



September 28, 2006

Hon. Sharon Waters  
Presiding Judge of the Superior Court  
4075 Main Street, Suite 310  
Riverside, CA 92501

Honorable Judge Waters:

The Riverside Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) appreciates the time and effort expended by the Grand Jury in reviewing and understanding Mosquito and Vector control issues as they relate to the spread of infectious disease within Riverside County. The following is the Commission's response to the Grand Jury recommendations, numbered to correspond to those recommendations.

FINDINGS:

1. West Nile Virus cases for Riverside County, as of November 2005, are shown in the attached Chart. Seventy-one percent of WNV cases were reported from the areas covered by County Vector Control Division of the Environmental Health Department.

Response:

The respondent agrees with the finding.

2. Complaints about mosquitoes between the Coachella Valley District and the City of Blythe are received by the Blythe office and submitted weekly to County Vector Control. The County then schedules control visits based upon the weekly reports and sends personnel and equipment, incurring cost for overnight stays and extensive mileage.

Response:

The respondent agrees with the finding.

3. With five agencies, separate areas of responsibility and unclear geographical boundaries, the public is often confused about whom to call for assistance or to report vector activity.

Response:

The respondent disagrees partially with the finding. Each of the special districts have established boundaries adopted by Riverside LAFCO. These boundaries however may be unknown to the public at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Conduct a study of vector control effectiveness throughout the areas covered by the five agencies. Based upon study results, consider the benefit to the County of dividing all vector control responsibilities between the two special districts (Northwest and Coachella Valley).

Response:

This recommendation is being implemented. It is estimated that the special study will be finished in the late fall 2006. Riverside LAFCO is in process with a "special study" of mosquito and vector control service provision within Riverside County. This study addresses all the known public agencies currently providing mosquito & vector control within Riverside County. These include the two special districts- Northwest Mosquito & Vector Control District and Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District, Riverside County Environmental Health Department, the City of Riverside and Blythe Public Works Departments. This study will address the existing service needs throughout the County, the service levels provided by each agency, the funding of each of the agencies, the facilities, equipment, training and expertise of the personnel available to each of the agencies. The study will further discuss the financial constraints or opportunities for each of the agencies and if expansion of services could be provided by that public agency if necessary.

The last item discussed in the study will be potential governance options. These may include but not be limited to: a) no change - continuing with the agencies who are currently providing vector control services at the same levels and funding; b) continuing with current providers but improving revenue for improved levels of services; c) the two special districts expanding their service areas to cover the entire county; d) formation of a third special district or other governmental options for provision of service.

2. Conduct a survey and/or prepare a ballot measure for voters outside the present Special Districts to determine their willingness to support the additional cost for Special District coverage.

Response:

The recommendation will not be implemented by this agency because it is not reasonable; LAFCO does not have the authority to call elections. It is the responsibility of the affected agencies to determine the will of their constituents, whether via public hearings, elections or surveys.

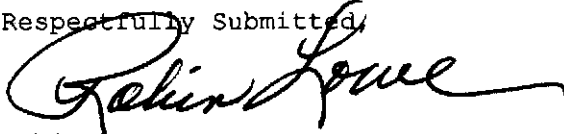
3. If accepted by the voters, merge County Vector Control into the two Special Districts, or form a third Special District. Such a merger or expansion should offer any non-participating cities the option to contract with the appropriate Special District.

Response:

The recommendation requires further analysis. As noted above, annexation of the County Vector Control service areas to the existing

districts will be addressed in the special study. It should be noted, however, that LAFCO cannot initiate annexations (Government Code Section 56375(a)). Annexation to one or both Districts can only be initiated by petition of registered voters or landowners or resolution of the affected agency, such as the two vector control district or by the County Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robin Lowe". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Robin Lowe  
Chair