

NAPA COUNTY GRAND JURY REPORT 1980-1981

MOSQUITO ABATEMENT DISTRICT

The Mosquito Abatement District, which was formed in 1925, is housed in a small metal building near the Napa Sanitation Department. Office space is at a bare minimum and the working vehicles are kept in an attached structure. Pesticides and other chemicals are stored in a nearby secure metal shed. A tank containing mosquito fish is located near the chemical shed. According to Mr. Risley the District Manager, who met with the Grand Jury Criminal Justice Committee, the stocking of mosquito fish remains the most effective biological control for use against these insects. These fish are available, free of charge, to Napa County residents who have possible mosquito breeding sites.

The Mosquito Abatement District now operates with a staff of 3.5 positions and serves the entire County of Napa. The original staff of 6 persons consisted of Mr. Risley, 4 field technicians and a secretary. This staff has been cut to Mr. Risley, who spends half of his time in the field and half in the office, 2 field technicians and a part-time secretary. It operates as a special district with a separate board of trustees under a State mandate. The function of the District is to maintain an environment which is free of nuisance mosquitoes as well as those capable of transmitting human and animal diseases. The District utilizes a variety of approaches to deal with the insect population including: water management, biological control, source reduction and education. They are placing a greater emphasis on non-chemical control techniques.

An ever-increasing population in the County will, of necessity, increase the service load of the District's small crew. Time and effort must also be devoted to meeting the new rules and regulations imposed by State and Federal agencies regarding the handling, storage and use of pesticides, environmental protection and health and safety of the workers. They have lost one position and have not been able to replace personnel due to financial difficulties. Personnel respond to calls from the public as well as make regular surveillance rounds throughout the County. Extensive fish stocking is also part of their program.

As a result of Proposition 13, the District today finds itself in dire financial straits. The present operational budget is \$150,000 with most of it slated for salaries. The District's general reserve fund is now depleted and they need dry period financing to stay in operation. The committee was impressed by the District's spartan operation. They seem to be utilizing their relatively small budget to the utmost.

Manager Risley's concerns include not only the operational funding but also the need to replace the one position lost by the financial cutback. To do effective vector control for a County the size of Napa, additional personnel are needed.

Since mosquito abatement is State mandated, the County must have a program. One alternative cited, should the funding not be forth-coming, was the mosquito abatement could be placed under another agency. This, however, would be of little financial advantage since the operating budget (salaries) would stay essentially the same.

This Committee feels that Mosquito Abatement is efficient and a well-run operation, but greatly handicapped by the lack of sufficient personnel.

RECOMMENDATION

The return of the cutback positions.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE COMMITTEE

[Original signature on file]

MARJORIE REID, Chairperson

[Original signature on file]

GLEN BAUDE

[Original signature on file]

EVELYN RILLERA