

Max Overland

From: Hamilton Hitchings <hitchingsh@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2025 6:52 PM
To: Board of Directors
Subject: Community Input on Board Agenda Item 5.3 - San Francisquito Creek Flood Protection

***** This email originated from outside of Valley Water. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. *****

Dear Valley Water Board,

As a resident in the San Francisquito Creek Flood Zone, I speak from experience about the devastating impact of the 1998 floods that left hundreds of homes uninhabitable. Today, 26 years later, reach 2 remains protected against only 15-year storm events, while no substantial improvements have been made upstream of Highway 101.

Four critical points about potential Valley Water withdrawal from the SFCJPA:

1. The timing is concerning, as Valley Water Board Vice Chair Barbara Keegan just signed the Updated JPA Agreement in August 2023 after an 18-month review. These new concerns have only recently been raised by Valley Water.
2. The 70-year flood protection goal for this single project, while admirable, shouldn't be a hard requirement if the JPA board determines there is a much higher cost-benefit ratio at a slightly lower flood protection goal that can be implemented faster or more incrementally.
3. Cross-county collaboration through the SFCJPA is essential, as the creek forms the boundary between counties. This allows flexibility to implement cost-effective improvements on either bank.
4. Why are you pushing to discuss how much each agency will contribute before you know the cost of the project or how much flood protection it will provide?

As an impacted community member I encourage you to make the following recommendations:

- Remain in the SFCJPA to maintain critical inter-agency cooperation
- Consider pragmatic flood protection improvements, even if they fall short of 70-year protection
- Focus on completing enough to answer the question of what level flood control the project design will achieve and how much it will cost. Ideally develop two options, one for 70-year flood protection and a slightly lower but much significantly cheaper alternative.
- Maintain current governance structure unless specific problems arise

Palo Alto residents supported Measures B and S expecting meaningful flood protection improvements. Please maintain your commitment to this critical public safety project through continued collaboration with and participation in the SFCJPA.

Thank you.

Hamilton Hitchings, Palo Alto

This page intentionally left blank.