



*Saddle Creek Community Services District, 1000 Saddle Creek Drive, Copperopolis, CA 95228*

*Board of Directors: President Dennis Merrill, V/P Charlie Robinson, Director/Treasurer Lou Cherniss  
Director/Secretary Bob Kenyon, Director Chris Jette*

May 2, 2005

To: Saddle Creek CSD Residents

Re: Overview of Saddle Creek Community Services District (CSD)

\*CSD's relationship with Castle & Cooke and the Architectural Design Committee (ADC)

\*CSD's relationship with on-site Home Owner Associations (HOA's) and

\*CSD's relationship with Calaveras County governmental agencies.

Several residents asked CSD Board Members to clarify the function of Saddle Creek Community Services District (CSD) in relationship to Castle & Cooke and the Saddle Creek Architectural Design Committee (ADC), to the on-site Home Owner Associations (HOA's) as well as Saddle Creek's relationship to agencies in Calaveras County. As the Board believes others may be interested in this matter, CSD staff has been directed to provide the following overview:

Saddle Creek CSD was established as a Special District on August 19, 1995, by an act of the Calaveras County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) under authority of California Government Code Section 61600. Saddle Creek CSD is a multi-purpose Special District with governing authority over various specific functions within the boundaries of the District. The registered voters within the District elect the five members Board of Directors to a four year term of office. The Board of Directors has similar duties and responsibilities to those of city council members or county supervisors. The Board establishes operational policy, hires staff to carry out policy and enacts ordinances (local laws) to insure compliance with district policy.

The services currently being provided by Saddle Creek CSD are as follows:

- a) On-site Wetlands and Wildlife Habitat Oversight and Management (wetland regulations are actually determined by the Federal Government and the CSD serves as the on-site monitoring agency),
- b) Landscape Maintenance of Public Areas (restricted to those areas under exclusive control of the CSD),
- c) Fire Prevention Activities (weed abatement of wildlife habitat areas),
- d) Street Maintenance/Oversight (restricted to public streets under exclusive control of the CSD. To date, Castle & Cooke has assumed the cost of all maintenance performed on CSD controlled streets),
- e) Gate Operations (Saddle Creek CSD controls gate operations, while staffing costs are currently being paid by Castle & Cooke) and
- f) Mosquito Abatement Operations (the only full service program currently operating in Calaveras County).

There are numerous Special Districts in California. Most are dedicated to a single function (local examples of this are the Calaveras County Water District and Copperopolis Fire District), while only a few (such as Saddle Creek CSD and our closest neighbor, Rancho Murrieta CSD in the Sacramento area) are multi-functional. Saddle Creek CSD and other multi-functional Special Districts operate like a mini-city in that they provide various types of services within the District boundaries that would otherwise be supplied by a city or county.

The primary differences between a Special District and a city or county are as follows:

- 1) The regulatory authority of Special Districts is limited to functions specifically identified in the LAFCO formation document. For example, Saddle Creek CSD has no authority over planning and building matters; those are handled by Calaveras County.
- 2) Cities and counties are required to provide services for all functions under their control, whereas the CSD Board of Directors has authority to determine which of those authorized services will be provided to the District. For example, Saddle Creek CSD has authority to provide police services, but Saddle Creek CSD Board of Directors has determined that the District's immediate needs are currently being fulfilled by the sheriff's office.
- 3) While they are empowered to enact ordinances regulating certain activities, Special Districts do not have authority to set penalties for violation of such laws. In order to secure the enforcement authority necessary to require compliance, Special District ordinances must relate to an existing federal, state, or county law.

An advantage to being in a Special District is that in certain cases local ordinances can be tailored to address the unique concerns of the community. For example, unlike a city or county, Saddle Creek CSD has the legal authority to regulate vehicle entry into the community. SCCSD has also provided fewer restrictions over golf cart operations on Saddle Creek streets than would be permitted on public streets outside the District.

With the recent growth in our community, residents are asking for even more involvement by the CSD in areas such as regulating the hours of construction access and noise as well as animal control regulations. In response the CSD Board has been working in cooperation with Castle & Cooke to increase gate-staffing hours, to provide increased control over the construction access gate and to increase monitoring and control of construction activities occurring during those hours defined in Castle & Cooke policy.

While a Special District works cooperatively with private entities, as Saddle Creek CSD does with Castle & Cooke, Saddle Creek Architectural Design Committee and local Home Owner Associations, it cannot enforce rules or regulations established by those private entities. While this cooperative effort should serve to minimize our problems, the CSD Board of Directors believes that additional steps are necessary.

The CSD Board has directed staff to work with Calaveras County officials toward the development of ordinances specific to our needs, since CSD must have enforceable ordinances in place if we are to effectively address those concerns expressed by community members. Interaction with county officials is necessary since current county ordinances, which are structured to respond to the concerns of rural areas rather than more populated communities such as Saddle Creek, do not necessarily address the needs of our Saddle Creek community.

Essentially, the CSD Board of Directors must adopt an ordinance authorizing CSD staff to enforce a law that has already been passed by another governmental agency. In those instances where a Special District has a need to control certain activities and no federal, state, county or city law addressing the matter is in place, the District must work with one or more of these agencies to secure passage of a related law. Voluntary compliance within our community would be the most desirable approach, but such an approach does not work in all situations.

In an effort to involve Saddle Creek residents in decisions affecting the community, Board President Merrill, will be appointing a Citizen's Advisory Committee to work directly with Castle & Cooke, Saddle Creek Architectural Design Committee, the on-site Home Owner's Association and the CSD staff. The committee will develop specific recommendations about particular areas of concern within our community.

Saddle Creek has experienced significant growth during the past two years and the demand for District services has increased proportionately. The Board of Directors is committed to insuring that these increased demands for services are met and Saddle Creek CSD continues to provide residents with the highest possible level of service.

Board of Directors  
Saddle Creek CSD