



Date: December 28, 2009 for January 6, 2010 Agenda
To: Commissioners
From: Executive Officer
Subject: CALAFCO Restructuring

Summary: The Commission should respond to CALAFCO's request for feedback on the proposal to restructure the association to include regions.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Commission discuss and authorize comments on CALAFCO's restructuring into regions.

Santa Cruz LAFCO is a member of a trade association titled the California Association of LAFCOs (CALAFCO). The association is governed by a board of fifteen LAFCO Commissioners from around the state elected by a majority vote of the membership, with each of the 57 member LAFCOs getting one vote. In 2008, several Southern California LAFCOs felt that their region was underrepresented on the CALAFCO Board and asked the CALAFCO Board to present a by-laws amendment to the membership that would reconfigure the Board to have a fixed number of Board members elected from designated regions in the State. In that manner, each region, including Southern California, would be guaranteed a fixed number of seats on the CALAFCO Board.

The CALAFCO Board set up a committee to study the Southern California proposal as well as other alternative governance structures. After considering the committee's report, the CALAFCO Board decided not to implement any restructuring in 2009 and began a discussion among the LAFCOs concerning the possibility of setting up regions.

The CALAFCO Board is asking for input from the individual LAFCOs concerning the establishment of regions within the organizational structure of CALAFCO. The rationale in support of regions is for CALAFCO to adopt and support a long-term goal of regionalization. LAFCO commissioners and staff would meet periodically within the regions. The feature of using regions to select CALAFCO Board members is not currently being considered, but the CALAFCO membership could be asked to consider this feature in the future.

CALAFCO is asking four questions concerning the possibility of regional restructuring. Before addressing these questions, I offer some observations regarding the current state of the association:

- CALAFCO is doing a good job on a small budget to conduct its core mission--training commissioners and staff.
- CALAFCO benefits from the breadth and number of LAFCOs that are members and participate in CALAFCO activities. At this point, only one or two LAFCOs are not members. This breadth also helps the association in having high credibility with the Legislature.
- The association should make adjustments in an effort to keep the maximum number of LAFCOs in the association.
- Any restructuring should not cost much or detract from the training activities of the association--the website, the annual meeting, the staff workshop, the listserve forums, and CALAFCO University.

FOUR QUESTIONS FROM CALAFCO

a) Does having a regional forum make sense for your LAFCO?

Answer: Not really. Most LAFCO issues do not correlate with geographic regions. When regional issues come up now, the staffs can quickly organize a de facto discussion group or set up a regional meeting, if needed.

However, establishing regions would be acceptable if CALAFCO decides that this change would be helpful to address the Southern California concerns, and would not detract from its core training mission. Regionalization should not pull any resources away from the training program.

b) What are some of the common interests you believe you share with your neighboring LAFCOs?

Answer: We share multi-county districts with each of the four adjacent counties: San Mateo, Santa Clara, San Benito, and Monterey.

c) Would you participate in occasional regional meetings?

Answer: The commissioners and staff members would evaluate the program to determine whether attending regional meetings would be worthwhile, particularly whether attending the regional meetings would be more worthwhile than attending the staff workshop, the annual conference, or an occasional CALAFCO University course.

d) Which LAFCOs would you want to see included in your region.

Answer: Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties are the AMBAG region and should be kept together.

MORE QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD BE DEBATED DURING CALAFCO RESTRUCTURING

During 2009, CALAFCO has been reacting to the Southern California initiative. As CALAFCO continues to pursue restructuring in 2010, the association board and members may benefit from broadening the discussion beyond regionalization. Additional questions that could broaden the debate are:

- What work of CALAFCO is most appreciated by individual LAFCOs? How can this be maintained even if some of our members leave the organization?
- What is the best structure for CALAFCO to provide services (education and problem solving) for its members?
- What is the best structure for CALAFCO for individual LAFCO success?
- Presently CALAFCO is limited to using no more than 15% of its budget for legislative work. Is 15% already too much? How should the association's legislative positions be made to promote the best interests of the association and individual LAFCOs?