About the project

The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project will reduce the risk of flooding from the creek, thereby making our communities safer while preserving and enhancing the creek’s physical and biological features. The primary objective of the project is to reduce the risk of flooding from events up to the level of the February 2017 flood.
Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project

About the Project

The primary goal of the project is to reduce the risk of flooding to homes, schools, businesses, and highways from a flood event equivalent to the one experienced in February of 2017. The Coyote Creek Watershed consists of a 322 square mile area with six major tributary creeks and is the largest watershed in the county. It 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.

The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project is located in the central section of the Coyote Watershed on the mid-section of Coyote Creek. The project reach extends approximately nine miles between Montague Expressway and Tully Road, all within the city limits of San José.

Flood risk reduction objectives

Coyote Creek is an active riparian corridor serving as habitat for wildlife. The project will protect and enhance that corridor. Wherever feasible, the use of non-structural and/or minimal hardscape features will be included for creek improvements. Other project objectives include:

- Enhance and restore stream habitat.
- Improve water quality within the project limits.
- Minimize the need for future operations and maintenance activities to create a self-sustaining natural system.

Concurrent planning studies and timeline

Urban growth has drastically reduced and altered the natural habitat surrounding Coyote Creek. The riparian corridor has become narrow and discontinuous because of adjacent land use. Creek ownership varies from public entities to private owners, creating challenges for consistent and comprehensive maintenance. Non-native and invasive plants have also decreased the value of riparian habitat for native wildlife along the creek. To fully understand Coyote Creek and implement the best possible solutions, Valley Water is developing a Coyote Creek Flood Protection Planning Study. The planning study will identify various alternatives, which are options for projects to provide the best possible solution for reducing flood risk. The study will also describe existing site conditions and facilities, identify potential challenges within the project area, and define project goals, opportunities and constraints for building the project. The planning study will be followed by project design, environmental review, and permitting. Construction of the selected project is tentatively planned to begin in 2022.

The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project Timeline

![Diagram of Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project Timeline]

The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project extends nine miles from downstream at Montague Expressway to upstream at Tully Road.
History of flooding

Flooding has occurred repeatedly within the Coyote Creek Watershed, including along portions of Coyote Creek in:

- 1852
- 1862
- 1911
- 1917
- 1932
- 1958
- 1969
- 1982
- 1983
- 1997
- 1998
- 2017

The largest flow recorded on Coyote Creek was approximately 25,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) in 1911, prior to construction of the current two water supply reservoirs in the upper watershed. The worst flooding in the project reach since the 1950 construction of Anderson Dam occurred in February 2017. Coyote Creek overtopped its banks at several locations between Montague Expressway and Tully Road. Businesses and hundreds of homes were inundated by creek waters – some by up to six feet of water. Highway 101 near Watson Park and various local streets were closed due to flooding, and thousands of residents were evacuated and sheltered.

Soon after the 2017 flood, Valley Water acted on a series of immediate flood risk reduction efforts. The largest of these efforts was the construction of a flood barrier and levee in the Rock Springs, Nordale, and Bevin Brook neighborhoods.

Your vote at work

The Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project was originally funded by the countywide Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Plan parcel tax passed by voters in November 2000. In November 2012, the project was transitioned to the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program. The 15-year program makes it possible to protect homes, schools and businesses from flooding, improve the health of creek and bay ecosystems, while creating trails and parks for recreational enjoyment. The Valley Water Board of Directors will make project decisions after the completion of the project’s planning phase, currently scheduled for the spring of 2020. Public meetings will be held throughout the planning phase to receive feedback on the potential alternatives to reduce flood risks.

Vinyl sheetpile wall installed behind Nordale and Rock Springs neighborhoods.

A type of flood barrier known as a berm was installed at Rock Springs Park to help reduce future flood risks.
More about us

Valley Water, 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 nearly 2 million residents. Valley Water 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. Valley Water is the flood protection 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 live you’re in a watershed, the area of land that drains to 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 habitats for fish and wildlife.

3 Ways to get project updates

1. Visit valleywater.org/coyote-creek

2. Use Access Valley Water (https://delivr.com/2yulk), Valley Water’s customer request and information system, to request project information or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a Valley Water staff person.

3. Sign up to receive project updates via email using the QR code below.

We speak your language

Si habla español y tiene preguntas sobre el contenido de este mensaje por favor de comunicarse con José Villarreal al 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 Ngọc Nguyễn tại NNgyen@ValleyWater.org hoặc (408) 630-3211.

如果你說中文並對上述訊息有疑問, 請聯繫 Jane Zhou, 電郵JZhou@valleywater.org, 或者電話:(408) 630-2631.

CONTACT US

For more information, contact Afshin Rouhani at (408) 630-2616 or by email at arouhani@valleywater.org. Or use our Access Valley Water customer request and information system at valleywater.org to find out the latest information on Valley Water projects or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a Valley Water staff person.

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