

## **\$10 million flood protection project along San Jose's Guadalupe River to start in May**

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An 18-month, \$9.7 million flood protection project is set to start in late May along the Guadalupe River in San Jose.

Santa Clara Valley Water District representatives officially broke ground on the project on April 29, and neighbors around W. Virginia Street and the Guadalupe River can expect trucks and other heavy equipment to begin arriving in the next few weeks. The project will close the W. Virginia Street bridge over the river as the bridge is rebuilt, but project leaders are unsure when that work will begin.

Paid for with Measure B bond money that Santa Clara County voters approved in 2000, the project prepares the river for a 100-year flood along "Reach 6," from Interstate 280 to Blossom Hill Road. The Gardner area near the river has flooded several times, most recently in 1998. Water district board member Joe Judge said the project would create several hundred jobs as it continues to the end of 2011.

"It's going to improve flood channel capacity, preserve and enhance existing vegetation, fisheries and wildlife habitat and provide some potential open space and recreational opportunities," Judge said.

The river is expected to be widened 100 feet to the east at the W. Virginia Street bridge, meaning the bridge will be replaced and traffic detoured to other streets. The detours will include Bird and S. Almaden avenues and Willow and Vine streets.

The plan is to reinforce the river banks and protect the area from floods along the full 5.7-mile stretch, and project leaders said the Army Corps of Engineers could do similar work on other stretches of the river if the corps receives federal funding in the coming months.

Katherine Oven, deputy operating officer for the water district, indicated that the construction workers would try not to disrupt the residential neighborhoods on both sides of the river. Truck traffic will take place only between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., she said, but the project's scope is large.

"They're going to be working pretty intensely on it. ... They're removing 200,000 cubic yards of dirt and hauling it away," Oven said.

Depending on the contractor's schedule, work could take place on different stretches of the river on different dates.

For more information on the Upper Guadalupe River Reach 6 project, visit [www.valleywater.org](http://www.valleywater.org) and click on Flood Protection.