



## San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority

### SFCJPA Fall 2022 Newsletter

*Mitigating Flood Risks. Protecting Shared Natural Treasures.*

## SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – 2022 UPDATE RELEASED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The SFCJPA's Comprehensive Plan describes our purpose and projects in a watershed context. This evolving document is updated each year in response to new information and changing conditions in the San Francisquito Creek watershed and floodplain.

The 2022 Draft Comprehensive Plan Update has been posted on the [SFCJPA's website](#). There is a 'clean' version and a version showing proposed changes in redline. This year's update incorporates known existing data about the physical characteristics of the watershed and floodplain.

Please submit comments to Tess Byler at [tbyler@sfcjpa.org](mailto:tbyler@sfcjpa.org) by October 28, 2022.

### CREEK CLEANUP

The annual multi-agency maintenance walk, to identify items such as downed trees and other large debris in the channel that could obstruct flows, occurred

on September 13 and 14. Although there were areas of trash and debris, this was no more than has been typical. Locations were noted and plans are in place to address what was found before anticipated winter rains.

On Saturday September 17, Menlo Park and Grassroots Ecology held a citizen creek cleanup. 88 volunteers were present and removed an estimated 2300 pounds of trash from the creek.



Beaver swimming near the mouth of Matadero Creek, September 2022. Photograph courtesy of Bill Leikam, Urban Wildlife Research Project.

## **Beaver Re-Colonizing South Bay Watershed**

**by Guest Contributor, Rick Lanman, MD. Institute of Historical Ecology**

Last spring, Bill Leikam, known as the “Fox Guy” and founder of the Urban Wildlife Research Project, documented a beaver in Matadero Creek area in the Palo Alto Flood Basin (see the associated photograph). The [Matadero Creek Watershed](#) is located adjacent to the San Francisquito Creek Watershed.

Once thought to be non-native to our region, in 2013 the team at the Institute of Historical Ecology published the first physical proof that beaver were native to San Francisco Bay tributaries and other California coastal watersheds.<sup>[1]</sup>

Beaver dams are not a threat to flooding as our quick-rising winter storm flows wash them out. The beaver ride out the storms safely inside their tunnels in the stream banks. Beaver dams are not a barrier to spawning steelhead trout or Chinook salmon, as adult and juvenile salmonids easily go over or through

them. Beaver ponds serve as “insect cafeterias” for young salmonids and have been shown to increase smolt survival by 80-fold.[2] Thought to be solitary, the Matadero Creek beaver that arrived last spring now is a pair of beavers. Bill Leikam’s trail cam picked up the pair the evening of September 21! Whether they are a mated pair remains an open question. If we see kits next spring, then we’ll know the answer. Meanwhile, the South Bay’s expanding beaver population is now just one step away from the next watershed to the north, San Francisquito Creek.

[1]. Pollock, M. M., G. R. Press, T. J. Beechie. 2004. The importance of beaver ponds to coho salmon production in the Stillaguamish River Basin, Washington, USA. *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* 24:749-760.

[2]. Lanman, CW, et al. 2013. The historical range of beaver (*Castor canadensis*) in coastal California: an updated review of the evidence. *California Fish and Game Journal* 99(4):193-221.



Trailcam photograph of beaver pair. Matadero Creek. Courtesy of Bill Leikam.

## Project Updates



## Reach 2

Top-of-Bank structures. Downstream from the Newell Road bridge, the Creek banks are topped on both sides by concrete structures. These are at or are nearing the end of their useful life and are being evaluated for repair or replacement. This component of the Reach 2 flood risk reduction work will be reviewed in a Supplemental EIR soon.

Our colleagues at Valley Water have been conducting detailed design analyses on creek bank reinforcement options for some of the widening sites. The options include sheet-pile walls supported by pilings, soil nail walls, soldier pile walls, tie-back walls, or combinations of these. The deep channel and narrow work areas contribute to the challenge of finding the right solution. Factors being taken into consideration are community safety, seismic and hydraulic performance, durability, potential habitat impacts, constructability, and cost.



## SAFER Bay

The SFCJPA initiated the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process with the release of a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for an Environmental Impact



Report (EIR). The NOP provided an overview of the scope and nature of the SAFER Bay project and invited comments from stakeholders through June 25, 2022. All comments received to date were compiled and posted on the SAFER Bay project webpage ([link](#)). A NOP Scoping Report is in progress and will be posted to our website in October.

## **SEEKING PARTICIPANTS – SAFER Bay Citizen's Advisory Group**

Participation is still open on the Citizen's Advisory Group. Please let us or our partners at Nuestra Casa (Maricela Garcia at [mgarcia@nuestracasa.org](mailto:mgarcia@nuestracasa.org) or Climate Resilient Communities (Cade Cannedy at [cade.cannedy@crc.acterra.org](mailto:cade.cannedy@crc.acterra.org) know if you are interested in providing your input. The group will meet quarterly. Sub-committees may meet more frequently, if needed.

## **Upcoming Board Meetings**

### **Regular board meetings for the remainder of the year are scheduled for:**

Thursday October 27, at 3:30pm

Thursday November 17 at 3:30pm

Thursday December 15, at 3:30pm

## **Our Offices have Moved!**

### **Our new address is:**

750 Menlo Ave. Suite 250

Menlo Park, CA 94025

### **Our new phone numbers are:**

Main Office Number: [\(650\) 643-1450](tel:(650)643-1450)

Margaret Bruce, Executive Director [\(650\) 643-1451](tel:(650)643-1451)

Miyko Harris-Parker, Administration & Finance Manager/Clerk of the Board [\(650\) 643-1452](tel:(650)643-1452)

Kevin Murray, Sr. Project Manager [\(650\) 643-1453](tel:(650)643-1453)

Tess Byler, Sr. Project Manager [\(650\) 643-1454](tel:(650)643-1454)

We have included you in our distribution because you have participated in one or more of our community meetings, your organization or community members may be impacted by the work of the SFCJPA, or you are directly involved in the SFCJPA's projects.

We do not share your contact information with anyone!

Please feel welcome to forward to anyone we may have missed.

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## San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority

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