

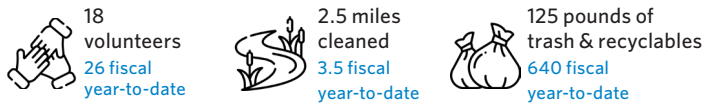
AUGUST 2024

# Office of Civic Engagement Monthly Update



## CREEK STEWARDSHIP

In August, two Adopt-A-Creek partners conducted cleanups in their adopted creek sections in Districts 3 and 7. Adopt-A-Creek partners continue to use the Access Valley Water system to report creek cleanup results and request trash pickup. Here are the latest numbers:



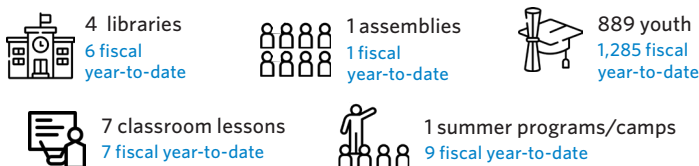
In an effort to enhance public engagement during the upcoming California Coastal Cleanup Day, Valley Water and the Creek Connections Action Group conducted extensive outreach to recruit volunteer cleanup site coordinators to host creek cleanups throughout Santa Clara County on September 21, 2024. Public cleanup registration opened at the end of August.



Youth volunteers from the Bay Area Chapter of Volunteering Together for Service show off the litter they collected along their adopted section of Lower Penitencia Creek in Milpitas.

## EDUCATION OUTREACH

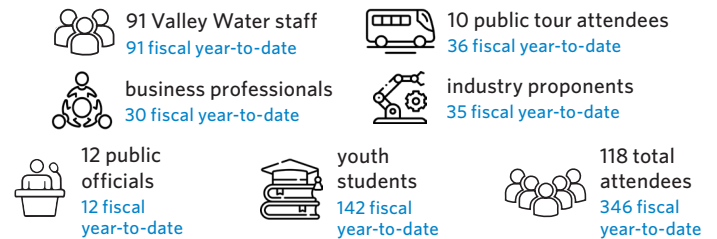
Staff reached Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 through classroom lessons, assemblies, summer programs, library visits, and tabling events this month. Staff collaborated with the City of San José to table at the Viva EscuelaSJ event at Schallenger Elementary School. Viva EscuelaSJ is a community event that encourages students and families to walk or bike to school by closing off nearby streets to vehicles during morning drop-off. The closed streets are lined with activities and community organizations offering information about local resources. Staff also presented an assembly at Stonegate Elementary, where students learned about Valley Water and how to conserve water daily.



Students from Stonegate Elementary School and staff recite the water conservation pledge in San José.

## WATER SUPPLY OUTREACH

Throughout August, staff engaged with 118 attendees who participated in tours of the Silicon Valley Advanced Purification Center. The month began with tours for 33 newly hired employees and 44 summer interns. Both tour groups learned about the advanced water purification technology and taste-tested Valley Water's purified water. On August 28, staff supported a media event celebrating the purification center's 10th anniversary. Vice Chair Santos, Director Estremera, CEO Rick Callender, were joined by San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan and Santa Clara Mayor Lisa Gillmor in commemorating the progress their partnership has made by toasting with our bottled purified water.



## YOUTH COMMISSION

The Youth Commission held its first meeting of the fiscal year on August 21. Seventeen commissioners were in attendance, and ten new members took their oath of office. The commission elected a new chair and vice chair and voted to change from a working group to a project-based model. Board Chair Nai Hsueh attended and welcomed the new and returning commissioners. She commended the commission on its policy proposal addressing the unhoused community, which was presented to the Valley Water Board at the end of August.



Youth Commissioners group together for an icebreaker to kickoff the first quarterly meeting of the fiscal year.



## SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

### Refill Station Grants

Jackson Oaks Association was awarded a \$5,000 Refill Station Grant to purchase, install, and maintain a refill station at their neighborhood clubhouse in Morgan Hill. The clubhouse, located near the community playground and swimming pool, hosts regular community meetings and serves as a local polling station for elections. The refill station will help reduce the use of disposable water bottles by residents and community members who visit the clubhouse.

### Mini Grants

On August 11, Director Jim Beall, joined by staff attended Compasspoint Mentorship's ribbon-cutting ceremony for its Los Gatos Creek County Park Mural in Campbell. The grantee was awarded a Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Safe, Clean Water \$5,000 F9 Mini-Grant to install a mural on a restroom wall in Los Gatos Creek County Park that highlights local flora. Director Beall provided opening remarks. There were approximately 30 attendees, including young program participants, their parents, and staff from Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department.



Director Jim Beall, Santa Clara County Parks staff, and Compasspoint Mentorship members celebrate the completion of the mural project, which was partially funded by a Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant.

**Closeouts:** In FY 2023, Valley Water awarded Chopsticks Alley Art, Inc. a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water F9 Mini-Grant for their Me Earth (Mother Earth): Past, Present, Future Project. The project included two community events that engaged community members and organizations in panel discussions focused on environmental stewardship, a film screening on water conservation, an art exhibit, and a group hike.



Hikers stop on the trail to look for birds during a group hike hosted by Chopsticks Alley as part of its \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant Project.

**Closeouts:** In FY 2023, Valley Water awarded Compasspoint Mentorship a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water F9 Mini-Grant for their Ed Levin Park Mural Restroom Project. This mural project was installed on a restroom wall in Ed Levin Park in Milpitas. The project engaged more than 30 students in a two-week long summer camp which included the mural planning, design, and installation, along with environmental education. The mural project educates park visitors about the local flora and fauna through its design as well as deters graffiti and blight.

### Standard Grants

On August 24, staff attended Smart Yards Education's San José Permaculture: Planting Water Fall 2024 workshop. It consisted of presentations on lawn conversion, watershed education and permaculture. It was also the first workshop by Smart Yards Education that was hosted exclusively in Spanish, with English translators present. Valley Water staff gave opening remarks to promote Valley Water's grants and landscape rebate programs. A total of 27 participants attended the workshop. The event is part of Smart Yards Education's Water Conservation and Permaculture Skills Training Program Project, funded by a \$51,900 Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection grant.



Smart Yards Education instructors present on lawn conversion and permaculture practices to Spanish-speaking participants.

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Purification Center Tours and Presentations:

- SEPT 13 Friends of Children with Special Needs Tour
- SEPT 14 Public Tour

### Education Outreach Programs:

- SEPT 11 Eaton Elementary School
- SEPT 16 Hughes Elementary School
- SEPT 17 Grant Elementary School
- SEPT 18 San José Public Library Pearl Ave. Branch
- SEPT 23 Gussie M. Baker Elementary School
- SEPT 25 Russo McEntee Elementary School
- SEPT 26 Gardner Elementary School
- SEPT 30 Lincoln Elementary School
- OCT 3 Cedar Grove Elementary School
- OCT 9 K.R. Smith Elementary School
- OCT 10 Oakwood School
- OCT 15 Tom Matsumoto Elementary School

### Creek Stewardship Events:

- SEPT 21 Coastal Cleanup Day