

# Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines



Santa Clara Valley Water District  
December 23, 2000

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# **Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines**

created for the  
**Santa Clara Valley Water District**  
**Coyote Watershed Program**

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23 December 2000

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## Introduction

### ***Background***

Lands of the Coyote Watershed cross a variety of jurisdictions. The Santa Clara Valley Water district (“SCVWD” or “district”) owns and manages significant areas along the creeks and waterways of the Coyote Watershed. Currently, the district is engaging in major flood protection projects along a number of these creeks, including Lower Silver Creek, Berryessa Creek, Upper Penitencia Creek and Silver/Thompson Creek. Many of these upcoming improvement projects contain elements that bring the physical and visual resources of the Watershed closer to the communities in which they are located. Allowing trail access along waterways and opening views to SCVWD lands have become significant components of the district's projects. Efforts continue to provide continuity and access across public lands under the jurisdiction of multiple municipalities and agencies. Additionally, public awareness of the watershed is increasing due in part to the district’s outreach efforts, such as the “Adopt a Creek” program and the “Open Classroom.” Future projects will continue to occur within the watershed.

Comprehensive documents have been developed to guide the design, management and locations of trails within the County of Santa Clara. These documents include: “*Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use, and Management Guidelines*,” (1999), “*Milpitas Trails Master Plan*,” (1997), and “*Santa Clara County Trails Master Plan*” (1995). These documents generally do not address aesthetic issues such as selection of materials, colors or surface treatments of physical elements. Where they do address those issues, we defer to them, and refer the reader to the specific location of the information.

Overall master planning and engineering documents also contain information relating to design of structures along SCVWD creek channels. Examples of these documents include: *SCVWD Engineering Policies & Procedures Manual* (1997) and *Guidelines for Riparian Revegetation Projects in Santa Clara County* (2000).

Existing design and trails documents fail to address aesthetic issues in areas where trails do not occur, as is often the case on SCVWD land. The Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines attempts to fill the gaps. It informs and guides the aesthetic choices involved in

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projects on SCVWD lands, both in areas where public access is provided and areas where it is not.

These guidelines are being developed under the direction of the Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines Committee, including representatives of the SCVWD, the City of San Jose, the City of Milpitas, and the Army Corps of Engineers. Existing trails master plans, design guidelines and other documents have been surveyed. Several workshops have been held by the Committee to develop and review drafts of this Guidelines document. Feedback from various interested agencies has been incorporated into the document. The resulting Coyote Watershed Aesthetic Guidelines will guide the appearance of future projects along the Coyote Watershed.

### ***Mission and Goals***

The mission of this document is to establish baseline aesthetic characteristics for projects in the Coyote Watershed implemented by the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and to serve as a tool for the Community Projects Review Unit to use in evaluating the quality of projects being proposed by outside entities.

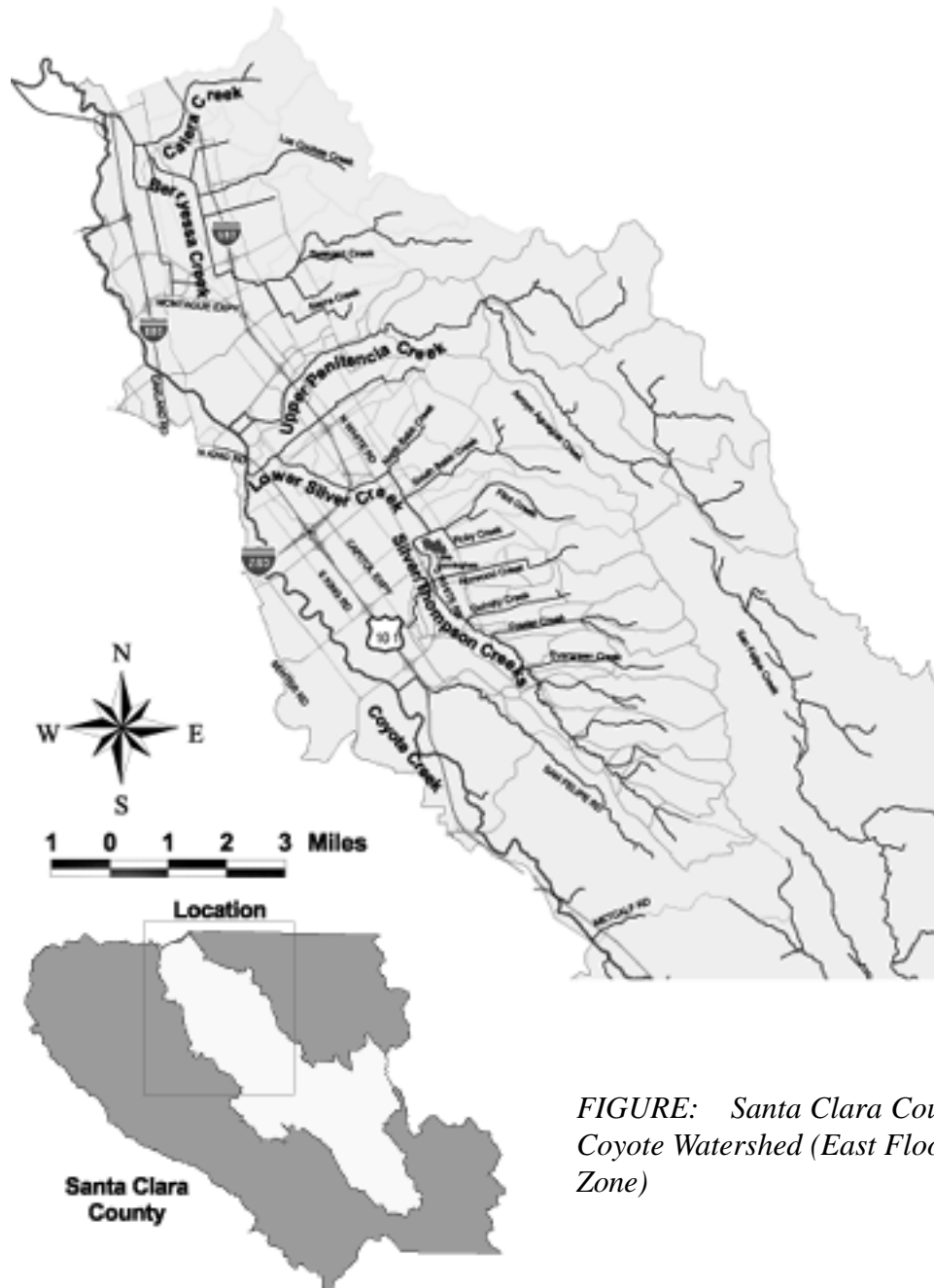
The goal of this document is to guide the design of projects within the Coyote Watershed in order to achieve a unified appearance that is aesthetically pleasing and sensitive to surrounding context. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the creek channels for the enjoyment of the public, using environmentally sensitive and aesthetically pleasing materials and treatments, while providing flood protection and maintaining or heightening habitat values.

### ***How to use these guidelines***

These guidelines are intended to be used for any improvement project occurring under SCVWD jurisdiction within the Coyote Watershed. These guidelines may also be used in other SCVWD watersheds. The guidelines do not address decisions that are governed by engineering, hydraulic or, in the case of habitat restoration and mitigation, biological concerns.

The guidelines establish baseline requirements that must be met in each project undertaken on these properties. The baseline

includes a family of forms that combine to create a visual unity. A common theme is established through the forms and surface treatments of walls, fencing, and bridge faces. Site furnishings are chosen to reinforce this continuity. Identity signage in the form of “awareness strips” and related signs also create a continuity throughout the Coyote Watershed.



*FIGURE: Santa Clara County  
Coyote Watershed (East Flood Control  
Zone)*

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The level of embellishment and enhancement to these baseline requirements will often depend on the level of access and exposure involved at a specific project location. As discussed more fully in the following sections, some areas of the watershed are highly visible and extremely accessible to the public, and may warrant customization. In areas that act as “gateways” or access points to trails or channels, enhancement of the baseline may be appropriate. Project teams along with community groups may decide on such improvements on a site by site basis. In all areas, the baseline treatments will result in aesthetically pleasing and environmentally compatible designs.

### ***Existing Conditions and Context***

The Coyote Watershed, located in eastern Santa Clara County south of the San Francisco Bay, is one of the largest watersheds in the area, encompassing nearly 350 square miles of foothills and valley floor, and including approximately 84 miles of waterways.

Historically, the Coyote Watershed was primarily composed of rural wild lands, grazing lands, and agricultural areas. In the hills of the Hamilton Range, wild open space and grazing were the predominant land uses. In the flatlands, agricultural uses such as orchards and row crops predominated.

At present, the SCVWD Coyote Watershed lands pass through a wide range of uses, from open spaces and parks to residential, urban and industrial areas. Much of the watershed is in rapidly urbanizing areas. Development and drainage patterns have changed, and flood protection is a continuing issue. Preservation of open space, restoration of natural areas, links between open areas and communities, and continuity of environmental systems are also issues of concern.

The creeks of the Coyote Watershed run through a wide range of conditions, from natural channel configurations to narrow channel structures. Design choices will be informed by the surrounding uses and contexts.

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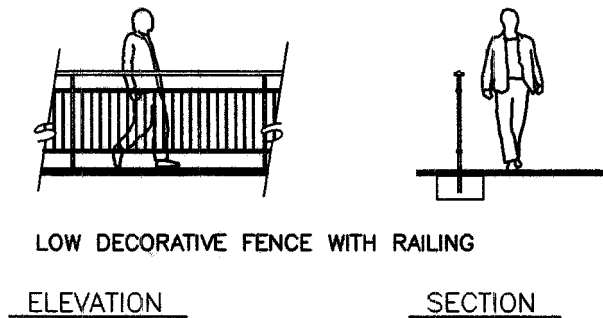
## Fences, Access Control and Safety Barriers

- **GOALS:** Maintain safety and control traffic flow using barriers that complement the surrounding environment. Balance aesthetics and visual sensitivity with function and context.

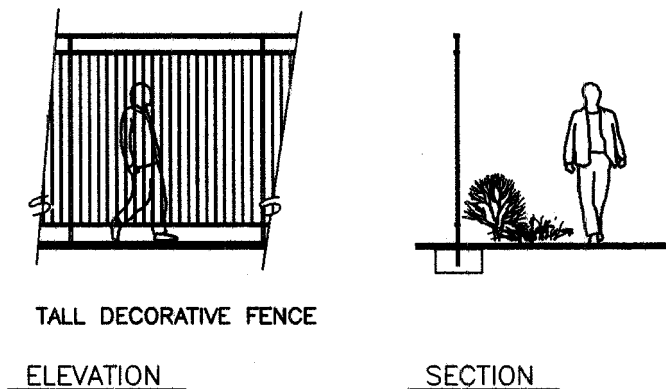
### *Fences and Railings*

The following types of fences and railings are acceptable:

**Decorative metal picket fence**, black, powder coated. Pickets shall be 5/8" square, spaced 4-5/8" o.c. Railings at top and bottom of pickets shall be 1" x 2". Top railing, for fence heights under 36", shall be a handrail, as shown. For fence heights over 36", the top railing shall be 1 1/2" x 2" black powder coated tubular steel.



*FIGURE: Cross section of handrail grip*



*FIGURE: Decorative fence and rail types*

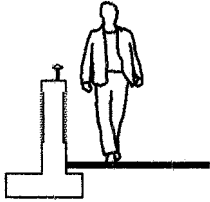
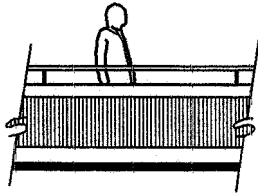


FIGURE: Wall detail

**Low wall with railing.** Where a low wall used as a safety barrier is adjacent a trail or pause point, it should be topped by the same handrail used on the low fence. Wall surface treatment relates to the form of the metal picket fence. For further information on wall treatments, see “Walls and Retaining Structures,” below.

**Chain link fence,** black, vinyl coated. Chain link shall be 1-1/2” x 6 gauge black vinyl coated. Top and bottom rails shall be 2” o.d. Line posts shall be 2-1/2” o.c. In areas that are neither visible nor accessible to the public, zinc coated chain link fence may be acceptable.

**Low wall, topped by fence.** Fencing should be either black, powder coated metal picket fencing, with dimensions and characteristics discussed above, or black, vinyl coated chain link, as discussed above. For wall treatment, see “Walls and Retaining Structures,” below.

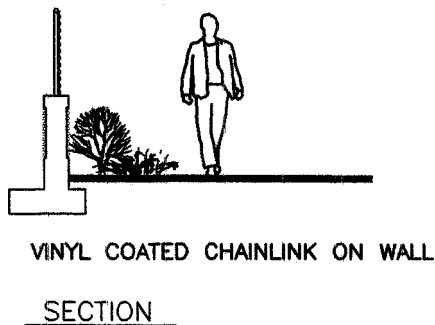
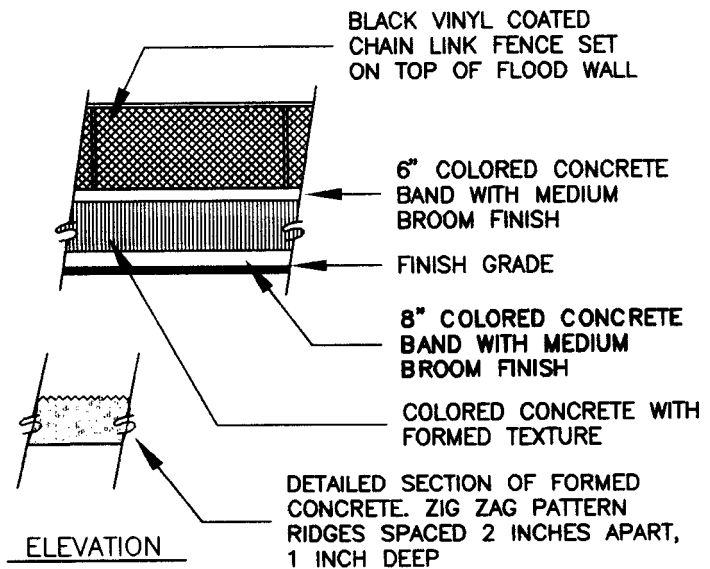
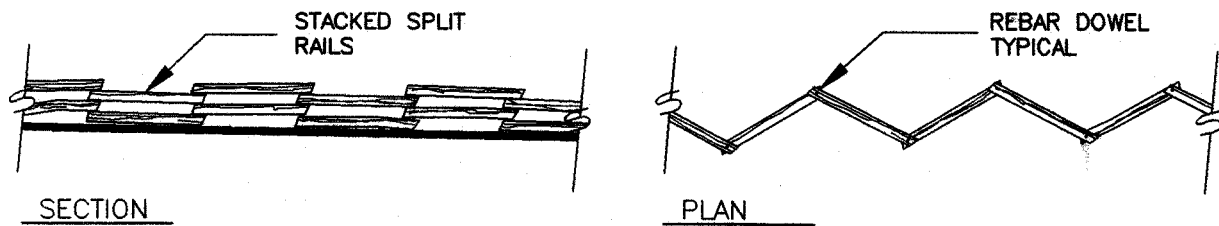


FIGURE: Wall detail



**Wooden three-rail fence.** Pole posts, approximately 5 1/2” in diameter, and pole rails, approximately 3 1/2” in diameter. 8’ long rails should be doweled into posts.

**Stacked split rail fence,** maximum height, 30”. Split wooden rails approximately 8’ long by 8” x 8”, doweled together. Split rail fencing shall be constructed for maximum structural integrity.



*FIGURE: Stacked split rail fence*

The vertical pickets and horizontal top and bottom rails of the decorative metal fence relate to the concrete walls' vertically fluted surface and horizontal bands. This family of forms is a baseline pattern that creates a linkage and visual continuity throughout Coyote Watershed improvement projects.

### **Choosing the Correct Fence**

The choice of fence to be used in a given location depends on the context. The fence type should relate to the surrounding uses, both up and down stream as well as adjacent. Typically, the more decorative picket fence should be used in more publicly accessible or visible locations. In situations that are less visible and/or located further away from high use areas, vinyl-coated chain link fencing may be more appropriate. Where the fence will not be publicly visible, galvanized chain link is acceptable. In some instances, fencing will be installed on top of low walls or floodwalls.



*FIGURE: The above scenario would be ideal for split rail fencing, where an environmentally sensitive area should be protected from trampling but user safety is not at risk.*

Three-rail fencing or stacked split rail fencing should be used in locations where a barrier is required for protection of special features or sensitive areas, and where user safety and security is not at risk. These types of fencing will reduce damage to sensitive areas while providing an aesthetically pleasing barrier that blends with the natural environment. These types of fencing may also be used as interpretive elements to invoke the agrarian heritage of the area.



*FIGURE: Typical three-rail fence as used along Los Gatos Creek at Lark Avenue*

Fence type and height are determined by the location and function of the fence. In public access areas, fencing should not be used to separate users from the creek, unless safety or habitat protection

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require it. See the *SCVWD Engineering Policies & Procedures Manual*, excerpted as "Appendix F," for specific fencing requirements.

### ***Fence Placement***

Fences should be visually unobtrusive. Where it is desirable to preserve the views through fencing, the fence should be as transparent as possible. Setting a fence back from the trail or sidewalk where possible reduces its visual intrusion. Locating the fence down slope from a trail reduces the perceived height of the fence, while preserving views.



SECTION

*FIGURE: Using planting and downslope placement to make fence less visible*

Planting should be used to reduce the visual impact of a fence where preservation of the view through the fence is not an issue, and especially where screening is desirable. Setting fencing back from trails or sidewalks allows for planting of shrubs or vines and makes the fence less visually prominent.



*FIGURE: The chain link fence located at this Los Gatos Creek bridge landing would be less visible but still effective if it was placed a few feet downhill and away from the more decorative three rail fence.*

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Fence lines tend to trap refuse. When planting adjacent to a fence or choosing a location, consider the maintenance efforts needed to keep the fence line clean. Planting should not interfere with maintenance access.

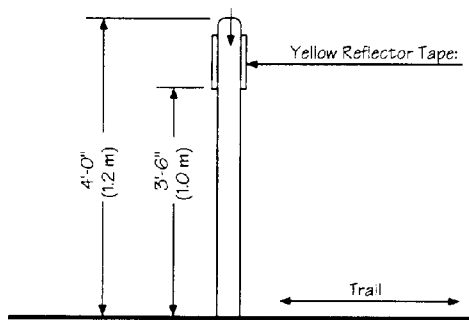
### **Gates**

Gates which are part of continuous fencing should be of the same material and of a similar style to the adjacent fencing.

At trail entries, freestanding gates may be appropriate for access control. For examples of this use, see Appendix E, and the *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines*.

### **Bollards and Boulders**

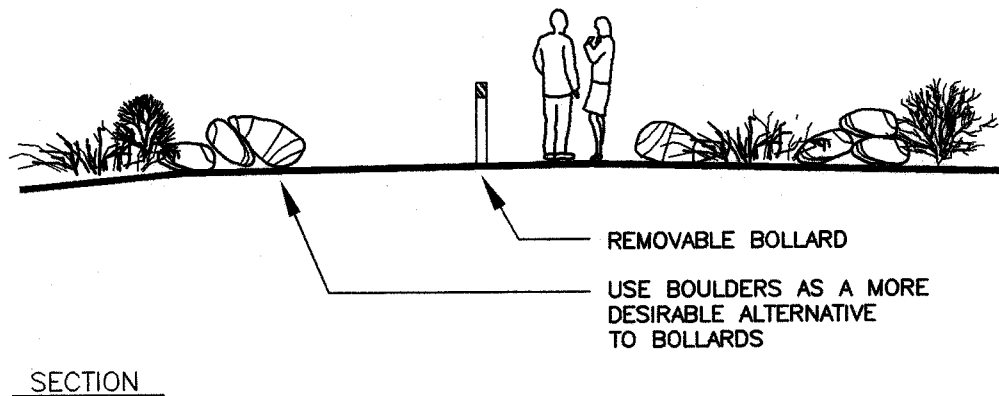
Bollard configurations and details are described in the *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines*. Metal should be used in more urban areas, whereas wood may be more appropriate in locations with a more rural or agrarian character.



*FIGURE: Standard bollard from the Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines. Also refer to Appendix E.*

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Boulders provide a natural and aesthetic traffic control alternative to bollards. Boulders are economical and vandal resistant. They may be subtly integrated into the landscape. Where necessary, boulders may be used in conjunction with a removable bollard for maintenance or emergency access.



*FIGURE: Using a combination of bollards and boulders to soften the appearance of traffic control measures*

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## Paving

- **GOALS:** Unify trail system and other functional travel ways through the use of a simple and identifiable palette of materials and treatments. De-emphasize visual impact of maintenance roads while preserving maintenance access.

### ***Materials***

Acceptable paving materials:

**Asphalt or rubberized asphalt paving:** for use as trail surfacing, either above or below normal high water. The incorporation of recycled materials such as glass is strongly encouraged. Avoid use of asphalt paving in areas where inundation is likely to be frequent or of long duration.

**Compacted crushed aggregate:** for trail surfacing, pause points, shoulders, equestrian trails and maintenance access above or below normal high water. Colors should be similar to the native stone found in the area.

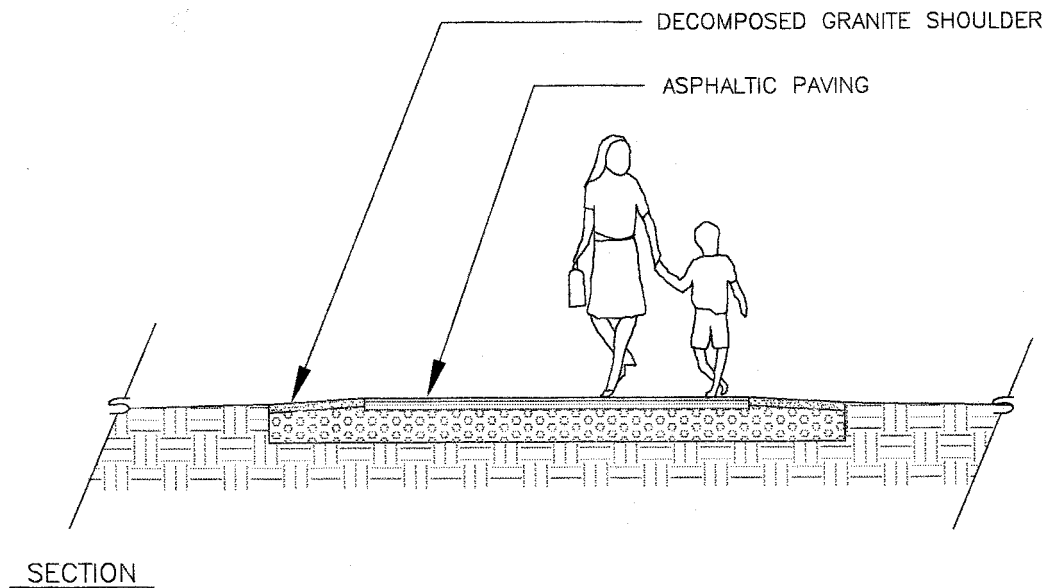
**Decomposed granite:** for trail surfacing, pause points, shoulders, and equestrian trails above normal high water. Colors should be similar to the native stone found in the area. Use a binding or stabilizing material where necessary.

**Native material:** for trail surfacing, equestrian trails and maintenance access, either above or below normal high water.

**Concrete:** for trail surfacing or plaza areas above or below normal high water. Use concrete where hard paving is desired in areas likely to be inundated frequently or for long durations. For trail paving or plazas, use earth tones, and medium broom finish. Tan colored concrete shall be used for “awareness strips.”

### ***Trails***

Preferred trail materials are native material, decomposed granite or crushed aggregate in lower traffic areas, and asphalt or rubberized asphalt in higher traffic areas. Both types of materials are



*FIGURE: Typical trail pavement section*



*FIGURE: Decomposed granite shoulder at Almaden Lake Park*

suitable for multi-use trails. Where the trail surface is hard paving, shoulders should be provided, composed of compacted crushed aggregate or decomposed granite. For equestrian trails, native material or crushed aggregate is preferred. Various aspects of shared-use, limited-use and single-use trails are discussed in the *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines*. Refer to that document, excerpted as "Appendix E," for layouts, setbacks, widths, striping and marking.

Concrete may be used as trail paving, in limited urban situations where it is warranted by context. It may also be used as edging adjacent to irrigated turf. The awareness strip that occurs at designated points in the trail is constructed of concrete.

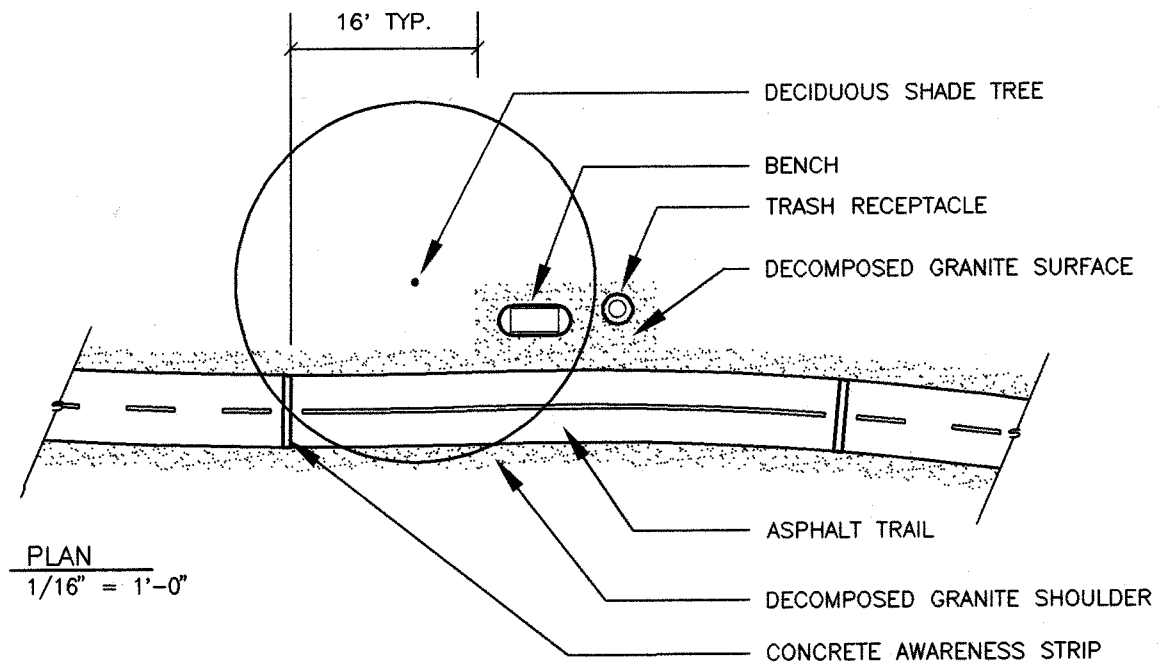
Use of decomposed granite for trail surfacing above the high water line is recommended as an environmentally sensitive alternative to hard paving.

If additional stabilization is needed for decomposed granite or native material, Road Oyl, Polypavement or a similar binding agent should be used.

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### **Pause Points**

Pause points should be provided at intervals along the trail, at points of interest, superior views, or interpretive opportunities. The paved surface should be decomposed granite or native material.



*FIGURE: Layout for typical pause point*

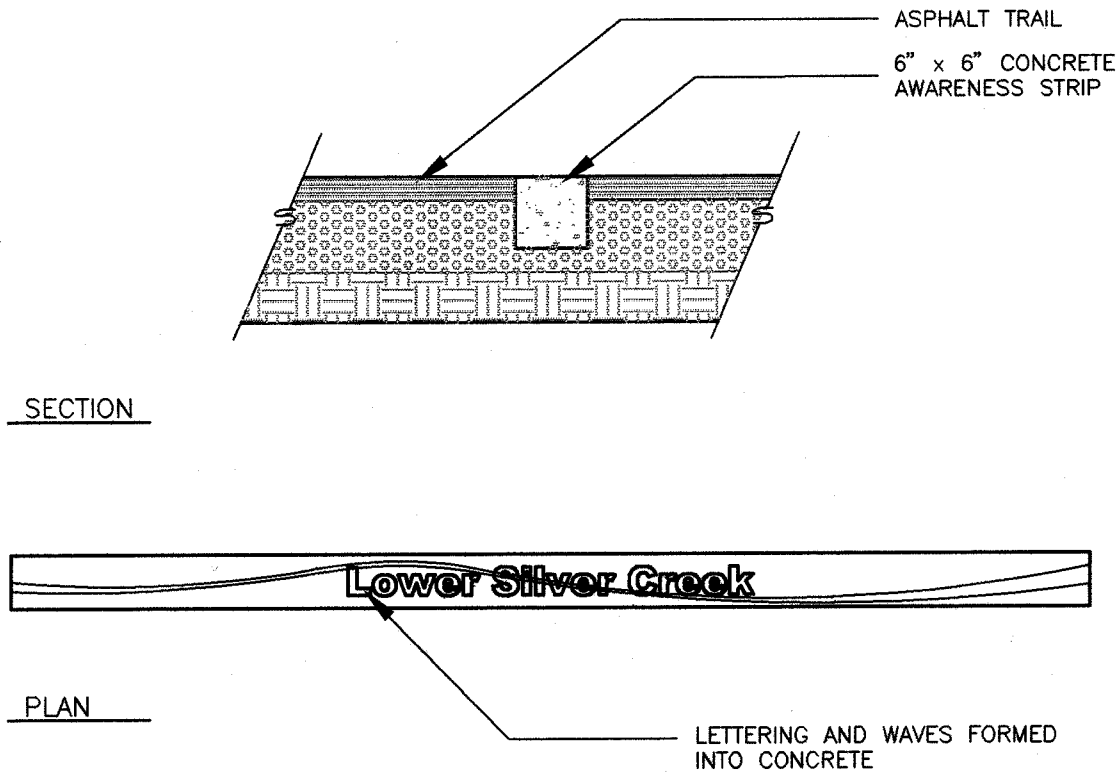


*FIGURE: Bench located along the trail*

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### **Awareness Strips**

Concrete awareness strips should be placed in the trail surface at special features such as pause points, trail entries and junctions, and creek crossings. The awareness strip identifies the name of the adjacent creek. The information is formed into a 6" wide, tan concrete band, with a background wave pattern. Refer to "Signage" section for additional information.



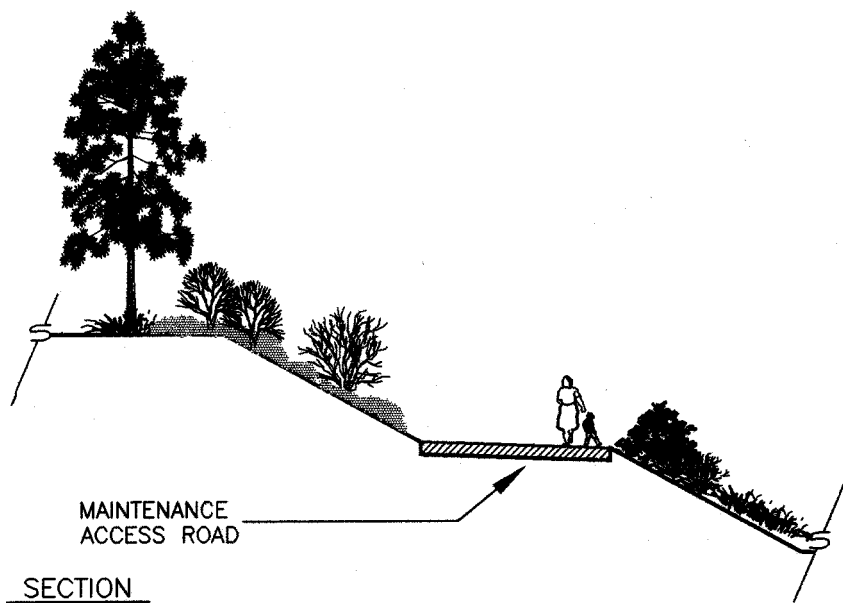
*FIGURE: Awareness strip placed in asphalt path*

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### **Maintenance Roads and Ramps**

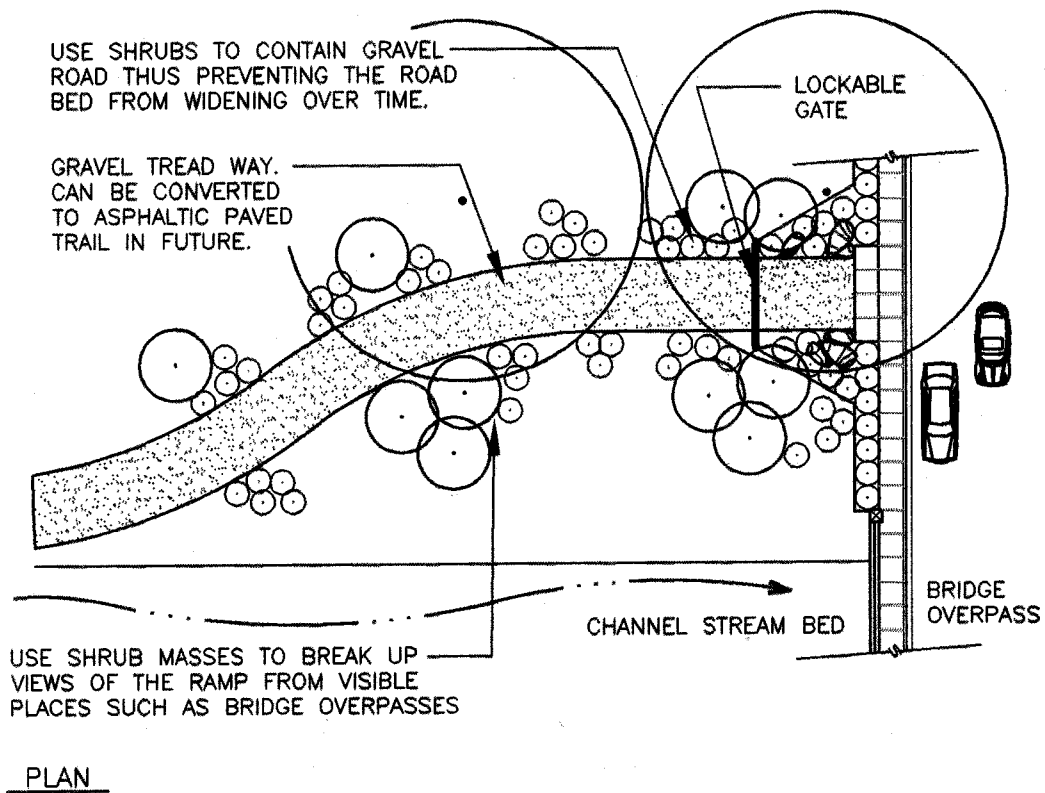
For maintenance access roads which are not used as trails, native material or base rock is preferred. For loading requirements, dimensions, and slope stabilization, see the *SCVWD Engineering Policies and Procedures Manual*.

Maintenance roads and ramps should generally be designed in a manner that allows for potential future conversion to trail use. Where future trail use is a possibility, consider designing the maintenance road to meet Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility standards, and use materials that are compatible for trail conversions. Crushed aggregate or native material treads can be easily converted to asphaltic or other paving.



*FIGURE: Layout and treatment of maintenance roads and ramps for a more pleasing aesthetic*

The visual impact of maintenance access ramps and roads should be minimized. Where a ramp will be highly visible, as from a trail, roadway or bridge, the ramp should be pulled as far back from viewpoints as possible. Use plant massing to break views of the expanse of ramp surface. Use planting to soften and contain the edges of the ramp. Edge planting may encroach on the road surface if it does not interfere with access or require extraordinary maintenance. In limited circumstances, low groundcover or grasses may be planted between tread areas to lessen the expanse. In assessing the degree of flexibility in design of an access road or ramp, the level of maintenance required for the particular creek channel is a primary factor. Aesthetic considerations must be weighed in light of maintenance requirements.



*FIGURE: Layout and treatment of maintenance roads and ramps for a more pleasing aesthetic*

## Walls and Structures

- GOALS:** Enhance appearance of structural elements through use of context appropriate materials, colors, shapes and surface treatments. Minimize graffiti and maintenance requirements by using rough textures and varied colors.

### Materials

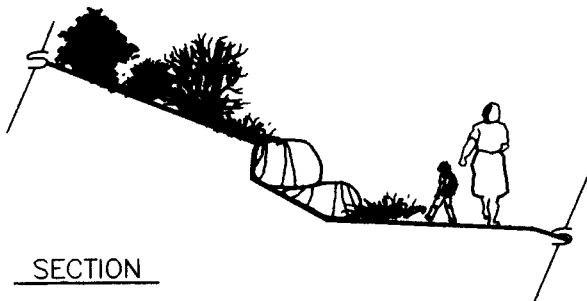
Acceptable materials for walls and retaining structures include:

**Modular concrete blocks:** earth tone colors, split-face textured blocks. Face dimensions: 8" x 12", flat.

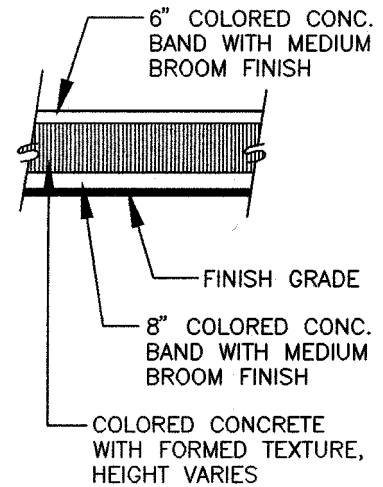
**Cast in place concrete:** earth tone colors. Surface textured with vertical grooves, with contrasting bands at top and bottom, as illustrated.

**Stacked stone walls; gabions; riprap:** rough or finished stone. Colors should be darker earth tones that blend with or complement the surrounding native materials. Gabions and riprap may be interplanted with willow pole cuttings or other vegetation.

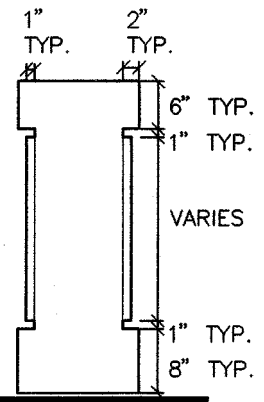
Use of graffiti resistant coatings is encouraged on surfaces with high risk of graffiti.



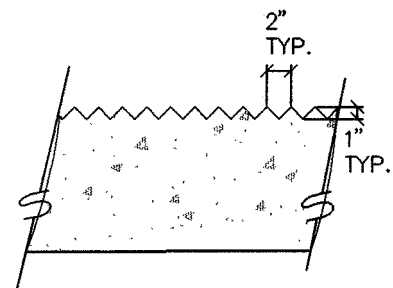
*FIGURE: Stacked boulders used as slope protection along a trail*



ELEVATION



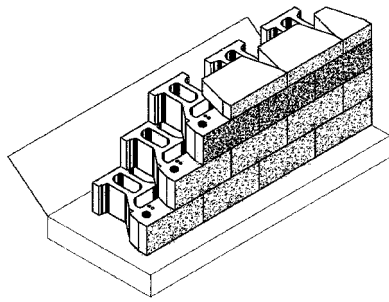
CROSS SECTION



FORMED CONCRETE ZIG-ZAG PATTERN, RIDGES SPACED 2 INCHES APART, 1 INCH DEEP

DETAILED SECTION

*FIGURES: Baseline pattern for concrete walls and structures*

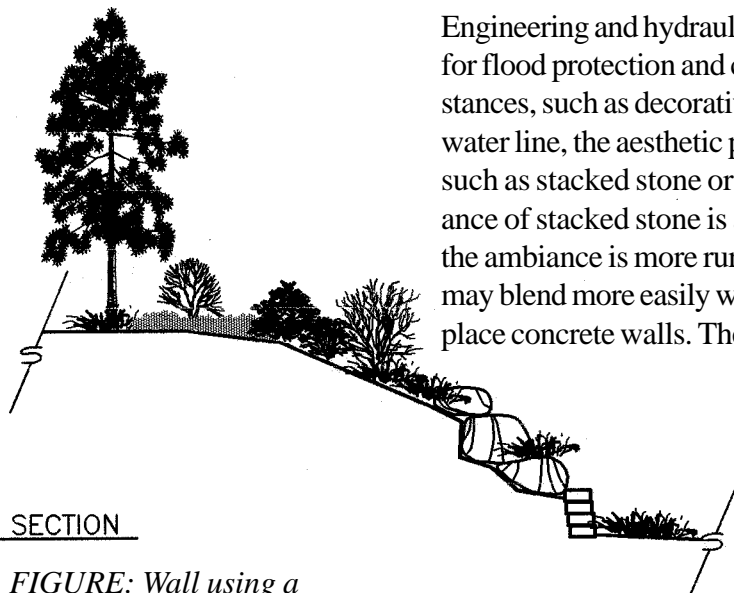


*FIGURE: Modular concrete block wall*

Walls and retaining structures are prominent features of many Coyote Watershed projects. Such structures include not only bank stabilizing structures, but floodwalls, vehicular bridges, abutments, headwalls, and wing walls. The concrete surface texture described above is the baseline pattern for all concrete work within the watershed. It is part of the family of forms that visually unifies projects within the watershed. (See sections on “Fences” and “Bridges.”). Enhancements to this treatment will be discussed below.

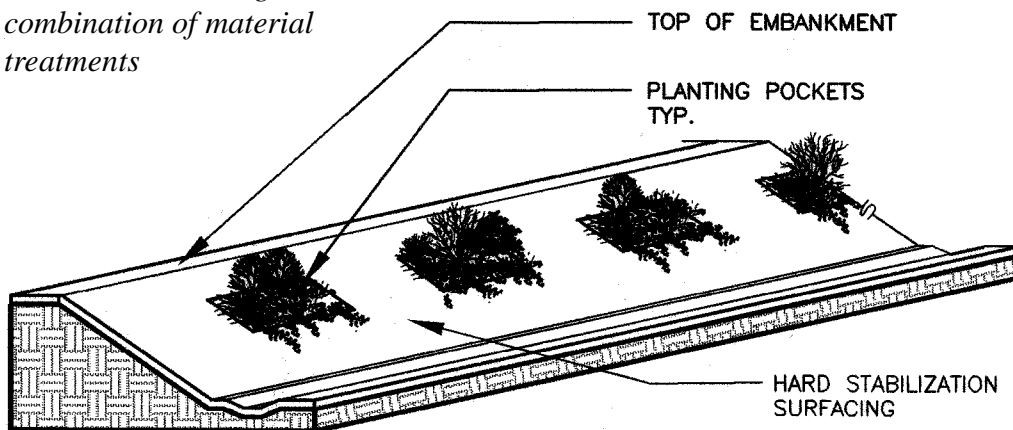
### **Types**

Engineering and hydraulic factors determine the types of walls used for flood protection and channel bank stabilization. In other circumstances, such as decorative walls or retaining walls above the high water line, the aesthetic preference is for the use of “softer” forms such as stacked stone or modular block walls. The natural appearance of stacked stone is appropriate in restoration areas and where the ambiance is more rural or agrarian. The scale of block walls may blend more easily with the surroundings than would cast-in-place concrete walls. The choice of material depends on the existing



SECTION

*FIGURE: Wall using a combination of material treatments*



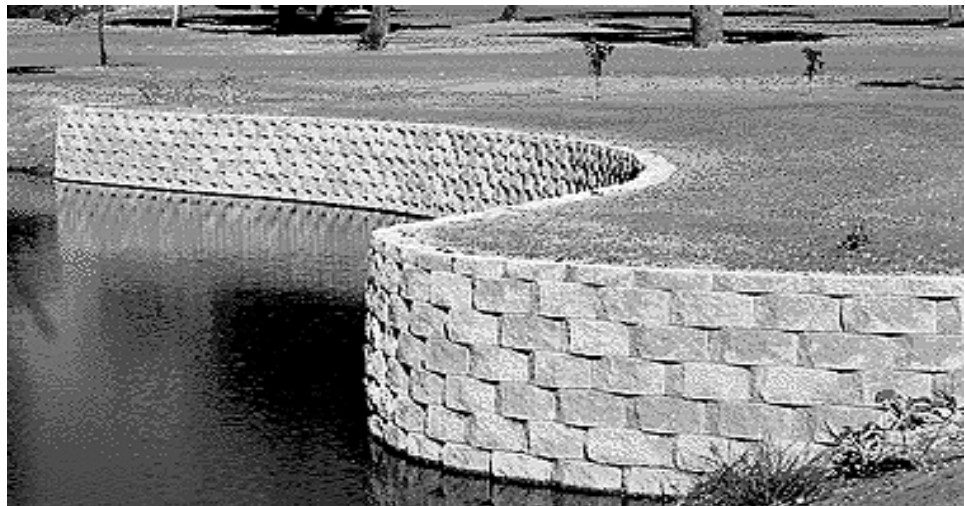
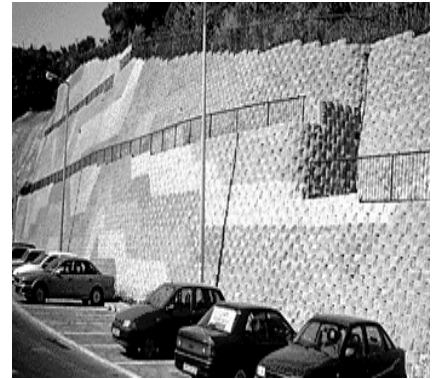
ISOMETRIC

*FIGURE: Breaking wall mass using planting pockets*

context. Design teams should use the listed materials to create functional walls with the highest aesthetic value possible. Combined forms may be the best alternative, allowing the most flexibility and variety, and minimizing the visual impact of the structures.

### ***Layout***

Where engineering and hydraulic considerations allow, block and concrete wall forms should be softened by using curvilinear, undulating, toothed or angled layouts. Avoid straight, linear forms where possible. Break up massing of structures. Slope or step tops of wall. Where possible, use lower wall heights to create planted slopes or terraces, and incorporate planting pockets into walls.



*FIGURES: Curvilinear wall layouts*



*FIGURE: Example of inlaid tile at the William St. bridge over Coyote Creek in San Jose*

### **Pattern Enhancements**

The baseline colors and textures described above create a visual unity for projects within the Coyote Watershed. These treatments should be used for most structural elements throughout the watershed.

In special locations found to be appropriate by the SCVWD, the design team and the community, the baseline treatments may be enhanced in a variety of ways. Locations for enhanced treatments could include entry or “gateway” areas, channel crossings, or areas that are highly visible from roadways or vehicular crossings. Community input should be incorporated into the design process.

Enhancements may be artistic or interpretive, and may express cultural, historical or environmental themes.

Enhancements may be created through the use of texture or color, or by varying surface materials or treatments, such as sand blast or contrasting form work, to create patterns. Inlaid precast concrete or tile may be added. The enhanced elements should transition smoothly to the baseline pattern, to integrate into the overall vocabulary of creekside features.



*FIGURES: Examples of concrete enhancement patterns*



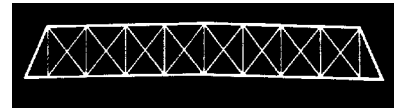
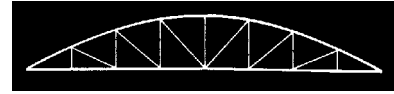
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## Bridges

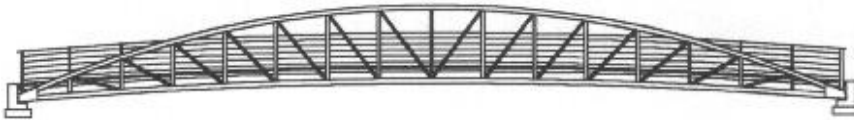
- **GOALS:** Enhance watershed awareness and appreciation through use of safe and aesthetic crossings. Provide design emphasis and architectural detail. Minimize graffiti by using rough textures and varied colors.

### ***Pedestrian Bridges***

Pedestrian bridges should be transparent and unobtrusive, complementing the environment rather than overwhelming it. Metal truss bridges blend well with both urban and rural environments. They are durable and vandal resistant. These transparent structures provide little surface for graffiti, and are relatively low maintenance.



*FIGURE: Typical span types for pedestrian bridges*



*FIGURES: Typical span types for pedestrian bridges*

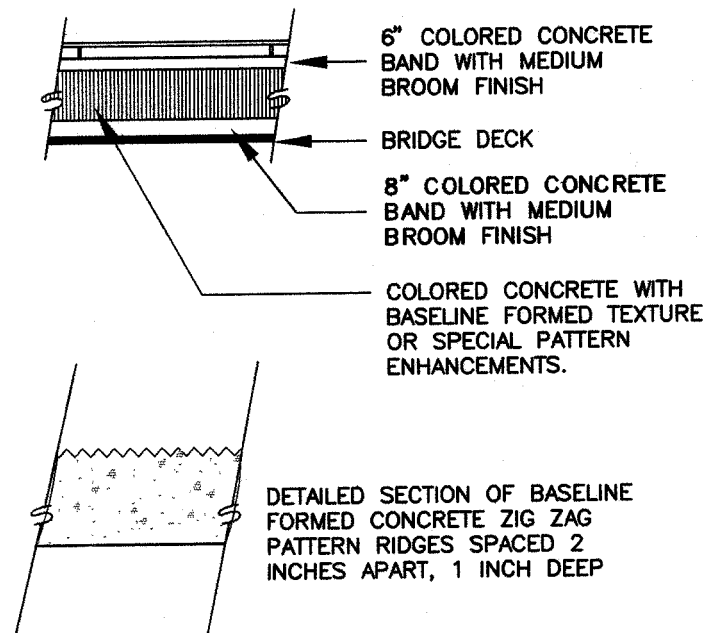


*FIGURE: Recycled plastic lumber bridge decking at Los Gatos Creek*

The preferred pedestrian bridges to be used on SCVWD crossings are metal truss bridges, constructed of weathering steel, such as Cor Ten. Preferred deck flooring is wood lumber, recycled plastic faux lumber, or, depending on loading requirements, earth tone colored concrete, or asphalt.

### **Vehicular Bridges**

Vehicular bridges will typically be concrete. Generally, the baseline colors and surface treatments discussed in the section “Walls and Structures” are appropriate for the wall surfaces, abutments and wing walls associated with vehicular bridges. Vehicular bridge wall faces should incorporate the band and groove pattern described in the "Walls and Structures" section. The top of the concrete walls should also be capped, to create shadow and visual interest. Side walls on vehicular bridges should terminate in piers with caps.



ELEVATION  
DETAIL

*FIGURE: Detail of baseline concrete pattern for bridges*

Where the faces of the bridge are publicly visible from up or down channel, enhancement to the typical concrete treatment should be considered. The area for enhancement would typically be the facade beneath the deck level. Enhancement should also be considered along the inside walls of the bridge, which are highly visible to pedestrians and drivers. A bridge abutment may also potentially provide a large "canvas" for embellished treatments. Enhancements might include color, texture, or inlay patterns, as discussed in the section "Walls and Structures." The enhanced elements should transition smoothly to the baseline pattern, to integrate into the overall vocabulary of creekside features.

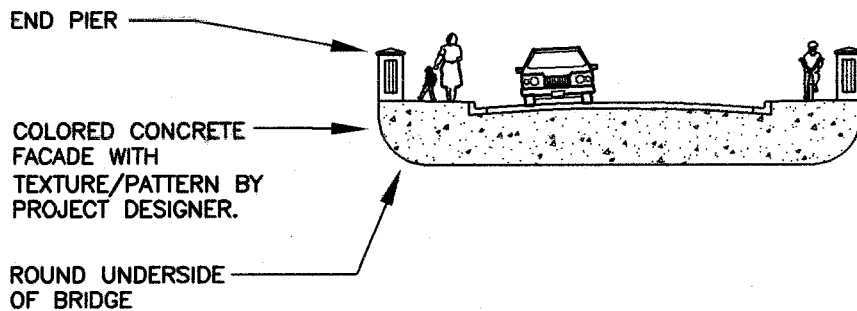


FIGURE: Elevation of street approach

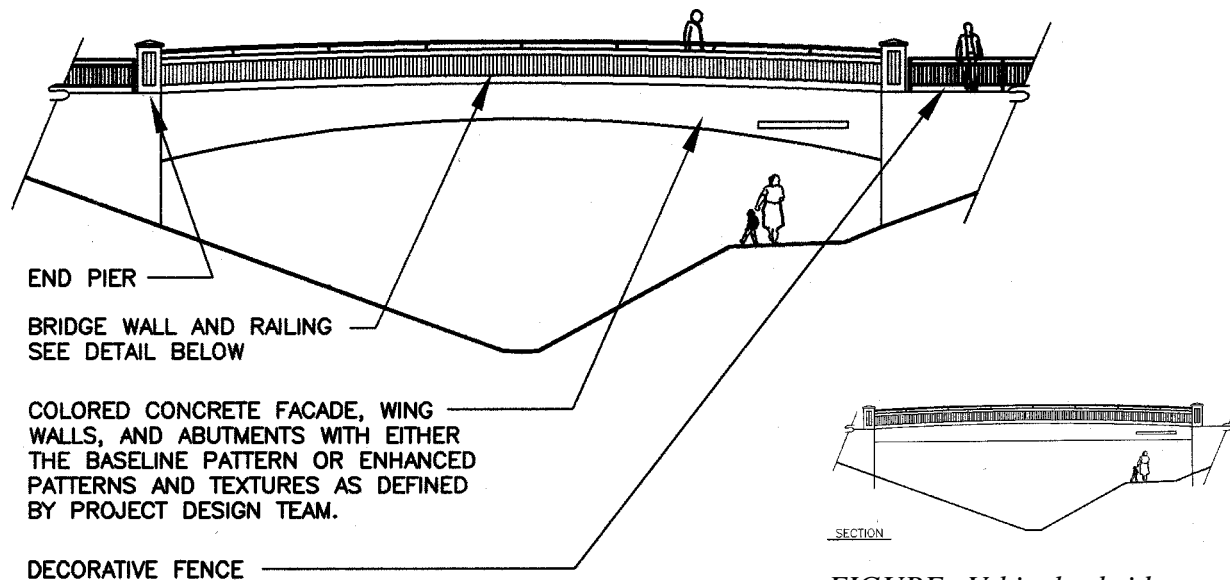


FIGURE: Arched vehicular bridge

FIGURE: Vehicular bridge option with flat bottom facade

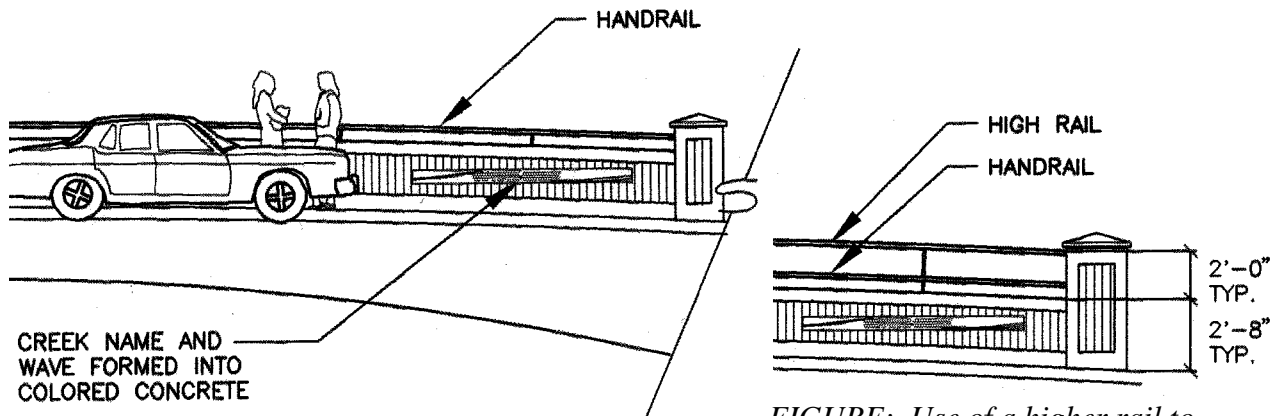
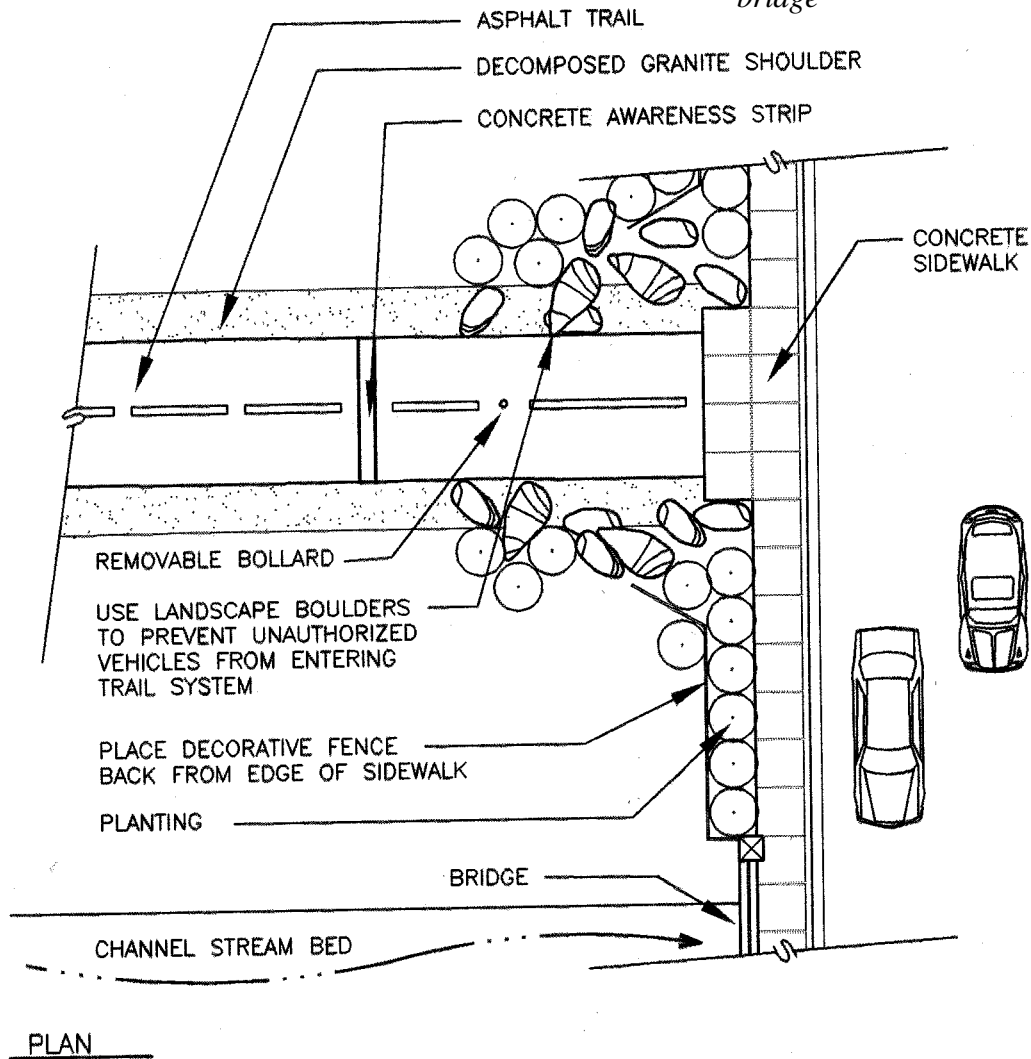


FIGURE: On-deck detailing

FIGURE: Use of a higher rail to discourage trash dumping from bridge



PLAN

FIGURE: Plan of conditions where trail meets bridge

Vehicular bridges should incorporate railings wherever there is the possibility of pedestrian access. See “Fences, Access Control and Safety Barriers” section, for railing detail. In some locations, trash dumping from bridges has become a recurring problem. In these areas the design team may want to consider using an additional higher railing, as shown, to discourage dumping, especially of larger items. Decorative fencing should extend beyond the piers, set back from the sidewalk or trail, in order to prevent pedestrians from taking short cuts down the channel bank and to discourage dumping.

Where trails pass under vehicular bridges, adjacent planting should be kept low so as not to interfere with visibility. The name of the street crossing should be formed into the facade where the trail approaches the underpass. Typical layouts for trail underpasses are found in the *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines* (Appendix E).

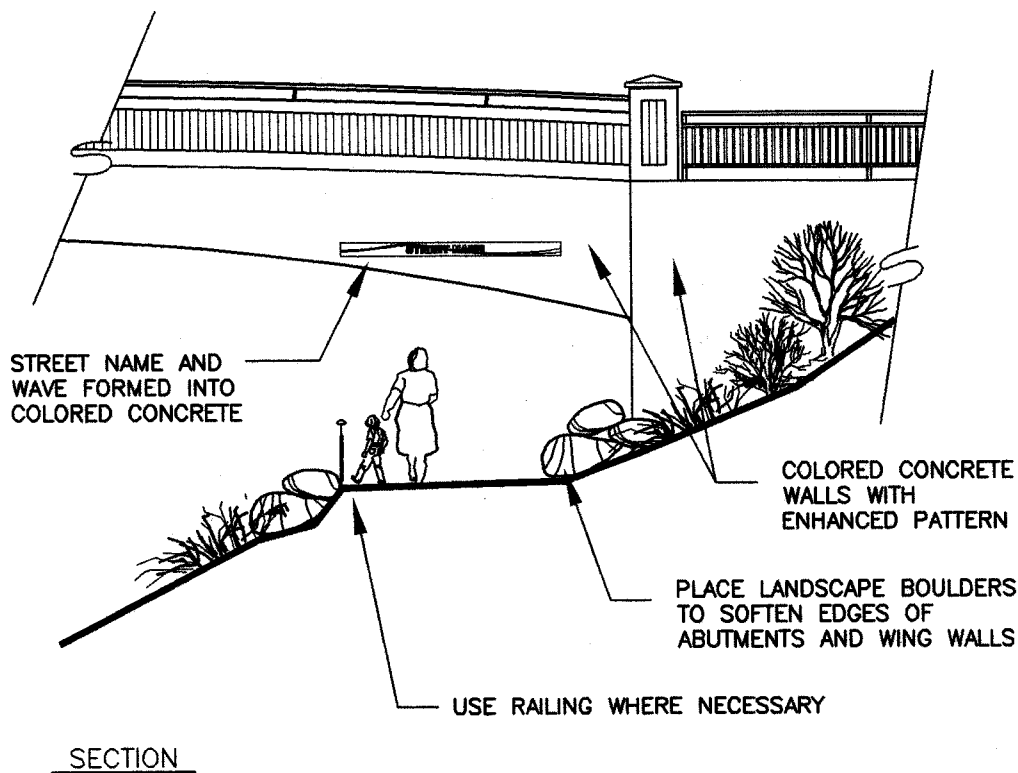
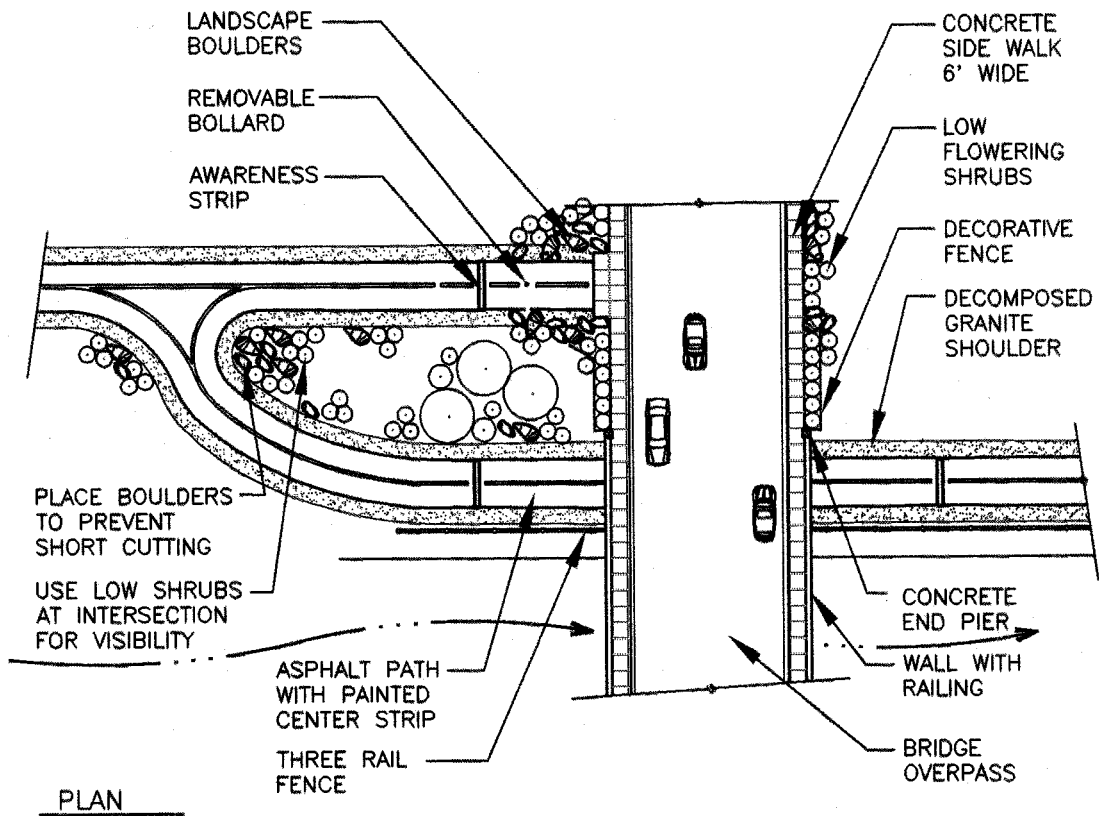


FIGURE: Typical bridge under pass



*FIGURE: Layout for typical vehicular bridge crossing with creekside trail underpass*



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## Planting

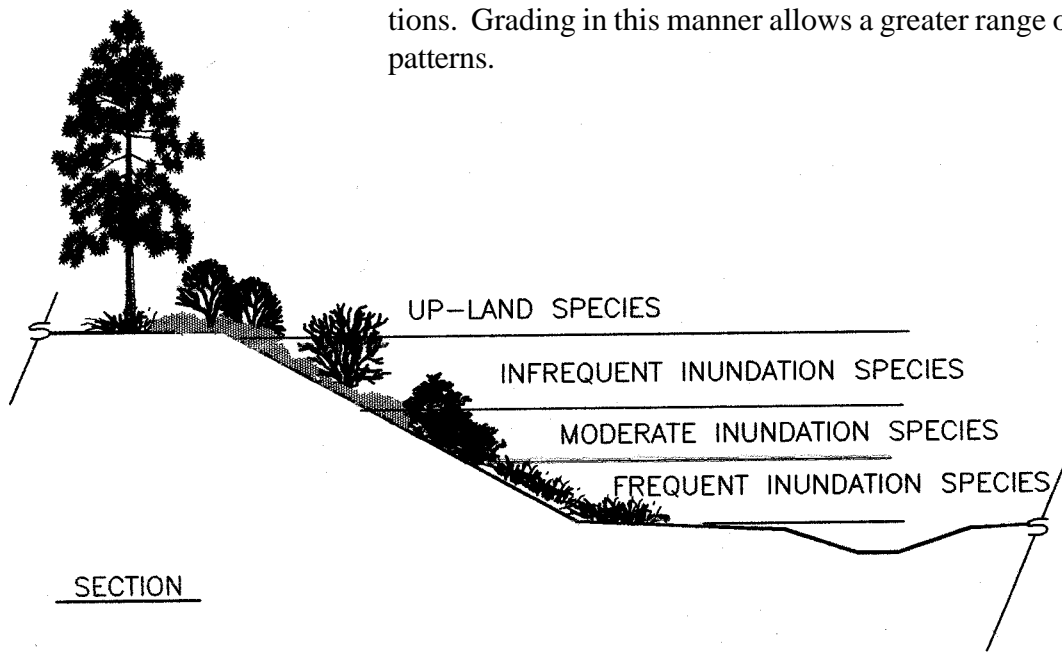
- **GOALS:** Use planting to enhance the trail experience, improve the natural values, to provide shade and visual relief, and to screen undesirable views and buffer conflicting uses. Increase aesthetic value while maintaining habitat value of creek channels, and minimize erosion through use of native and compatible planting. Provide for safety and security in all planting design.

### ***General Considerations***

Generally, projects on SCVWD lands in the Coyote Watershed should emphasize the use of native plants. In many cases, planting will be part of a mitigation or habitat restoration project. These projects are governed by specific guidelines and requirement of various agencies, such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service or California Department of Fish and Game. In these projects, biological concerns are the overriding consideration and this aesthetic guidelines section may not apply.

In any Coyote Watershed project, biological implications should be carefully considered. It must be recognized that planting practices in non-mitigation areas may have an impact on the vegetation within mitigation or other sensitive areas. Use of a qualified biologist to assess each site is required in most cases. Non-local, showy, native “landscape” species should not be intermingled with native revegetation species on projects where restoration of habitat is the goal. Invasive, non-native species should be avoided in all cases. To assure the availability of locally appropriate native plant stock, careful planning and ordering of plant materials must be done well in advance of the projected planting date. See *Guidelines for Riparian Revegetation Projects in Santa Clara County*, attached as Appendix B.

Wherever possible, creek channels should be planted with locally appropriate native plants. The hydrology and soil types of the creek channels will dictate the range of plant species appropriate at different locations in relation to the low flow level of the creek. Different groupings of riparian plants exist at different elevations above the water line. Locating native riparian plants according to their biological preferences not only assures their health and survival, but results in aesthetically interesting plant groupings. This type of planting may occur on natural channel slopes, or on stabilized slopes. Riprap or gabions may be interplanted with willow pole cuttings, or planting may occur on terraced slopes between low walls. Given the constraints of biological preference of selected plant species, visual variety can be further achieved through creative grading – varying slopes, creating benches at different elevations. Grading in this manner allows a greater range of planting patterns.



*FIGURE: Channel planting zones*

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## ***Layout***

In laying out planting plans, consider the existing conditions of the right of way and of the adjacent uses. Where channels meander or are adjacent to a natural-type park or open space, use naturalistic riparian-type planting. Along trails and at pause points in these areas, shade trees should be provided in informal groupings. Drifts of plantings that are either natives or compatible should comprise the understory.

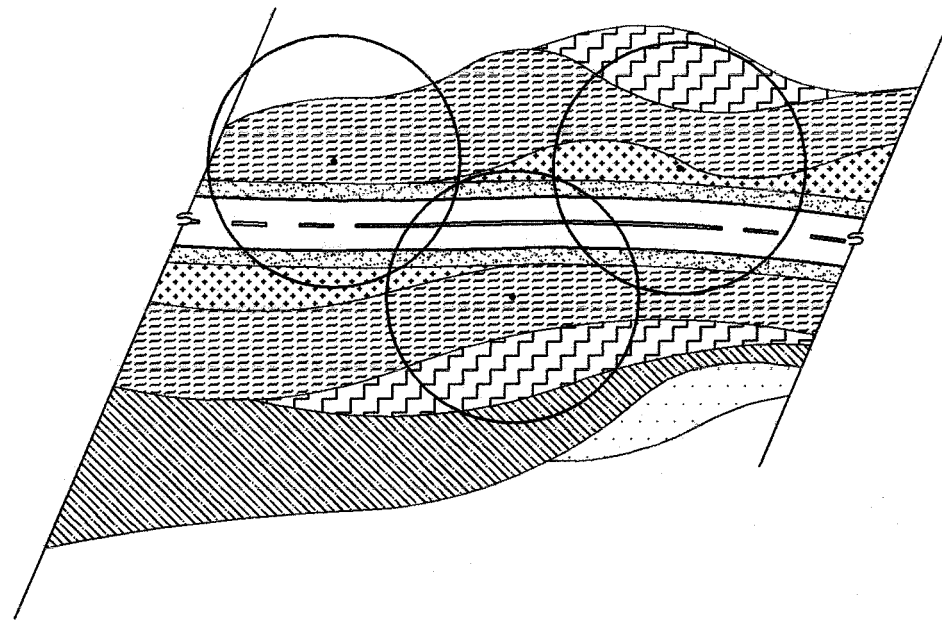
Where channels and right of ways are linear, emphasize the agrarian history of the area by planting trees in hedgerow or orchard grid patterns. In this type of area, trees along trails would occur in a regular pattern, providing rhythm and overall structure. The understory would be tall fescues, or low shrubs and groundcover. There may be special considerations regarding planting and irrigation on levee structures. At levees, the Aesthetic Guidelines are secondary to engineering concerns. For example, irrigation is generally not allowed, and trees and tall shrubs may be prohibited on levees.

Formal planting arrangements may also be appropriate as extensions of more formal parks, plazas, or urban spaces.

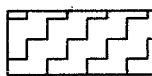
The amount of landscaping to be used at a particular site depends on adjacent development and existing character – and the visibility/accessibility matrix (see Appendix D). Wherever highly visible conditions exist, maximize planting. Include areas of seasonal color and a richly layered palette of plants. Trail entries, pause points, or other areas of interest should be highlighted through the use of special plant palettes that include flowering plants, seasonal color and/or specimen plants. Where public access passes along residential rear yards, use tall shrubs along the edge of right of way to screen for privacy and to buffer the residences.

Provide planting which will soften the appearance of structures and engineered slopes. Break long linear expanses with planting which spills over tops of walls and abutments. Plant shrubs or climbing plants at bases of walls. Use a variety of plant forms and heights to add visual contours to flat engineered slopes.

Layer plant material to create interest, provide rhythm, and avoid monotony. Create groupings and layers of shapes, forms, colors, and textures. Use planting to direct views to features of interest, and to screen undesirable views. Where planting is used to screen, there should be a transition from lower foreground planting to the higher screen planting. Plant sizes and species should be chosen to assure full coverage in a reasonable amount of time.



KEY



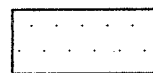
SPECIES MIX 'A'



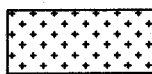
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SPECIES MIX 'B'

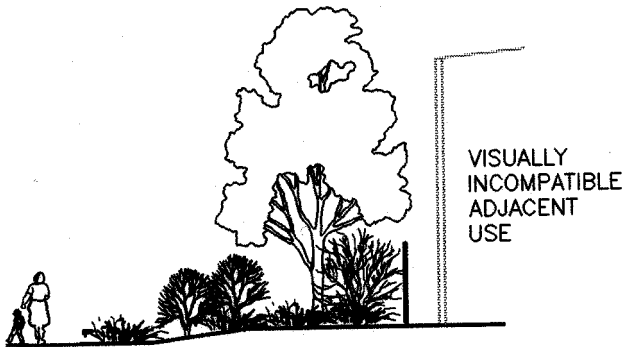


SPECIES MIX 'E'



SPECIES MIX 'C'

FIGURE: *Planting in drifts*



*FIGURE: Screen planting*

Always consider safety, visibility and uniform fire codes in developing planting plans. High dense masses of planting should be avoided near bridges and adjacent to trails, and on large channel terraces or other areas where loitering may be a problem. Clear visual corridors should be maintained along trails and at undercrossings.

For lists of prohibited plants refer to Appendix C.



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## Furnishings and Site Amenities

- **GOAL:** Provide continuity and strengthen SCVWD identity through the use of a designated family of site furnishings.

### ***Benches***

Benches should be provided at pause points along any trails located on SCVWD lands. The SCVWD cast concrete bench, with inset for interpretive graphics, is the standard for use in single bench situations. Other benches may be proposed if appropriate to the context. Refer to district policy regarding any plaques, inscriptions, or signage affixed to benches or other site furnishings.



### ***Trash/recycle receptacles***

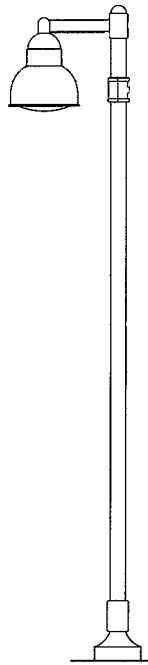
Trash receptacles should be located at pause points, staging areas, and street crossings. The trash can should be metal slat design, black in color, with a cover and removable liner.



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### **Lighting**

Height and spacing of light fixtures should be consistent within visual corridors. Where lights are freestanding, they should be 12' powder coated black steel poles, as shown. Where possible, lighting should be attached to structures, as shown. Lighting should be consistent with district maintenance requirements and should not impede district access.



*FIGURE: Typical lighting fixtures*

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## ***Drinking fountains***

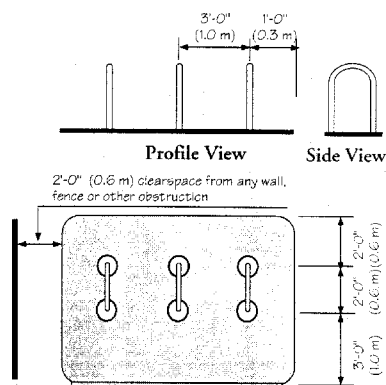
Where drinking fountains are provided, they should be of metal. Typical style is shown below. Drinking fountains shall be universally accessible according to standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



*FIGURE: Drinking fountain*

## ***Bike racks***

Where bike racks are provided, they should be inverted "U" style, fabricated of steel, with a black powder coat finish. See *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines*, excerpted in Appendix E, for bike rack placement.



*FIGURE: Layout of "U" style bike racks*



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## Signage

- **GOAL:** Increase awareness of the Coyote Watershed and SCVWD; provide educational and interpretive information.

### ***Sign Types***

Signage within the watershed should provide clear orientation and safety information, and enhance the user's experience, without being obtrusive. For major trail entrance signs, entrance bollards and use control signs, along with mile marker and direction sign guidelines, refer to the *Uniform Interjurisdictional Trail Design, Use and Management Guidelines*. For property boundary markers, announcing entry onto SCVWD lands, refer to the *SCVWD Engineering Policies & Procedures Manual*. For use of the SCVWD logo, refer to the *SCVWD Graphic Standards Manual*.

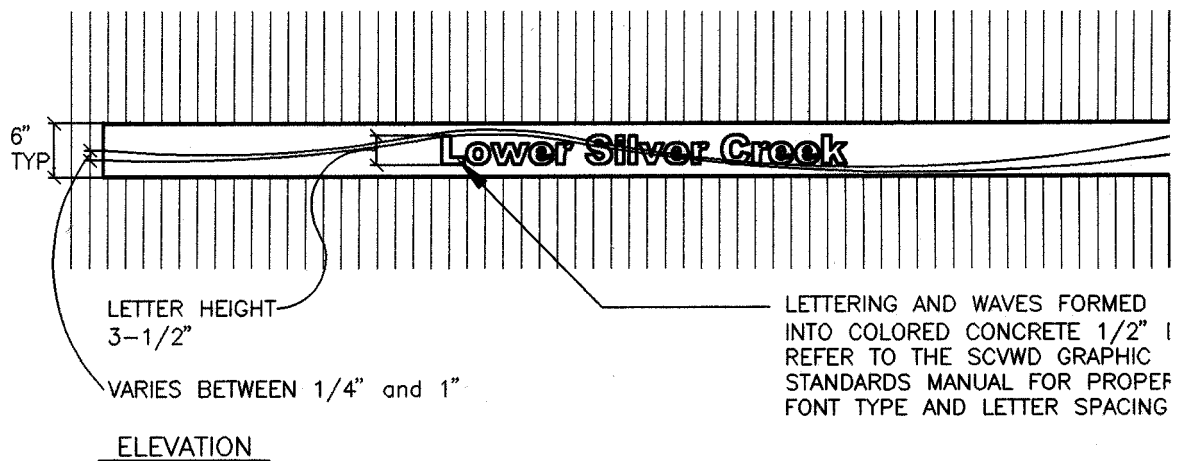
Signage is a valuable tool for public education and awareness of the Coyote Watershed. "Adopt a Creek" signage promotes community stewardship, and should be incorporated where such programs are in effect. At pause points, opportunities may be present for interpretive signage. In these instances, the SCVWD bench insert may be the appropriate location for signage.

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### **Awareness Bands and Bridge Signage**

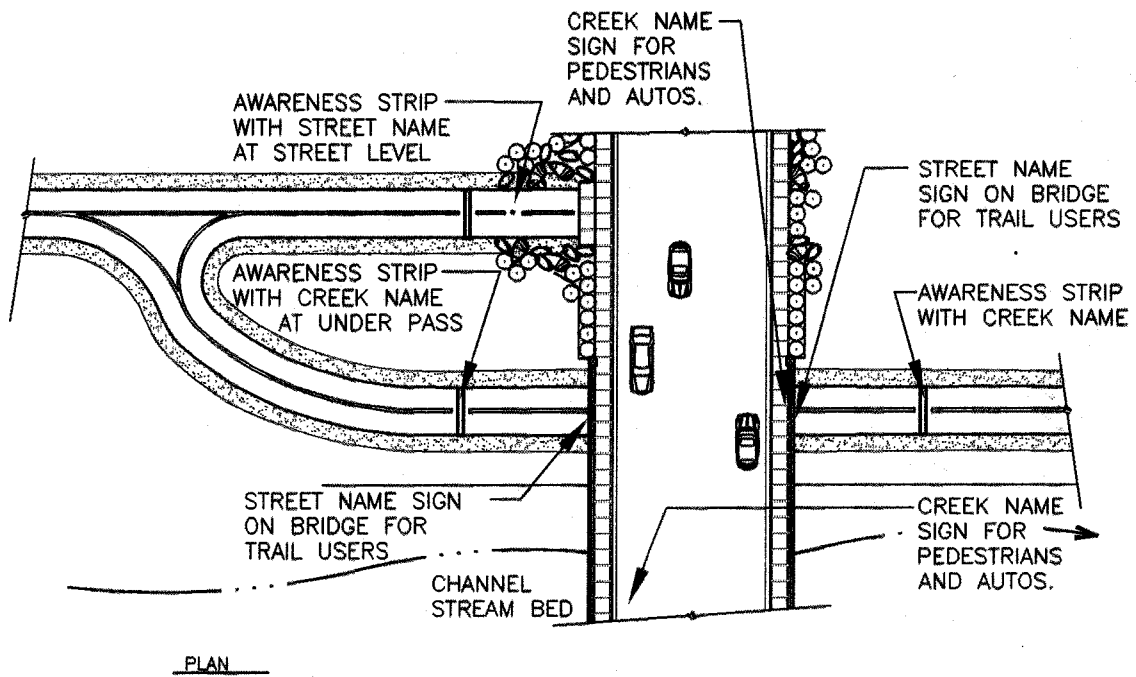
Information orienting users to the watershed should be provided in several ways. Creeks should be identified by signage along the trails and crossings; roadway over crossings should be identified from the trail.

The identifying module in the trail, at pause points and at entries to pedestrian bridges is the “awareness band” described in the "Paving" section. This band of 6” wide toned concrete will have the name of the creek stamped in 3-1/2” high letters in Futura font, backed by a wave pattern, as shown. This module should also be formed into the concrete on vehicular bridges, on the exterior facade to identify the road which is crossing the creek, and on the interior walls to identify the creek that is being crossed.



*FIGURE: Typical trail and street signs formed into concrete and placed on walls and in awareness strips*

Where it is not possible to use stamped concrete to create the identifying module, a similar sign should be fabricated of metal, and affixed to the existing bridge structure. Where a watercourse is highly visible but not accessible, a similar creek identification sign should be placed on the fence.



*FIGURE: Typical layout for formed concrete signage at a bridge overpass*

