

SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING 2010

INITIAL FACT FINDING

(2011/03/08 db/gis/cdd/sjc)

INTRODUCTION

California Elections Code § 21500 requires that a County's Board of Supervisors adjust the boundaries of their districts following each decennial census so as to be "as nearly equal in population as may be". It also establishes the timing and manner in which this redistricting must occur.

It is understood that the primary goal of redistricting should be to establish an equity of population distribution that promotes equal representation – "one person, one vote". In addition, there are several other criteria cited that may also be given consideration:

- topography
- geography
- cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory
- community of interests of the districts

San Joaquin County has five Supervisorial Districts, thus the "ideal" population of any single District may be defined as one-fifth of the total County population. It is unlikely that any redistricting plan could achieve this ideal exactly, due to the abstracted nature of the Census data as well as the secondary considerations listed above, but it does serve as the benchmark against which equal distribution may be measured.

HISTORY — CENSUS 2000 SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING

Following the 2000 Census, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors began a redistricting effort. On the advice of Counsel, the following guidelines were adopted as practicable measures of equitable population distribution:

- the population of any Supervisorial District *must not* vary by more than 10% of the ideal
- the population of any Supervisorial District *should not* vary by more than 5% of the ideal

(The strict interpretation of absolute equality as required for congressional districts is not required for Supervisorial Districts. While the 5% criteria does not *guarantee* the validity of a redistricting plan, it was considered a degree of assurance above and beyond the 10% requirement – a redistricting plan where any district varies by *more* than 10% of the ideal is understood to be *prima facie* invalid.)

In addition, it was decided to limit the use of Census geography to the Block Group level data, if it were at all possible to achieve equity at that level without resorting to the more detailed Block level data. This guideline tended to simplify the resulting boundaries, increasing their "cohesiveness" and "compactness".

On June 19, 2001 the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 4112, establishing the current boundaries for all five Supervisorial Districts. (County Ordinance Code, Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 1, § 2-1000 thru 2-1005)

That plan managed to achieve an equitable distribution of population wherein no Supervisorial District varied from the ideal population by more than 1.4%.

Census 2000 Supervisorial Redistricting

Total County population: 563,598
Ideal District population: 112,720 (rounded)

District Deviations:

DIST	POP	ΔIDEAL	%ΔIDEAL
1	113,778	+1,058	+0.94%
2	111,825	-895	-0.79%
3	111,872	-848	-0.75%
4	111,875	-845	-0.75%
5	114,248	+1,528	+1.36%

Another measure of equity that is often used is the variation of the largest district to the smallest district. For the 2000 redistricting, this variation (between Districts 5 and 3) was approximately 2.1%.

PRESENT — CENSUS 2010 SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING

On March 7, 2011 the US Census delivered to the State of California a set of data to support redistricting activities, pursuant to Public Law 94-171. On March 8, 2011 that data was made generally available and acquired by the San Joaquin County Community Development GIS Unit.

Using the existing boundaries of the five Supervisorial Districts, and summarizing the Census 2010 count of population, the equity of population distribution established in the 2000 redistricting plan has since been disrupted by differential growth across the County:

Census 2010 Supervisorial Redistricting

Total County population: 685,306
Ideal District population: 137,061 (rounded)

District Deviations:

DIST	POP	ΔIDEAL	%ΔIDEAL
1	129,361	-7,700	-5.62%
2	110,990	-26,071	-19.02%
3	143,264	+6,203	+4.53%
4	134,314	-2,747	-2.00%
5	167,377	+30,316	+22.12%

In particular, Supervisorial Districts 2 and 5 are significantly out of compliance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Board again adopt a set of guidelines to establish priorities that will direct the redistricting effort. Those guidelines should include both the technical guidelines as well as any other directions and/or considerations deemed necessary or desirable.

Based on the experiences from the 2000 effort, the following set of guidelines is offered for the Board's consideration:

- the population of any Supervisorial District *must not* vary by more than 10% of the ideal
- the population of any Supervisorial District *should not* vary by more than 5% of the ideal
- disruption/displacement of existing districts shall be minimized to the extent possible
- disruption/displacement of existing communities shall be minimized to the extent possible
- the use of Census geography shall be limited to the Block Group level if at all possible
- district boundaries shall be as simple and compact as is possible
- district boundaries should follow recognizable major physical features where possible
- no district shall be altered so as to displace a sitting Board member