

**To: Board of Directors**  
**From: Melanie Richardson, Interim CEO**

**Weeks of December 5, 2025 – December 18, 2025**

**Board Executive Limitation Policy EL-7:**

*The Board Appointed Officers shall inform and support the Board in its work. Further, a BAO shall 1) inform the Board of relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, or material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions upon which any Board policy has previously been established and 2) report in a timely manner an actual or anticipated noncompliance with any policy of the Board.*

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**1. Demonstration Garden Design Charrette**

As part of the design phase for the approximately 26,000 square foot demonstration garden planned at Valley Water's Headquarters, Valley Water's Conservation Team hosted a design charrette to engage key stakeholders and experts in the landscape community on November 14,2025. Valley Water, along with contractor BFS Landscape Architects, presented the garden's goals, background, current conceptual plans, and preliminary plant list. Thirteen landscape professionals attended the charrette including Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County, Going Native Garden Tour committee members, various landscape business owners and designers within the county, and Vice Chair Richard Santos.

During the charrette, attendees toured the proposed garden site, received an in-depth look into the concept design developed by BFS Landscape Architects, and collaborated in various break out groups providing feedback utilizing their various backgrounds and expertise. The breakout groups discussed different elements of the garden including proposed plants, high-efficiency irrigation systems, stormwater and integrated rainwater capture components, and planned signage and educational content. Feedback provided during the charrette will be incorporated into the final design of the garden. In another effort to engage the community, Valley Water will distribute an online survey to past and current participants of the Landscape Rebate Program.

Funded through the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, the design of the demonstration garden is expected to be completed in Spring 2026, and construction will be

completed by the close of FY28.

For further information, please contact Kirsten Struve at (408) 630-3138.

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## **2. Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant Closeout: Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont's Film on Hydroponics Project**

In Fiscal Year 2023, Valley Water awarded Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Program F9 Mini-Grant for their Film on Hydroponics (Project). Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont completed the Project in August 2025, and submitted the final invoice items in September 2025, allowing for grant closeout.

Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable, water-wise agriculture and community education through hands-on learning and public outreach. The Project raised awareness of hydroponics as an accessible, water-efficient growing method for residents in Santa Clara County. The video was screened at community garden events hosted by local environmental organizations throughout Santa Clara County, including Veggielution, the California Native Garden Foundation, and the Sindhoor Natya Center for the Arts in San José and shared online by local environmental organizations.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- Engaged more than 11,000 residents through live community screenings and online promotion by partner organizations.
- Strengthened local awareness of water-efficient gardening practices through interactive, community-based education.
- Informed residents to explore home hydroponic systems as a practical, sustainable way to conserve water.

For further information, please contact Rachael Gibson at (408) 630-2884.

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## **3. Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant Closeout: Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont's Film on Water-Saving Hügelskultur Bed Project**

In Fiscal Year 2023, Valley Water awarded Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Program F9 Mini-Grant for their Film on Water-Saving Hügelskultur Bed (Project). Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont completed the Project on August 28, 2025, and submitted the final invoice items in September 2025, allowing grant closeout.

Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable, water-wise agriculture and community education through hands-on learning and public outreach. Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont created an educational film on Hügelskultur, a gardening method that conserves water and promotes healthy soil. The video demonstrated how to build Hügelskultur beds in both large garden plots and small spaces. The film was screened at community garden events throughout Santa Clara County and shared online by local environmental organizations.

### **Key Outcomes:**

- Promoted greater understanding of sustainable gardening and water conservation across Santa Clara County.
- Engaged more than 11,000 community members through in-person local screenings and online outreach.

- Created a short educational film introducing Hügelkultur as a practical, water-saving gardening technique.

For further information, please contact Rachael Gibson at (408) 630-2884.

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#### **4. Safe, Clean Water Refill Station Closeout: Jackson Oaks Association's Clubhouse Deck Project**

In Fiscal Year 2025, Valley Water awarded Jackson Oaks Association a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Program F9 Refill Station Grant for their Clubhouse Deck (Project). Jackson Oaks Association completed the Project and submitted the final invoice items on September 10, 2025, allowing for grant closeout.

Jackson Oaks Association is a homeowners' association located in Morgan Hill that provides a space for local events, public meetings, and recreational activities. Jackson Oaks Association hosts community events, serves as a public polling station, and engages residents on topics such as water conservation, fire safety, and other community projects. Jackson Oaks Association installed the first refill station on the exterior of the Project location between the two outside bathrooms for convenient public access.

##### **Key Outcomes:**

- Installed the first permanent refill station outside of the Jackson Oaks Association Clubhouse.
- Provides convenient access to clean drinking water for over 500 homes in the Jackson Oaks community and visitors.
- Supports preschoolers, school-age children, college students, and adult residents using the playground, pool, and clubhouse year-round.

For further information, please contact Rachael Gibson at (408) 630-2884.

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