

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, CA
Via Email, sent May 21, 2019

Re: 5/21/19 Agenda Item 13. Approve referral to Administration to report to the Board with options for consideration relating to amending Santa Clara County goals for environmental stewardship for protection of streams and riparian corridors. (Ellenberg) (ID# 96711)

Dear SCCBOS President Simitian and Supervisors,

I am writing as an individual in support of Supervisor Ellenberg's memo that recommends the "referral to Administration to report to the Board with options for consideration relating to amending Santa Clara County goals for environmental stewardship for protection of streams and riparian corridors."

Riparian corridors are important to us here in Santa Clara County:

- They provide habitat for native aquatic, terrestrial, and arboreal wildlife, and also provide safe passage between habitats.
- The corridors provide room for creekside trails to be constructed in an environmentally sensitive manner, providing both recreation and non-motorized transportation.
- And the corridor setbacks provide the space necessary for "streams to be streams", to allow room for floodplains, shifting channels, and bank erosion. Preservation of corridors help keep development away from the streambanks, thereby reducing or eliminating the need in the future for concrete channels or other mitigations to "save" structures that otherwise might have been built in harm's way.

It took over a quarter century for the City of San José to go from the first tentative definition of a riparian corridor setback (in the 1990 Coyote Creek Long-Range Land Utilization Taskforce report), and through a set of "guidelines" in their 1999 "study", until it was recently adopted as city ordinance in the fall of 2016: it's time now for Santa Clara County also to act. While the development pressures are likely to be less in the unincorporated county, the number of streams and creeks in the county to protect is larger, and their habitat quality and recreational potential are higher.

I join others in urging you to support environmental sustainability and recreation by approving this referral.

Thank you!

~Larry Ames

Dr. Lawrence Ames, longtime creek, trail, and park advocate – and member of the 1990 CCLRLUTF.

cc: James Eggers, Katja Irvin, and Dave Poeschel, Sierra Club; Megan Fluke and Alice Kaufman, Green Foothills; Shani Kleinhaus, Audubon Society; Deb Kramer, Keep Coyote Crk Beautiful; Steve Holmes, South Bay Clean Creeks Coalition