

Office of Communications Activities Summary for March 2021



Purified Water Project Scoping Meeting



On March 29, 2021, staff hosted a virtual public scoping meeting on the Purified Water Project. Chair Estremera and Director Santos delivered opening remarks to an audience of about 73 people. Vice Chair Kremen also participated in the meeting. Emceed by Assistant Chief Executive Officer Melanie Richardson, the meeting included an overview of the project, the planning process and how to provide feedback related to environmental impacts. Staff answered questions related to these topics and highlighted what to expect following the scoping meeting. The presentation video from that event has been viewed more than 200 times.

Water Supply Outlook Virtual News Conference

On March 16, Valley Water held a virtual news conference on the water supply outlook and conservation programs. Chair Estremera gave opening remarks, Chief Operating Officer Aaron Baker presented on current dry conditions heading into spring and Senior Water Conservation Specialist Karen Koppett discussed how residents and businesses can save water and money with Valley Water's conservation programs. The presentations were followed by a question and answer segment. Several media outlets participated including The Mercury News, KTVU, ABC7, KPIX, KCBS, and Morgan Hill and Gilroy Life.

Presentation to Gilroy Rotary Club

On March 23, Director Varela and Dep Op Ofcr Chris Hakes gave a presentation to 34 members of the Gilroy Rotary Club. The presentation included an update on the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, and was well-received by the group.

Media, Communications and Social Media

Staff wrote and posted seven stories on valleywaternews.org on the following subjects:

- Valley Water continues to call for voluntary conservation as drought conditions worsen
- Say farewell to water thirsty lawns and say hello to beautiful water-wise landscapes
- Job Shadow Day 2021 event recap
- Valley Water evaluating five dam alternatives for the proposed expansion of Pacheco Reservoir
- Valley Water Board Chair outlines 2021 priorities
- Adopt-A-Bench public art project with the Youth Commission
- A herculean effort by Valley Water to protect an endangered plant species

During March, staff continued to produce and lead the biweekly Town Halls to provide employees with updates and bring awareness of resources, engagement opportunities, and other relevant items. In addition, staff supported the Emergency Operations Center activation with a variety of communications and outreach efforts.

Staff responded to media inquiries on the following topics:

- KTVU reporter Jana Katsuyama requested an interview on the reduction of the state water allocation. Staff sent her Chair Estremera's statement and Media & Public Relations Supervisor Matt Keller was interviewed.
- San Jose Spotlight reporter Carly Wipf interviewed Assistant Officer Kirsten Struve about the Purified Water Expansion Project negotiations with the City of San José.
- Freelance reporter Madelyn Reese interviewed Senior Biologist Janell Hillman about the Coyote ceanothus. Janell discussed when the work started, our partnership with other agencies and creating a whole new population of the species.
- NBC Bay Area reporter Damian Trujillo requested a statement from Valley Water for a story on the Alum Rock and Franklin McKinley School superintendents concerned about the unhoused camping in creek beds adjacent to schools. Staff sent him a statement from Interim Chief Operating Officer Sue Tippets.
- ABC7 News Reporter Wayne Freedman interviewed Media & Public Relations Supervisor Matt Keller on the importance of having a safe and reliable water supply, investing in infrastructure like the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, the increasing costs that can come with drought and Valley Water's conservation programs.
- Politico reporter Debra Kahn interviewed Valley Water staff on the topic of drought and conservation. Assistant Officer Kirsten Struve and Water Supply Planning and Conservation Manager Metra Richert answered questions about the current dry conditions in our county and Valley Water's continued efforts to make conservation a way of life.
- Staff provided Mercury News Reporter Paul Rogers a statement on the March snowpack survey.

Staff prepared Nextdoor messages for board members on the following topics:

- Free COVID-19 testing bus returns to Valley Water HQ
- The Purified Water Project Virtual Public Scoping Meeting
- Wonders of Water Wednesday
- Robert W. Gross and Piedmont Ponds refilled as Department of Water Resources completes South Bay Aqueduct maintenance
- All aboard! Water Infrastructure Virtual Bus Tour Series - Stop #1 - #4
- We want your input on the proposed expansion of the Pacheco Reservoir
- You're Invited: Adopt-A-Bench Ribbon Cutting on March 18
- Silicon Valley Advanced Water Purification Center Virtual Tour

Statistics for Facebook, Twitter, valleywaternews.org blog, video, and eNews are below. Impressions are the number of times a post is displayed in a newsfeed, Twitter stream, etc. Engagement is the number of times a user interacts with a post, such as a retweet, click, and more.

	98,200 video views	6 videos posted
	400,426 impressions	16,782 engagements 2,689 message clicks
	19,109 impressions	297 engagements 32 link clicks
	valleywaternews.org blog	13,818 views 2,947 visitors
	34,186 impressions	708 engagements
	March e-news	25% open rate 12% click through rate

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Internal Communications

News You Can Use was sent to all employees each Tuesday and Thursday, and 17 all user e-mails were sent in March.

Community Outreach

The Purified Water Project (Chair Estremera, Vice Chair Kremen and Director Santos)

- Mailed project brochure to homes and businesses near the Palo Alto and San Jose project site alternatives
- Launched project website on Valleywater.org
- Prepared project content for the future Be Heard engagement website
- Sent an email newsletter and Nextdoor post invitation for the project's scoping meeting
- Produced director speaking points for the March 29 scoping meeting
- Hosted virtual public scoping meeting on March 29
- Supported the project's industry day on March 30

Groundwater and Surface Water Rate Hearing Process (All Directors)

- Received community inquiries on the rate hearing process

South Bay Aqueduct repair work (Director Santos)

- Nextdoor post promoting the completion of work that impacted Robert Gross Ponds

Central Pipeline Inspection and Rehabilitation Project (Vice Chair Kremen, Director Santos, and Director LeZotte)

- Created and published project page on valleywater.org

Lower Berryessa Creek Flood Protection Project (Director Santos)

- Selected June virtual public meeting date and drafted invitation

Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project (Chair Estremera, Director Keegan and Director Santos)

- Initiated outreach phone calls to property owners to inform them of the forthcoming Permission to Enter letters.

Main Avenue Ponds Fence Installation Project (Director Varela)

- Mailed project notice to residents

COVID-19 Testing Bus at Valley Water Headquarters (All Directors)

- Nextdoor post to each district to inform residents of the testing bus

Graphics and Design

Publications created

- Capital Improvement Programs, FY 2022-26
- Safe, Clean Water Report, Year 7
- Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project partners opportunity brochure
- 50th Annual Protection and Augmentation of Water Supplies
- Nitrate FAQ Sheet, Spanish Version
- Lower Berryessa shell updates

Book Report Covers created

- Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, Annual Report
- Water-Year Report for the Santa Clara and Llagas Subbasins 2020
- Board Work Plan, FY 2021-22
- Palo Alto Tide Gate engineers report
- Federal Delegation Report, Spring 2021

Mailer, Event and Outreach Materials created

- Safe, Clean Water low-income senior property tax exemption postcard, brochure, FAQ sheet, form
- Purified Water Project mailer
- 2021 National River Cleanup Day posters, flyers

Public Notice and Newspaper Advertisement created

- South County Recycled Water Pipeline
- Piedmont Creek Interim Concrete Repair Project
- Lower Penitencia Creek Improvement Project
- Board Directors Compensation

Internal Support Materials created

- Director Santos 20th Year of Service slideshow commemorative storage box

- Board Chair signature support on the residential letter for pipeline access
- PRSA awards application for Safe Clean Water Renewal and Get Flood Ready Campaign, 2020 - 2021
- Rinconada Water Treatment Plant photo support for Government Relations
- One-pager for Office of Communications and Civic Engagement February 2021
- 2021 Employee Recognition Awards: sandwich board sign, flyers, and web carousel
- Infographic of Valley Water separation from the County of Santa Clara
- Workflow instruction manual for Parallel 2X Mac users
- Virtual Job Shadow Day 2021 Certificate

Social media graphics supported

- CEO statement on violence and racism against Asian Americans
- We're Water People Twitter header
- Pacheco Reservoir Expansion Project
- Black History Month
- Safe, Clean Water Low-Income Senior Property Tax Exemption

Digital Graphics supported

- E-Newsletter template update
- Brand icon for Be Heard Valley Water
- Animated graphic for Water Conservation shopping cart feature
- Silicon Valley Business Journal digital banner ads
- Virtual Background for Be The Change at Valley Water and Adopt-A-Bench ribbon cutting event
- Resource guide for Water Conservation campaign update
- Youth Commission bios

Upcoming April Activities

Stream Maintenance Program (All Directors)

- Post on Nextdoor for goat grazing vegetation work for Spring 2021

Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project (Director Varela)

- Nextdoor post to promote safety amidst dangerous conditions at Anderson Reservoir
- Draft speaking points for Director Varela for May 2021 virtual public meeting

Almaden Lake Improvement Project (Director LeZotte)

- Web page update to promote Final Environmental Impact Report going to the board of directors on April 29

Santa Clara Conduit (Director Varela)

- Web page goes live on valleywater.org

South County Groundwater Open House (Director Varela)

- Draft speaking points for Director Varela

San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project Director (Director Santos)

- Nextdoor post to promote the start of construction for reaches 1-3

Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project (Chair Estremera, Director Keegan and Director Santos)

- Complete mailing Permission to Enter letters to select property owners

Lower Penitencia Creek Flood Improvements Project (Director Santos)

- Identify date for a pre-construction meeting

Upper Llagas Creek Flood Protection Project (Director Varela)

- Draft pre-construction mailer and identify virtual public meeting date

Rancho San Antonio Detention Basin (Vice Chair Kremen and Director Hsueh)

- Identify a date for a virtual ribbon-cutting event

Public Trails on Valley Water Lands: Draft Policy Criteria and Guidance (All Directors)

- Post a Constant Contact notice with details on upcoming state updates to the Santa Clara Valley Water Commission and Environmental and Water Resources Committee