



What we do

The Santa Clara Valley Water District manages water resources and provides stewardship for the county's five watersheds, including 10 reservoirs, hundreds of miles of streams and groundwater basins. The water district also provides flood protection throughout Santa Clara County.

Visit our website at www.valleywater.org.

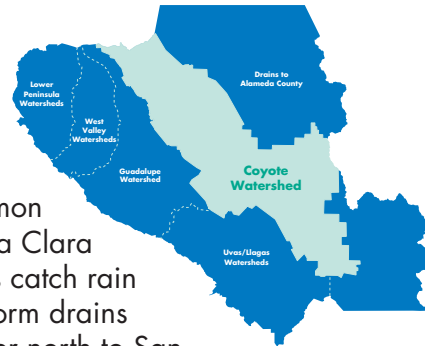
On the cover:

1. High creek flow at Lower Silver Creek near Dobern Avenue, April 2006
2. Volunteers cleaning up trash
3. Dragon Fly (*order Odonata*)
4. California Sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*)
5. Scrub Jay (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*)
6. New pedestrian bridge over Lower Silver Creek at Lausett Avenue

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You're in a watershed

No matter where you are, you're in a watershed. A watershed is the area of land that drains a common waterway. In Santa Clara County, our creeks catch rain and runoff from storm drains and carry the water north to San Francisco Bay or south to Monterey Bay. Along the way, some of the water is used to fill reservoirs for drinking water, replenish the underground aquifer and create better habitat for fish and wildlife.



This project is in the **Coyote Watershed**. Sixteen major creeks drain this 322-square-mile area. The county's largest watershed extends from the urbanized valley floor upward to the vast natural areas of the Diablo range. Coyote Creek, its main waterway, is the longest creek in the county.



Natural Flood Protection

Santa Clara Valley Water District is the primary flood protection agency in Santa Clara County. During the past 30 years, the water district has removed more than 93,000 properties from flood-prone areas, but another 73,000 still remain vulnerable to flooding.



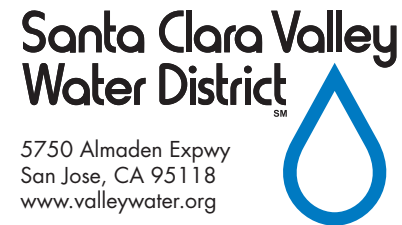
Clean, Safe Water in Creeks and Bays

Improving the quality of water in the county's creeks and bays is vital to Santa Clara County's quality of life. Over the past five years, the water district has removed more than 30,000 cubic yards of trash and debris from neighborhood creeks.



Healthy Creek and Bay Ecosystems

The health of a creek reflects the conditions throughout a watershed, not just those along its banks. In the past five years, the water district has created nearly 300 acres of tidal wetlands in South San Francisco Bay and plans to create another 250 acres of wetlands. In addition, it has removed nearly 60 acres of invasive plant species along local waterways.



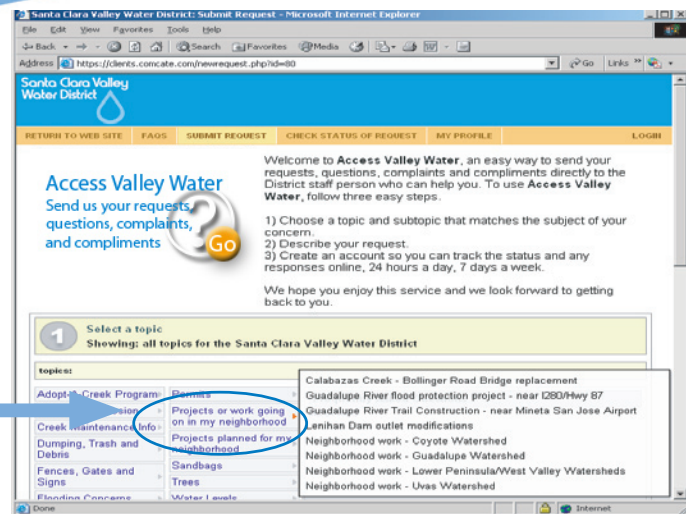
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The Santa Clara Valley Water District is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Contact us

For more information, contact Senior Project Manager **Dennis Cheong** at **(408) 265-2607, ext. 2618**. Also, visit our website at www.valleywater.org and use our **Access Valley Water** customer request and information system. With three easy steps, you can use this service to find out the latest information on the project or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a district staff person.



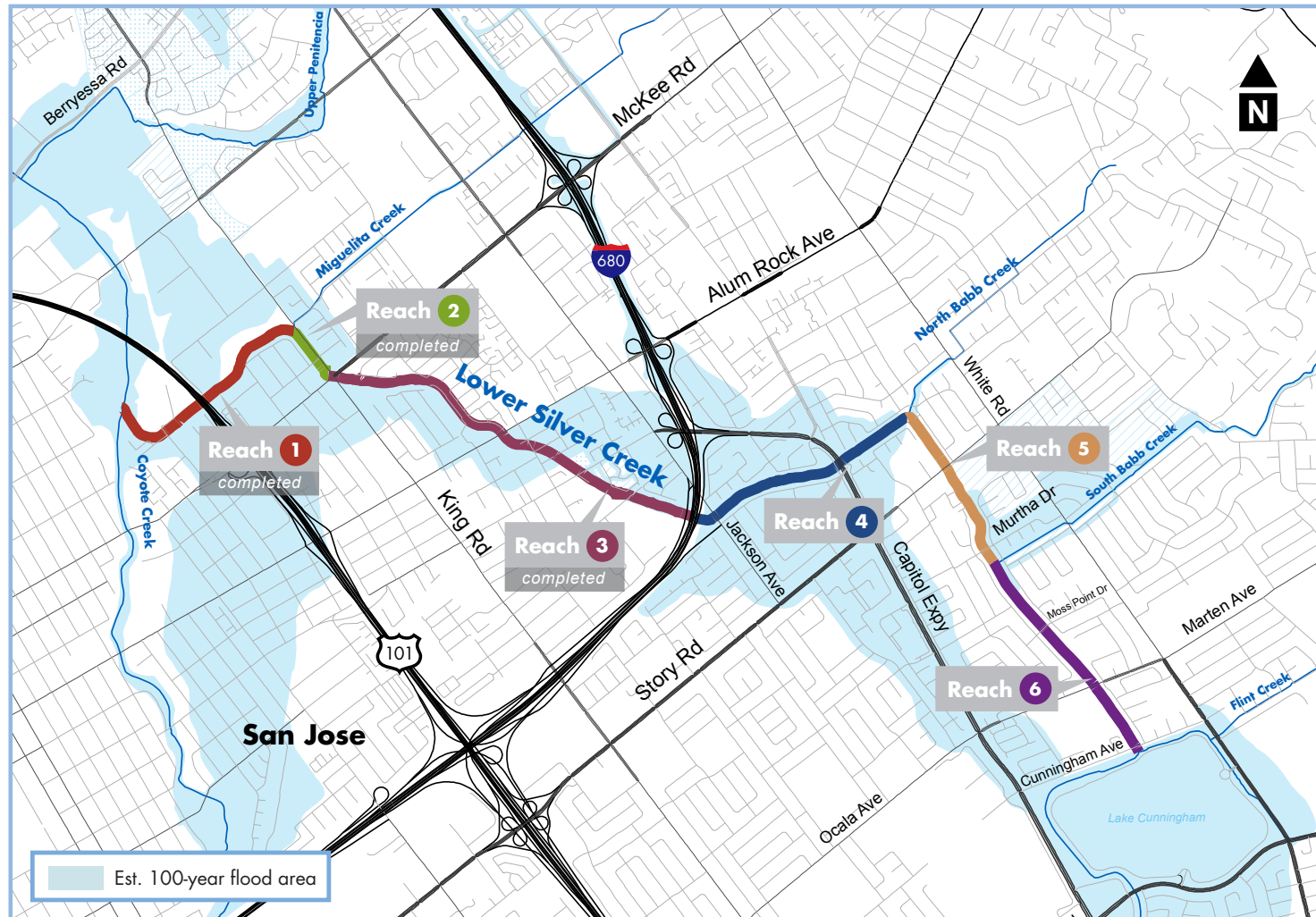
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Trails, Parks and Open Space

The water district works with cities and the county to provide open space and recreational opportunities. More than 30 miles of new creekside trails have been constructed in the past five years and an additional 40 miles are planned.

Lower Silver Creek flood protection project



The Lower Silver Creek flood protection project extends approximately 4.4 miles through the city of San José, from its confluence with Coyote Creek to Cunningham Avenue. The project encompasses multiple segments of Lower Silver Creek, also referred to as "Reaches".

About the project

Every winter, thousands of households, schools and businesses in San Jose are susceptible to the damages of flooding from Lower Silver Creek during a major storm event. Lower Silver Creek drains a large area of east San Jose into Coyote Creek, which flows northward to San Francisco Bay. Over the past 50 years, Lower Silver Creek has experienced severe flooding that resulted in damage to residential, commercial and industrial properties, as well as erosion of the creek's banks and levees. Disruption to businesses and transportation networks can result in significant loss of productivity and revenue.

In 2002, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, in partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) initiated design and construction of a flood protection project along 4.4 miles of the creek, from its

confluence at Coyote Creek to Cunningham Avenue, near Lake Cunningham Park. The water district and NRCS completed the flood protection improvements for Reaches one to three in 2006. Although designs were nearly complete for Reaches four to six at that time, the project was put on hold due to funding limitations. Some parcels were removed from the flood hazard area because of the completion of Reaches one to three; removal of all parcels in the Lower Silver Creek watershed can only be accomplished by the completion of flood protection improvements through Lake Cunningham Park.

In addition to providing protection from the damages of floods, the completed project would also provide enhanced habitat and vegetation along the creek, new recreational amenities for the neighborhood, including pedestrian bridges and opportunities for new trails.

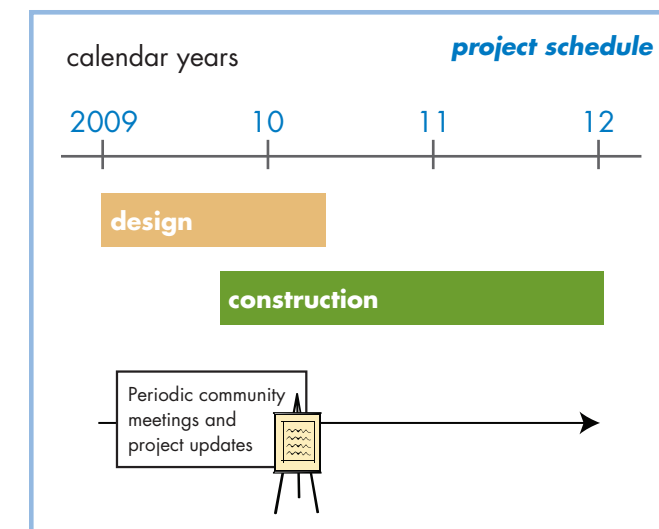
Project objectives

The primary objectives of the project are to:

- Provide flood protection from a 100-year flood event from Coyote Creek to Cunningham Avenue
- Protect 3,800 homes and businesses from a 100-year flood event
- Prevent potential future flooding damages from a 100-year flood event
- Enhance native riparian and environmental habitat
- Improve creek maintenance
- Improve water quality
- Provide increased opportunities for recreation in cooperation with the city and county

"Shovel-ready" partnership

The longstanding partnership between NRCS and the water district enabled both agencies to mobilize quickly when the opportunity to apply for stimulus funding became available. In spring 2009, the Lower Silver Creek Flood Protection Project improvements were identified as "shovel-ready" projects and were approved to receive \$18 million in federal economic stimulus funds through NRCS as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The design of improvements for Reaches five and six have since been resumed, with construction anticipated to begin in late August 2009.



Lower Silver Creek (Reach 3) completed in 2006; enhanced habitat and vegetation, and improved maintenance.



Lower Silver Creek (Reach 6, near Cunningham Ave) creek banks will be stabilized and flood conveyance will be improved.

Looking ahead

The water district also plans several improvements for Lake Cunningham, which serves as a retention facility for Lower Silver Creek. One concept is to improve the Lake Cunningham facilities to capture some of the peak flows from large storm events and release them back into the creek after water levels have dropped back from flood stage without affecting the operation of the water park. Upon completion of improvements for all the Reaches and Lake Cunningham, the water district and the city of San José will be able to demonstrate to FEMA that the homes and businesses subject to 100-year flooding from Lower Silver Creek have been protected. This documentation triggers actions by FEMA to remove the mandatory flood insurance requirement.

The water district will continue to work with the community and city towards accomplishing this goal and providing critical flood protection needs for San Jose.