary infrastructure when considering annexation of adjacent areas by cities and special districts by requiring these agencies to include them in local planning processes.

The nearest DUC identified by the County of Madera is Eastside Acres, located adjacent to Avenue 7 ½ across the San Joaquin River from Firebaugh in Fresno County and approximately 2.5 miles away from the proposed SOI. The next nearest DUC is Fairmead, approximately 12 miles northeast of the proposed SOI. Therefore, there are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities located within, or contiguous to, the District service boundary or sphere of influence.

### C. Adequacy of Public Services and Infrastructure

Landowners within the District have made progress towards accomplishing the goals of the District, by constructing the following improvements:

- Establishment of a Mitigation Agreement;
- Establishment of a Pumping Reduction Policy;
- Construction of additional shallow wells;
- Modernized an existing lift station to capture flood flows from the Fresno River;
- Constructed improvements to the Berenda lift pump to 20 cfs capacity;
- Constructed five reservoirs within the proposed District to accommodate surface water;
- Installed 1.5 miles of 27-inch pipeline to receive water from the Poso Canal;
- Current infrastructure in the District able to convey water into the district through two pipelines from neighboring water districts.
- Acreage has been set aside for groundwater recharge; and,
- Execution of a Well Sharing Agreement within the District to maximize the number of landowners utilizing shallow wells.



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Landowners within the District continue in their efforts to mitigate subsidence and are working to develop a master plan for conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water resources, including options for increased conjunctive use including direct recharge (in channels, by surface irrigation, and in recharge ponds, by flood flow routing across property and reservoirs), in-lieu recharge, deep percolation of irrigation water. A 2012 report Groundwater Conditions and Land Subsidence in the Sack Dam-Red Top Area prepared by K.D. Schmidt and Associates identified four potential areas for direct groundwater recharge, the majority of which are located within the District. Percolation tests were conducted on the Triangle T Ranch in 2013 which identified recharge rates ranging from 0.70 to 0.80 foot per day and averaging 0.75 foot per day, showing great potential for recharge within the District. The subsidence survey completed in December of 2020, showed the rates of subsidence had improved to losses of 0.3-0.45 feet per year in areas that were previously losses of 0.45-0.60 feet per year. The District's action to mitigate subsidence is working, and the district will continue in their essential efforts.

### D. Financial Ability to Provide Services

Landowners in the District donate their time to the running of the District. The District does not have any employees; however, it has hired a consultant to administer the necessary activities. Accordingly, there are no employee, administrative, or other expenses. Future expenses anticipated by the District include the cost of a possible multi-district cooperative groundwater study, followed by the possible construction of facilities based on the study's recommendations to enhance the current groundwater conditions in the District. The installation, operation, and insurance costs of any infrastructure that may be installed on District lands will be financed by land assessments allocated among the remaining landowners, pro rata. Pro rata land assessments will provide adequate financial stability for the District as the landowners in the District are substantial farming enterprises. Furthermore, as a result of the passage of Proposition 1 and SGMA, the District is potentially entitled to state funding to conduct a cooperative groundwater study as well as for the construction of facilities to enhance the groundwater conditions within the District.

As part of annexation, the proposed annexed lands have committed to a voluntary assessment. The voluntary assessment is comprised of two elements. The first component is a one-time annexation fee of \$64.00/per annexed acre. The second element is an infrastructure assessment of \$80/acre the first year and a reduction to \$16/acre in subsequent years. Landowners of the proposed annexed lands have committed to investing in the future of TTWD and have agreed to these voluntary assessments.

#### Proposition 68

**Table III-1** contains audited annual financial information for the District from inception in 2017 through CY 2020. The District has maintained a steady flow of operating profits, though it does have a significant amount of accounts receivable.

In 2019, the Triangle T Water District GSA along with the County of Madera, applied for a grant of \$4,200,000 in the first round of Proposition 68 Grant Funding to develop recharge locations on properties within the district and properties in the proposed annexation. The Triangle T Water District GSA was awarded the funds and is diligently working on the development. The development of these essential recharge basins are on the lands in the proposed annexation.

The Triangle T Water District GSA has been awarded the second round of Proposition 68 Grant funding to support four groundwater sustainability projects, including one that would result in the extension of the Poso Pipeline within TTWD. The Poso Pipeline Extension Project would build approximately 1.5 miles of pipeline that would convey excess surface water from the Poso Canal to lands within the Inter Basin Coordination Committee's Subsidence Priority Area. While providing water to areas that have heightened risk of subsidence, the project would support groundwater recharge for the region through the construction of two

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30-acre regulating reservoirs and delivery of water to existing recharge ponds. The project aligns with the Chowchilla Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP), and would reduce the reliance on groundwater pumping, while restoring the underlying aquifers and reducing subsidence. Properties within the boundaries of TTWD and the land that would be annexed would be affected by the grant award. The grant allows for TTWD to expand its facilities and providing for enhanced use for those locally, as well as improving recharge capabilities for the area. Triangle T Water District GSA is the grant manager for this Proposition 68 Grant on behalf the Chowchilla Subbasin. **Table III-2** below shows the proposed spending plan for funds received under the grant, including what benefits grant funding would supply to the four projects that it would help facilitate. Each of the four Projects were scored on the basis of how beneficial they would be to the Chowchilla Subbasin by a qualified panel, based on a Department of Water Resources scoring system. The scores are contained within the table below. **Appendix C:** Triangle T Water District GSA Proposition 68 Grant Funding Scoring System contains the scoring index used to analyze the benefits of each Project.

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Table III-1. Three-Year Summary of Revenues and Expenses

<b>Twenty-Seven Month Summary of Revenues and Expenses</b> <i>Triangle T Water District: Inception (9/2017) to CY 2020</i>				
Fund		Fiscal Year		
		Audited Inception (9/2017) to CY2018	Audited CY2019	Audited CY2020
<b>ASSETS</b>	Cash and cash equivalents	\$430,117	\$774,046	\$1,087,981
	Accounts receivable	\$266,950	\$1,111,432	\$190,800
	<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$697,067</b>	<b>\$1,885,478</b>	<b>\$1,278,781</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>\$290,136</b>	<b>\$1,171,129</b>	<b>\$284,482</b>
<b>Net Position:</b>		<b>\$406,931</b>	<b>\$714,349</b>	<b>\$994,299</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>	Assessments, program revenue	\$1,725,765	\$2,212,520	\$1,883,887
	Water sales	\$865,270	\$1,255,527	\$2,195,730
	<b>Total Revenues:</b>	<b>\$2,591,035</b>	<b>\$3,468,047</b>	<b>\$4,079,617</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	Agricultural surface water	\$1,448,442	\$2,241,470	\$2,579,196
	Insurance	\$1,796	\$1,691	\$1,792
	Legal expense	\$34,040	\$16,194	\$36,580
	Engineering	\$60,847	\$58,891	\$130,130
	Office	\$2,881	-	-
	Dues and subscription	-	\$25,509	\$4,172
	Professional fees	\$128,056	\$110,888	\$134,182
	Repairs and maintenance	\$14,408	-	-
	Consulting	\$21,537	\$40,871	\$6,926
	Telephone	\$1,012	\$970	\$1,029
	Water – O&M	\$277,545	\$420,884	\$236,700
	Water – Power	\$93,975	\$98,275	\$110,243
	Water – rights application	-	-	\$554,769
	<b>Total Expenditures:</b>	<b>\$2,084,539</b>	<b>\$3,015,643</b>	<b>\$3,796,259</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit:</b>		<b>\$506,496</b>	<b>\$452,404</b>	<b>\$283,358</b>

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Table III-2 Triangle T Water District GSA Proposition 68 Grant Round 2 Spending Plan

Rank	Name	Estimated Score	COD SJV Component Requirement	Benefactors	Cost	Justification
N/A	Grant Administration	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tribe(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URC(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDAC(s)	\$7,600,000	TTWDGSA is the grant administrator on behalf of the Chowchilla Sub-Basin.
1	GSP Revisions	22	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribe(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URC(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDAC(s)	\$ 336,306	The GSP Revisions will provide benefits to the entire subbasin (including URCs and SDACs) and influence subbasin sustainability criteria and all projects and management actions taken to implement the GSP. The review panel consisting of representatives from each GSA unanimously agree that this is the highest priority component (in spite of scoring).
2	Triangle T WD Poso Pipeline Extension	28	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribe(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URC(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDAC(s)	\$ 2,606,250	This project will provide quantifiable benefits to the subbasin, primarily Triangle T WD and the project vicinity. These benefits include enhanced use of local supplies, surface water recharge, and subsidence reduction. Funding for 75% of the total estimated

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Rank	Name	Estimated Score	COD SJV Component Requirement	Benefactors	Cost	Justification
						project cost is being pursued; the remainder will be covered by project proponents.
3	Sierra Vista MWC Recharge Basin	28	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribe(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URC(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDAC(s)	\$ 674,535	This project will provide quantifiable benefits to the subbasin, primarily within Sierra Vista MWC and the project vicinity. These benefits include enhanced use of local supplies, groundwater recharge using peak surface water flows, temporary habitat, subsidence reduction, and potentially flood control. Funding for 75% of the total estimated project cost is being pursued; the remainder will be covered by project proponents.
4	Madera County Eastside Bypass Flood Flow Recharge Program	28	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribe(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> URC(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SDAC(s)	\$ 5,622,909	This project will provide quantifiable benefits to the subbasin, primarily within Madera County GSA and the project vicinity. These benefits include groundwater recharge using peak surface water flows, temporary habitat, and flood control. The

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Rank	Name	Estimated Score	COD SJV Component Requirement	Benefactors	Cost	Justification
						project will be scaled to meet available funding in the final grant funding allocation.
					Total Cost:	\$10,000,000

Table III-3 Grant Proposal Summary Budget

Budget Categories	Requested Grant Amount
Component 1: Grant Administration	\$760,000
Component 2: GSP Revisions	\$336,306
Component 3: Triangle T WD Poso Pipeline Extension	\$2,606,250
Component 4: Sierra Vista MWC Recharge Basin	\$674,535
Component 5: Madera County Eastside Bypass Flood Flow Recharge Program	\$5,622,909
Grand Total	<b>\$10,000,000</b>

Table III-4 Grant Proposal Schedule

Categories	Start Date	End Date
Component 1: Grant Administration	December 17, 2021	May 31, 2025
Component 2: GSP Revisions	December 17, 2021	April 30, 2025
Component 3: Triangle T WD Poso Pipeline Extension	December 17, 2021	April 30, 2025
Component 4: Sierra Vista MWC Recharge Basin	December 17, 2021	April 30, 2025
Component 5: Madera County Eastside Bypass Flood Flow Recharge Program	December 17, 2021	April 30, 2025

## E. Status of and Opportunities for Shared and Future Facilities

Planned Future Facilities:

1. Extension of Pipeline – connecting annexed lands and future annexation lands to the District’s infrastructure.

Opportunities for shared facilities and resources include:

- The District participates in the Chowchilla Subbasin SGMA Committee.
- Potential projects may be undertaken by the District in conjunction with one or more surrounding jurisdictions pursuant to Proposition 1 and/or the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 for groundwater recharge.
- The District has been recently approached by a neighboring water district to explore connecting the two districts via pipeline. In years when the neighboring district has excess water, they could convey that water to TTWD, keeping the water in the Chowchilla Subbasin for the benefit of the whole basin.

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### 2023 Municipal Service Review

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Triangle T Water District is open to the concept of a single district in the future. Found below is the status of and opportunities for shared facilities with other nearby water and irrigation districts. Figure XX illustrates these nearby water and irrigation districts relative to TTWD.

#### **Chowchilla Water District**

Chowchilla Water District is adjacent on the northern and eastern side of the proposed SOI boundary change of the District. Prior to formation of Triangle T Water District in 2017, the petitioning landowners requested annexation to Chowchilla Water District, however there was no interest by Chowchilla Water District at the time to annex new lands to their boundaries.

#### **Clayton Water District**

The District is adjacent on its western side to Clayton Water District (CLWD). Triangle T Water District separated from CLWD in 2017, leaving it with a total acreage of approximately 1,143 acres. That same year, CLWD filed a request with LAFCO to activate its latent powers, resulting in direction to CLWD from the LAFCO governing authority to expand to the north. In 2018, CLWD filed a proposal with the Madera LAFCO to expand its SOI and annex an additional 47 parcels. The proposed land to be annexed consisted of 2,451 acres in Madera County and 7,006 acres in Merced County for a total area of 9,457 acres. The proposed SOI would encompass approximately 13,542 acres.

#### **New Stone Water District**

New Stone Water District (NSWD) comprises approximately 3,600 acres of existing agricultural land, adjacent to the Chowchilla bypass. NSWD is a landowner-voter district formed to provide well and surface water for agricultural uses for its landowners; facilitate contracting with the United States Bureau of Reclamation for delivery of water from the Mid-Valley Canal; obtain surplus waters, if any, from the Madera Irrigation District, for use on District lands; and appropriate surplus flows out of the Chowchilla Bypass.

NSWD is directly south of the District. Extending infrastructure into these areas would allow for shared facilities and additional points of diversion from the Chowchilla Bypass, although there is no such extension currently under consideration.

#### **Central California Irrigation District**

Central California Irrigation District (CCID) is located adjacent to the western side of the District and is one of the largest irrigation districts in California. While CCID is a different type of special district, the services it provides or can provide are similar. CCID is located across the San Joaquin River from the District, thereby making mutually-beneficial, district-consolidating infrastructure both expensive and time-consuming.

#### **Madera Irrigation District**

The Madera Irrigation District (MID) encompasses an area of approximately 139,757 acres. MID operates a primarily gravity irrigation distribution system with approximately 300 miles of open flow canal systems as well as 150 miles of large diameter pipelines. Approximately 2,056 acres of TTWD's proposed SOI would overlap MID's existing SOI southwest of Avenue 14 and Road 9. That area would be removed from MID's SOI.

# Section Three: Municipal Service Review – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

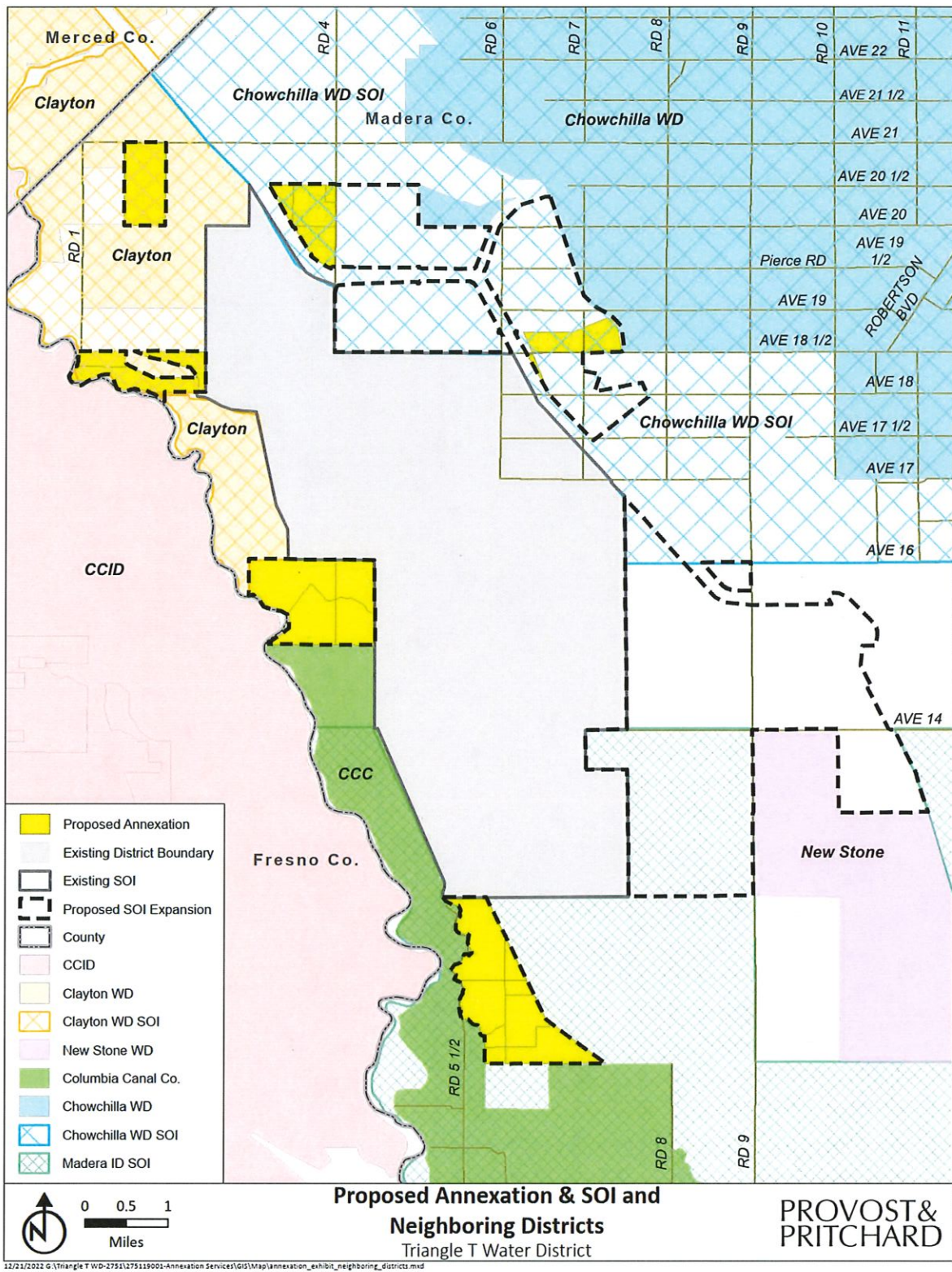


Figure III-1: Vicinity Map



## **F. Accountability**

The District is governed by a five-member Board of Directors. The Directors are elected to four-year terms in accordance with the provisions of the California Water District Law. The District Board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM. Meetings are conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, and the meeting locations and facilities are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The District posts its official agenda at the meeting location at least 72 hours prior to its regular meetings, specifying the time and location of the meeting and briefly describing items to be discussed and/or acted on. The District also posts the official agenda and accompanying information on the District website when the District has the ability to do so. Based on the information provided above, there are no other means available to improve the District's accountability.

The District holds its board meetings at 4400 Hays Drive, Chowchilla, CA 93292, and can be reached at (209) 665-1788. Its website is: [www.triangletwaterdistrict.org](http://www.triangletwaterdistrict.org).

## **G. Other**

LAFCO has not adopted any other criteria to evaluate regarding service delivery beyond those which are statutorily mandated by CKH.

## IV. Determinations for LAFCO Consideration

### Growth and Population

1. The territory within the Triangle T Water District is not urbanized; all properties within the District are zoned varying levels of Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (ARE-20, ARE-40), which limits the development of population-increasing residential homes to one per 18 to 36 acres. Therefore, the District does not expect to grow in terms of population. The landowners within its boundary are committed to agriculture for the long term.

### Disadvantage Unincorporated Communities

2. There are no disadvantaged unincorporated communities within or adjacent to the District. If any such communities are identified in the future, LAFCO, the District, and any prospective project proponent would consult to determine whether the community should be annexed into the District.

### Adequacy of Public Services and Infrastructure

3. Landowners within the District have made progress towards accomplishing the goals of the District, by the construction of various improvements within the District.
4. Landowners within the District are working to develop a master plan for conjunctive use of groundwater and surface water resources.

### Financial Ability to Provide Services

5. Landowners in the District donate their time to the running of the District.
6. The District does not have any employees; however, it has hired a consultant to administer the necessary activities. Accordingly, there are no employee, administrative, or other expenses.
7. The installation, operation, and insurance costs of any infrastructure that may be installed on District lands will be financed by land assessments allocated among the remaining landowners, pro rata.
8. As a result of the passage of Proposition 1 and SGMA, the District is potentially entitled to state funding to conduct a cooperative groundwater study as well as for the construction of facilities to enhance the groundwater conditions within the District.
9. The District maintains a steady flow of operating profits and is able to provide services to lands within the District.
10. The proposed annexed lands have committed to a voluntary assessment. The voluntary assessment is comprised of two elements. The first component is a one-time annexation fee of \$64.00/per annexed acre. The second element is an infrastructure assessment of \$80/acre the first year and a reduction to \$16/acre in subsequent years.

### Status of and Opportunities for Shared and Future Facilities

11. The District participates in the Chowchilla Subbasin SGMA Committee.
12. Potential projects may be undertaken by the District in conjunction with one or more surrounding jurisdictions pursuant to Proposition 1 and/or the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 for groundwater recharge.
13. The District has been recently approached by a neighboring water district to explore connecting the two districts via pipeline. In years when the neighboring district has excess water, they could convey that water to TTWD, keeping the water in the Chowchilla Subbasin for the benefit of the whole basin.

## Section Five: Sphere of Influence Determinations – Triangle T Water District 2023 Municipal Service Review

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### **Accountability**

14. The District was created in 2017. The District has an elected five-member Board of Directors. The Board meets regularly on the second Thursday of each month. The Board meetings are publicly-noticed and are conducted in compliance with the Brown Act. The meeting locations and facilities are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## V. Sphere of Influence Determinations

GC Section 56425(e) requires that LAFCO consider and make a written statement 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.

The territory within the Triangle T Water District is not urbanized; all properties within the District are zoned varying levels of Agricultural, Rural, Exclusive (ARE-20, ARE-40), which limits the development of population-increasing residential homes to one per 18 to 36 acres. Therefore, the District does not expect to grow in terms of population. The landowners within its boundary are committed to agriculture for the long term.

All the properties that are to be included in the District have either operated under an inactive water district or not within the boundaries of any water district. The District has and will continue to have the capacity and facilities to adequately serve the needs of those lands within the proposed sphere of influence boundaries. While the District will have existing sufficient water supplies to continue its agricultural use, it has identified a need for future public service of surface water, through existing and newly constructed delivery systems, and groundwater recharge facilities, all used to address existing subsidence issues.

As identified above, the District contains no disadvantaged unincorporated communities within, or contiguous to, the District service boundary or sphere of influence.

The areas proposed for inclusion in the SOI, with the resultant overall District SOI, are shown in **Figure V-1**.

Section Five: Sphere of Influence Determinations – Triangle T Water District  
 2023 Municipal Service Review

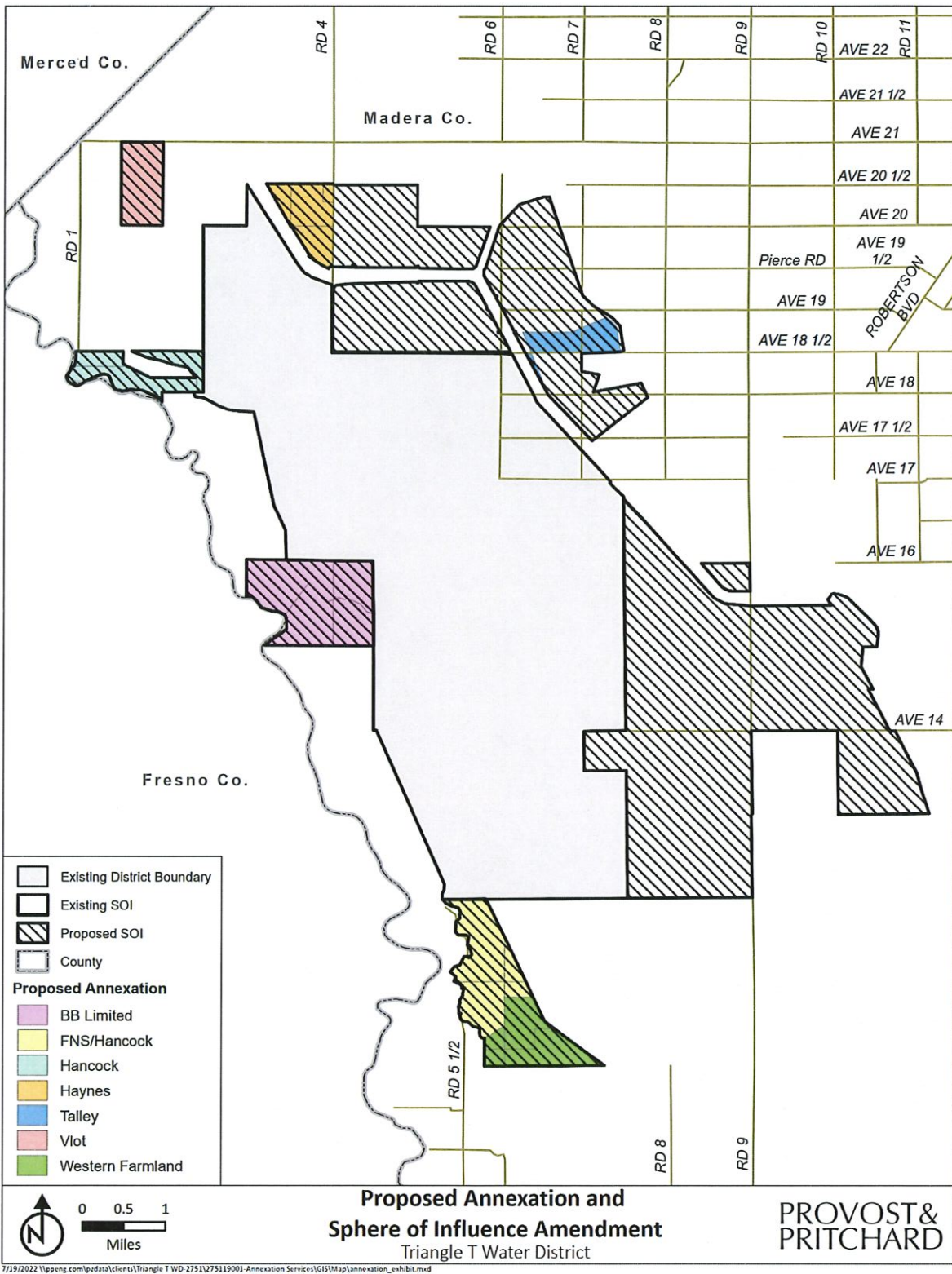


Figure V-1. Parcels included in SOI Amendment and Annexation

## VI. CEQA Review

A Municipal Service Review (MSR) is considered a “project” as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and therefore is subject to CEQA. In LAFCO’s role as lead agency under CEQA for adoption of this MSR, the Commission may make the determination that the MSR is categorically exempt from CEQA review under CEQA Guidelines Section 15306, Information Collection, which states:

“Class 6 consists of basic data collection, research, experimental management, and resource evaluation activities which do not result in a serious or major disturbance to an environmental resource. These may be strictly for information gathering purposes, or as part of a study leading to an action which a public agency has not yet approved, adopted, or funded.”

The supporting findings for this CEQA exemption are as follows:

- The purpose of an MSR is to collect data for the purpose of evaluating an agency’s ability to provide services within a specified geographic area.
- Adoption of an MSR does not result in any change to land use or zoning, nor does it grant an entitlement or permit of any kind, either directly or indirectly.
- Nothing resulting from adoption of an MSR has the potential to create any physical change to the environment.

## VII. Recommended Actions

Staff recommends the Commission take the following actions:

### A. Environmental Review

Recommended Action: Make the determination that the municipal service review report prepared for the Triangle T Water District is exempt from CEQA review pursuant to Section 15306 of the CEQA Guidelines (Information Collection), based on the findings identified in Section VI of the municipal service review report.

### B. Municipal Service Review

Recommended Action: ADOPT the seven determinations required in Government Code Section 56430 for the Triangle T Water District as detailed in Section IV of the municipal service review report.

### C. Sphere of Influence

Recommended Action: ADOPT the Sphere of Influence for Triangle T Water District as illustrated in **Figure V-1** of the municipal service review report and amend the Sphere of Influence of the Madera Irrigation District to reflect the accurate and appropriate sphere of influence for each district.