

Annexation approved by La Selva board

The annexation of 160 acres to the La Selva Beach Fire Protection District was approved last week by the district Board of Directors.

The district originally received approval from the county's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to annex 250 acres along Larkin Valley Road. That property connects the La Selva Beach and Aptos Fire Districts, which have formed a joint fire protection agency. But earlier this month, the Aptos-La Selva Fire District asked LAFCO to take 90 acres out of the annexation area.

Those 90 acres along Halton Lane are too far from any of the district's fire stations to make it feasible for the district to cover, according to Fire Chief Al Forbes. Forbes estimated it would take almost 15 minutes to reach the end of Halton Lane from either the La Selva Beach or Rio del Mar fire stations, and that his district doesn't want responsibility for covering an area that far away.

The property owners, Russell and Vivien Bowen and John Sperling, had sought to be included in the annexation. They are pursuing the subdivision of their property, and have proposed the construction of a road from Larkin Valley Road to Halton Lane, as part of the subdivision.

If such an access road is built, the fire district would gain much quicker access to Halton Lane, and would be willing to annex the area, Forbes said.

Until now, the county has had responsibility for protecting the Halton Lane area, and has had a contract with the La Selva Beach fire district to provide that service. Now that the Aptos-La Selva district doesn't want responsibility for Halton Lane, the county will have to add the area to its contract with the state Department of Forestry, which will respond to fires on Halton Lane from its Corralitos Station.