

# THE GUADALUPE WATERSHED

Los Gatos Creek is a major tributary of the Guadalupe River system. The creek plays an important role in the Guadalupe Watershed and Santa Clara County's environment as a whole. The Santa Clara Valley Water District maintains the creek for flood protection, provides protection and enhancement of the riparian environment, and provides access to trails and open spaces.

Through a voter approval parcel tax passed in 2000, the Clean, Safe Creeks and Natural Flood Protection Plan was implemented by the Santa Clara Valley Water District to protect homes, schools, and businesses from flooding. The plan also seeks to improve the health of waterways and bay ecosystems and provides access to trails and open spaces. The nearby Guadalupe River is a major focus of these flood protection efforts that span from the San Francisco Bay to Almaden Valley. Some of the most significant improvements can be seen nearby within the Guadalupe River Park in downtown San Jose.

In and along Los Gatos Creek, including within this reach along the former Del Monte Cannery, the water district is helping to protect and restore native aquatic species and their habitat including Steelhead and Rainbow Trout. Concern for natural resources has changed the way flood protection projects and other water district activities are being planned, such as the planting of riparian trees to shade the waterways, the removal of fish passage barriers, and placement of spawning gravel, and the creation of in-stream habitat.

These types of environmental enhancements are being implemented throughout the Guadalupe Watershed and other watersheds within Santa Clara County.

The water district partners with the cities, towns, and county, as well as community and environmental groups to ensure all needs are considered. At the same time, habitat and the environment are protected and improved where necessary.

Originating in the Santa Cruz Mountains, Los Gatos Creek runs from Lexington Reservoir to its confluence with the Guadalupe River in downtown San Jose, just north of West Santa Clara Street. The Los Gatos Creek Trail generally runs along the creek, and travels through the communities of Los Gatos, Campbell and San Jose. The trail system is already enjoyed by many for recreational and commuting purposes. With the future linkage to the Guadalupe River Trail, the Los Gatos Creek Trail system will permit people to travel from Los Gatos to the San Francisco Bay.