
Laughable LAFCO

By Linda Sutter May 28, 2026

LAUGHABLE LAFCO — BUT NOT IN THE FUNNY SENSE

On May 18, 2026, the Del Norte Local Agency Formation Commission — commonly known as LAFCO — held a public meeting at the Flynn Center chambers beginning at 4:00 p.m.

One of the major agenda items before the commission was a proposal involving the annexation of all of Del Norte County into the Del Norte Resource Conservation District (RCD). members- Jason Greenough, Issiah Wright, Dean Wilson and Donna Dewolf.

What should have been a routine public discussion instead exposed growing public outrage over what many citizens described as a “stealth district” operating for more than two decades without meaningful transparency or accountability.

Out of eight members of the public in attendance, six spoke directly against the RCD and raised serious concerns regarding the district’s lack of openness, public accessibility, and apparent disregard for California transparency laws.

The concerns were presented before a LAFCO body specifically designed to ensure local government agencies operate lawfully and responsibly.

The commission includes two members of the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors and two members of the Crescent City Council — individuals entrusted with safeguarding public interests and ensuring special districts comply with state law.

Present on the commission were Supervisor Dean Wilson, City Councilmembers Jason Greenough and Isaiah Wright, and public member Donna DeWolf. Supervisor Darrin Short was absent.

Citizens described a district that allegedly operates with little oversight while controlling grant funding and county-wide conservation influence.

Speakers told the commission that public members attempting to ask questions about the district’s operations are often treated as nuisances rather than taxpayers seeking accountability.

Yet despite repeated warnings from the public, LAFCO members offered little resistance, scrutiny, or concern.

There were no stern warnings issued regarding transparency deficiencies. No demands for immediate compliance with the California Public Records Act.

No concerns voiced over apparent Brown Act issues. No visible effort to require the district to modernize its public accessibility practices before expanding its reach countywide.

Instead, the commission appeared poised to hand the district broader authority while ignoring the very concerns raised by the citizens they are supposed to represent.

For many in attendance, the meeting felt less like government oversight and more like government indifference.

The following day, on May 19, 2026, this reporter personally drove to the listed address for the RCD office located at 241 First Street, Suite “B,” in Smith River.

What occurred next only deepened public concern. Upon entering the office, I requested to inspect public records during normal business hours pursuant to the California Public Records Act. Becky Crockett allegedly responded that records could not be reviewed without an appointment.

When reminded that California law generally allows the public to inspect non-exempt records during business hours, Crockett allegedly stated these were “not business hours.”

When asked what the business hours actually were, Crockett allegedly responded:

“Whenever I feel like working.”

When asked for the district’s business phone number, Crockett allegedly responded:

“We don’t have a phone.”

The statements were startling for an agency exercising governmental authority and receiving public funding.

The concerns do not end there.

On May 18, 2026, Del Norte County Records Clerk Alyssa Northrup was contacted regarding the district’s filings. According to the information reviewed, no Form 700 Statements of Economic Interest for the RCD board had reportedly been filed since 2018.

The composition of the board itself is also raising questions among citizens, as many board members are reportedly farmers or individuals directly connected to agricultural interests — the very groups that may benefit from grants, approvals, or district decisions.

Critics argue the structure creates the appearance of insiders monitoring insiders rather than serving the broader public interest.

Multiple conflict-of-interest complaints involving board members are now reportedly being prepared for submission to the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

At its core, the controversy surrounding the RCD is larger than one district.

It raises a fundamental question: What is the purpose of LAFCO if it refuses to aggressively examine transparency failures before empowering special districts with even greater authority?

LAFCO exists to provide oversight, accountability, and orderly government structure — not to rubber-stamp agencies accused of operating in secrecy.

Citizens who attended the May 18 meeting did not appear angry because they oppose conservation. They appeared angry because they believe transparency laws are being treated as optional.

And when the very agencies tasked with oversight refuse to ask difficult questions, public trust erodes even further.