

CEO BULLETIN



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

Weeks of June 4 – June 17 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. Annual National River Cleanup Wraps Up

Valley Water, in partnership with the Creek Connections Action Group (CCAG), hosted the annual National River Cleanup event through coordinated cleanups every Saturday in May in Santa Clara County.

From Palo Alto to Gilroy, volunteers took to the streets for National River Cleanup Month. A total of 774 volunteers cleaned 128 miles of creeks and streets, removing approximately 76,623 pounds of trash, which included 203 pounds of recyclables.

This year, due to the pandemic, large groups of cleanups in the creeks shifted to smaller local cleanup efforts. With the changes in the health order on gatherings for large groups, the CCAG offered various opportunities for the public to clean up in their neighborhoods and local natural areas. Valley Water provided education on how pollution prevention starts at our front doors as trash can travel through storm drains, creeks, and rivers to become Bay pollution. Every week, two CCAG members offered a supply pick-up day for those who registered for the event. By registering, volunteers received free tips on conducting a safe and effective cleanup. Volunteers learned about the CleanSwell app to keep track of their trash totals and stay connected with thousands of other residents. Reusable face coverings were also provided to Adopt-A-Creek partners who participated during the month-long event.

We received positive feedback from the volunteers, including:

- "It was very fun to do it with friends, and we constantly got waves and thanks of appreciation from others."
- "We had a great time, lots of trash out there. We'll do this again soon."
- "It was a nice experience."
- "Our streets are now cleaner than usual, except for cigarette butts."

Some of the most interesting items that volunteers picked up included the following: a coconut, lawn chair parts, small bicycle wheel, inside panel from a Volkswagen car, diapers, floss, various types of fishing gear, liquor bottles, microwave, screen door, mattress, personal protective equipment, face masks, a wig, a prom dress, motor home door, and a broken arrow.

As always, we will be leveraging the momentum from the volunteers to encourage them to sign up for the upcoming Coastal Cleanup in September 2021, the Adopt-A-Creek Program, and to support other Valley Water volunteer efforts.

The Creek Connections Action Group is a consortium of public agencies and non-profit organizations that share a goal of protecting Santa Clara County's waterways. These agencies include Valley Water (as CCAG Chair), Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation, the City of San José (Parks Recreation and Neighborhood Services, Environmental Services Department), City of Santa Clara, City of Palo Alto, City of Sunnyvale, City of Milpitas, City of Cupertino, and West Valley Clean Water Program (Campbell, Monte Sereno, Saratoga and the Town of Los Gatos).

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

2. Clean, Safe Creeks Grant Closeout: City of San Jose's Three Creeks Trail, Trestle, and Interim Improvements Project

In Fiscal Year 2011, Valley Water awarded the City of San Jose a \$450,000 Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Program Trail and Open Space Grant for their Three Creeks Trail, Trestle, and Interim Improvements Project (Project). The City of San Jose (City) completed the Project in January 2021 and submitted all the closeout items in March 2021.

The Project funded interim trail features, such as temporary fencing at roadways and directional signage, to support public access while the City retrofitted the existing trestle bridge. Once completed, the retrofitted bridge permitted safe pedestrian and bicycle travel and linked to neighboring trails.

Key Outcomes:

- Replaced an unstable wooden bridge with a safe, sustainable bridge.
- Removal of the old bridge restored the natural flow of the Los Gatos Creek.
- Enhanced bridge safety for pedestrian and bike travel parallel to the Three Creeks Trail System and future access to the Los Gatos Creek Trail System from the street.
- Installed a creek viewing platform.
- Installed informative panels about fish species, native plants, the history of the railroad, and the environmental impact of this Project on the local community.
- Hosted a virtual ribbon cutting ceremony (pre-recorded video) in January 2021.

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

3. PFAS Workshop Held on May 27, 2021

On May 27, 2021, Valley Water hosted a virtual workshop titled "Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS): Occurrence and Outlook." The goal was to share information on the evolving water quality challenge posed by PFAS due to their widespread use and environmental persistence. The workshop was well-attended by over 70 professionals from local water retailers, the State Water Board Division of Drinking Water and Regional Water Quality Control Boards, other Bay Area water agencies, and Valley Water. Presentations by the Division of Drinking Water, Orange County Water District, San Jose Water Company, and Valley Water provided timely information on regulatory efforts, testing methods and results, treatment technologies, and communication strategies. Attendees also participated in breakout rooms to maximize engagement.

Strong planning and support from a cross-functional Valley Water team helped ensure the workshop proceeded smoothly. The workshop was successful based on the large number of attendees and engagement in the breakout rooms and question and answer session. Feedback from surveys sent to attendees will support continual improvement for future Valley Water workshops and PFAS response.

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

4. Reduced Recharge Program's Impacts on Ponds and Creeks

In order to conserve local and imported water supplies for health and safety, Valley Water has suspended most groundwater recharge operations in summer 2021 and possibly longer if the drought conditions persist. Valley Water has restricted the delivery of water to the majority of its 102 recharge ponds and also reduced releases of imported water to most creeks.

All the recharge ponds have been turned off in North County due to the lack of imported water. Only the recharge systems in Morgan Hill remain in operation since South County relies on groundwater pumping to provide water to residents for health and safety.

Creeks downstream of local reservoirs are receiving minimal releases using the low storage in these reservoirs to keep the creek partially wet throughout the summer. The wetted extent of each creek is expected to be naturally reduced as the summer progresses. No imported water is being used in creeks except for Coyote Creek. Releases of San Luis Reservoir water into Coyote Creek is meant to keep the Cold Water Management Zone between Anderson Dam and the Ogier Ponds wet and provide some recharge for the Coyote Valley.

Valley Water has notified the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and other regulatory agencies about the reduced releases to creeks due to cuts to the managed recharge operations.

Furthermore, Valley Water has notified the County of Santa Clara about the ponds that are expected to dry up this summer, and has given courtesy notices to city managers and mayors of the Town of Los Gatos, City of Campbell, and City of Cupertino, and also San Jose Councilmembers whose districts will be impacted.

Valley Water has developed communications materials to reach out to the public and explain the reasons why the recharge ponds and many creeks are drying up.

Valley Water's priorities remain the delivery of safe, clean water from our drinking water treatment plants to local water providers and municipalities and also maintaining healthy groundwater basins for residents and retailers that depend on groundwater pumping to meet their demands. Valley Water will continue to work with local, state, and federal regulatory partners to coordinate on drought impacts on fish and wildlife while conducting water supply operations and maintenance activities in an environmentally sensitive manner.

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

5. Safe, Clean Water Mini-Grant Closeout: Living Classroom's Hoover and Nixon Native Ecology Garden-Based Lessons Project

In Fiscal Year 2018, Valley Water awarded Living Classroom a \$5,000 Safe, Clean Water Program D3 Mini-Grant for their Hoover and Nixon Schools Native Ecology Garden-Based Lessons Project (Project). Living Classroom completed the Project in May 2019 and submitted the final invoice items on January 28, 2021, allowing for grant closeout.

Living Classroom provides garden-based education programs, with an emphasis on native ecology lessons. Funds for this mini-grant were used to restore the native gardens at Lucille M. Nixon Elementary and Herbert Hoover Elementary schools in Palo Alto, California. In addition, Living Classroom provided 24 garden-based lessons, with a focus on native ecology, to all second and fourth grade students at these schools. The students learned about the plants and wildlife that are a part of the local native ecosystems and the importance of a healthy and functioning ecosystem. The school gardens were used to deliver a watershed stewardship curriculum to approximately 400 students, which included the following lesson plans: What's my Habitat and Flower Power, Grade Habitat Perspectives, and Ethnobotany: California Indian Uses of Plants and Leaf Adaptations.

Key Outcomes:

- Restored native gardens at Lucille M. Nixon Elementary and Herbert Hoover Elementary.
- Provided 24 native ecology garden-based lessons on habitats, ecology, pollution and California's biodiversity to approximately 400 second and fourth grade students at Hoover and Nixon Elementary Schools.
- Students met the lesson objectives with 83% accuracy as indicated by learning outcome questions.

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

6. Sewage Spill Near Lexington Reservoir

On June 5, 2021, at approximately 8:51 a.m., Valley Water Pollution Prevention was notified of a three-vehicle accident on Highway 17 that resulted in an initial spill of 70 gallons of sewage waste into a storm drain that had the capacity to negatively impact the Lyndon Canyon Creek tributary.

Valley Water assessed the scene and the affected storm drains. The following actions were taken:

- The outfalls located on Lyndon Canyon Creek tributary and Lexington Reservoir were inspected. No signs of sewage discharge were observed.
- A down-flow storm drain located near the accident scene contained a few inches of sewage that appeared to be contained by sediment in the storm drain.
- Down-flow storm drains located on Montevina Road had no signs of sewage.
- Reinforced spill containment was set-up by Santa Clara County Fire Department. The containment was effective in preventing additional fluids from entering the storm drain.

An additional spill occurred when the sewage truck was being positioned onto the tow-truck. This resulted in an additional 50 gallons of sewage, and 6 quarts of oil, to spill onto the highway. The spill containment barriers were effective, and no additional fluids entered the storm drain. Valley Water provided on-site support and remained at the scene until Cal-Trans completed clean-up activities of the affected storm drains.

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

7. State and Federal Drought Activities Update

Responses to the drought in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta are progressing rapidly given their urgent nature and this bulletin provides an update on activities that have occurred since the update provided in the CEO Bulletin on June 4, 2021.

On May 28, 2021, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) issued a certification for the Emergency Drought Salinity Barrier Project, which is designed to reduce saltwater intrusion into the Delta. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) will install the rock barrier by July 2021 at West False River.

The SWRCB is now working on incorporating comments on their proposed methodology for determining water unavailability in the Delta watershed based on input received during and after a May 21, 2021 workshop. Valley Water provided oral and written comments, both individually and with the State Water Contractors. Once the methodology is finalized, the SWRCB is likely to issue notices of water unavailability to all post-1914 water right holders in the Delta watershed as early as mid-June, 2021.

On May 28, 2021, the SWRCB received a final 2021 Sacramento River Temperature Management Plan (TMP) from the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) as required by Order 90-5. The TMP outlines how Keswick Dam, Shasta Dam, and other facilities will be operated to protect Chinook salmon in the upper Sacramento River. In addition to specifying temperature targets in the river, the TMP sets a target for end-of-September 2021 carryover storage in Shasta Reservoir to maintain a balance between temperature control this year while maintaining supplies in case of dry conditions next year. SWRCB approval is not required, however SWRCB has 10 days from the time of receipt to object and propose an alternative temperature compliance location below Shasta Reservoir.

On May 28, 2021, DWR and Reclamation also released a State Water Project (SWP) and Central Valley Project (CVP) Drought Contingency Plan. The Plan was submitted to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to fulfill a condition in the SWP's Incidental Take Permit. Though it is not required by the federal Biological Opinions, Reclamation opted to coordinate with DWR on this plan. The plan includes the latest hydrological conditions, species status, drought monitoring plans, operations forecast, and currently planned drought actions.

On June 1, 2021, the SWRCB conditionally approved the Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) submitted by DWR and Reclamation to temporarily deviate from the terms of their water rights permits to address drought-related needs. The TUCP took effect immediately but is subject to revisions.

In addition to the drought activities listed above, state and federal agencies continue to coordinate through various forums to plan and respond to drought conditions. Valley Water is monitoring these activities and will continue to keep the Board apprised of significant developments.

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

8. Valley Water Hosts Virtual Public Meeting on the Start of Construction of the Lower Penitencia Creek Improvements Project.

On June 9, 2021, Valley Water hosted a virtual public meeting to provide an update on the upcoming construction of the Lower Penitencia Creek Improvements Project, which is slated to begin in July 2021.

Five participants attended virtually via Zoom and five participants joined on Facebook Live. Following the presentation, Valley Water responded to questions related to trail impacts and held a question and answer session covering the project's benefits, schedule and timeline. Attendees were encouraged to contact the project's neighborhood liaison with additional questions or concerns. As the project progresses, information on construction impacts will be continually shared with neighbors, businesses, and the City of Milpitas.

A recording of the June 9, 2021, virtual meeting and presentation is now available on the project's webpage: <https://www.valleywater.org/project-updates/lower-penitencia-creek-improvements-project>.

For further information, please contact Rachael Gibson at (408) 781-4739.

9. Valley Water Hosts Virtual Ribbon-Cutting on the Completion of the Rancho San Antonio Detention Basin Project.

On June 4, 2021, Valley Water hosted a virtual ribbon-cutting on the completed Rancho San Antonio Detention Basin Project. This project was the last remaining element of the greater Permanente Creek Flood Protection Project, which will provide flood protection for at least 2,200 properties in Mountain View and Los Altos.

Vice Chair Kremen and Director Hsueh provided opening remarks to 45 participants who virtually participated via Zoom and nine participants who joined Facebook Live. The webinar event was emceed by Valley Water Chief Executive Officer Rick Callender and featured representatives from Santa Clara County Parks and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

The virtual recognition event included the showing of two videos. The first video highlighted the project area and its four completed elements: the McKelvey Park Detention Basin, Permanente Creek and Hale Creek channel improvements, levee and channel improvements downstream of Highway 101, and the Rancho San Antonio Detention Basins.

The second video captured the ribbon-cutting and comments made by Vice Chair Kremen, Director Hsueh, Santa Clara County Parks Director Don Rocha, and Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District Assistant General Manager Brian Malone.

A recording of the June 4, 2021, virtual ribbon-cutting is now available on the project's webpage: <https://www.valleywater.org/project-updates/rancho-san-antonio-county-park-detention-basin>.

For further information, please contact Rachael Gibson at (408) 781-4739.

10. Valley Water receives prestigious PRSA Silver Anvil Award

On June 10, 2021, Valley Water was presented the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Silver Anvil Award for our efforts in crafting an updated community-preferred Safe, Clean Water Program, before it was placed on the ballot as Measure S, in the category of Public Affairs for Associations, Government, Nonprofit Organizations.

PRSA is the nation's leading professional organization serving the communications community. The Silver Anvil is one of the most prestigious and sought-after public relations awards nationwide and honors the best public relations campaigns each year. Out of the hundreds of submissions received nationwide, only 148 agencies were selected as finalists, and of those, only 67 Silver Anvil Awards were given.

In the midst of a global pandemic, Valley Water's robust public affairs and outreach efforts helped build the community-preferred renewal program before it was officially placed on the ballot as Measure S. The efforts resulted in more than 21,000 direct engagements with county residents and stakeholders and paid media efforts resulting in more than 14 million impressions in a six-month period between January and June 2020 to gather direct input into the program before being finalized. Ultimately, the measure passed in a landslide victory with more than 75% of votes cast in the November 2020 election. The funding generated by the Safe, Clean Water Program helps partially fund and support critical water supply projects and helps our agency better prepare for climate change and emergencies like drought.

The Silver Anvil will be mailed to Valley Water headquarters in July 2021 and will be put up for display in the board room trophy case for all to enjoy.

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

11. Water Treatment Plant and Pipeline Project Workshop

On June 1, 2021, Valley Water hosted a Water Treatment Plant and Pipeline Project Workshop via Zoom. Valley Water presented on major pipeline and treatment plant projects that are scheduled in the next 2-5 years, inviting water retailers to participate in discussions of operational strategies and communication protocols in response to impacts of pipeline outage, potential project delay and water quality issues on raw and treated water deliveries. Representatives from all seven treated water retailers within Santa Clara County attended the workshop.

Following the presentations of upcoming pipeline projects and potential impacts on raw water supply and treated water operations, as well as discussions on contingency plans by Valley Water and San Jose Water Company operations staff, three different scenario exercises were conducted. These exercises guided attendees and engaged treated water retailers' participants through mock events during extended project delay, water supply shortage, and treated water interruption due to water quality impacts during San Luis Low Point and County-wide drought conditions.

Valley Water received helpful feedback from treated water retailers about how they might operate under certain situations, and Valley Water was able to respond to treated water retailers' questions and comments. This dialogue will help refine our contingency planning, operational strategies, and our communications strategy with treated water retailers as well as the broader community. Preliminary feedback from participants was that the workshop was worthwhile, and future such sessions may be scheduled.

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