Accomplishments to reduce flood risks along Coyote Creek
Since the flood along Coyote Creek in February 2017, the Valley Water Board of Directors acted on a series of short-term projects to help reduce the risk of flooding along Coyote Creek. The actions varied from immediate levee repairs and blockage removal to advocacy for state and federal funding that would include a flood risk reduction project. In addition, the board formed the Coyote Creek Ad Hoc Committee to help steer efforts to reduce flood risks along the Creek.

Emergency levee repair
Soon after the flood, Valley Water repaired a levee that was damaged when flood waters spilled over the levee and entered the South Bay Mobile Home Park. Crews repaired about 150 linear feet of levee that runs along the back of the community.

Project extension to include vulnerable communities
The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project was extended by 2.9 miles from Interstate 280 to Tully Road including vulnerable areas that were impacted by the flood, such as the Rock Springs neighborhood. The project extension allows Valley Water to use local funding to reduce flood risks in this area of San José.

Flood risk reduction barrier
The Rock Springs, Nordale, and Bevin Brook neighborhoods were heavily affected by the 2017 flood. To help reduce future flood risk, Valley Water designed and constructed a temporary flood barrier. Construction crews installed 40-feet of vinyl sheet pile wall along Rock Springs Park and 500-feet of earthen berm to match the peak water surface elevation seen during the 2017 flood event.
Vegetation removal
The City of San José granted Valley Water access to city-owned property along Coyote Creek for the removal of approximately 15 acres of invasive vegetation to benefit ecological habitat and improve the creek’s capacity to carry storm water. Additionally, Valley Water removed almost 4 acres of thickets of Arundo Donax. It is a giant invasive weed which can act as a barrier, preventing water from moving efficiently through the creek during high water flows. Valley Water used its stream maintenance crews to remove this invasive vegetation on Valley Water and city-owned property.

Valley Water crews perform invasive vegetation management work along Coyote Creek.

Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study
The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Valley Water to develop a feasibility study for reducing flood risks on Coyote Creek. This MOA is an important step toward potentially securing funding from the United States government and state of California for a flood protection project. The feasibility study is the initial step in the USACE process for addressing flood risk reduction. The study establishes the federal interest, engineering feasibility, economic justification and environmental acceptability of a water resource project recommended for congressional authorization and construction.

Emergency Action Plan to reduce risk of flooding
Valley Water’s board of directors and San José City Council approved a Joint Creek Emergency Action Plan (EAP), outlining strategies and the actions for agency coordination during potential flooding along Coyote Creek and other waterways in San José. The action plan guides decision-making, coordination, and communications for all levels of a flood event, beginning with year-round preparations and projects that reduce flood risk.

City and Valley Water staff worked to identify flood risks and hazards, develop pre-incident planning, and establish a response plan, including a set of public warning messages based on flood condition levels as defined by the National Weather Service.

Installation of flood gauges on bridges
As part of the EAP, Valley Water repaired existing flood gauges and installed several new gauges at various bridge locations along Coyote Creek. Flood gauges provide visual information on water height in the creek, which helps Valley Water and City of San José determine necessary responses during a major storm. The gauges also provide the public with real time information about flood levels in the creek.

Visible stream gauges were placed at various locations along Coyote Creek to provide real time information on water levels.