



# Santa Clara Valley Water District

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**File No.:** 21-0594

**Agenda Date:** 6/22/2021  
**Item No.:** 4.3.

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## BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

### **SUBJECT:**

Consider the March 1, 2021, Board Policy and Planning Committee Recommendations Regarding Modifications to Board Governance Ends Policy E-4: Water Resources Stewardship.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Consider the March 1, 2021, Board Policy and Planning Committee Recommendations Regarding Modifications to Board Governance Ends Policy E-4: Water Resources Stewardship

### **SUMMARY:**

At the August 12, 2020 Special Meeting, the Board Policy and Planning Committee requested staff provide a revised Board Ends Policy E-4, Water Resources Stewardship, for their consideration that:

1. Reflects the Board's goal to achieve a net positive impact on the environment;
2. Clarifies the Board's stewardship vision to the public; and
3. Guides staff to integrate stewardship "in everything we do".

The Committee provided input on the revisions at three subsequent meetings; and on March 1, 2021, recommended that the final modified policy be presented to the full Board for consideration (Attachment 1).

To clarify Santa Clara Valley Water District's (Valley Water) stewardship mission, the modified Ends Policy E-4 includes five policy goals to achieve the following End: *Water resources stewardship protects and enhances ecosystem health*. Goals include using a science-based approach to protect aquatic ecosystems, managing water resources for multiple benefits, encouraging sustainable management of water resources in the Bay-Delta, preventing pollution of waterbodies, and engaging the community. Each goal is supported by several actionable objectives.

The draft policy was developed with community concerns in mind. Out of 17,100 total people surveyed for the Safe Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program renewal effort, numerous residents listed stewardship as an important priority for Valley Water: 96% of respondents ranked reducing and removing toxins, hazards, and contaminants from local creeks, streams, and reservoirs as important- extremely important; 88% of respondents ranked restoring fish, bird, and wildlife habitat

in and around local creeks, streams, and the bay as important- extremely important; and 88% of respondents ranked providing creek cleanups, vegetation management, and tree removal near creeks to lessen the threat of flooding and wildfires as important- extremely important. Top concerns expressed by respondents related to environmental stewardship were wildlife habitat quality in Santa Clara County; Bay-Delta watershed health; pollution in local streams, reservoirs, and the bay; and community engagement and education.

The policy revision was also informed by a comparative study of other water agencies. In a benchmarking exercise of seven water districts and flood control agencies in the region, the current Ends Policy E4 was found to be of moderate strength when compared to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and the East Bay Municipal Utility District. The proposed draft policy reflects the board direction to be leaders in promoting a science-based, watershed approach to water resources management.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact associated with this item.

**CEQA:**

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: Revised Ends Policy E-4

**UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:**

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