



Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
Environmental Assessment
Initial Study/Checklist

1. **Project title:** Dissolution of County Service Area 18, Silver Creek drainage District, Poso Resources Conservation District, and Firebaugh Resource Conservation District in Accordance with SB 448.
2. **Lead agency name and address:** Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission
2607 Fresno Street, Suite B
Fresno, California 93721
3. **Contact person email address and phone number:** Juan Lara
jlara@fresnocountyca.gov
559.600.9490
4. **Project sponsor's name and address:** Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission
2607 Fresno Street, Suite B
Fresno, California 93721
5. **Dissolution of County Service Area 18, Silver Creek drainage District, Poso Resources Conservation District, and Firebaugh Resource Conservation District in Accordance with SB 448:** This focused initial study addresses the potential environmental impacts related to the dissolution of County Service Area 18(CSA 18), Silver Creek Drainage District, Poso Resources Conservation District, and Firebaugh Resource Conservation District in Accordance with SB 448. (Project).
6. **Project location:**

All districts are located within the County of Fresno. (Attachment A).

Poso Resource Conservation District

The Poso Resource Conservation District was formed in 1957. The District service area encompasses 67,905 acres and SOI encompass 1,342,718. The District is located in northwest Fresno County and is contiguous to Madera County on the north to the Firebaugh Resource Conservation District on the south. A small portion of the District is located within Merced County. It was intended to enable landowners within the district's boundaries to receive technical assistance services from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service related to improving land capabilities, conserving resources, preventing and controlling soil erosion.

The District operates pursuant to the Resource Conservation District Law Public Resources Code sec. 9151 et seq. and is governed by an elected Board of Directors. As shown on the enclosed map the District service area and SOI are not conterminous and is primarily located

in the western portion of Fresno County with a portion spanning into Merced County.

The District's 2007 MSR states, "... The District is inactive and did not respond to the request for information to prepare the MSR determinations" also described in the District 2011 MSR the District has one employee but does not have a board and does not meet. The 2011 MSR states, "...The District is inactive". The District does not have a board, employees, or facilities.

Firebaugh Resource Conservation District

The Firebaugh Resource Conservation District was formed in 1951 the district SOI encompasses approximately 1,342,718 acres and service area encompasses 87,938 acres. The district is located on northeast Fresno County and is contiguous on the north to Madera county and Poso Resource Conservation District on the west to Merced County and Panoche Resource Conservation District on the south to the Westside Resource Conservation District and the on the east to Tranquility Resources Conservation District.

The District was intended to enable landowners within the District's boundaries to receive technical assistance services from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service related to improving land capabilities, conserving resources, preventing and controlling soil erosion.

The District operates pursuant to the Resource Conservation District Law Public Resources Code sec. 9151 et seq. and is governed by an elected Board of Directors. As shown on the enclosed map the District's service area and SOI are not conterminous and is primarily located in the northwestern portion of Fresno County.

The District's 2007 MSR states, "... The District is inactive and did not respond to the request for information to prepare the MSR determinations" and described in the 2011 MSR the District has two employees, one general manager and one secretary. The District's board of directors is vacant and do not meet. The 2011 MSR states, "...The District is inactive". The District does not have a board, employees, or facilities.

Silver Creek Drainage District

The Silver Creek Drainage District was formed in 1982. The Districts Service area encompasses 49,873 acres (77.9) square miles and Sphere of Influence(SOI) encompasses 155,864 acres including the unincorporated area surrounding the City of Mendota and south and west of the City of Firebaugh. The District is intended to provide drainage related services for territory within its service area.

The District operates pursuant to County Drainage District Act of 1903 Water Code (Sec, 5600 et seq.). As shown in the enclosed map the District's service area and SOI are not conterminous. The Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission's 2007 MSR states that the District is inactive and a non-user of its corporate powers. The District does not have a board employees, or facilities.

County Service Area 18 (Calwa)

CSA 18 is located in southeast Fresno and is bounded by Church Avenue to the north, the Jensen Avenue bypass to the south, Cedar Avenue to the east, and Orange Avenue to the west. The District's service area and SOI are coterminous and encompasses 119 acres. CSA No. 18 (Calwa) was formed in 1966 pursuant to County Service Area Law (Government Code sections 25210-25217) as a single-purpose district to provide street lighting within the unincorporated community of Calwa. The District is authorized to provide street lighting and associated maintenance services within the District's boundaries. The District is a dependent special district governed by the Fresno County Board of Supervisors (BOS). Fresno County Public Works and Planning Department, Special Districts Administration (Special Districts Administration), provides staff support for the District's administration.

The District boundaries include 401 parcels, of which 320 parcels are residential lots and 81 parcels are non-residential lots.

The Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) has prepared two previous service reviews on CSA No. 18, first in 2007 and a subsequent update in 2011. During the preparation of the 2016, Municipal Service Review (MSR) LAFCo observed that by 2013 the District presented the following characteristics that are of concern to Fresno LAFCo:

- District ceased providing a service;
- District had no adopted annual budget;
- District did not charge any users rates/fees;
- District had depleted its reserve;
- District was unable to fund capital improvements, operations, or staffing critical to its mission; and
- No recent financial audit had been performed

The District is non-operational and does not provide a service. Lighting infrastructure is leased to the District by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and it is believed to be limited to 36 streetlights, poles and fixtures, and other necessary equipment required to provide lighting services.

Special District Administration informed LAFCo that the County's lease with PG&E was assumed to be nullified after the County stopped paying the light bill. Special District Administration assumed that PG&E would become responsibility for the ongoing maintenance, liability, and the utility bill for maintaining the lights within CSA No. 18. PG&E has continued to provide street lighting and maintenance through the District boundaries since the County ceased payment of the utility bill. It is not known how long PG&E will continue to provide street lighting and maintenance.

LAFCo staff inquired with both Special Districts Administration and County Auditor-Tax Collector which resulted in no conclusive documentation to determine why CSA No. 18's assessment revenue was terminated. Information gathered indicated that the District's reserve account was used to fund expenses until it was exhausted in 2013. The Special Districts Administration informed LAFCo that the County has not provided administrative support to CSA No. 18 after 2013. The District leases its infrastructure from PG&E; it does not own any lighting infrastructure. At the time this report was prepared, the Special District Administration informed LAFCo that PG&E carries out any maintenance services associated with public street

lights within CSA No. 18. Staff recommended that the Commission adopt a zero SOI as a precursor for dissolution of the District. On November 9, 2016, this Commission adopted a Zero Sphere determination for CSA 18 as provisional status for the District in preparation for dissolution of the District.

7. General Plan designation/zoning:

The County of Fresno General Plan designates all land within The Poso Resource Conservation District, Firebaugh Resource Conservation District, and Silver Creek Drainage District for Exclusive Agricultural (AE20) land uses.

The County of Fresno General Plan designates land within CSA 18 as Neighborhood Shopping Center (CI) and Single Family Residential (R1) land uses.

8. Description of project: The project consists of the dissolution of CSA 18, Silver Creek drainage District, Poso Resources Conservation District, and Firebaugh Resource Conservation District in accordance with SB 448. After the effective date of the dissolution the districts shall be dissolved, disincorporated and extinguished, its existence shall be terminated and all of its corporate powers shall cease. No development is proposed.

9. Agencies and sources consulted in preparing initial Study:

- Fresno County General Plan
- Fresno County Election Division
- Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning
- Fresno County Department of Public Health
- Fresno County Assessor's Office

DETERMINATION

Based on this initial evaluation:

I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

Juan Lara
LAFCo Analyst II

Date