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Subject: Valley Water Proposed KPI Changes for SFC Flood Control - Against
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Dear Valley Water Board,

Below are my comments regarding the proposed change to the KPI for San Francisquito Creek that you will be meeting at 1 pm on Tuesday to discuss. Thank you.

Hamilton Hitchings

My name is Hamilton Hitchings. I live in Palo Alto and serve as a volunteer Neighborhood Preparedness Coordinator with the City's Emergency Services program, representing Duveneck/St. Francis and writing this letter in my personal capacity. Our neighborhood sits in the deepest parts of the San Francisquito Creek flood zone and was severely flooded in 1998.

I ask the Board not to approve the proposed Project E5 KPI change.

The voter-approved KPI commits Valley Water to a measurable public-safety result: protection for approximately 3,000 parcels, including roughly 70-year protection upstream of Highway 101. The replacement KPI measures only whether Valley Water provides the JPA an undefined "commensurate" share of funding — with no protection level, no dollar amount, and no way for the public to know whether the project succeeded.

Valley Water says it cannot be accountable for an outcome the JPA controls. But Reach 1 disproves that. The JPA was the lead agency there too — yet Valley Water was deeply involved in the design and, through a 2015 agreement with the JPA, led construction. The result: 100-year flood protection downstream of Highway 101, meeting its KPIs. That success was built on a strong Valley Water–JPA partnership — one that has since deteriorated. Your own FAQ acknowledges that similar agreements "can be executed" for Reach 2. So the barrier is not authority — it is willingness. Deleting the outcome KPI removes the incentive to collaborate on design and construction.

The timing makes this worse. Technical staff across the JPA agencies, including Valley Water's, now believe a viable preferred alternative can contain 7,200 cfs and replace the Pope-Chaucer Bridge. If Valley Water steps back now — during design — it might later say

it cannot responsibly lead construction of a project it did not help shape or approve. Retreat during design makes retreat from construction far more likely.

Please reject this KPI change, or direct staff to return with a revised KPI that preserves accountability for actual flood protection. At minimum, defer any change until the JPA selects a preferred alternative. Don't ratify a retreat — require re-engagement, and deliver the protection voters were promised.

Hamilton Hitchings