



Lower Peninsula and West Valley Watershed Master Plans

Presented by: **Elizabeth Mercado**, Senior Engineer, Water Resources Planning and Policy Unit
Environmental and Water Resources Committee - July 20, 2026

Agenda

Purpose: Provide update on the West Valley and Lower Peninsula Watershed Master Plans

- Background
- Public Engagement
- Settings Overview
- Metrics Overview
- Priority Actions Development – Opportunity for Input
- Next Steps

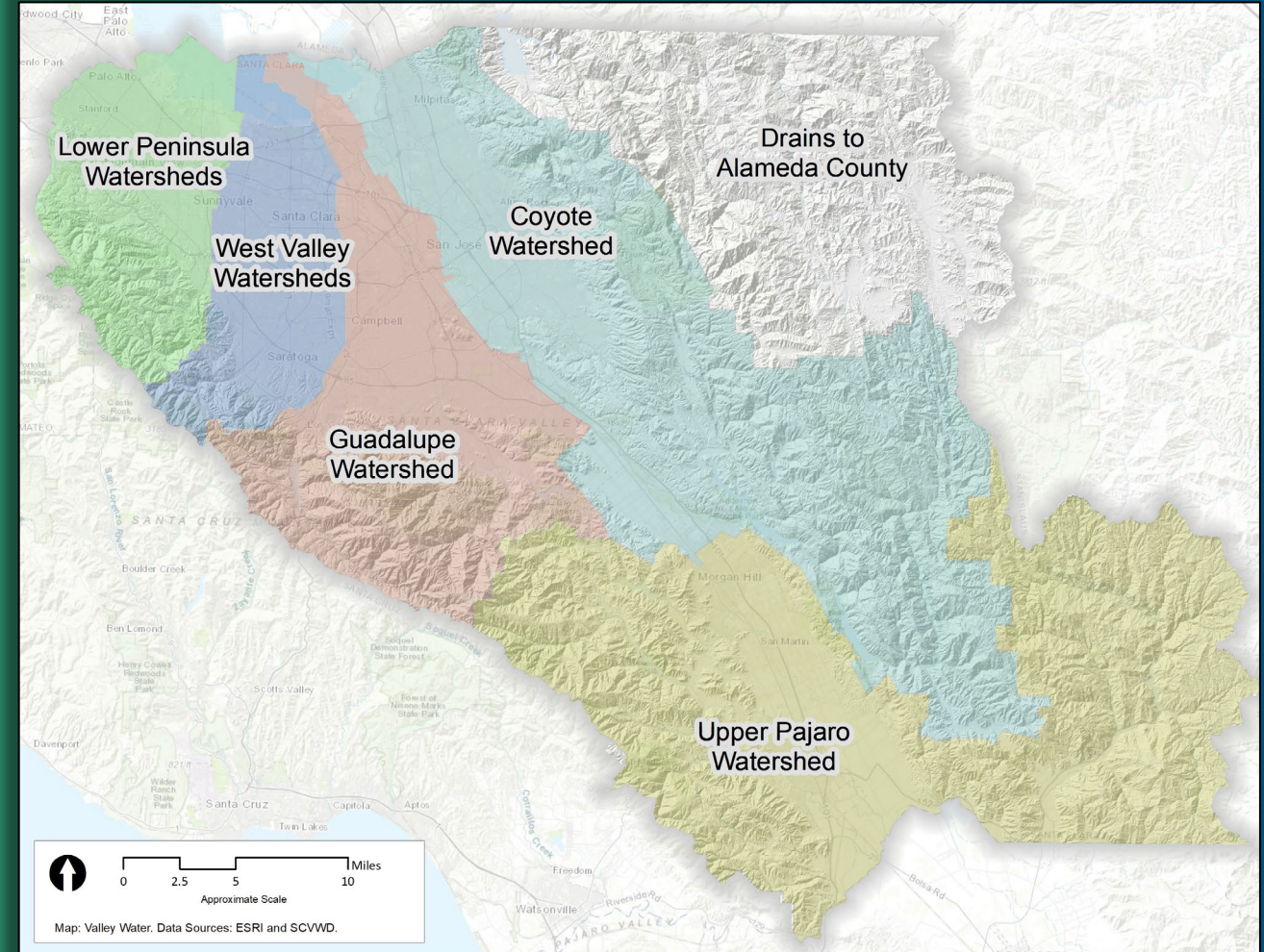
Watershed Master Plans - Progress

3

**West Valley
Lower Peninsula**
IN PROGRESS

**Upper Pajaro
Guadalupe**
2024

**Countywide Framework
Coyote**
2022



Watershed Master Plan - Objectives



**Natural
Ecosystems**



**Flood Risk
Reduction**



**Water
Quality**



**Water
Supply**



**Climate
Change**

Watershed Master Plan – Elements

Setting

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Metrics

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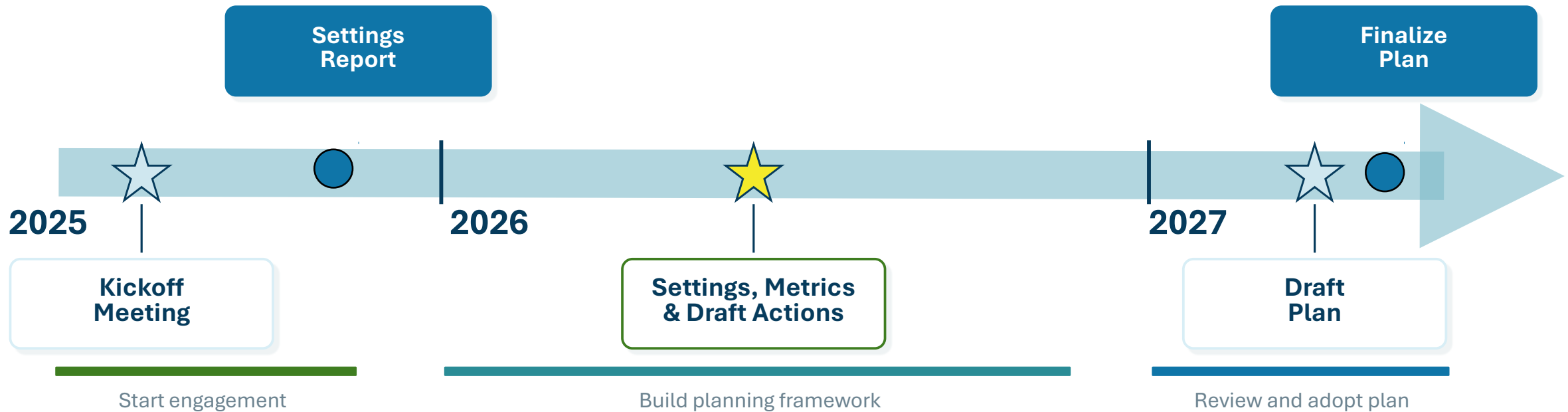
Priority Actions



West Valley & Lower Peninsula Watershed Master Plans

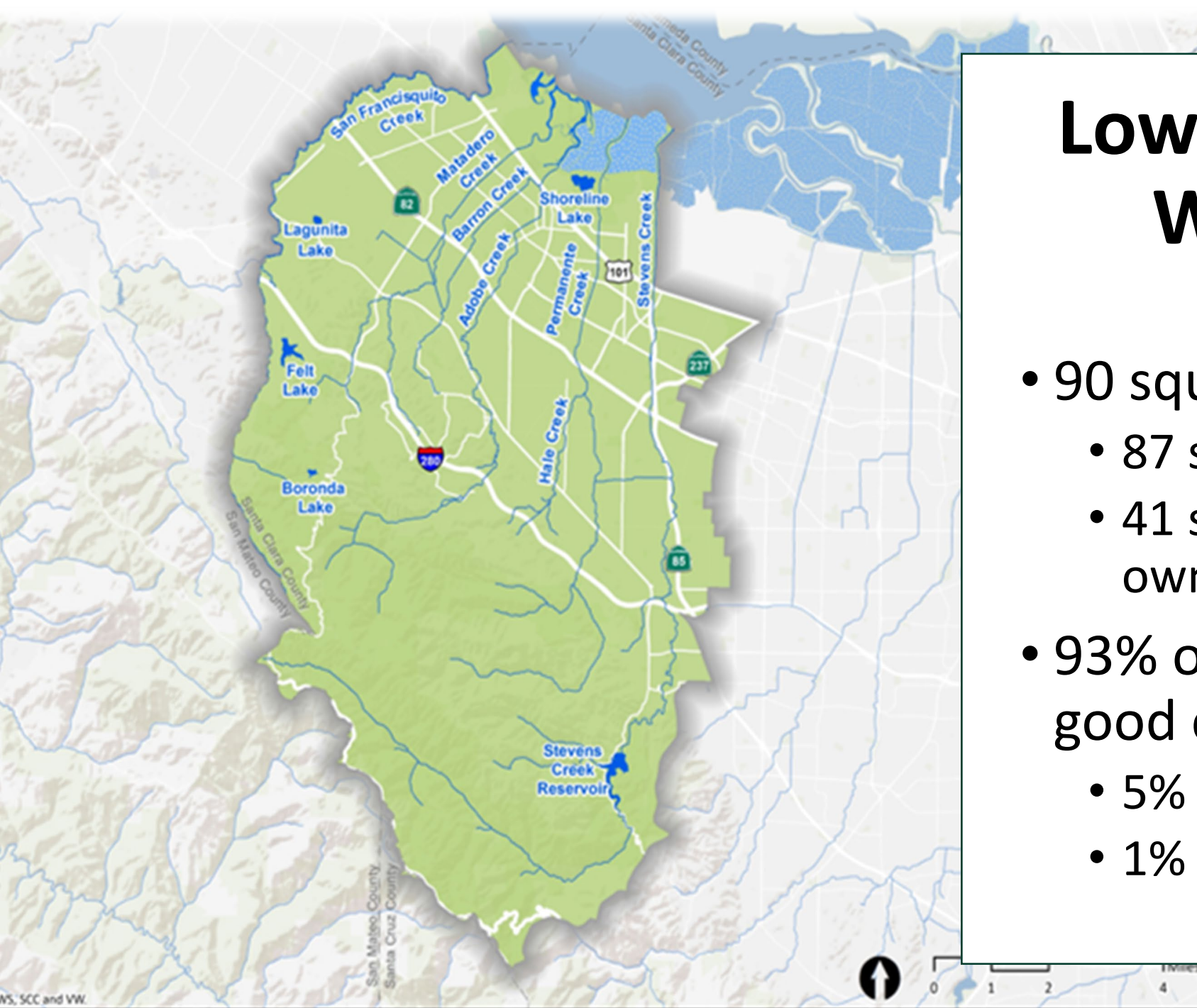
Planning Timeline

6



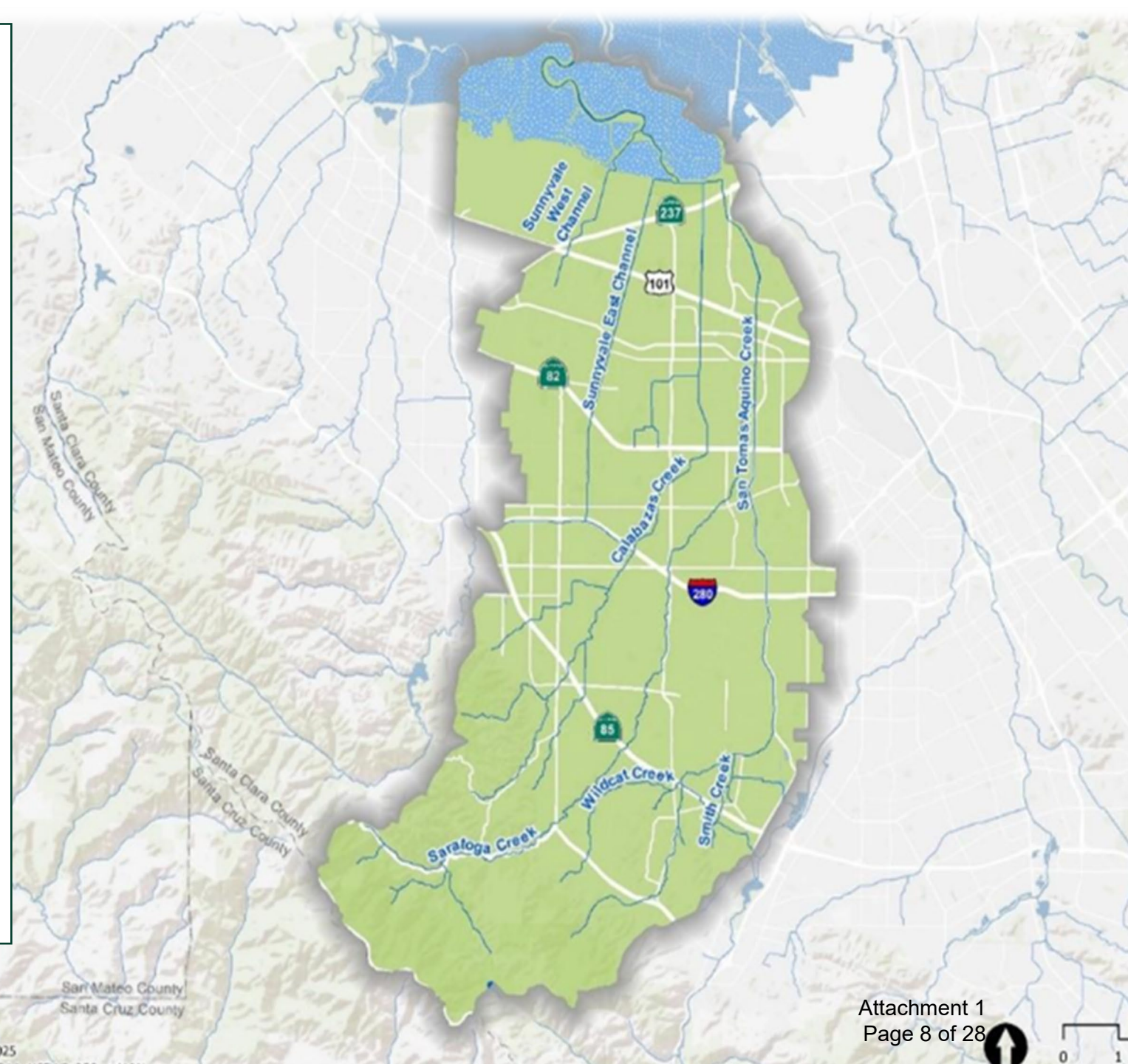
Lower Peninsula Watershed

- 90 square-mile area
 - 87 sq miles of creek
 - 41 sq miles of District-owned creek
- 93% of the creek is in good condition
 - 5% - shows signs of wear
 - 1% - poor condition



West Valley Watershed

- 85 square-mile area
 - 68 sq miles of creek
 - 55 sq miles of District-owned creek
 - Smallest watershed
- 88% of the creek is in good condition
 - 10% - shows signs of wear
 - 2% - poor condition



Community Network

List of Groups for Engagement

Agriculture/Ranching

Economic Vitality & Sustainability

Educational Institutions

Tribes/Environmental Justice

Environmental Org./Stewardship

Governing Bodies - Regulatory Agencies

Municipalities/Land Use Agencies

Open Space Conservation/Recreation

Residents/Community-Based Orgs

Special Joint Organizations/Coalitions

Subject Matter Experts/Research & Data

Water Resource Agencies / Special Districts

Outreach and Engagement

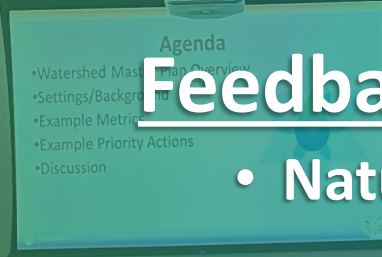
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Community Meetings:

- March 2025 – Kickoff
- Sept. 2025 - Los Altos
- March 2026 - Stevens Creek Summit

Feedback:

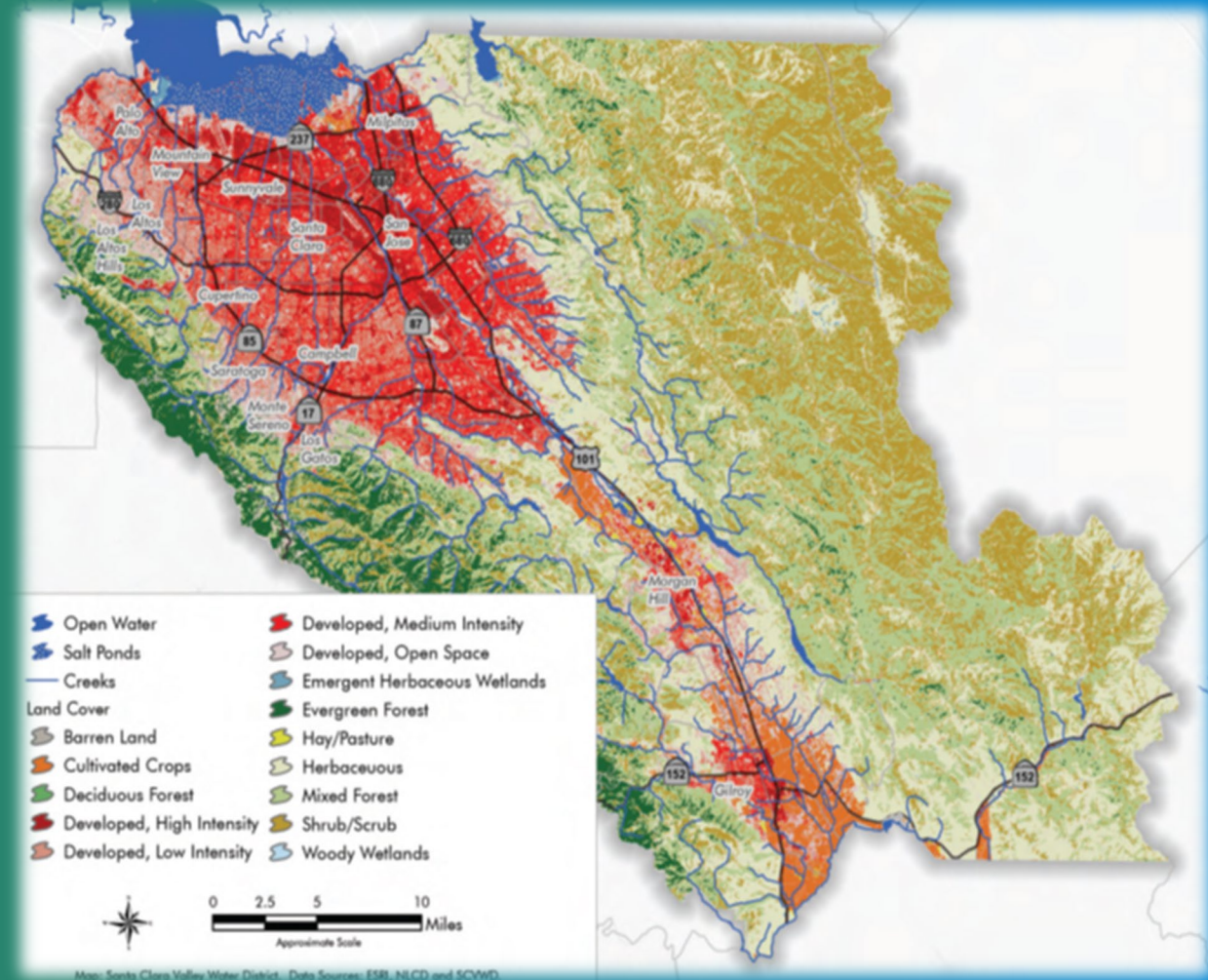
- Nature-based creek restoration
- Removal of fish passage barriers (i.e. Stevens Creek near Hwy 101)
- Expand trails and creek trail connectivity
- Increase riparian setbacks for future urban development
- Improve bird and pollinator habitat



Watershed Setting Reports

11

- Describes existing conditions
- Detailed assessment for each objective
- Identifies challenges and opportunities



Challenges

Highly constrained, urban
creeks

Aging flood protection
infrastructure

Degraded habitat and limited
connectivity

Water quality impairments
from urban runoff

Climate change impacts

Opportunities

Multi-benefit projects

Nature-based solutions

Regional partnerships

Strategic asset renewal

Urban and Bayland
restoration

Existing Flood Protection Conditions 13



San Tomas Aquino

Existing Concrete Conditions



Existing Ecological Conditions

15



Moffett Fish Ladder

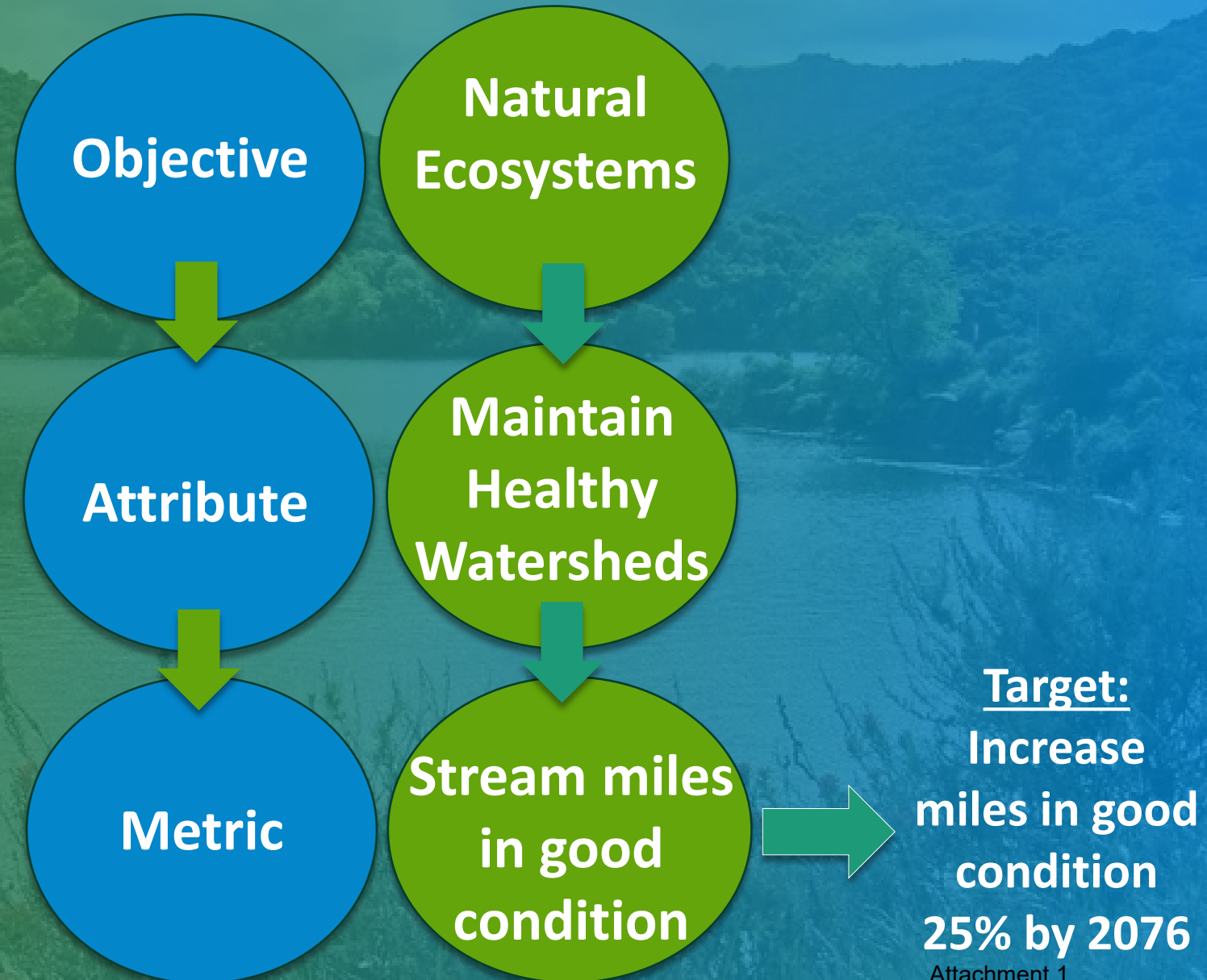
Existing Urbanization Conditions



Metrics

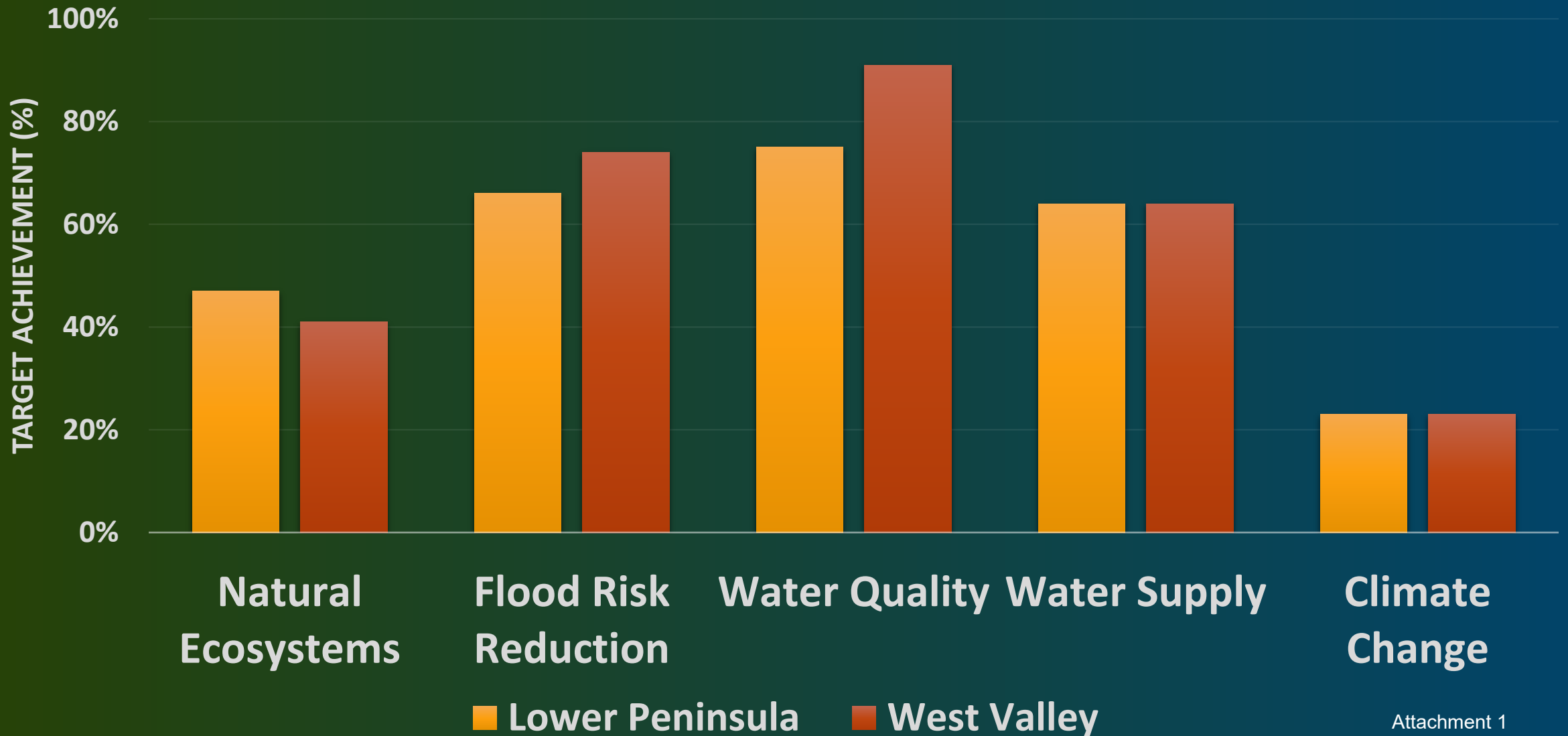
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- Metrics are measurable components to show status and movement toward a target



Current Results

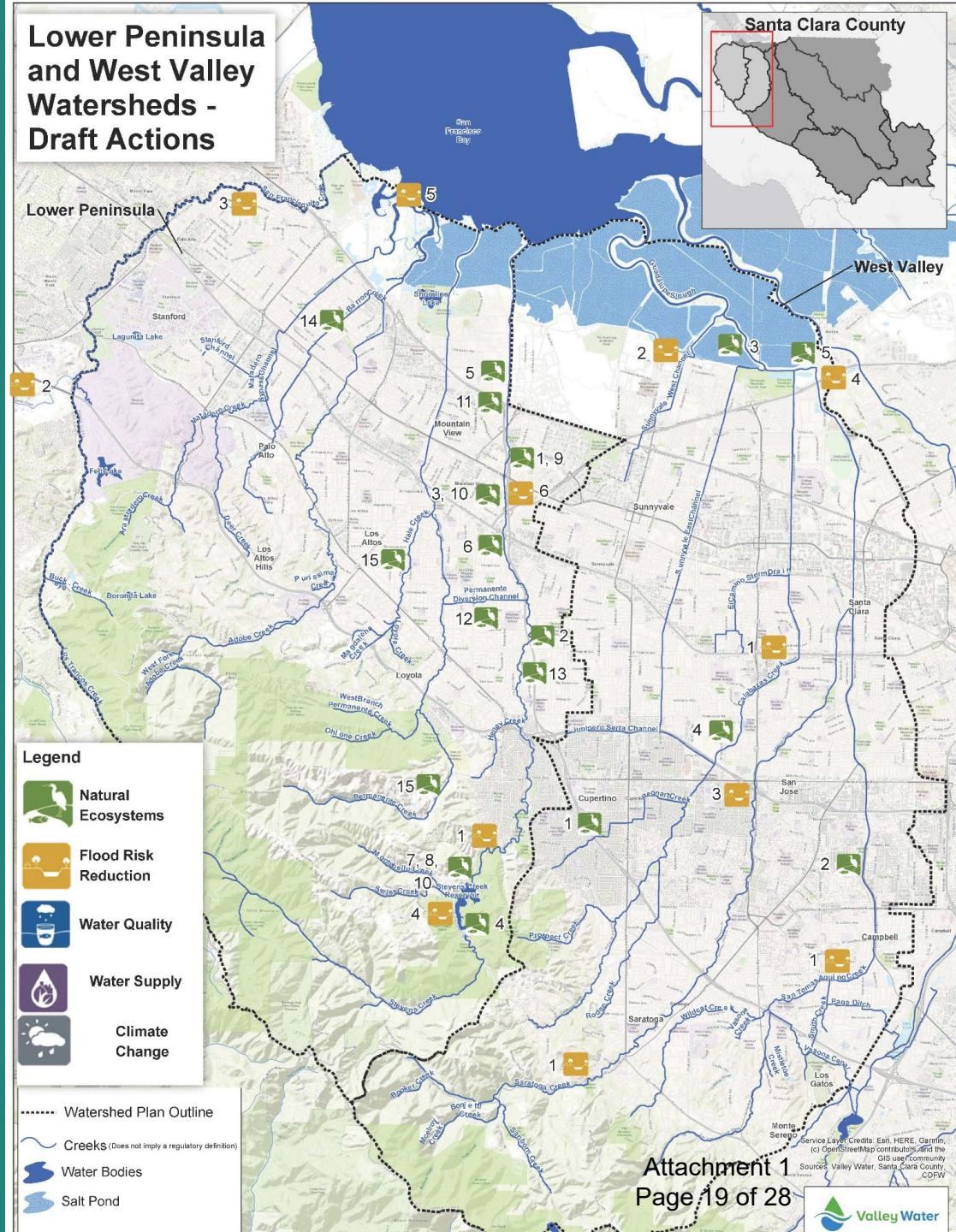
18



Priority Actions

- Existing and potential future projects within the watershed
- Actions address priorities set by metrics and community input

*Draft Actions Map of Lower Pen
and West Valley Watershed*



Draft Priority Actions in the Lower Peninsula & West Valley

- Aquatic Habitat Improvements
- Baylands Restoration
- Rehabilitation of Existing Infrastructure
- Hydrology Studies
- Groundwater Management
- Water Quality Improvement

Natural Ecosystems

21

Fish Passage Improvements

Implementation of identified priority sites for fish passage improvements.
(i.e. Lower Pen - ECO-2, ECO-3, ECO-4)



Aquatic Habitat Augmentation

Enhancing aquatic habitat with placement of gravel and large woody debris.
(i.e Lower Pen - ECO-1, ECO-9)



Flood Risk Reduction

22

Hydrology Studies

Estimating frequency, duration, and intensity of flood flows.

(i.e. Lower Pen FRR-1, West Valley FRR-1)



Flood Conveyance Improvements

Enhancing the capacity of floodplains to manage floodwaters effectively.

(i.e. Lower Pen FRR-3, West Valley FRR-2)

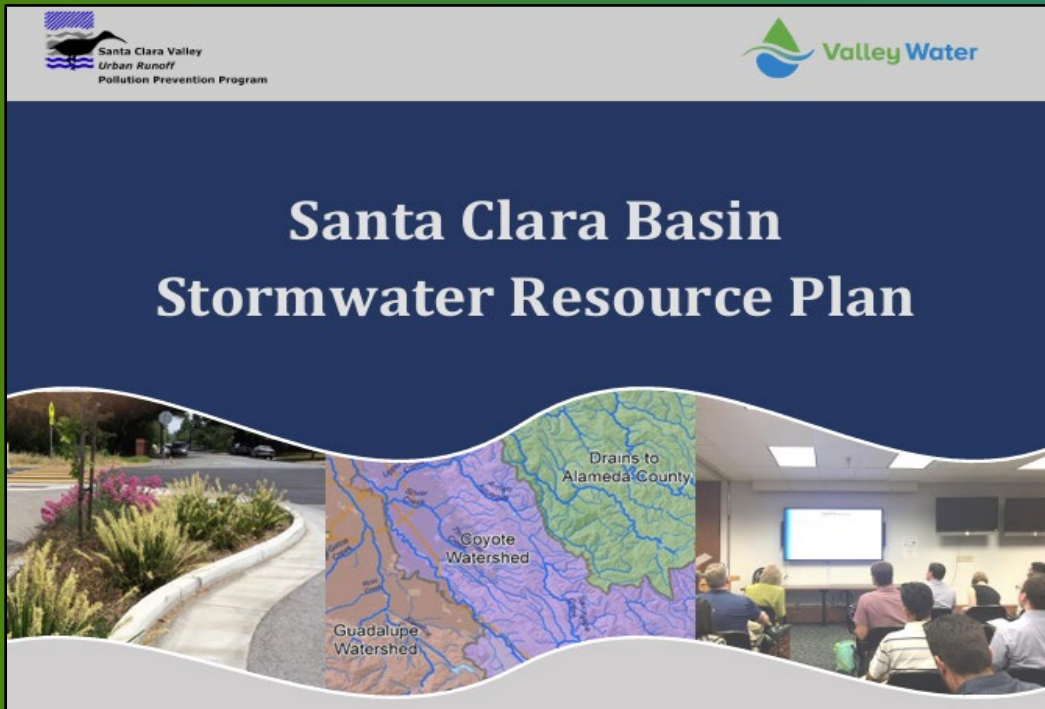


Water Quality

23

Support Water Resources Plan Updates

Partner and support local municipalities and agencies on the updates of the Stormwater Resource Plan and Regional Shoreline Adaptation Plan. (i.e. WQ-1, WQ-2)



Trash Boom Partnerships

Partnering to prevent trash and debris from entering the Baylands.

(i.e. IP-3 in Lower Pen)

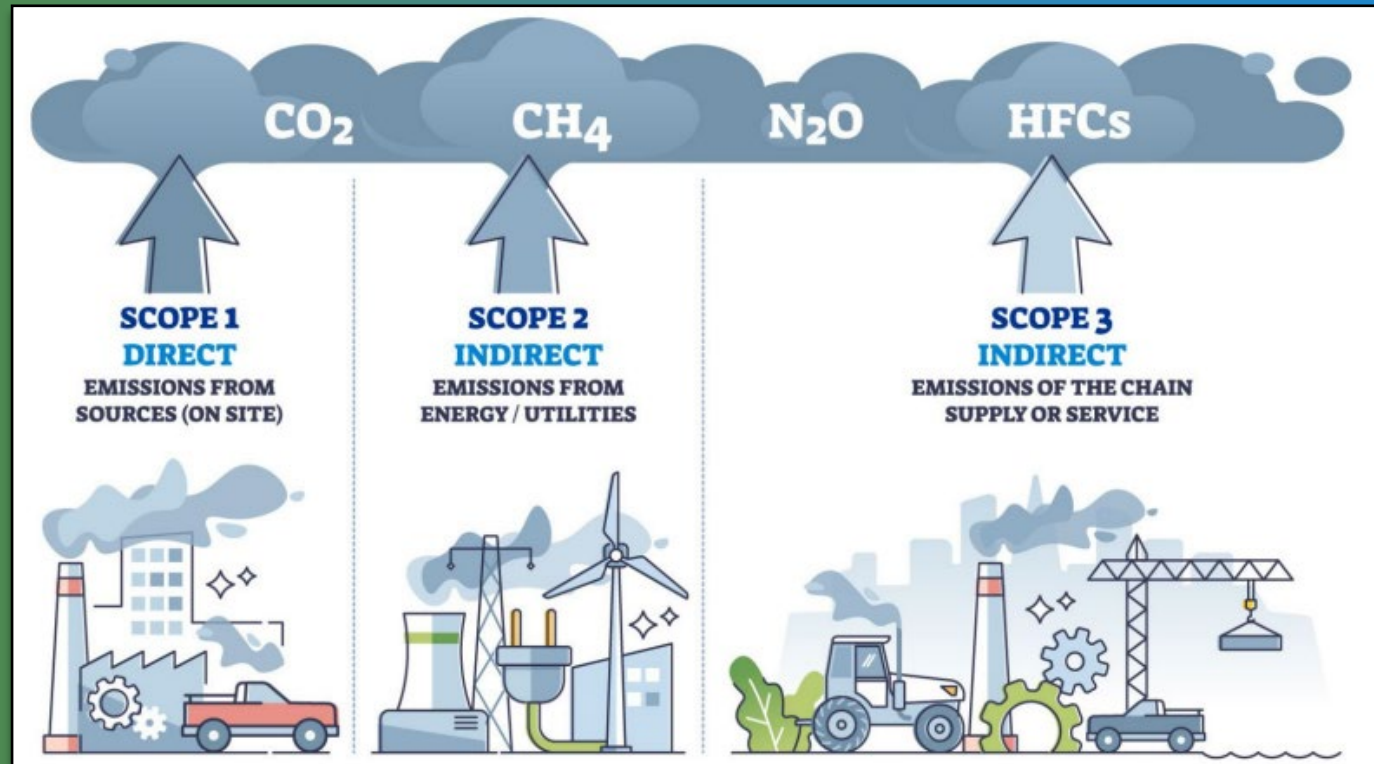


Climate Change

24

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Measures

Identifying and implementing GHG reduction measures to achieve Valley Water's carbon neutrality objectives.
(i.e. CC-1, CC-2, CC-3)



Overview of Completed and Ongoing Efforts

Water Supply (WS)	Water Quality (WQ)	Natural Ecosystems (ECO)
Groundwater Management of the Santa Clara Subbasin	Trash Capture Device Maintenance	Hale Creek Enhancement Project
Water Supply Master Plan 2050	Urban Runoff & Green Stormwater Infrastructure Program	Invasive Spartina Project
Climate Change	Good Neighbor Program – Encampment Cleanup	Integrated Invasive Plant Management Program
Reservoir Greenhouse Gas Emission Study	Mercury Monitoring & Reservoir Water Quality Studies	Early Detection & Rapid Response (EDRR) Program
Flood Risk Reduction (FRR)		San Tomas Aquino Creek Watershed Sediment Assessment
Emergency Response & Flood Forecasting System Upgrades		Saratoga Creek Hazard Tree Removal & Habitat Restoration
		Reservoir Greenhouse Gas Emission Study

Feedback Requested!

Your turn! Give input today and...

Visit the project's webpage at
valleywater.org/project-updates/watershed-master-plan

Contact Elizabeth Mercado
Emercado@valleywater.org

We'd love to hear from you at any time!
<https://beheard.valleywater.org/west-valley-watershed-plan>

<https://beheard.valleywater.org/lower-peninsula-watershed-plan>



West Valley & Lower Peninsula Watershed Master Plans

Planning Timeline

27



QUESTIONS

