

# Upper Penitencia Creek Project

Flood risk reduction, recreation, water supply, and creek habitat benefits

## About the project

The Santa Clara Water District works to reduce the risk of flooding and keep our communities safe. The Upper Penitencia Creek project will provide flood risk reduction to creekside communities in San José and Milpitas.

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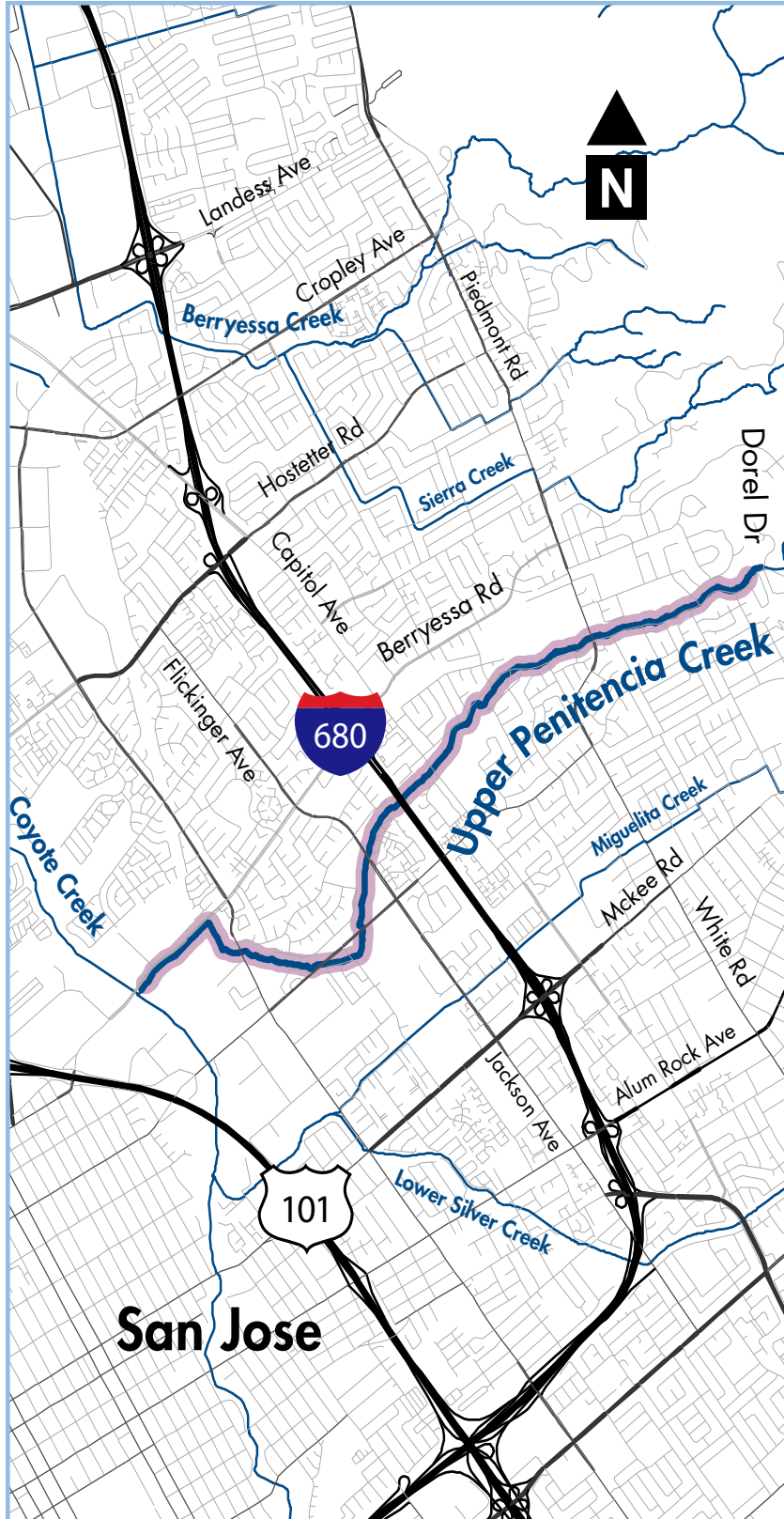
Santa Clara Valley  
Water District





# Upper Penitencia Creek Project

## Flood Risk Management Study



The Upper Penitencia Creek Project extends 4.2 miles through the city of San José, from its confluence with Coyote Creek to Dorel Drive.

## About the project

The Upper Penitencia Creek Project seeks to reduce flood risk to thousands of homes, businesses and public facilities in San José, while maintaining and enhancing recreation, water supply, and creek habitat benefits. The project encompasses approximately 4.2 miles of Upper Penitencia Creek from Dorel Drive to the Coyote Creek confluence.

The Upper Penitencia Creek Project was previously a joint effort with the United States Army Corps of Engineers. This project is no longer within the scope of the Army Corps and is now being led by the Santa Clara Valley Water District in coordination with local stakeholders.

## History of flooding

Collecting intense rainfall from the highlands in Alum Rock Canyon before flowing into the valley, the creek has a long history of flooding from the 1950s through recent years. The 1982 flood caused between \$1 to \$2 million in damages. The February 1998 flood impacted many homes, businesses and local streets causing disruptions to commuters and residents. More recently, in 2017, the creek caused minor flooding when it overflowed its banks near Independence High School in San José.



Flooding at Berryessa Industrial Park, January 1983.



## Project objectives

The primary objective of this project is to provide a 100-year\* flood protection to the impacted communities. The Upper Penitencia Creek Project offers a tremendous opportunity to:

- Reduce flood risk to thousands of homes, business, schools, and parks in San Jose and Milpitas;
- Enhance native riparian and environmental habitat;
- Reduce sediment accumulation and maintenance requirement;
- Improve water quality; and
- Provide increased opportunities for recreation in cooperation with the city of San Jose and Santa Clara County.

## Planning phase

The water district is in the planning phase of the project. The flood risk reduction alternatives may include one or a combination of the following improvements:

- Flood detention basins
- Modifications to floodplains
- Short levees and/or floodwalls
- Channel excavation
- Open and closed bypass channels
- Small-scale floodproofing

## Project timeline and looking ahead

The planning phase is anticipated to be completed by June of 2019, followed by the design phase. If the design phase is approved, a design processes takes approximately three years to complete with various milestones to accomplish before construction can begin. Milestones include:

- Designing selected project alternatives
- Approval of the EIR report
- Obtaining regulatory permitting from various State of California and federal agencies
- Securing the necessary land parcels prior to construction

Regulatory approval can take up to a year and half to obtain. Construction can take two to three years to complete.

Visit [valleywater.org/upper-penitencia-creek](http://valleywater.org/upper-penitencia-creek) to sign up to receive project updates.

## Your investment at work

This project is part of the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection program approved by voters in November 2012. Developed with input from more than 16,000 residents and stakeholders, this 15-year program was created to match the community's needs and values. The program provides \$41.9 million in funding to complete project planning, design and begin construction.

\*A 1% (or 100-year) flood has a one percent chance of occurring in any given year.



## More about us

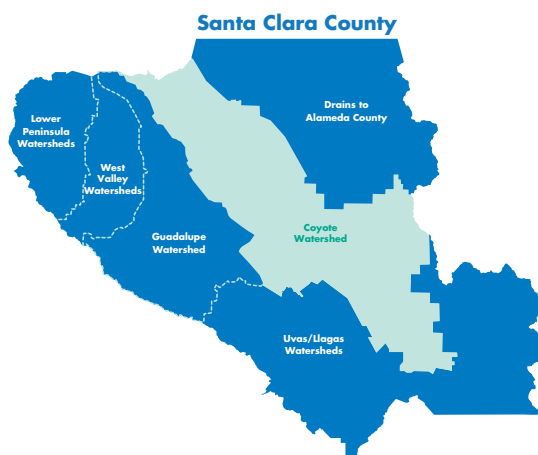
The Santa Clara Valley Water District, with a history dating back to 1929, manages an integrated water resources system that includes the supply of clean, safe water, flood protection and stewardship of streams on behalf of Santa Clara County's 2 million residents. The district effectively manages 10 dams and surface water reservoirs, three water treatment plants, an advanced recycled water purification center, and a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory. We operate nearly 400 acres of groundwater recharge ponds. We provide wholesale water and groundwater management services to local municipalities and private water retailers who deliver drinking water to homes and businesses. The water district is the flood control agency for Santa Clara County, annually preparing creeks for winter rains through levee maintenance, sediment removal, bank repair and vegetation management. We have invested more than \$1 billion in flood protection efforts to protect nearly 100,000 parcels with many more projects planned.



## 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.



Si habla español y tiene preguntas sobre el contenido de este mensaje por favor de comunicarse con José Villarreal al [JVillarreal@valleywater.org](mailto:JVillarreal@valleywater.org) o (408) 630-2879.

Nếu bạn nói tiếng Việt và có thắc mắc về nội dung của thông báo này, xin vui lòng liên hệ với Triet Trinh tại [TTrinh@valleywater.org](mailto:TTrinh@valleywater.org) hoặc (408) 630-3211.

如果你說中文並對上述訊息有疑問, Sarah Young 請聯繫 電郵 [syoung@valleywater.org](mailto:syoung@valleywater.org), 或者電話: (408) 630-2468.



### CONTACT US

For more information, contact us at **(408) 630-2879** or by email **Jose Villarreal** at [JVillarreal@valleywater.org](mailto:JVillarreal@valleywater.org). Or use our **Access Valley Water** customer request and information system at [valleywater.org](http://valleywater.org) to find out the latest information on district projects or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a district staff person.

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