

CEO BULLETIN



To: Board of Directors
From: Rick L. Callender, CEO

Weeks of January 22 – February 4, 2021

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. Factsheet Developed for Pajaro River Watershed Integrated Regional Water Management

Valley Water collaboratively manages the Pajaro River Watershed (Pajaro) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) region with Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency and San Benito County Water District. The IRWM program is a cooperative effort among regional stakeholders to identify and implement water management solutions that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and achieve the social, environmental, and economic objectives of the region.

Valley Water developed a factsheet for the Pajaro IRWM region that can be used by government officials, potential partners, and other stakeholders to help raise awareness of the IRWM program, and its capabilities to address regional water resources issues. This factsheet also includes Pajaro IRWM regional successes, such as identification of needs and improved participation of under-represented communities, as well as studies and projects to address water quality, flood risk reduction, habitat improvement, water supply, and water conservation.

The Pajaro IRWM region is one of the first to have an IRWM factsheet, and it is being used as an example to support other regions in developing their own. The Pajaro IRWM factsheet was presented at the "IRWM Advocacy Template 101" webinar organized by the Association of California Water Agencies. The factsheet can be found on the Pajaro IRWM website at <https://www.pajaroirwmp.org/documents>.

For further information, please contact Kirsten Struve at (408) 630-3138 or (408) 613-0566.

2. PFAS Meeting with San Francisco Regional Board, Division of Drinking Water, and San Jose Water Company

On January 26, 2021, Valley Water, San Jose Water Company, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board), and the Division of Drinking Water met to discuss ten San Jose Water Company wells impacted by PFAS (Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances). As reported in a prior CEO Bulletin, the group's initial meeting was in October 2020, and the agencies committed to quarterly meetings to ensure continued coordination.

San Jose Water Company provided an update on a recently launched PFAS treatment feasibility study for its Williams Well Field. Valley Water shared recent PFAS results from voluntary groundwater, raw water, and treated water sampling. Twelve monitoring wells with previous PFAS detections were resampled, with consistent levels between recent and prior results. Recent raw and treated water sampling at Valley Water treatment plants continues to indicate that PFAS with state advisory levels are not detected in raw and treated water. The Regional Board described an initial screening of known environmental release sites that could be potential sources of PFAS present in the San Jose Water Company wells. Valley Water and San Jose Water Company will provide additional information to aid the Regional Board in further exploring potential sources, and the group is expected to reconvene in April 2021.

For further information, please contact Greg Williams at (408) 630-2867.

3. Safe, Clean Water Grant Closeout: Children's Discovery Museum's Bill's Backyard: Bridge to Nature

In Fiscal Year 2016, Valley Water awarded the San Jose Children's Discovery Museum a \$142,771 Safe, Clean Water Program D3 Grant for their Bill's Backyard: Bridge to Nature Project (Project). The Children's Discovery Museum completed the Project in February of 2020 and the final Project closeout materials were provided last Fall 2020.

The Project provides an outdoor learning environment for children ages two through ten that contains drought-tolerant, native plants, trees, shrubs and grasses. The design supports runoff prevention through bioswales, permeable hardscape, and drainage strategies. The Project also provides children with an opportunity to learn about the natural world, the importance of water conservation, and promotes the importance of the Guadalupe River ecosystem to downtown San Jose and the greater Bay Area.

Key Outcomes:

- 0.5 acres/linear feet of area enhanced or restored
- 0.5 acres of grass converted to drought tolerant plants resulting in water savings
- More than 100 native plants, trees, shrubs, grasses and ground covers planted

For further information, please contact Marta Lugo at (408) 630-2237.

4. Taste and Odor After-action Debrief Meeting with San Jose Water Company and City of San Jose

As previously reported to the Valley Water Board of Directors, Valley Water was notified by San Jose Water Company (SJWC) and City of San Jose (CSJ) of several complaints of musty smell in customers' drinking water in early November 2020. The incident was immediately addressed in collaboration with California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the retailers, with source and treatment process changes. On January 28, 2021, Valley Water held an after-action debrief meeting with SJWC and CSJ to discuss this incident.

Valley Water provided an overview of steps taken to identifying the source of the problem, and the immediate analytical and operational actions Valley Water took to mitigate the impact to customers, including communications with the affected water retailers, DWR, and South Bay Aqueduct (SBA) contractors. In addition, Valley Water shared lessons learned and described actions taken to minimize the chances of similar episodes.

Actions taken by Valley Water include: conducting an internal debrief with key Valley Water staff, providing refresher training to operations staff on rarely-used treatment tools, revising Valley Water's taste and odor action plan to expand monitoring, more regular data-sharing with SBA contractors, and initiation of discussions with DWR to reduce the turn-around time for water sample results.

SJWC and CSJ expressed appreciation for the thorough information provided by Valley Water, asked questions, and provided additional feedback that Valley Water will be considering for inclusion in next steps.

For further information, please contact Bhavani Yerrapotu at (408) 630-2735.

5. Valley Water Hosts Crane Operator Certification Training

During the week of January 4, 2021, Valley Water hosted Crane Operator Certification training, provided by the California Crane School, for 10 apprentice operators. This training is part of an effort to enlist a greater number of field maintenance staff who are cleared to safely operate mobile cranes, and it is an important factor in succession planning efforts for field maintenance staff.

Mobile crane operators serve a critical role during storm events. They are responsible for safely operating the equipment used to remove woody debris and other types of materials that can cause blockages that prohibit the flow of stormwater. To be cleared as a journey level crane operator, maintenance staff must obtain certification at the national level, successfully complete 300 hours of on-the-job crane training, plus 300 hours of crane operating hours, and complete a list of training milestone achievements. In recent months, an apprentice operator completed the clearance requirements and was added to the list of journey level crane operators.

Scheduling training and facilitating program requirements for staff undertaking and accomplishing the journey level crane certification is a cross-functional effort between the Watershed Field Operations, Environmental, Health & Safety and Talent Development Units.

For further information, please contact Tina Yoke at (408) 630-2385.

6. Valley Water hosts GET FLOOD READY Virtual Workshop

On January 21, 2021, Valley Water hosted a virtual flood preparedness workshop to an audience of about 35 people, including residents and Valley Water staff. The GET FLOOD READY workshop provided emergency preparedness tools and information to residents and businesses in areas at the highest risk of creek flooding.

Speakers discussed community hot spots and shared emergency preparedness tips. They included information on finding a location on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) map. Valley Water also explained how to understand stream gauges, prepare an emergency plan and kit, obtain flood insurance, locate sandbag sites, and report creek blockages. Interpreters provided live translation services in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Chinese. The event was shared live on Facebook and the recording has since been viewed more than 2,000 times.

Public outreach for this virtual workshop included a mailing to more than 1,300 properties located near a community flooding hot spot, as well as targeted emails and direct mailings to more than 50 community organizations, in addition to multilingual social media ads.

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