

**Status of Voting System in Santa Cruz County**  
**A Preliminary Assessment by the County Clerk/Elections Department**  
**August 6, 2007**

On Friday, August 3, 2007 at midnight, Secretary of State Debra Bowen withdrew approval of the Sequoia Voting System used in Santa Cruz County and then re-approved it subject to 39 conditions. My staff and I are in the process of reviewing those conditions and will provide in the near future an in-depth report on their impact, cost and additional personnel requirements. There are requirements listed in the report that we are already doing and there are requirements that are unclear and require us to seek clarification by the Secretary of State.

For now, I offer the following analysis:

1. The voting structure Secretary Bowen approved to be used statewide is the model deployed in Santa Cruz County – which is one touch screen voting unit at each polling place with the majority of voters casting votes on paper ballots that are counted at the precinct by a scanner. Therefore the affect on our county will be far less than other counties who have implemented full use of touch screens at the polls.
2. The county is required to do a 100 percent manual recount on votes cast on the touch screens. Santa Cruz County did a 10 percent manual recount on the touch screens in November 2006 that proved to be 100 percent accurate. The process took 8 people about 3 days to complete. A 100 percent recount will increase those numbers. If we were to use the same number of people and there are approximately the same number of votes cast on the touch screens as in November 2006, that process in February could take up to 30 days – two days longer than the deadline for certification.
3. The conditions require additional training of poll workers and additional duties that will most likely result in the need for more people to serve at the polls.
4. The conditions require that at least five people voluntarily cast ballots on each touch screen and election officials are required to train poll workers on how to accomplish this. It is uncertain how to accomplish this if voters do not wish to vote on the machines. And, it is uncertain if zero votes cast on a touch screen would be acceptable.
5. I am uncertain whether the conditions will allow us to continue offering touch screen voting at the Watsonville City Clerk's Office for the 29 days before the election. I do not believe the conditions will preclude us from offering paper ballots in the form of absentee ballots at the Watsonville early voting site.
6. The conditions require the vendor to accomplish various tasks within challenging timeframes. The items requested of the vendor are typically policies and procedures developed by the counties. So, we are working with the vendor along with other Sequoia counties to complete all of the required tasks by the deadline. Tasks include: development of a security plan, voting system procedures, and voting system programming, testing and transport procedures. Documentation of our processes and procedures already exist in these areas, but must be updated with the new conditions and procedures.