

Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Master Plan



The Master Plan will address a variety of needs

What is the Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Master Plan?

The Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Master Plan guides the strategic investment of public funds in Santa Clara County in support of the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Program. The water district is now updating the current plan to extend the horizon another 25 years.

What is the Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Program?

The Santa Clara Valley Water District's mission is a healthy, safe, and enhanced quality of living in Santa Clara County through watershed stewardship and comprehensive management of water resources in a practical, cost-effective, and environmentally sensitive manner for current and future generations. The Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Program primarily implements the watershed stewardship portions of the mission, related to protecting Santa Clara County from floods and storm waters and ensuring healthy creeks, bays and watersheds.

What is the project schedule?

The Master Plan is based on an aggressive schedule aimed at completing the planning, analysis, data collection, technical evaluation, funding analysis, report writing, and stakeholder engagement and outreach in a 16-month period. Work on the Master Plan began in January 2010 and is scheduled to be completed in May 2011.

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The program includes the following components:

- Natural flood protection
- Reduced potential for flood damages
- Healthy creek and bay ecosystems
- Clean, safe water in creeks and bays
- Trails, open space and water resources management

In the last 30 years, the program has removed nearly 100,000 properties from flood-prone areas. Other accomplishments since 2001 include:

- Removal of 371,292 cubic yards of sediment from creeks to reduce flood risk.
- Repair of over 7.5 miles of eroded creek banks.
- Restoration of 59.19 acres of riparian habitat.
- Creation of 299 acres of freshwater and tidal wetlands.
- Creation of 54.23 miles of new trails.
- Removal of 41,651 cubic yards of trash from creeks.

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The table below shows planned milestones and timing for the Master Plan’s development:

2010-2011 Planning Schedule	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Identify goals and objectives related to the Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Program.																	
Document the existing program over a 25-year planning horizon to determine resulting levels of service.																	
Conduct first round of stakeholder engagement meetings.																	
Develop needs and opportunities.																	
Conduct the second round of stakeholder engagement meetings.																	
Develop draft proposed program.																	
Conduct a third round of stakeholder engagement meetings.																	
Complete the Master Plan Report.																	

Why do a Master Plan now?

The existing Flood Protection and Stream Stewardship Plan was last updated in 2000, as part of the voter-approved Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection special parcel tax, which provided significant funding to implement the program. The plan’s funding structure has a built-in sunset date of 2016. The sunset allows for evaluation of program effectiveness, re-assessment of community needs, and the addition of new projects for the future. Evaluation and re-assessment of the program is now due.

The Master Plan will allow the water district to strategically build upon the achievements funded by the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection parcel tax, which sunsets in 2016. The Master Plan will also verify and incorporate community values while reflecting changing conditions in economic, technical, environmental, and regulatory arenas.

Other factors driving the development of the Master Plan include the need to align program activities with recently updated Board policy and the need to align and coordinate planning efforts with other internal initiatives in support of an integrated district-wide planning approach.

Who will be involved?

All the work associated with the development of the Master Plan will be completed by water district staff. The project includes a stakeholder engagement component to achieve sufficient representation and engagement of various interests to facilitate the development of a Master Plan that captures stakeholder support and buy-in.

The three rounds of stakeholder engagement will include meetings with the water district board’s Environmental Advisory Committee, the four Flood Control and Watershed Advisory committees, as well as separate community meetings in North and South County. Other stakeholder meetings include chambers of commerce, professional organizations, and interested community groups.

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