

Santa Clara Valley Water District

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Date: October 26, 2012

CUPERTINO — On Oct. 17, the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program presented its 2010 Site Design Award to the Santa Clara Valley Water District and the city of Cupertino for a restoration project on Stevens Creek where it passes through Blackberry Farm Park.

The project was designed to maintain the natural floodplain of the creek, providing protection from flooding to the surrounding neighborhoods while reducing run-off.

The first phase of the Stevens Creek Corridor Restoration Project was completed in 2009. The water district awarded grants totaling \$1.39 million to the City of Cupertino to help restore nearly one half mile of Stevens Creek. In addition to funding support, the water district provided expertise on the design of the project.

Four partial barriers to steelhead migration were removed and creek banks that had been compacted and denuded by years of heavy picnic use were restored with native plants. Stevens Creek has been identified as one of the prime steelhead habitats within Santa Clara County. This particular reach of the creek serves as a steelhead spawning and rearing area.

The project also included the replacement of 3.4 acres of an asphalt parking lot with a permeable surface, reducing runoff into the creek.



Upper parking lot—before



Upper parking lot—after



Lower parking lot—before



Lower parking lot—after creek realignment



Stevens Creek—before



Stevens Creek—after

Phase Two, which is scheduled to be constructed in 2013, will complete riparian restoration in the section of the creek that flows by the Blackberry Farm Golf Course. Worn out concrete-lined channel will be replaced with pool-riffle sequences and fish habitat structures that provide much better habitat. The newly restored creek banks will be planted with native vegetation. This phase also includes the addition of trails and environmental enhancements and will be partially funded by two grants totaling \$850,000 from the water district.

The water districts grant support for this project is funded by the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Program, approved by Santa Clara County voters in 2000.

The Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program is an association of thirteen cities and towns in Santa Clara County, the County of Santa Clara, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District that share a common National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to discharge stormwater to South San Francisco Bay. The mission of the program is to assist in the protection of beneficial uses of receiving waters by preventing pollutants generated from activities in urban service areas from entering runoff to the maximum extent practicable. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System was authorized by the Clean Water Act which just had its 40th anniversary.

SCVURPPP presented the award at a meeting of the American Public Works Association—Silicon Valley Chapter. The project won the 2010 Site Design Award for a public project.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District 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 1.8 million residents. The district effectively manages 10 dams and surface water reservoirs, three water treatment plants, a state-of-the-art water quality laboratory, nearly 400 acres of groundwater recharge ponds and more than 275 miles of streams. We provide wholesale water and groundwater management services to local municipalities and private water retailers who deliver drinking water directly to homes and businesses throughout Santa Clara County.