

San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority

February 26, 2009 Board Meeting

Agenda Item 11

Informational Items

a) February 15, 2009 storm report

A large storm struck the Bay Area on the weekend of February 14 and 15, 2009, dropping approximately 3.75 inches of rain at the Palo Alto Foothills Park rain gauge during the most intense 24-hour period. This resulted in increased flows in San Francisquito Creek, the greatest of which occurred between 11:00 p.m. and midnight on Sunday, February 15th. While this served to remind everyone of the potential for flooding and the need for action to reduce that threat, the Creek was not close to overtopping.

Although the region experienced significant rainfall over a number of days, soil within the watershed was much dryer than average for this time of year. Most of the initial rainfall soaked into the soils and dry vegetation and did not result in instantaneous surface flows. The maximum flow recorded during this storm was approximately 2,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the USGS gauge on Stanford Golf Course. By comparison, the February 2, 1998 peak flow at this location was 7,200 cfs.

Water did rise in some reaches of the creek, but 2,200 cfs is not enough flow to cause water surface elevations near flood stage. Capacity at the two most watched constriction points, the Pope-Chaucer Bridge and West Bayshore Road, have capacities of approximately 5,500 cfs and 4,500 cfs, respectively. Although storm drain contributions led to flows somewhat higher at these two crossings than what was recorded at the USGS gauge, sonar creek monitors operated by the City of Palo Alto led their staff to conclude that the neighborhood did not come close to flooding.

b) Emergency Preparedness and Communication Meeting follow-up

As a follow-up to the December 10, 2008 Emergency Communication and Preparedness meeting hosted by the JPA, two meetings are now scheduled at the JPA offices with local agencies:

- 1) A meeting on March 18 to address important differences and redundancies in response communication and implementation across jurisdictions. Participants will include those responsible for emergency response planning at each city, town and fire district within the watershed.
- 2) A second meeting on March 19 focused on trying to ensure that all agencies and residents receive notification that contains consistent messages from various emergency agencies, and that notification is not duplicated so that the local telecommunications systems are not overloaded and brought down. The individuals at this meeting will include those responsible for the Emergency Notification System of their city, town or county.