

What is the Native Plant Revegetation Program?

Valley Water promotes the ecological wellbeing of the county’s watersheds through its Native Plant Revegetation Program. Native plant communities provide habitat for wildlife, prevent erosion, and enhance the aesthetic appeal of riparian areas.

The Native Plant Revegetation Program was developed to enhance Valley Water lands that currently contain little native vegetation. Project sites are cleared of invasive species and revegetated with native plants that promote ecological diversity and stability.

Which native species are planted?



Top row: coast live oak, toyon, coyotebrush
Bottom row: California aster, mugwort, goldenrod

The program plant list includes over 70 species that are native to Santa Clara County. Plants are chosen based on suitability for specific site conditions, and planting plans are developed with the requirements of each species in mind. These are some of the most commonly planted native species:

Trees	Shrubs & Vines	Herbs & Grasses
Box elder, buckeye, coast live oak, cottonwood, elderberry, sycamore, valley oak, willows	CA blackberry, CA rose, coffeeberry, coyotebrush, holly leaf cherry, mulefat, toyon, sagebrush, snowberry	Blue wildrye, Buckwheat, CA aster, CA brome, goldenrod, marsh baccharis, mugwort, purple needlegrass, rushes, yarrow



Valley Water staff mulching around new plantings to retain soil moisture.

How are revegetation sites selected?

Revegetation sites are chosen based on habitat value, available planting space, suitable soil and water conditions, and accessibility for site maintenance. In addition, sites treated under the Invasive Plant Management Program can become revegetation sites after invasive plants have been eradicated. Sites vary in size and existing vegetation, but typically include both riparian and upland areas. Each watershed is home to several revegetation sites.

By 2025, Valley Water will have planted over 700 acres of native vegetation in Santa Clara County.

Revegetation activities

Site preparation may include minor grading, topsoil preparation, and incorporation of soil amendments. Next, basins are flagged and excavated for planting and irrigation is laid out. Cages may be installed to prevent herbivore damage to young plants.

Planting occurs in winter through mid-spring to take advantage of water availability. Once planted, revegetation sites are regularly weeded and watered by Valley Water crews to ensure plant establishment. Empty basins are replanted within the first year, and sites are formally monitored for species composition, percent survival, and percent cover every year for five years.

Equipment on a revegetation site can include augers, trenchers, hydroseeders, backpack sprayers, walk-behind mowers, and water trucks.



Native plant revegetation in progress.

Ecological benefits of the Native Plant Revegetation Program

Native plants are the foundation for healthy, resilient ecosystems. Local wildlife, including sensitive species such as the salt marsh harvest mouse and dusky-footed woodrat, rely upon native plants for shelter and food. In preventing erosion and improving soil health, native plants provide water quality benefits to aquatic species as well.

Revegetation sites also benefit human neighbors. Established native plant communities resist invasion by weeds, tolerate drought, and produce little fuel for fires.

Preventing the spread of Sudden Oak Death and other pathogens

Sudden Oak Death has spread in Santa Clara County due in part to contaminated restoration plantings. Valley Water takes the following precautions to prevent spreading *Phytophthora* organisms to revegetation sites:


- All container plants used in revegetation projects are sourced from nurseries that comply with the Guidelines to Minimize Phytophthora Pathogens in Restoration Nurseries (Working Group for Phytophthoras in Native Habitats, 2016).
- Revegetation projects may also utilize seeds, plugs and/or cuttings. Plant propagules are taken from sites within the same watershed to preserve local population genetics and prevent the introduction of new pathogens.




Newly planted site on Guadalupe River.



Guadalupe River site - six months after planting.





Get more tips at watersavings.org

VOW to garden with water-wise plants.



CONTACT US

For more information, contact **Jocelyn Torralba** at (408)630-3863 or visit our website at 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 Valley Water projects or to submit questions, complaints or compliments directly to a district staff person.

Follow us on:





[/valleywater](https://www.facebook.com/valleywater) [/valleywater](https://twitter.com/valleywater)




To get eNews, drop an email to: