

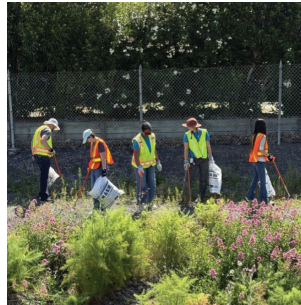
MAY 2026

Office of Civic Engagement Monthly Update



CREEK STEWARDSHIP

On May 16, Valley Water and the Creek Connections Action Group successfully coordinated National River Cleanup Day at 47 cleanup sites throughout Santa Clara County. A total of 740 volunteers participated in the event, removing approximately 14,050 pounds of litter from 69 miles of waterways and surrounding natural areas.



Volunteers pick up litter along the banks of Sunnyvale East Channel in Sunnyvale during National River Cleanup Day.

Valley Water's Youth Commission hosted a cleanup site which included a trash sorting activity to educate volunteers on the types of litter entering local waterways. Director Santos visited the site, as well as other cleanup sites in District 3.

National River Cleanup Day continues to serve as an important community stewardship effort supporting water quality, pollution prevention, and public engagement throughout Santa Clara County.

In addition to National River Cleanup Day, Valley Water Adopt-A-Creek volunteers conducted two cleanup events earlier in May, removing 140 pounds of litter from Permanente Creek in Mountain View and Calabazas Creek in Santa Clara.

EDUCATION OUTREACH

In May, staff engaged youth from kindergarten through fifth grade through classroom lessons and assemblies. Students at Capri, Country Lane, and Nimitz elementary schools explored the life cycle and challenges of the steelhead trout through the interactive Steelhead Journey lesson and game. Students learned how Valley Water protects steelhead habitat and discussed everyday actions they can take to help protect this local species. In the Water We Share lesson, students from Glen View Elementary created posters promoting purified water to demonstrate their understanding of its importance and benefits.



Students at Country Lane Elementary school learn about Valley Water's mission to provide safe and clean water, flood protection, and healthy creeks and ecosystems to Santa Clara County.

1,072 youth
9,082 fiscal year-to-date

34 classroom lessons
239 fiscal year-to-date

1 assembly
15 fiscal year-to-date

WATER SUPPLY OUTREACH

Valley Water hosted the 2026 WaterReuse Association Northern California Chapter meeting in May at its headquarters in San José. Staff welcomed water agencies from around the region and offered new beverages and treats made with purified water, including lemonade, sweet tea, and popsicles.

The City of San José's Environmental Services Department invited staff to present at the San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility for the Association of Women in Water, Energy and Environment. Staff discussed the threats to Santa Clara County's water infrastructure and highlighted the demand for waterreuse.

In May, 152 attendees visited the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center for an in-person tour, including youth students and educators, water industry proponents, business professionals, and members of Valley Water's Water 101 Academy. Altogether, staff distributed 305 bottles of purified water for outreach.



Local water agencies, consultants, and regulators are welcomed with purified water popsicles at the WaterReuse Association Northern California Chapter meeting in San José.

81 students and educators
874 fiscal year-to-date

43 public tour attendees
405 fiscal year-to-date

28 Valley Water staff
112 fiscal year-to-date

152 total attendees
1,569 fiscal year-to-date

305 bottles distributed
2028 fiscal year-to-date

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Valley Water Youth Commission holds its 4th Quarterly Meeting at the board room.

In May, the Youth Commission held its fourth quarterly meeting, during which each subcommittee provided updates on the completion of their respective projects. The meeting also included a graduation ceremony recognizing 11 Youth Commissioners for

their service and contributions. Directors Ballard and Hsueh were both in attendance. With 11 upcoming vacancies on the Youth Commission, staff conducted outreach and received more than 120 applications from interested students throughout Santa Clara County. Eleven new Youth Commissioners will be selected to join the Commission this fall.

SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Mini-Grants

Awards:

- Dhyan Foundation - Environmental Stewardship Education: Soil Health, Composting, and Community Learning:**
Valley Water awarded a Mini-Grant to Dhyan Foundation for the Environmental Stewardship Education: Soil Health, Composting, and Community Learning Project. The project will deliver environmental education focused on soil health, composting, and plastic waste reduction through a series of 12 workshops in San José. Participants will engage in hands-on activities that feature composting and water conservation.

Standard Grants

Closeouts:

- Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency - Pacheco Creek Restoration Project:**
Through a \$500,000 FY 2019 Safe, Clean Water Program Standard Grant, Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency supported the long-term recovery of threatened and endangered species including South Central California Coast steelhead, California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, and Least Bell's Vireo along the Pacheco Creek Reserve near the Pacheco Pass Highway in Santa Clara County. This was achieved by restoring 9.43 acres of Central California sycamore alluvial woodland, restoring or enhancing 1.02 acres of coastal and valley freshwater marsh habitat, enhancing 10 acres of mixed riparian woodland, creating 0.40 acres of seasonal wetland, creating or reconnecting 1.67 miles of secondary stream channels, establishing 4,600 native plants throughout the restoration area, installing 34 post-assisted log structures, and engaging members of the public throughout the duration of the project.

Refill Station Grants

Awards:

- Alum Rock Union Elementary School District - McCollam Elementary School and Russo/McEntee Academy:**
Alum Rock Union Elementary School District received two \$5,000 FY 2026 Safe, Clean Water Refill Station Grants for two elementary schools in San José. The grant will support the purchase, installation, and maintenance of new refill stations at McCollam Elementary School and Russo/McEntee Academy, ensuring that students, staff, and community members have reliable access to safe, clean drinking water.

The Water 101 Academy held its fourth virtual session and in-person infrastructure bus tour in May. The theme for session four was Water is Life: Securing Our Future, where participants learned about how Valley Water is preparing for climate change, the process for budget and rate setting, and received overviews of the Calabazas/San Tomas Aquino Creek-Marsh Connection Project and the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project. On the infrastructure bus tour, participants visited five locations representing various Valley Water projects.

WATER RATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

On May 12, the Board approved increasing the Water Rate Assistance Program (WRAP) budget by \$250,000 in FY 2027 and FY 2028. The additional funds will assist income-eligible residents of Santa Clara County who are struggling to pay their water bills. At the Water Retailers Finance Subcommittee meeting, staff shared details about WRAP with local water retailers and discussed other financial assistance programs available to the community. In May, WRAP assisted 155 households by paying water bills totaling \$59,122.65.



150 households
1,325 fiscal year-to-date



\$59,122.65 paid
\$546,449.68 fiscal year-to-date

LOOKING AHEAD

Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center Tours and Presentations:

- June 5 Public Tour
- June 13 Public Tour
- June 30 San Jose City College

Education Outreach Programs:

- June 3 Nature Explorers Camp
- June 11 Boys and Girls Club: Alviso
- June 18 Boys and Girls Club: Levin
- June 23 City of Los Altos' Redwood Grove Summer Camp
- June 25 Boys and Girls Club: Sí Se Puede
- June 29 City of Los Altos' Redwood Grove Summer Camp
- June 30 City of Santa Clara Summer Camp

Water 101 Academy:

- June 4 Water 101 Academy Graduation Ceremony