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Supervisory districts to reflect west county growth

By Eric Laughlin Telegraph correspondent

El Dorado County officials have released a set of supervisory district map options that are indicative of the 25,000 new residents measured in last year's census.

New mapping is required by law following each census and each district is to have an equal number of residents. With last year's growth that amounts to 36,212 people in each of the five districts.

Mike Applegarth serves as an analyst with the county's chief administrative office and said each of the five map options will likely have some sort of effect on each supervisor. He went on to say that there are a couple of the options that if approved would actually result in sitting supervisors living in another district, barring them from re-election to the same post.

"The effects are hard to forecast, but each map would present some kind of consequence to each supervisor," he said. "But we don't take those kinds of consequences into account when drawing the new districts."

Applegarth said the goal is to keep communities with similar interests together, although that's not always possible. County surveyor Rich Briner agreed.

"It's not difficult to generate a map with the right number of residents per district," Briner said. "It can be difficult to achieve that balance while ensuring that similar communities are contained within the same district."

Applegarth said the new mapping options will likely stir up dialogue among residents with differing views on local government structure.

"I've heard arguments that El Dorado Hills should be its own district and have its own supervisor," he said. "But then there's another group of people who think it's better to have two or three supervisors who are accountable to the community."

Historically, the Tahoe Basin has been able to maintain its own district based on population, but Applegarth said a decrease in population could lead to changes in the future. All of the growth, he said, was documented in the western side of the county.

Going back to the mapping alternatives and their affect on the five board members, Applegarth said that since Briner is elected, he is accountable to voters and not the board, which in turn brings more objectivity to the process.

Although the supervisors will get their first official glimpse of the alternatives this week, they are not expected to adopt a final map until July.

In the meantime, there will be a series of public meetings to discuss the options. The first is set to take place 7 to 9 p.m. April 28 at the Pollock Pines Community Center. A second is planned for 6 to 8 p.m. May 5 at the El Dorado Hills Community Services District Pavilion.

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KNOW AND GO

Two public meetings on
redistricting

When: 7-9 p.m., April 28

Where: Pollock Pines

Community Center

When: 6-8 p.m., May 5

Where: El Dorado Hills, Community Services District Pavilion