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Census Results, Redistricting

It'll Be Give And Take In County Districts

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When county supervisors speak of their "constituents," they are no longer talking equal numbers.

According to the 1980 census, the five districts differ in population numbers by as much as 5,647 and only the Fourth (Watsonville) District is fairly close to the 37,628 constituents that a district should have out of the county's 188,141 population.

Supervisors' Chairman Gary Patton has 5,647 less constituents in the Third (Santa Cruz-North Coast) District than does Supervisor Joe Cucchiara in the Fifth (San Lorenzo-Scotts Valley) District.

Cucchiara has a district population of 39,863 and is followed by Supervisor Robley Levy in the Second (Aptos-Capitola) District who has 39,088.

Fourth (Pajaro) District Supervisor Wayne Moore is closest to the average of 37,628 when the total population is divided by five with 38,568 constituents.

Along with Patton, who has 34,216 constituents, Supervisor Dan Forbus in the First (Live Oak-Bran-ciforte) District is low with 36,405.

Following each decade's census, elected officials must cut up their districts so they have about the same number of residents. The law allows a 3 percent difference in numbers.

To hit the average, Forbus must pick up 1,223. Levy give up 1,460 Patton pick up 3,412, Moore lose 940 and Cucchiara give up 2,235 of his constituents.

To accomplish that, the county board must redraw its district lines and they are scheduled to get into that in the early fall with the schedule calling for it to be completed

by November.

Patton's district takes in most of the city of Santa Cruz (all of the western section) and the north coast including Bonny Doon.

Cucchiara's district includes San Lorenzo Valley, most of Scotts Valley and then interfaces with Patton's District in Santa Cruz where Cucchiara has about 25 percent of his residents in the northeastern section.

Forbus then abuts Patton's and Cucchiara's districts, both in the city and going northward where Forbus gets a small western part of Scotts Valley and all of the mountain areas from mid-county to the summit.

Levy's district lies along the eastern part of Forbus' district, taking in Capitola and Aptos and runs eastward to where Moore's district takes in Watsonville and Pajaro Valley.

The board will be concerned about not only reshaping the districts, but in shaping the future political blocs within each district.

Since Cucchiara will have to give up some territory, he will have to be concerned if he wants to "liberalize" Forbus' district by giving him city of Santa Cruz voters, or entrench the conservative Forbus by giving him some of the more conservative Scotts Valley territory.

By giving up some of Scotts Valley, Cucchiara could increase the "liberalism" of the Fifth District vote, if he chooses to go that way.

Since the liberals—Patton, Cucchiara and Levy—are the majority on the board, it will be their decision to make.

Logically, it appears that Cucchiara will have to give Patton some of the city and Forbus some of Scotts Valley.

Levy will have to release some of mid-county while being nudged eastward by some of Moore's territory.

The 3 percent range is appreciable in making determinations and with Patton it would mean that he picks up from 2,284 to as many as 4,564. Moore could either pick up 192 or lose 2,068.

The breakdown of the census into districts was done by the county Planning Department and Director, Kris Schenk said Friday, "The present district populations are estimates, but we feel they are real good estimates."