

Georgetown Divide Public Utility District

Agency Profile

The Georgetown Divide Public Utility District (GDPUD) was formed in 1946 to establish a public water agency to serve the Georgetown Divide area, which had historically been served by a succession of private water companies. GDPUD is located in the northwest portion of El Dorado County and is roughly bounded on the north and west by the Middle Fork of the American River and on the east and south by the South Fork of the American River. The District serves a population of approximately 9,100 in an area of 118 square miles. The District's Sphere of Influence (SOI) encompasses an additional 177 square miles with a majority of that area to the east of the District's boundary. GDPUD is empowered to provide the following services:

- Water
- Wastewater
- Hydroelectric Power
- Drainage
- Parks and Recreation

GDPUD provides domestic and agricultural water service, and wastewater services for the on-site septic systems and Community Disposal System within the Auburn Lake Trails community. In addition, the District has recently entered into an agreement with a private entity to re-power, operate, and maintain the District's Buckeye and Tunnel Hill hydroelectric projects.

Of the services listed above, GDPUD does not currently provide drainage and parks and recreation services. Although the District is empowered to provide these services, only water, wastewater and hydroelectric services will be used to determine the District's sphere.

Land Use Character

GDPUD serves a number of unincorporated communities in the northwest portion of El Dorado County, including Georgetown, Garden Valley, Kelsey, Greenwood, Cool, and Pilot Hill. The estimated population is 9,100 residents, which is projected to increase to 13,404 by 2025. Moderate growth is expected to occur within the GDPUD service area through 2010, with somewhat slower growth thereafter.

Land uses are mixed within the District's boundaries but are primarily designated as rural residential and low density residential with some agricultural lands per the El Dorado County General Plan Land Use Map. The General Plan Land Use Element designates the following communities as Rural Centers that are expected to have higher intensity development than other rural areas: Cool, Garden Valley, Greenwood, Georgetown, Kelsey, and Pilot Hill.

Level of Service

Water

The District's water infrastructure includes storage facilities, a conveyance system, treatment plants, and distribution systems for both treated and untreated water. GDPUD's water system originates at Stumpy Meadows Reservoir, 17 miles to the east of the District's main service area. The water is released into Pilot Creek and diverted and conveyed through a series of ditches and transmission mains to the Walton Lake Water Treatment Plant, which is a 2.7 MGD direct filtration plant. The distribution system for this plant serves Georgetown, Kelsey, Garden Valley, and portions of Greenwood. Both raw and treated water are distributed within the eastern portion of the District. Pipes and open ditches convey raw water further west to the Auburn Lake Trails Water Treatment Plant, which provides treated water to the western portion of the District's service area. The Auburn Lake Trails Water Treatment has a capacity of 2.3 MGD; it serves Cool, Pilot Hill, and portions of Greenwood. Untreated water is delivered to agricultural properties through open ditches and pipelines. GDPUD provides agricultural water to some properties outside the District's boundaries.

Wastewater

GDPUD provides wastewater services within the Auburn Lake Trails development only. The wastewater facilities which serve the Auburn Lake Trails community include a Community Disposal System for wastewater collection, conveyance, and discharge to leach fields; primary treatment is provided through the individual septic tanks. In addition, the District provides inspections of on-site septic systems.

Hydroelectric Power

In December 2006, GDPUD approved a contract with Henwood Associates/Tunnel Hill LLC for the latter private entity to re-power, operate, and maintain the District's Buckeye and Tunnel Hill hydroelectric projects. The plants will primarily operate in the summer months and will not affect water supplies or water service. Per the terms of the 20 year agreement, GDPUD will receive a ten percent royalty on gross project revenues until Tunnel Hill recoups its investment at which time the District's share will increase to 15 percent. Tunnel Hill will renegotiate the power purchase agreement with Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) after ten years. The District has no operational responsibilities or financial obligations associated with this agreement. With normal water flow, the District projects that it will receive approximately \$22,500 in revenue annually from this venture. If successful, the District may consider sites for additional power plants.

Services Not Provided

Although GDPUD is empowered to provide a variety of public services, according to the General Government Services I Municipal Services Review, adopted by the Commission on February 27, 2008, the District does not currently provide drainage or parks and recreation services (please refer to page 2.14-1 of said MSR). Therefore, the Commission should consider these powers as authorized but not currently utilized by the District. As noted earlier, the sphere of influence determinations below will only refer to actively provided services.

Commission's Policies and Guidelines

LAFCO Policy 4.4 requires the Commission to review the following topics before making sphere of influence determinations. The Commission's review of water services as well as general government services addressed these requirements as noted below. All citations are from the *Final Water, Wastewater and Power Municipal Services Review* (Water MSR), adopted January 30, 2008.

1. *Service capacity, level and types of services currently provided by the agency, and areas where these services are provided*

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR pages 4-4 to 4-12, “Section 4.3 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies;” and pages 4-18 to 4-19, “Section 4.12.2 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies.”

2. *Financial capabilities and costs of service*

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR pages 4-13 to 4-14 “Section 4.4 – Financing Constraints and Opportunities;” page 4-15, “Section 4.5 – Cost Avoidance Opportunities;” pages 4-15 to 4-16, “Section 4.6 – Opportunities for Rate Restructuring;” and page 4-19, “Section 4.12.3 – Financing Constraints and Opportunities,” “Section 4.12.4 – Cost Avoidance Opportunities,” and “Section 4.12.5 – Opportunities for Rate Restructuring.”

3. *Topographic factors and areas of social and economic interdependencies*

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR pages 4-1 to 4-3, “Section 4.1 – Overview” and page 4-4, “Section 4.2 – Growth and Population Projections.”

4. *Existing and planned land uses, land use plans and policies, consistency with county and city general plans, and projected growth in the affected area*

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR page 4-4, “Section 4.2 – Growth and Population Projections;” and page 4-18, “Section 4.12.1 – Growth and Population.”

5. *Potential effects on agricultural and open space lands*

GDPUD serves a variety of land uses, from rural residential communities to agricultural and open space areas. GDPUD's current Sphere of Influence encompasses almost the entire northwestern corner of the County and includes many areas of undeveloped land that have yet to be converted from open space to more intensified uses. While the services provided by the District may be considered to induce urban growth, LAFCO has the discretion to approve or disapprove annexations into the District based on a variety of factors, including the potential effects on agricultural and open space lands and the efficient provision of services. This adds a layer of protection for existing customers and agricultural operations from the potential premature conversion of agricultural land to urban uses that could occur as a result of the availability of water and wastewater services.

6. A description of the services that will be provided to any areas which may be added to the sphere and the timing and method for funding expansion of facilities or services

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR pages 4-4 to 4-12, “Section 4.3 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies;” and pages 4-18 to 4-19, “Section 4.12.2 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies.”

7. An analysis of the effects of a proposed sphere of influence on other agencies and their service capabilities:

Water, Wastewater and Power Services – Refer to the Water MSR pages 4-4 to 4-12, “Section 4.3 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies;” and pages 4-18 to 4-19, “Section 4.12.2 – Infrastructure Needs or Deficiencies.”

DETERMINATIONS

In determining the sphere of influence for each local agency, Government Code §56425(e) requires the Commission to consider and prepare a written statement of determinations with respect to four factors. Staff recommends the following determinations for updating the sphere for Georgetown Divide Public Utility District:

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

Present land use in the GDPUD service area includes primarily low- to medium-density residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural related activities such as orchards, vineyards and livestock. Primary residential areas within the District tend to follow along the major road arteries, with the heaviest concentration clustering in the communities of Georgetown, Garden Valley and Cool. Areas between these community regions are primarily agricultural and rural residential. Over half of the land within GDPUD’s Sphere of Influence, on the eastern side, is publicly owned by the US Forest Service.

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

In 2006, GDPUD had 3,559 water service accounts of which 86 percent are residential, 4 percent are commercial, and 10 percent are agricultural. Although the majority of service accounts are residential, agricultural water use comprises 70 to 80 percent of total water demand. Agricultural land use generally includes smaller-acreage properties with crops that are suitable for sloped hillsides, including vineyards, Christmas trees, olive and citrus groves, berries, deciduous orchards, and pasture. According to the Water MSR, there were 1,195 irrigated agricultural acres within the District’s boundaries on 2001; by 2025 the acreage is expected to increase to 3,527 acres.

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

The District has planned for the infrastructure needs of water and wastewater services, and is planning to construct a new water treatment plant at Greenwood

Lake. The District is pursuing new water supply options and is addressing capital needs through its five-year CIP. The biggest challenge to the District is infrastructure and lack of facilities to tap into water sources. Instead, the District is exploring using gravity feeds and topographical features to resolve these deficiencies.

The water demand projections in the 2004 General Plan and EDCWA's *Water Resources Development and Management Plan* (November 2007) are significantly higher than those shown in GDPUD's 2005 *Urban Water Management Plan*, and project that new water supplies will be needed to meet projected demand by 2025 and at buildout. Utilizing those same numbers, the Water MSR, found that, when using firm yield and factoring in latent demand and operational losses, GDPUD's water supply is not adequate to meet future demand. The District disputes these findings, indicating that its supplies are ample when factoring probable use instead of EDCWA's buildout numbers. Should water shortages occur during multiple dry years, GDPUD would curtail agricultural water deliveries prior to domestic water deliveries and would implement its Water Shortage Contingency Plan to reduce water use.

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.*

GDPUD serves multiple communities within the Georgetown Divide, including Georgetown, Garden Valley, Cool, Greenwood, Pilot Hill, Kelsey, Quintette and Volcanoville. Georgetown, Garden Valley and Cool represent the primary concentrated, social or economic communities of interest within the district. The District did not indicate any specific areas planned for annexation in the near future, nor the need for sphere of influence or boundary adjustments.

Based upon the information contained in this document, it is recommended that the Georgetown Divide Public Utility District Sphere of Influence be updated to affirm its current sphere, as shown in the map labeled "Exhibit A" and attached to Resolution L-2008-26.