



Board of Directors: San Mateo County Flood Control District • East Palo Alto • Menlo Park • Palo Alto • Santa Clara Valley Water District
Associate Members: Stanford University • San Francisquito Watershed Council

Seasons Greetings and best wishes for a bright new year!

As we turn the corner on the calendar year and reflect on where we've been, we here at the JPA would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to all of you for your tremendous support and commitment. It is the exceptional relationships that have been formed that make the beginning of this new year special. This issue of the CAN describes the many exciting things underway. An exciting personal note for staff occurred earlier this month with the birth of a first child for Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Kloak. Little Mariana arrived on December 10th and the new family is doing very well! From the staff of the Joint Powers Authority, a very warm happy holidays to you and yours...and a peaceful new year.

Creek Speak from the Director

“A Creek is a joining seam in the fabric of neighboring communities”.

A few months back a commentary was written in the *Palo Alto Weekly* on the subject of neighboring communities having disputes regarding planning, transportation and building issues. In this article the creek was referred to, in a metaphorical manner, as a 'dividing line' of these communities.

Although historically this has been an expression to characterize our creeks and rivers across the nation, the tide is changing with regards to these precious pieces of natural resources in our urban midst. Creeks and rivers are being recognized for their contribution to the health and interconnectedness of our communities.

As a community fortunate enough to still have a creek that sustains a unique and dynamic quality of life here, an opportunity exists to harness the recognized value of the creek, this common seam, and use it to strengthen the fabric of our adjoining communities. Any 'divisiveness' that occupies views on matters common to the community can be overcome when dealing with creek issues, if focus is placed on preserving the benefits it provides and managing it as a regional natural resource.

As it stands, the established political and jurisdictional boundary structure was not designed to recognize or respect the margins of a natural system. But waterways are seams that flow through political boundaries, adhering only to the dictates of nature. The Joint Powers Authority provides a way to bridge this difference. Through this structure, we can cross the political boundaries to manage our natural resource together, and in the process strengthen neighboring communities. The creek can be the joining seam...this is my belief, and my sincere hope in what we can do together as we move forward in our efforts.

Partnering with the Army Corps of Engineers (COE)

The concept of partnering with the COE on a comprehensive, watershed wide, flood management and habitat preservation project has been pursued by the JPA since the 1998 flood for two primary reasons. First, the costs for addressing our flooding problems are anticipated to be exorbitant enough to require federal matching funds, and second, it is agreed that we need the expertise of the COE to find solutions. The process of securing a partnership with the COE can be lengthy, complex, and from time to time, difficult to follow. If you have questions, please call our offices for clarification. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about it. The following is a brief recap of what occurred this past year, and current activities regarding the effort:

- In May 2002, the JPA Board approved becoming the “Local Lead Sponsor” to work with the COE for the Reconnaissance Study and the Feasibility Study phases of a General Investigation Project (GI). A GI is often called the ‘long-term project’, and refers to the larger, watershed-wide study.
- Also in May, the Joint Powers Authority sent a letter to the San Francisco (SF) District of the COE requesting a project be started here under the 205, Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). A CAP project is a ‘localized flood control project’ of up to \$7 million dollars that is funded through the SF District office, and does not require Federal authorization of funds.

The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
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- In June, Congresswoman Eshoo advised the JPA that the COE had been given authorization by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to conduct a GI study in this watershed. This is the first step; we still need funding approval at the Federal level to start a GI project.
- In November 2002 the COE SF District Office notified the JPA that a CAP project could be funded through the local district, and indeed we could begin a project with them. *Starting a 205 CAP project does not in any way discontinue the Joint Powers Authority's efforts to engage the COE in a GI study.* It is simply another avenue for beginning work in the watershed with the COE. The next step is for the JPA to define the boundaries or scope of the CAP project for the COE.

To create a scope for the project, discussions took place in a Workgroup last Spring; a meeting between the Public Works directors from each member agency and the JPA Director took place in December; a public presentation and Board meeting will happen on January 9th with the SF District COE (question/answer time will be available); and a final Joint Powers Authority Board meeting on January 23rd. Stakeholder input into the two Board meetings are welcomed and recommended. Please see schedule below for exact times and locations of meetings.

Searsville Lake - Sediment Impact Study

In March of 2002, Stanford University completed a sediment study regarding existing conditions, future conditions assuming no intervention at the dam, and future conditions given certain modifications to the dam. The JPA was asked to render a decision as to whether the study results, which indicate that a 2 inch increase in sediment over 50 years in the creek bed downstream of Pope-Chaucer Street Bridge, as a result of lowering of the dam, is a tolerable increase. The JPA's Executive Director recommended to the Board, that an outside peer review of the study be conducted before they comment. Through the California Coastal Conservancy, the JPA is being offered the services of the firm Moffatt - Nichol Engineers to do such a review. Final approval of the contract is expected in early January 2003; the review will follow four weeks after this authorization.

Levee Project

As part of a \$3 million construction project, the SF Creek JPA headed an effort by all member agencies to restore the levees and floodwalls near Hwy. 101 this year. Construction began in August and will be completed by the end of this month. The project has restored levees downstream of Highway 101 and raised and / or replaced a portion of floodwalls just upstream of Hwy 101. The natural levees, which were built more than 40 years ago, needed restoration due to erosion and settling. The project will mitigate potential flooding while preserving the creek's natural environment. Construction required the participation of all JPA member agencies and many residents. Congratulations and thanks to all!

Sediment Reduction Planning

The Joint Powers Authority submitted and was awarded a grant from the State Regional Water Quality Control Board through Prop 13 last year to conduct a 'Watershed Wide Sediment Reduction Plan' (plan). The plan is being conducted in response to permit requirements issued to both San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties for storm water discharge. The SFCreek is listed by the state as "sediment impaired", which triggered the need for the study to meet storm water discharge permits. Not all requirements of storm-water runoff permits for the two counties are the same, nor are they on the same time schedule. However, this specific requirement was made of both counties. Because the watershed feeding our beloved creek spans both counties, the JPA was asked to oversee this project to aid in bridging this requirement.

It took almost a full year to get a scope of work approved through the state process, and agreed upon by the stakeholders of both counties involved in a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for the project. But the project is finally underway! Northwest Hydraulics, Inc. of Sacramento has been hired as the consultants to conduct the project. Reports will be completed in fall of 2003.

Bank Stabilization

Design work has begun on three sites along the creek to implement ecologically-sensitive, "soft engineering" methods of bank stabilization and erosion control. The designs, which are highly vegetative and rely less on concrete and other hardscape structures, will serve as demonstration projects in the community to showcase these new stabilization



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alternatives. Additional sites are currently being considered for design work to begin this summer.

The JPA is partnering with the California State Coastal Conservancy, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Children's Health Council, Sunset Magazine and creek side homeowners on these and future project sites. Northwest Hydraulic Consultants (NHC) is providing technical analysis and design recommendations.

Corte Madre Creek Planning

The JPA has been awarded funding from the California Department of Water Resource's Urban Streams Program to conduct reconnaissance studies and make preliminary recommendations for bank stabilization and erosion control along Corte Madera Creek above Searsville Dam.

Partnering with the Town of Portola Valley, the JPA will study a six-mile section of Corte Madera to compile a report, modeled after the *Bank Stabilization and Revegetation Master Plan* produced in 2000 for the main stem of San Francisquito Creek.

Ira Bonde Weir Replacement

As a contribution to the work of the Watershed Council's Steelhead Task Force, the JPA has secured grant funding from the California Department of Fish and Game to provide designs for the replacement of an aging grade control weir below the CalTrain crossing and Ira Bonde pedestrian bridge. (Alma Street connection between Palo Alto and Menlo Park).

The goals of the project and resulting new structures are to provide protection for the wall and abutments of the bridges, improve sediment transport through the stretch, and decrease erosion in the areas surrounding the project, while providing a design that is easily passable for migrating adult and smolt steelhead trout. Water Consulting Inc (WCI) has been hired by the JPA, and on December 3 presented conceptual designs for review. The Steelhead Task Force will work with WCI's recommendations and begin to seek funding for construction this spring. Construction could take place in summer, 2004.

Discharge Response Team

In June the JPA initiated a small committee to discuss possible improvements in cross-county communications with regards to the investigation of and response to creek spills. This committee held regular conference calls to strategize

recommendations. In October, the JPA hosted a meeting of all the primary and secondary responders within the watershed, which included representative from local Emergency Dispatch, Fire and Hazardous Materials Teams, Public Works Departments and local and state Water Quality Divisions.

The participants agreed that a one-page reference sheet with cross-county communications recommendations and contact information could be made available to all responders, and would be a simple and effective way to make immediate communications improvements. JPA staff is currently gathering information and developing the reference tool, and will disperse it in January. Special thanks to Phil Bobel (City of Palo Alto), Trish Mulvey (CLEAN South Bay), Jim Johnson (SFWC), and Brett Calhoun (SCVWD) for participating in the committee and providing valuable insight.

CPA Management Recommendations

For the first two years of operation, the city of Palo Alto acted as Fiscal Agent for the JPA. In August 2001, the responsibility was transferred to the agency itself, and as a result the first audits of the agency's finances for the fiscal years ending in 2001 & 2002 were completed and presented at the September 2002 Board meeting.

Along with completing the audits, Mr. Kevin Harper, CPA in a Financial Management Report - made recommendations for future reporting and internal accounting for the agency. Many of the recommendations were implemented immediately; JPA staff will be reporting on implementation process of the remaining recommendations at Board meetings throughout 2003.

Member Agency Reports

The following member agency reports were presented to the Board of Directors at meetings within the last six months. Please contact our offices for more information on any one of these items.

Watershed Council / July:

Project Notification Form - letter of request

Retreat Summary

Santa Clara Valley Water District / November:

Levee Project Update (for all member agencies)

Proposed Water Resources Protection Ordinance

COE liaison to East Palo Alto / November:

Degraded Urban Rivers Pilot Program Proposal

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Exploring other Programs

In an effort to stay informed of river/creek efforts in other watersheds, to keep planning efforts abreast with regulatory changes, and to maximize agency development, JPA staff have attended or participated in the following events / conferences this past year:

- UC Davis Endangered Species Act Conference
- Alameda Creek Alliance Exchange
- San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Creeks Subcommittee
- FishNet 4C Conference
- 2002 State of the Estuary (SF Bay)
- Urban Creeks Council, Bay Area Chapter
- Bay Area Open Space Council Annual Event
- Collaborative Decision Making in Land Use
- American Society of Landscape Architects Annual Convention (San Jose)
- NorthBay Watershed Association – Prop 50

Please contact staff directly for more information on any one of these items.

SFCreek Web connections...

JPA home site:

www.cityofpaloalto.org/JPA

Bank Stabilization and Revegetation Master Plan:

www.menlopark.org/creek/sfcindex/html

Creek level monitor:

www.cityofpaloalto.org/earlywarning/creeklevels.html

USGS INCLUDE Project:

<http://wgsc.wr.usgs.gov/sfcreek>

Santa Clara Valley Water District:

www.valleywater.org

San Francisquito Watershed Council:

www.acterra.org/watershed

Searsville Lake Sediment Impact Report

<http://facilities.stanford.edu/searville>

In addition, staff recommended at the November 2002 Board meeting that these sites be visited as reference to community related processes on other similar projects:

Napa River site:

www.napaflooddistrict.org/brochure.pdf

Truckee River site:

www.migcom.com/truckee/

JPA 2003 Board Meeting Schedule

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>TIME</u>
<i>January 9</i>	Menlo Park	1:30-3:30
Note: This is a special meeting with Army Corps of Engineers.		
<i>January 23</i>	Palo Alto	6 – 8 p.m.
<i>March 20</i>	Menlo Park	6 – 8 p.m.
<i>May 22</i>	East Palo Alto	6 – 8 p.m.
<i>July 24</i>	Palo Alto	6 – 8 p.m.
<i>September 25</i>	Menlo Park	6 – 8 p.m.
<i>November 20</i>	East Palo Alto	6 – 8 p.m.

All meetings are held in City Council Chambers unless otherwise noticed. Please contact our offices for exact addresses.

New Look for JPA Communications

In addition to a new publication timeline, this issue of the *Creek Authority News* introduces a new visual appearance that is part of a family of graphics and design being created for the JPA by graphic artist, Ms. Beverly Catli - Manzano. Also, a year end report was distributed in September, and an agency pamphlet and Creek Issues brochure will be published soon as a part of the new literature.

We hope you like it! Let us know how it works in the new email format. We continue to perfect the the deliverability, so if it doesn't work for you, let us know! With an email list close to 500 members, we're sure it may not work for all of you! But we'll try....



Shot taken by Cynthia November 2002, in SFCreek near San Mateo Drive pedestrian footbridge.

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