**California State Law**

LAFCO is an acronym for Local Agency Formation Commission. It is a regulatory agency with county-wide jurisdiction, established by state law, the Cortese-Knox Act Local Government Reorganization Act of 2000 (CHK) to coordinate logical and timely changes in local government boundaries, and to insure that services are provided efficiently while agricultural lands are protected. (Government Code Section 56000 et seq.)

LAFCO is responsible for reviewing and approving proposed jurisdictional boundary changes, including annexations and detachments of territory to and/or from cities and special districts; incorporations of new cities; formations of new special districts; and consolidations, mergers, and dissolutions of existing districts. In addition, LAFCO must review and approve Out-of-Agency service agreements; determine spheres of influence for each city and district; and may initiate proposals involving district consolidation, dissolution, establishment of subsidiary districts, mergers, and reorganizations (combinations of these jurisdictional changes).

**California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)**

The CEQA statute, [California Public Resources Code § 21000 et seq.](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayexpandedbranch.xhtml?tocCode=PRC&division=13.&title=&part=&chapter=&article=), codifies a statewide policy of environmental protection. According to the act, all state and local agencies must give major consideration to environmental protection in regulating public and private activities, and should not approve projects for which there exist feasible and environmentally superior mitigation measures or alternatives. In making decisions, San Joaquin LAFCO is required to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)