



Valley Water Proposed Working Group and KPI

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Date Sat 08/08/2026 05:00 PM

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Dear Valley Water Board Members and Esteemed Representatives,

I support Chair Estremera's proposed letter asking Valley Water and the San Francisquito Creek JPA to form a joint Working Group to address the public's concerns about Valley Water's role in Reach 2, including whether Valley Water should take a stronger leadership role in delivering the project.

I think this is exactly the conversation that should happen before the Board replaces the E5 KPI's measurable flood-protection commitment with a funding-only model.

Since the last hearing, the case for deferral has only grown stronger. The San Francisquito Creek JPA has lost its Executive Director, one of its project managers is leaving by the end of the month, and its management structure is in transition. That argues for closer engagement between the two agencies, not for locking Valley Water into a funding-only role.

At the same time, the technical picture has improved. The JPA's work has identified viable Reach 2 alternatives capable of 7,200 cfs and replacement of the Pope-Chaucer Bridge. This is exactly when Valley Water's engineering experience adds the most value — and stepping back during design makes stepping back from construction far more likely.

There is also a basic problem with the proposed replacement KPI. Valley Water's own materials say Reach 2 is not yet fully defined or designed, the benefit to Santa Clara County remains undefined, and the "commensurate" funding share therefore cannot yet be calculated. The Board would be replacing a measurable flood-protection commitment with **a metric that cannot presently be measured.**

The audit raised a fair concern — Valley Water shouldn't be held solely responsible for outcomes it doesn't control. But Reach 1 shows the answer isn't to drop the standard; it's to define a partnership that gives Valley Water a meaningful role in delivering the outcome.

This isn't abstract for us. Hundreds of homes in my neighborhood were severely damaged in 1998, and Measure S was a promise to roughly 3,000 Palo Alto homes to fix that.

My comments are also consistent with the letters from Jeffrey Shore and Thomas Rindfleisch, both of whom have urged the Board to defer the KPI change while Valley Water and the JPA consider a stronger, more clearly defined partnership for Reach 2.

Please support Chair Estremera's Working Group, postpone the E5 KPI change, and use that process to clarify Valley Water's technical, construction, and funding roles before deciding what KPI should govern the project.

Define the partnership first. Then decide the KPI — and keep the public's promised flood protection at the center of both.

Thank you.

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