



Valley Water

Clean Water • Healthy Environment • Flood Protection



Public Trails on Valley Water Lands – Policy Criteria and Guidance

September 12, 2021

Attachment 5
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Trail Policy Criteria and Guidance

- Purpose and Need
- Goals of Policy Criteria and Guidance
- Goals of Public Outreach
- Public Outreach Process
- Criteria and Guidance
- Resolutions to Adopt Criteria and Guidance



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Purpose and Need

**Valley Water Supports Trails
and Access to Open Space**

District Act

Resolution 72-44: Recreational Use

Resolution 74-38: Joint Use



Purpose and Need

What is compatible?



Operations

- Water storage
- Levees and floodwalls
- Flood flow capacity
- Aquifer recharge
- Mitigation



Maintenance

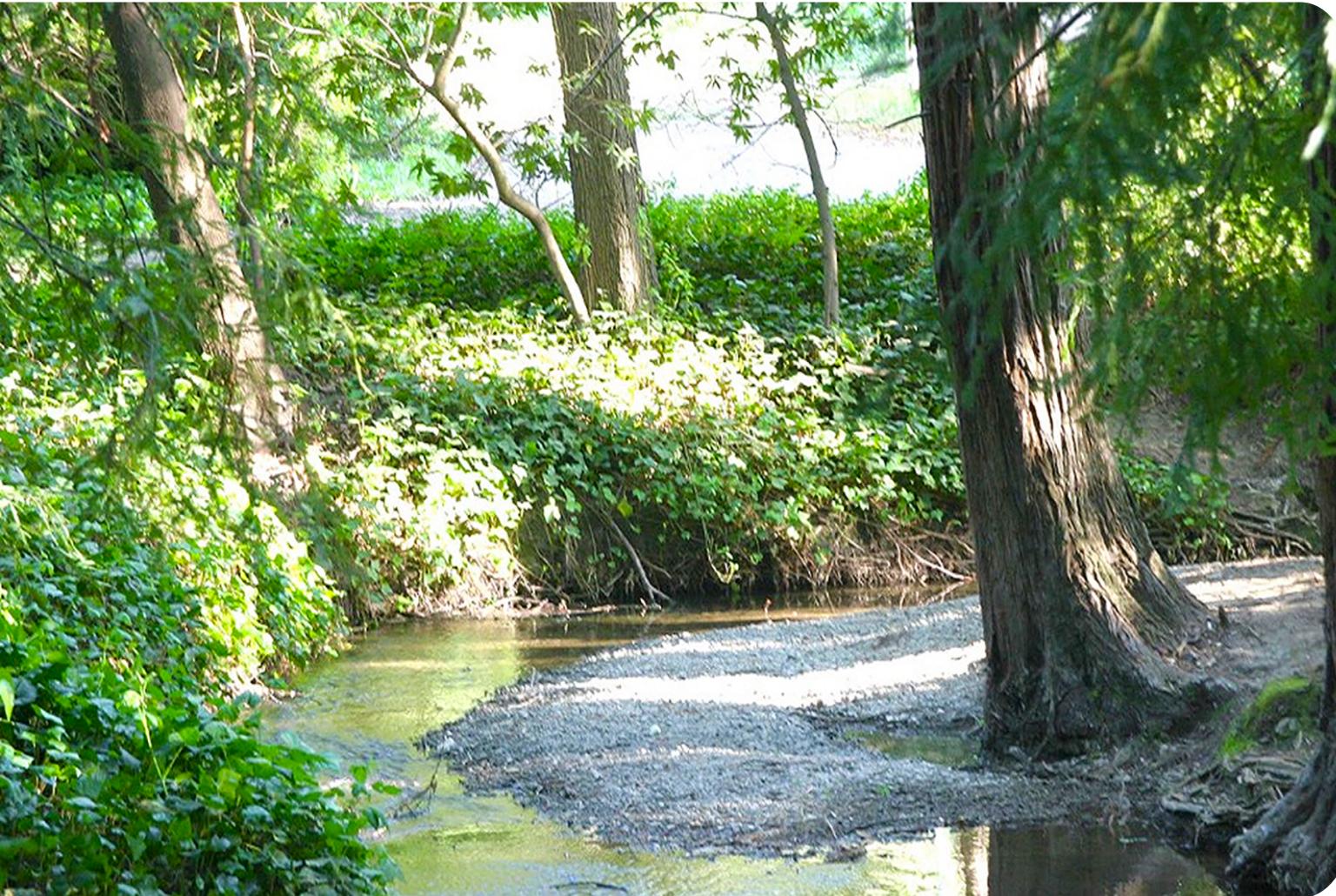
- Sediment Removal
- Levee and Bank Repair
- Vegetation management



Stewardship

- Water Quality
- Habitat Protection
- Restoration and Enhancement

Goals of the Policy Criteria and Guidance



- Provide clear standards to evaluate trails projects
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of Valley Water and Partner Agencies
- Define a collaborative process

Public Outreach Process



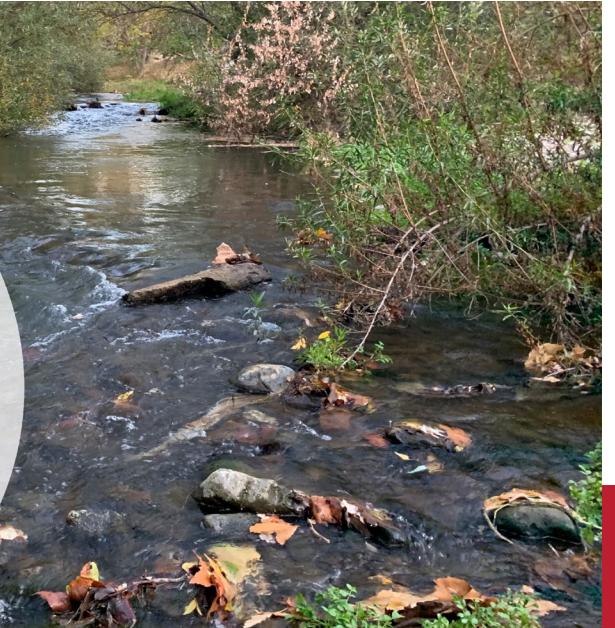
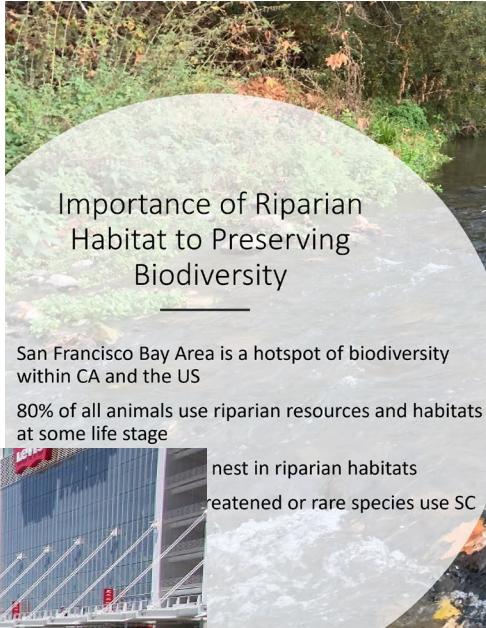
Goals of Public Outreach

Awareness

■ Education

■ Expertise

■ Input



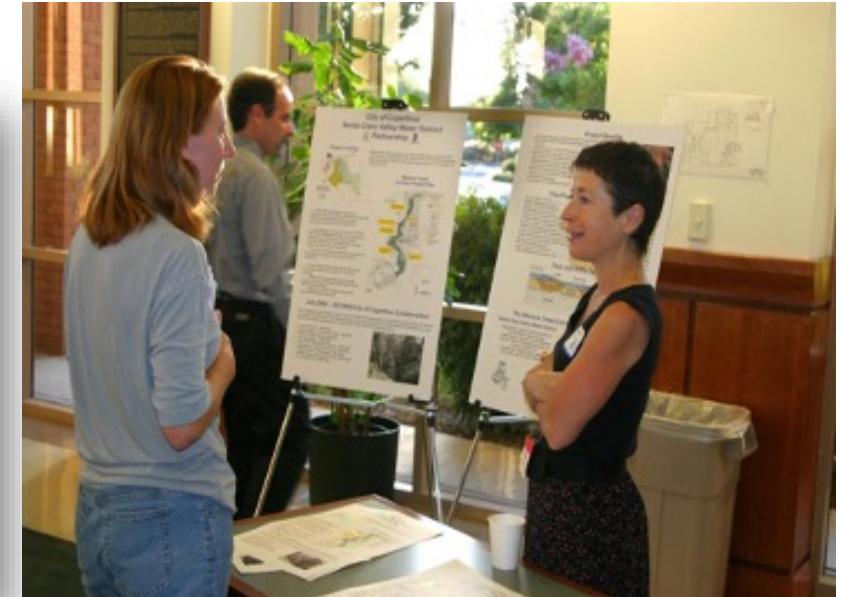
YOUR
INPUT IS
NEEDED

Valley Water Does Not Plan, Construct or Operate Trails.

Policy Criteria Planning and Public Outreach

Partner Agency is
responsible for conducting:

- Public Planning Process
- Community Outreach
- Stakeholder Engagement



Policy Criteria Flood Protection

Trail Projects must not:

- Reduce existing or design levels of flood protection
- Adversely affect existing FEMA flood mapping,
- Increase flooding or the frequency of flooding.



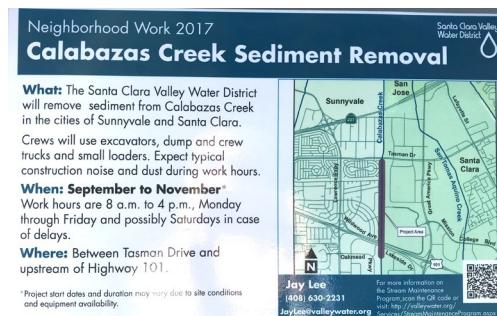
Policy Criteria Valley Water Operations

Trail Projects must not limit or constrain Valley Water access to maintain and operate its facilities.



Policy Criteria Valley Water Operations

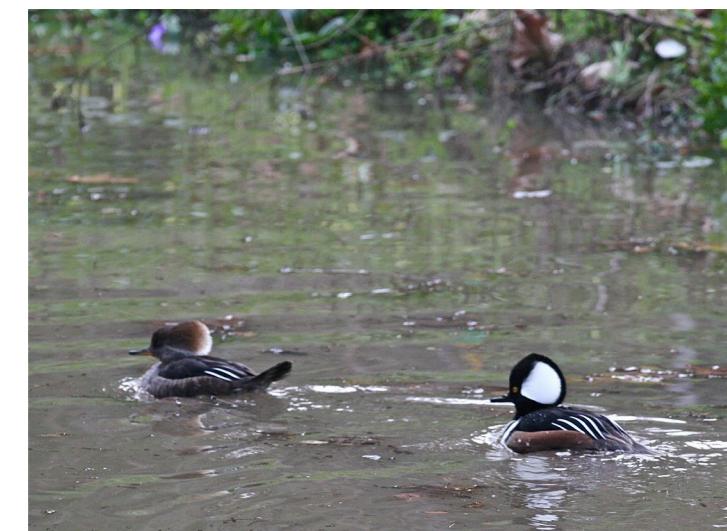
- Sediment Removal
- Maintaining Native Plant Mitigation Sites
- Erosion Repair
- Vegetation Management
- Trails must be designed to withstand access by heavy equipment.



Policy Criteria Habitat Protection

Trail Construction and Use must not result in serious or major disturbance to biological resources, including aquatic, riparian and wetland habitats, and the streamside ecosystem.

- Sensitive Trail Siting and Design
- Maintain Native Tree Canopy
- Protective Design Features
- Enhancement of Existing Habitat





JUA Application requires:

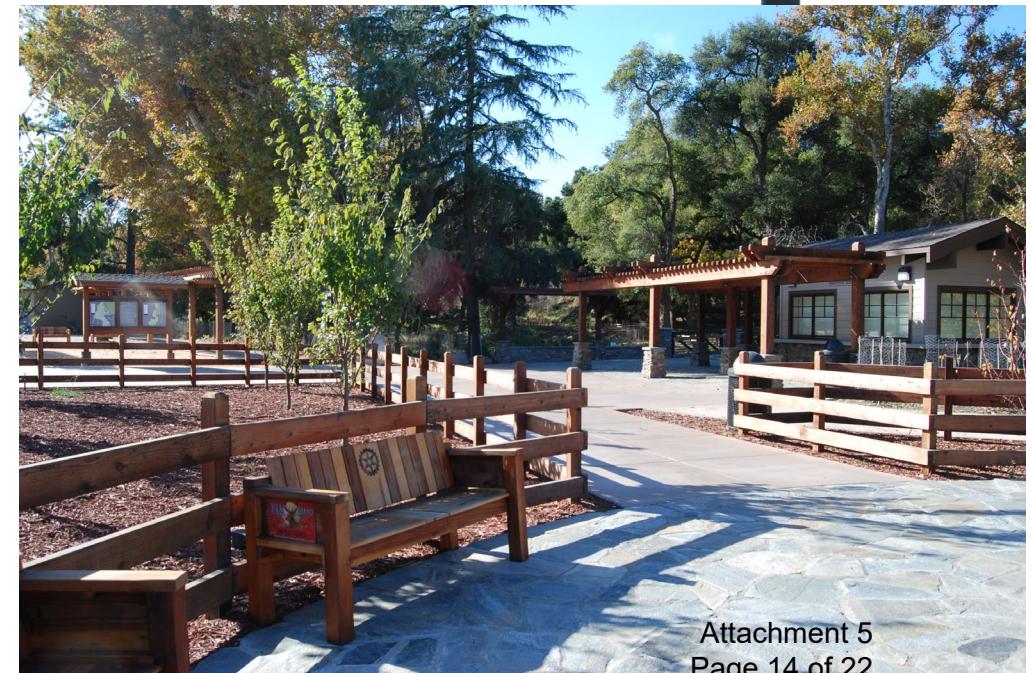
- Biological Resources Assessment
- VW Habitat Protection Criteria may not align with CEQA thresholds or other state and federal permitting regulations
- Trail Projects may clear CEQA and not be suitable for development on Valley Water lands



Policy Criteria Trail Maintenance and Security

Maintenance, patrolling, and management of the trail is at the sole cost and responsibility of the Partner Agency. JUA Application requires:

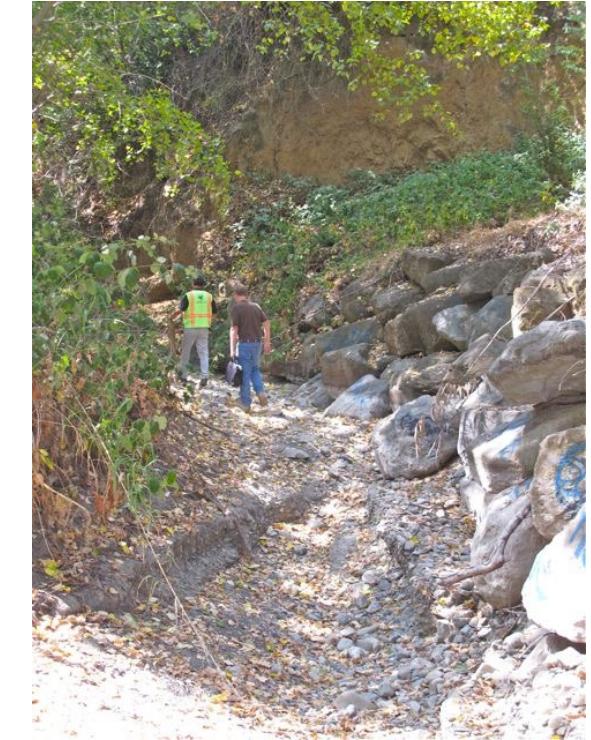
- O & M Plan and a Commitment to Fund these costs for the life of the trail
- Partner Agency to remove a trail for Flood Control Improvements



Policy Criteria Channel Stability

Trail Projects, including any in-channel features, must not adversely affect channel bank or bed stability or cause or exacerbate existing erosion problems.

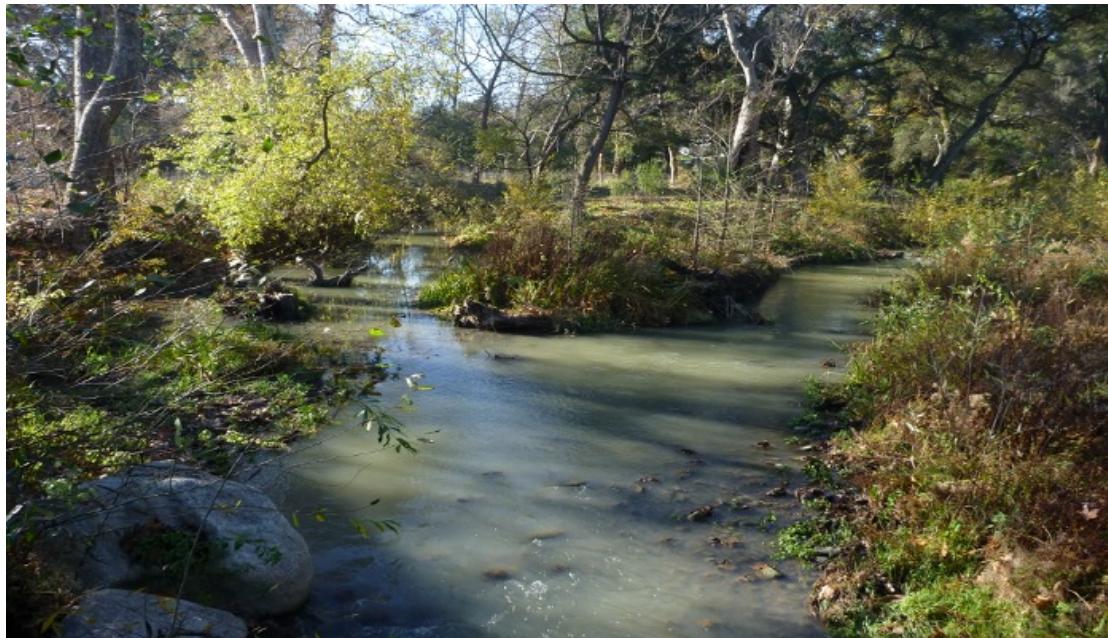
- Trail Ramps and Underpasses
- Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridges
- Restoration Structures



Policy Criteria Water Quality

Trail Projects must be designed to:

- Minimize erosion
- Reduce the flow of pollutants, including trash and litter, into the creeks

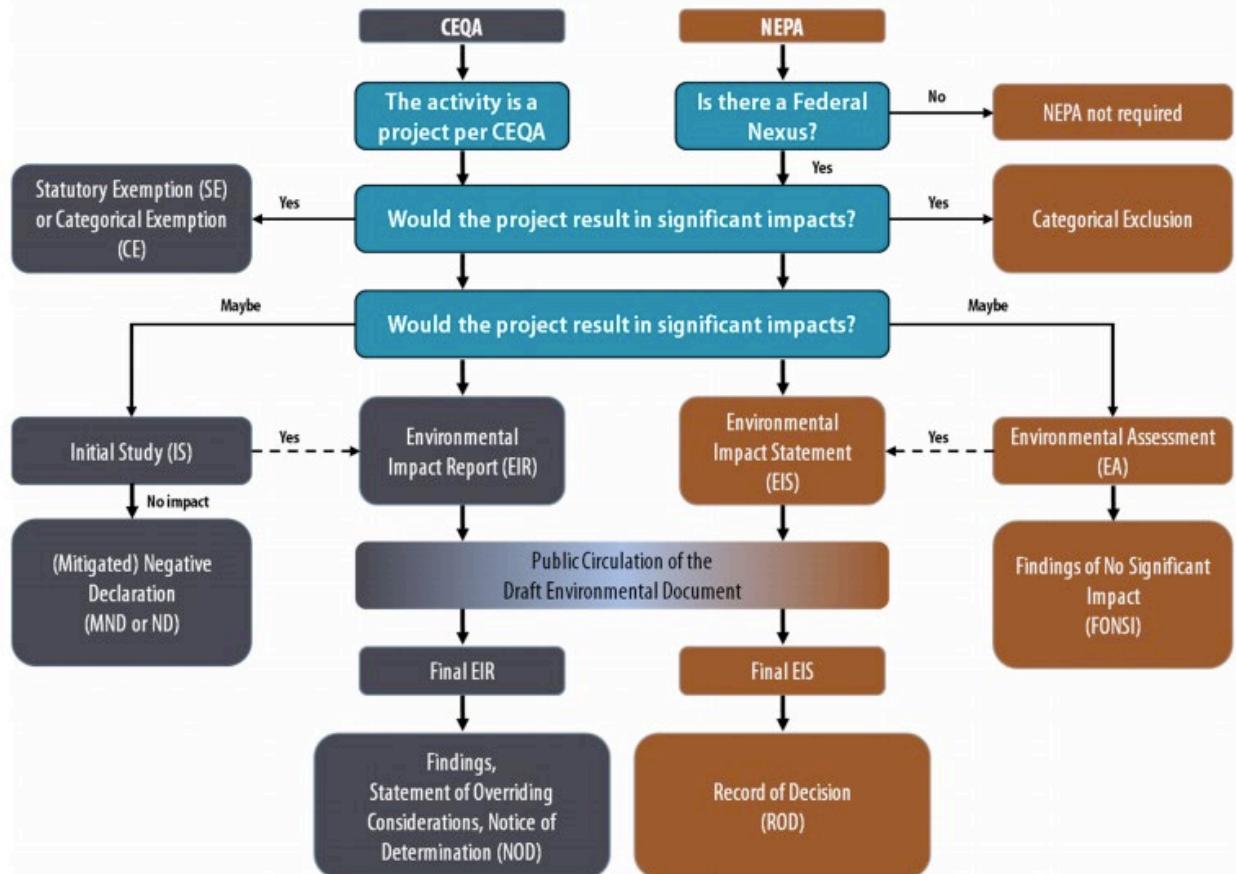


Policy Criteria Regulatory Compliance

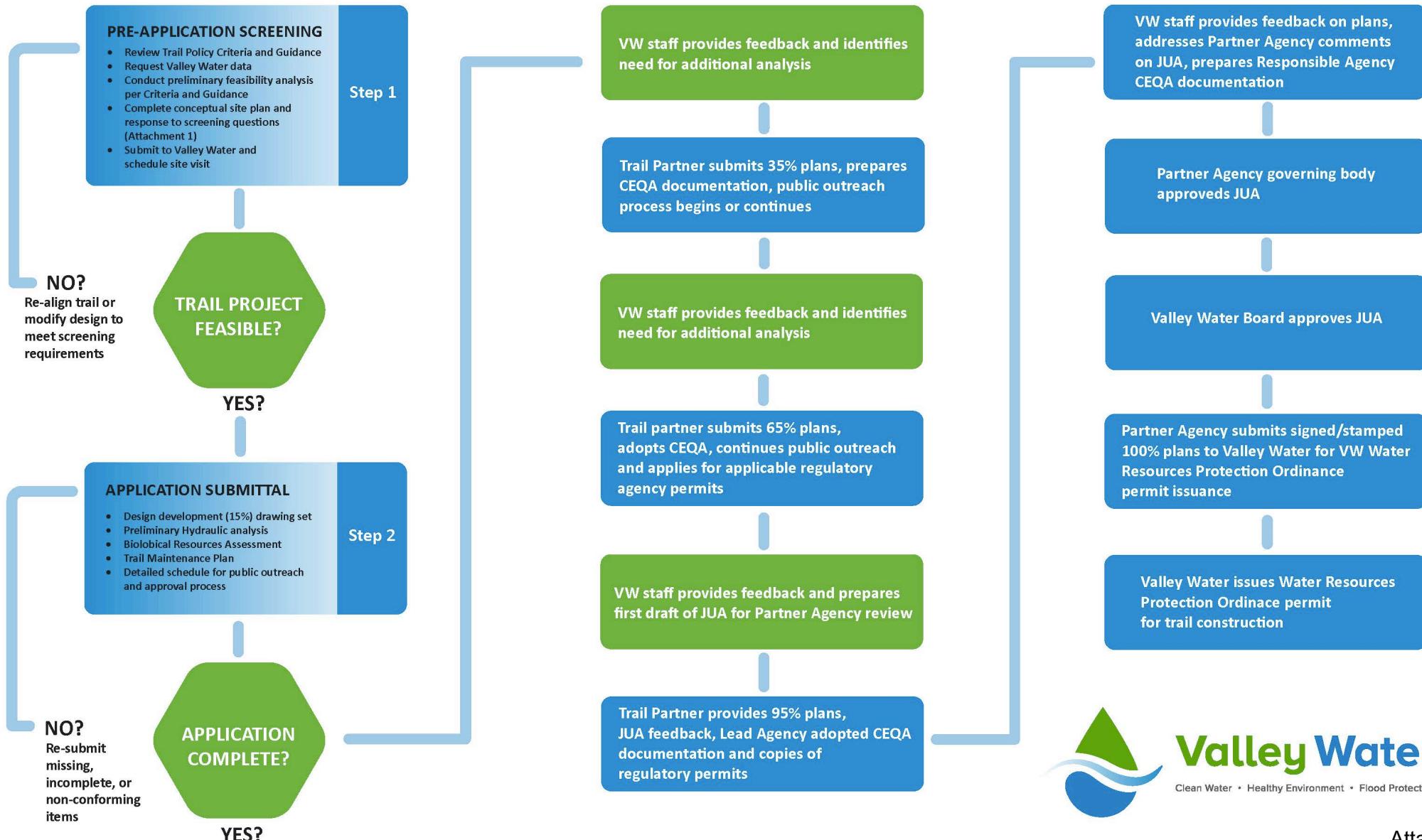
Partner Agency is responsible for:

- Environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Obtaining all necessary regulatory permits

Environmental Process Flow Chart



Guidance to meet the Criteria – JUA Process



Guidance to meet the Criteria – Habitat Protection

New construction of trails or trail segments within wetlands or parallel to waterways within riparian habitat shall be avoided, and an appropriate buffer provided where feasible

Access areas to the waterway or riparian habitat for interpretive/educational purposes, designed to minimize impacts to habitat, **are encouraged**.

Trail Projects shall be located along **existing access roads or within other previously-disturbed areas**, and shall be generally limited to one side of the waterway.

Trail Projects **shall avoid removal or substantial pruning of native trees**, and seek an alignment that maintains a contiguous tree canopy

Habitat enhancement may be incorporated into the design of Trail Projects to offset adverse effects and create an **overall beneficial impact** on habitat quality.

Recommendations

- A. Consider the January 25, 2021 Board Policy and Planning Committee recommendation to approve the Policy Criteria and Guidance for Public Trails on Valley Water Lands;
- B. Adopt the Resolution **ESTABLISHING POLICY CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC TRAILS ON VALLEY WATER LANDS**;
- C. Open the Public Hearing to Consider Amendment of the Water Resources Protection Manual to Include the Policy Criteria and Guidance for Public Trails on Valley Water Lands;
- D. Close the Public Hearing; and
- E. Adopt the Resolution **AMENDING THE WATER RESOURCES PROTECTION MANUAL TO INCLUDE POLICY CRITERIA AND GUIDANCE FOR PUBLIC TRAILS ON VALLEY WATER LANDS**.



Questions?



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