

SFCJPA Summer 2021 Newsletter

Project Updates

Reach 2 (from Highway 101 to just upstream of the Pope-Chaucer Bridge)

The Reach 2 project entails replacing the Pope-Chaucer Bridge and widening the creek channel to prevent flooding during high rainfall events. The 1998 floods, considered the 'flood of record', caused almost \$30M in damage. Lawsuits were filed against the cities of Palo Alto and Menlo Park by flood-damaged property owners.

The Reach 2 project aims to protect -

~ 800 parcels in Menlo Park

~2100 parcels in Palo Alto

~2900 parcels in East Palo Alto, west of Highway 101.

Parcels located east of Highway 101 are now protected from creek flooding by the completed Reach 1 "Downstream" project.

The design of the Pope-Chaucer Bridge is at approximately 80% Preliminary completion. The SFCJPA is continuing to coordinate with the bridge engineering and design team on finalizing the design details.

Channel widening sites are at approximately the 30 – 50% design stage. We are modeling how high water and sediment in the creek will behave based on different channel widening configurations, including some new potential options. Factors we are considering include necessary channel capacity improvements, constructability, preserving creek-side trees and other habitats, minimizing construction impacts to project neighbors, and reducing the size of the project footprint. However, our overall objective is to protect our communities from flooding.

We continue to develop permit application materials in coordination with regulatory agency staff as we refine design details and are on pace to receive construction permits in September 2022.

If you are interested in a presentation, a tour, or just looking for more information about the project, please see our website at: <https://www.sfcjpa.org/reach-2-upstream-project>



Existing Pope-Chaucer Bridge



Preliminary design of proposed new Pope-Chaucer Bridge

SAFER Bay (Menlo Park and East Palo Alto shorelines)



Map of SAFER Bay Project Area

The overall goal of the Strategy to Advance Flood protection, Ecosystems and Recreation (SAFER) Bay project is to protect residents, businesses and critical infrastructure from tidal flooding and sea level rise using a combination of natural flood protection and engineered structures. The area is part of the San Francisco Estuary Institute’s [Adaptation Atlas](#) San Francisquito Operational Landscape Unit and is being coordinated with other adaptation projects across the 9-county Bay Area.

This early adaptation project extends along the Bay margin from the northern border of the City of Menlo Park at Marsh Road to the southern border of East Palo Alto, where the San Francisquito Creek enters the Bay. The project has been segmented into 9 distinct “reaches” for planning purposes (See image above). The City of East Palo Alto has committed \$5.5M in capital funding to construct the portion of the project in East Palo Alto, as local match for a CalOES Hazard Mitigation Grant Program under FEMA, for up to \$17.2M in funding. The project is currently undergoing Environmental and Historic review by FEMA, with funding potentially awarded by 4th quarter 2022.

We are working with our partner agencies on a coherent technical approach and are engaging community members. We presented project information to the City of East Palo Alto’s Public Works and Transportation Commission on April 21, 2021, and to the San Mateo County League of Woman Voters on April 29, 2021.

We will begin the Environmental Impact Review process for the SAFER Bay project this fall.

The SAFER Bay project and the issue of sea level rise has been featured recently in several local and national media stories:

<https://www.sciencefriday.com/articles/east-palo-alto-rising-seas/>

<https://www.kqed.org/science/1973645/in-their-own-words-east-palo-alto-residents-on-the-coming-rise-in-sea-level>

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11871855/sea-levels-are-rising-in-the-bay-and-east-palo-alto-is-on-the-front-lines>

<https://www.kqed.org/forum/2010101883160/east-palo-alto-faces-rising-seas-displacement-2>

If you are interested in a presentation, a tour, or just looking for more information about the project, please see our website at: <https://www.sfcjpa.org/safer-bay-project>

The SFCJPA is Discontinuing our Automated Flood Warning Alerts

The SFCJPA system is retiring its automated alerts. If you have signed up for SFCJPA flood warning alerts, you will no longer receive them from us.

State-of-the-art emergency alert systems are now in place for residents of San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. **We encourage you to sign up for emergency alerts from these alert systems.**

For San Mateo County sign up at [SMCALERT](#)

For Santa Clara County sign up at [AlertSCC](#)

The SFCJPA will continue to provide background data collection, real time rainfall, and streamflow data that informs local first responders and the SFCJPA's Flood Early Warning System Website.

Questions about the updated Flood Early Warning System or the transition to county alert systems should be directed to jpa@sfcjpa.org.

Changes Coming to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

FEMA is updating its insurance risk rating methodology for the first time in 50 years. The new methodology, called "Risk 2.0" is intended to "...deliver rates that are actuarially sound, equitable, easier to understand and better reflect a property's flood risk", according to the FEMA website <https://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance/work-with-nfip/risk-rating>.

According to FEMA, publication of new rates is anticipated on or about **August 1, 2021**.

Beginning October 1, 2021, new policies will be subject to the new rating methodology.

After April 1, 2022, renewing policies will be subject to the new rating methodology.

Nation-wide, rates for NFIP policy holders are anticipated to decrease by as much as \$89 per month for 23%, stay about the same or increase only slightly for 66%, and increase by \$10 or more per month for 13% of policy holders.

The FEMA website also provides downloadable files with zip code level analyses of rate changes. For example, in the 94303 zip code, where the SFCJPA offices are located, more than 45% of property owners with NFIP policies will see a decrease in their premiums.

Upcoming events of interest

SFCJPA Board Meeting

The next regular meeting of the SFCJPA Board of Directors will be held on June 22, 2021, at 3:30pm via Zoom. Please contact Miyko Harris-Parker at mhparker@sfcjpa.org to be added to the board meeting announcements and materials distribution list.

Home Fire Hardening in Wildland Urban Interface

Dr. Matteo Garbelotto, UC Berkeley

June 16, 7-9pm

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89522090581?pwd=ZU9wWXBnTlg1dzFrdFMvWXJmcCt5QT09>

Phone: +1 669 900 6833

Webinar ID: 895 2209 0581

Passcode: 94022

Join the Open Space Committee of Los Altos Hills for a presentation on home fire hardening and vegetation management in the wildland urban interface (WUI). Fire is a natural and beneficial element in California's ecosystem. Learn how to fire harden your home to reduce risk of damage for homes built in or near wild lands. Los Altos Hills County Fire District Emergency Services Manager & Retired Fire Captain, Denise Gluhan, will also be available to answer your questions.