

JANUARY 2026

Office of Civic Engagement Monthly Update



CREEK STEWARDSHIP

In January, five Adopt-A-Creek volunteers conducted cleanups. Their combined effort contributed 26 volunteer service hours to remove approximately 126 pounds of litter from the banks of Regnart Creek, Guadalupe Creek, Saratoga Creek, Permanente Creek, and Berryessa Creek. Adopt-A-Creek volunteers continue to use the Access Valley Water system to report cleanup results, request trash pickup, and report large debris and other concerns related to creeks.

 **4.04 miles cleaned**
98.93 fiscal year-to-date

 **126 pounds of trash and recyclables**
34,411 fiscal year-to-date

 **13 volunteers**
2,233 fiscal year-to-date



The Boy Scouts of America Troop 468 cleaned up Berryessa Creek in San José.

EDUCATION OUTREACH

In January, staff reached students in grades TK-6 through classroom lessons, assemblies, a field trip, and a library program. Staff provided a presentation about Valley Water, where our water comes from, and how to conserve water at the Teens Reach Program at the Evergreen Branch Library in San José. Staff also presented The Water We Share, a lesson about purified water, to fourth through sixth grade students at Sakamoto Elementary School in San José.

 **1,346 youth**
5,539 fiscal year-to-date

 **27 classroom lessons**
122 fiscal year-to-date

 **1 field trip**
11 fiscal year-to-date

 **5 assemblies**
13 fiscal year-to-date

 **1 library**
14 fiscal year-to-date

WATER 101 ACADEMY

Applications for the Water 101 Academy closed on January 16. Staff received 62 applications from residents across the seven districts represented by the Valley Water Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will select its top candidates to participate in the academy. The Water 101 Academy sessions

will commence in April. Staff are excited to share information, educate participants, and help this year's cohort become Water Ambassadors.

WATER SUPPLY OUTREACH

In January, 56 attendees participated in virtual and in-person tours of the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center (SVAWPC). Chair Estremera, Vice Chair Santos, the Office of Government Relations and its consultants visited the SVAWPC and learned about the importance of purified water for our water supply. Staff also presented a virtual tour and The Water We Share lesson at the Youth Commission's regular meeting.

In a major milestone, a new batch of approximately 16,000 purified water bottles was approved by the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water and California Department of Public Health for distribution. Valley Water is the first agency in California to bottle purified water since the new direct potable reuse regulations were released and took effect in October 2024. Staff distributed 25 bottles at the Board meeting on January 13, and 25 bottles on January 14 to the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies Lab Committee.

 **20 public tour attendees**
257 fiscal year-to-date

 **16 Valley Water staff**
84 fiscal year-to-date

 **4 industry proponents**
28 fiscal year-to-date

 **16 students & educators**
644 fiscal year-to-date

 **56 total attendees**
1,124 fiscal year-to-date

 **74 bottles distributed**
74 current year-to-date

YOUTH COMMISSION

In January, the Youth Commission assembled more than 100 safety and hygiene kits for unhoused youth across Santa Clara County, each containing essential personal care and safety items. The effort was strengthened by support from the San José District 2 Councilmember Pamela Campos' Office, which donated more than 40 additional kits. At the end of January, the Youth Commission toured the Bill Wilson Center, and in partnership with the center, will distribute the kits directly to unhoused youth throughout the county.

On January 28, the Youth Commission held its quarterly meeting. The commissioners received a special presentation about purified water and a virtual tour of the Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center. They also presented project updates on their Board-approved projects, including the Creekside Community Care project, Data Accessibility project, and One Water Pitch video contest project.

[Continued on back »](#)

SAFE, CLEAN WATER GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Refill Station Grants

Awards:

- **Orchard School District – Orchard Elementary:** Through a \$5,000 FY26 Safe, Clean Water F9 Refill Station Grant, Orchard Elementary in San José will install a water refill station in the center of the fifth-grade pod, replacing an existing fountain. The station will provide students, staff, and community members with easy access to clean, filtered water.
- **Martha’s Kitchen – Refill Station Project:** Through a \$5,000 FY26 Safe, Clean Water F9 Refill Station Grant, Martha’s Kitchen will install a permanent water refill station in its Volunteer Gathering Hall in San José. The refill station will provide safe drinking water for volunteers, staff, and community members while reducing an estimated 10,000 single-use plastic bottles each month.

Closeouts:

- **AchieveKids – Valley Water Refill Station Project:** Through a FY25 \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water F9 Refill Station Grant, AchieveKids installed a permanent water refill station at its San José campus, replacing an outdated existing drinking fountain in a high-traffic area near student bathrooms. The refill station provides convenient access to more than 80 students and staff while supporting daily programming and community events.

Mini-Grants

Awards:

- **Acterra: Action for a Healthy Planet – Acterra’s HomeGrown Bay Area: San Jose Community Food Forest:** Through a \$10,000 FY26 Safe, Clean Water F9 Mini-Grant, Acterra will transform an underutilized site at Veggielution in San José into a community food forest with fruit trees, vegetables, and pollinator-friendly plants. The Project will engage local families and students through bilingual workshops, hands-on planting, and educational activities, while adapting irrigation systems to promote water conservation.

Closeouts:

- **Bay Area Ridge Trail Council – Ridge Trail Service Day:** Through a FY25 \$10,000 Safe, Clean Water F9 Mini-Grant, Bay Area Ridge Trail Council supported its annual Ridge Trail Service Day at three Santa Clara County locations, including Sierra Vista Open Space Preserve, Sanborn County Park’s Skyline Trail, and Coyote Creek Trail. The Project engaged 125 volunteers and staff who contributed to 315 hours of trail maintenance, habitat restoration, and debris removal, improving public access along two miles of trail and removing 104 bags of trash.

- **Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose – Guadalupe River Watershed Exhibit:** Through a FY24 \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water F9 Mini-Grant, Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose created a permanent outdoor watershed exhibit at Bill’s Backyard in San José featuring a three-dimensional watershed model illustrating local geography and human impacts on the Guadalupe River watershed. The exhibit includes multilingual signage in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, providing accessible environmental education for diverse audiences.

Standard Grants

Closeouts:

- **Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition – Wheels and Waterways Project:** Through a FY21 \$50,000 Safe, Clean Water Program B7 Grant, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition delivered a community bike ride and creek cleanup series across Santa Clara County. The Project engaged 376 residents through 17 educational rides and removed 6,230 pounds of trash during six cleanup events, increasing awareness of watershed stewardship, flood protection, and sustainable transportation.

LOOKING AHEAD

Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center Tours and Presentations:

- FEB 4 Indigo Program
- FEB 5 Menlo School
- FEB 6 Public Tour
- FEB 10 Morrill Middle School
- FEB 14 Public Tour

Education Outreach Programs:

- FEB 4 Lakewood State Preschool
- FEB 5 Pasitos School (Central)
- FEB 7 San José State University Science Extravaganza
- FEB 11 John Muir Elementary School
- FEB 12 Del Roble Elementary School
- FEB 25 Guadalupe Elementary School
- FEB 26 Sedgwick Elementary School