

CEO BULLETIN



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

Weeks of February 5 – February 18, 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. Countywide Water Reuse Master Plan – Stakeholder Participation

On January 19, 2021, Valley Water virtually hosted the eighth meeting of the Project Partners Group (PPG) for the Countywide Water Reuse Master Plan (CoRe Plan) with representatives from our PPG members, Valley Water, and other interested stakeholders. The PPG includes:

- Cities of Palo Alto and Mountain View (PA/MV Recycled Water System);
- Cities of San José and Santa Clara (South Bay Water Recycling);
- Cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill (South County Recycled Water System); and
- City of Sunnyvale (Sunnyvale Recycled Water System).

Technical staff support was provided by Brown and Caldwell, Valley Water's engineering services consultant for the CoRe Plan project. The meeting was well attended by over 30 participants, representing broad participation by Project Partners.

Highlights of the meeting included:

- Review of PPG comments and recommendations on the Draft Final CoRe Plan, including discussion of key updates and modifications to the Final CoRe Plan;
- Review and discussion of flexible implementation strategies for a 10 million gallons per day indirect potable reuse project to the Los Gatos Recharge System via a Public-Private Partnership (P3) procurement;
- Review and discussion of next steps to finalize the CoRe Plan; presentation of findings and recommendations to the Board and Public; and implementation opportunities and collaboration; and
- Completion of the PPG participatory process, celebration of agency participation, and expression of appreciation for contributions to the master planning process.

PPG representatives commended Valley Water for a successful stakeholder effort to develop a comprehensive feasibility assessment of potable reuse opportunities that promotes expanded water recycling efforts countywide over the next 25 years. PPG members also expressed their optimism with the refinement of total project cost estimates and future water rates to implement potable reuse expansion.

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

2. Protecting Valley Water Employees from Hearing Loss

On February 1st, 3rd and 4th, 2021, Valley Water held on-site audiograms (hearing exams) for field operations staff identified as working in areas where equipment is used that meets or exceeds regulatory threshold noise levels. The exams were administered by Health Metrics, Incorporated. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, safety protocol precautions were integrated into the event.

Valley Water field operations staff need hearing protection during work activities such as vegetation removal that requires the use of chainsaws, pole saws, mowers, weed eaters, and wood chippers. Other work activities include certain work at construction or maintenance sites where heavy equipment, large pumps, circular saws, and jack hammers are utilized.

Audiograms are scheduled annually and are a critical component of Valley Water's Hearing Conservation Program. Per applicable Cal/OSHA regulations, employers are required to have a Hearing Conservation Program when employees are exposed to noise levels of 85 dBA (A-weighted decibels, are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear over an 8-hour workday), or higher. The audiogram results provide verification that current safety practices and personal protective equipment being used are adequate in protecting staff from suffering hearing loss when performing the identified work activities. Annual audiograms are designed for early detection of hearing loss in staff. If degradation in hearing is discovered, staff are required to undergo a process of being fitted (or re-fitted) with hearing protectors and re-trained on the proper use of hearing protection devices, and when the hearing protection devices are required to be used.

In addition to providing audiograms, Valley Water periodically assesses noise levels at worksites using sound level meters and noise dosimeters. These instruments help identify any areas, or activities, with high noise levels and aid in the decision-making process for providing the appropriate type of engineering controls and hearing protection.

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

3. Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant Closeout: Stanford Conservation Program's Native Hedgerow Planting Project

In Fiscal Year 2018, Valley Water awarded Stanford Conservation Program a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Program D3 Mini-Grant for their Native Hedgerow Planting Project (Project). Stanford Conservation Program completed the Project in May 2020 and submitted their final invoice and closeout materials in September 2020.

The Project used hedgerows to help restore the Deer Creek Conservation Easement, a riparian ecosystem south of the Deer Creek and Matadero Creek confluence in the city of Palo Alto, that has been degraded due to heavy agricultural use. Hedgerows are comprised entirely of native shrub species and can provide nectar sources to pollinators, habitat for native birds and other species, control erosion, as well as shade out non-native weeds. Hedgerows have historically been used to delineate property boundaries in agricultural settings and can be used as an alternative to fencing to signal land use boundaries.

Magic, an ecological educational foundation, with support and direction from the Stanford Conservation Program, worked with community volunteers to plant and maintain 382 native shrubs in a hedgerow. Volunteer work days involved watering and weeding shrubs as well as removing protective Tubex, tree shelters that protect and enhance the growth of young plants.

The Deer Creek Conservation Easement is part of the Matadero Creek watershed and supports hundreds of native species and plants, including the federally and state threatened California red-legged frog. Volunteer work days were focused on environmental education, teaching community members about the flora and fauna of the region, and how planting a hedgerow of native plants will help to restore riparian ecosystems.

Key Outcomes:

- Over 450 volunteers participated in planting and maintaining the native hedgerows.
- Approximately 382 native shrubs in a hedgerow were established and nurtured.

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

4. Safe, Clean Water Grant Closeout: City of San Jose's Pollution Prevention and Creeks Cleanup Project

In Fiscal Year 2018, Valley Water awarded the City of San Jose (City) a \$195,000 Safe, Clean Water Program B3 Grant for their Pollution Prevention and Creeks Cleanup Project (Project). The City completed the Project in June 2020. The Project required an amendment to pay the last remaining invoice in November 2020.

The Project engaged the homeless community to assist with creek cleanups as part of the City's Encampment Abatement Program (EAP). The City subcontracted with Downtown Streets Team (DST) to carry out the objectives, tasks, and deliverables of the Project. DST serves homeless persons and persons at risk of homelessness with case management, employment development services, and housing placement assistance to increase their self-sufficiency.

Participants supported this Project by serving in work crews providing debris removal and trash/illegal dumping collection. The removal of such debris and outreach on trash removal helps improve water quality in creeks and increase flood protection.

Key Outcomes:

- Posted 12 social media posts about Project activities.
- Presented to four community organizations.
- Educated 425 members of the public about pollution prevention.
- Attended eight community events with approximately 770 attendees.
- Collected 13,868 yards of trash throughout Coyote, Guadalupe, and Los Gatos creeks.

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

5. Valley Water Information Technology Division Releases Microsoft Planner and Asana

Valley Water's Information Technology Division is pleased to announce the release of two new tools that can help with managing tasks and perform light project management.

Microsoft Planner is available through Valley Water's Office 365 subscription and enables users and teams to create plans, assemble and assign tasks, share files, communicate and collaborate with other users, and receive progress updates. This tool is geared toward basic task management for one person to use.

Asana is a web and mobile application designed for light project management and small teams. It helps groups organize, track, and manage their work. This tool offers more robust features including gantt chart views, dependencies, and reporting.

These two new tools can help individuals and teams stay organized, prioritize work, and provide greater collaboration across business units and the organization.

For further information, please contact Mike Cook at (805) 674-1884.

6. Water Management Agreements Executed in January 2021

Pursuant to EL-5.1.6 and EL-5.3.3, Valley Water's Chief Executive Officer is required to inform the Board on a timely basis when imported water management agreements are executed. The imported water management agreements executed in January 2021 related to the Central Valley Project (CVP) are listed below:

- January 26, 2021 - Yuba Temporary Warren Act Contract (#A4420W) between the Bureau of Reclamation and Valley Water: Provides for the storage and conveyance of non-CVP water from the Yuba County Water Agency to Valley Water through CVP facilities.
- January 26, 2021 - Yuba Power Letter of Agreement (#A4421W) between the Bureau of Reclamation and Valley Water: Provides a billing mechanism for Valley Water to reimburse Reclamation for energy costs incurred in the conveyance of non-CVP water from the Yuba County Water Agency to Valley Water through CVP facilities.

For further information, please contact Vincent Gin at (408) 630-2633

7. **LeZotte**

Director LeZotte requested that, staff provide a five-year report on who received sponsorship money and how much money was paid for each sponsorship.

R-21-0001

A listing of all Valley Water sponsorships over the last five years, in fulfillment of BMR- R-21-0001, is included in the Valley Water Board's February 19, 2021, Non-Agenda package.

For further information, please contact Don Rocha at (408) 630-2338.

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