

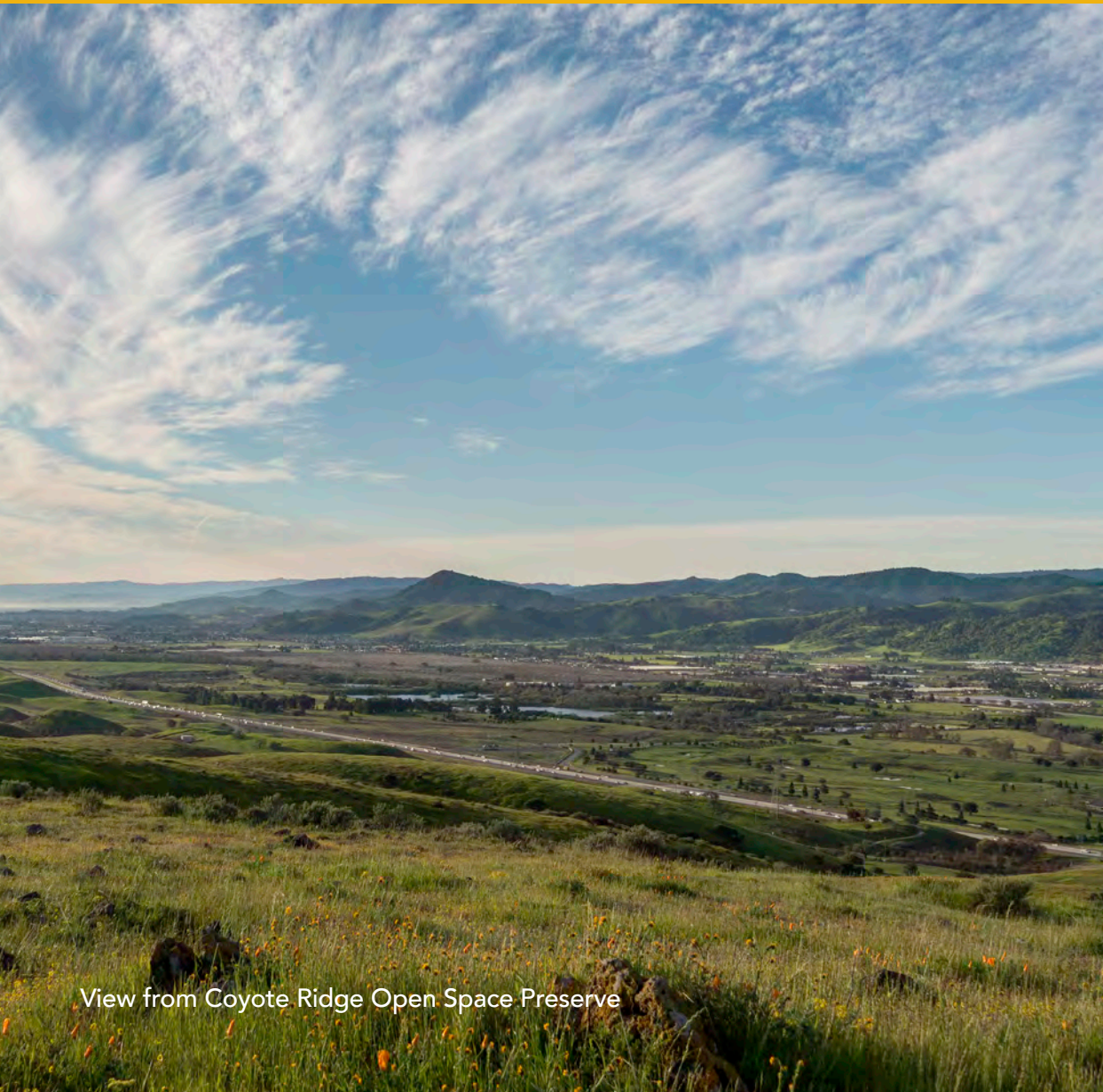
# Coyote Valley: A Case for Conservation



“Coyote Valley represents a rare opportunity to preserve an intact floodplain upstream of a major urban area.

It is the prime example of nature as infrastructure, and its protection is essential for flood risk reduction, wildlife linkages, and resilience to climate change.”

John Laird  
California Secretary for Natural Resources



View from Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve

# Coyote Valley



# The myriad benefits of conservation in Coyote Valley

Strategic investments in conservation, smart land use policies, and green urban design can provide for a sustainable future in Santa Clara County – even in the face of population growth and climate change.

**Nature as infrastructure** means recognizing and protecting the natural ecological processes that provide a multitude of important services that increase our community's resilience to climate change and promote the health and safety of its residents.

Coyote Valley offers unparalleled opportunities to create a 21st century greenbelt in close proximity to urban San Jose, and delivers a host of benefits:



**Flood protection** provided by natural floodplains



A **clean water** supply for area residents



Increased **climate resilience** to adapt to extreme natural events



**Agriculture** as part of a thriving local economy



**Wildlife connectivity** and linkages between mountain ranges



Open space for **recreation and public health**

By investing in our open spaces and conserving Coyote Valley, we can protect these ecological, economic, and quality of life benefits – now and for future generations.



# Coyote Valley

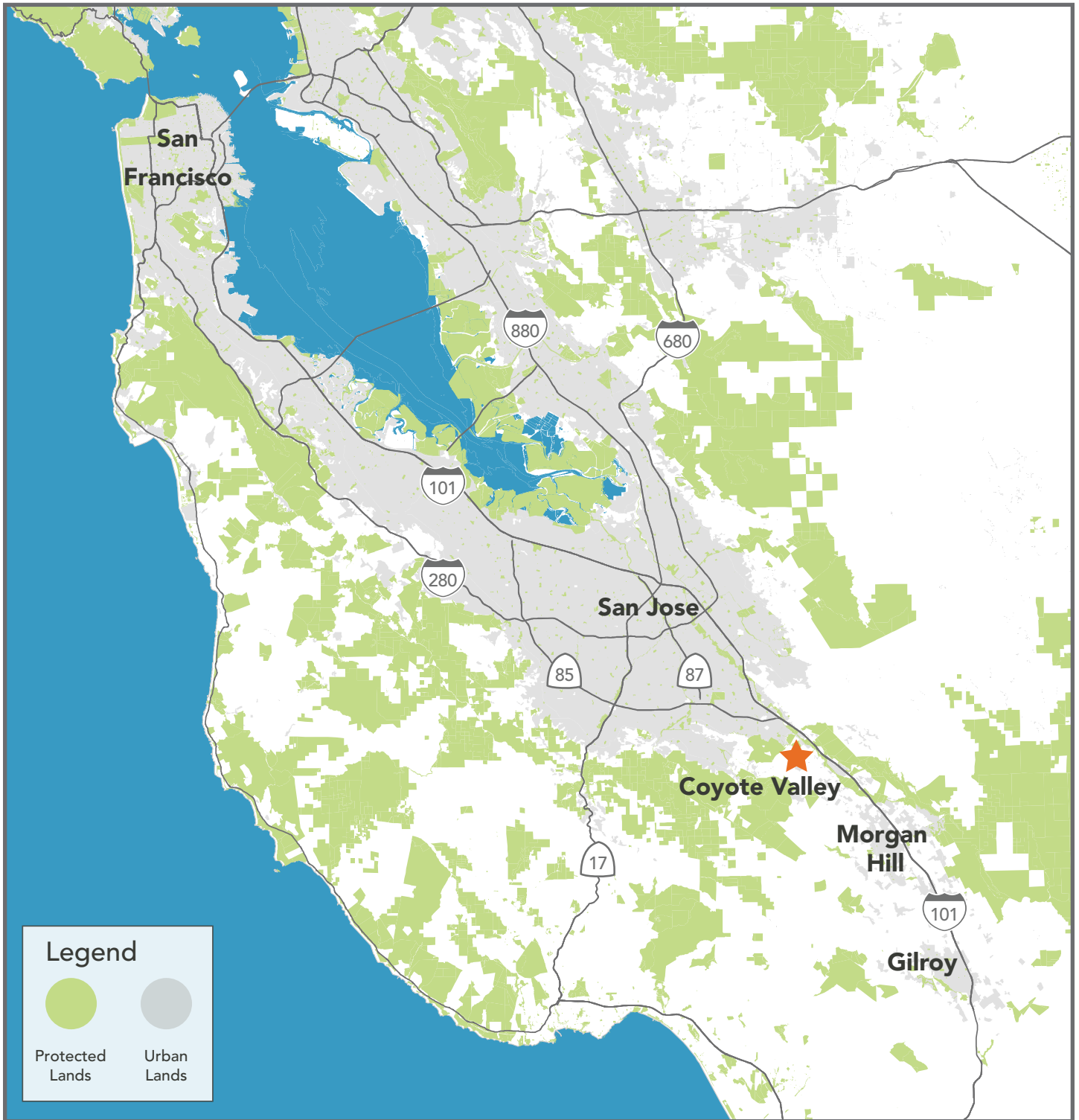


Photo credit: Stephen Joseph

# Water Resources



Coyote Valley is a critical landscape that **protects San Jose's water resources and downstream residents** through its **natural infrastructure**.

The City and its conservation partners have an opportunity to conserve and enhance land in ways that will **safeguard our groundwater aquifer, preserve local floodplains**, and protect wildlife and rare habitats.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Avoiding development in areas of Coyote Valley protects Silicon Valley's largest remaining **groundwater recharge area**, freshwater wetland, and undeveloped floodplains below Anderson Dam.
- Conservation and restoration along Fisher Creek and Laguna Seca would allow these lands to **hold more water during storms and floods**, slowly releasing these waters through riparian areas, wetlands, and into the aquifer, **improving water quality** flowing into Coyote Creek.
- Investment in floodplain preservation and restoration to capture and store excess stormwater upstream of San Jose has the potential to **reduce the likelihood, severity, and extent of downstream flooding**, helping to buffer communities from increasingly intense storm events.



Homes and businesses around Coyote Creek suffered **\$100M** in damages in the 2017 floods



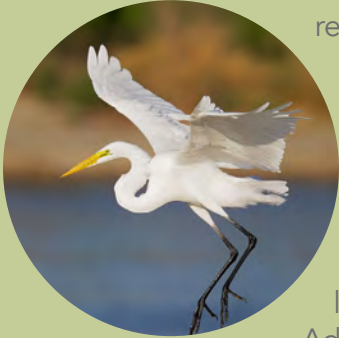
Restored floodplains in Coyote Valley could prevent ~450 acre-ft of water from flowing through Coyote Creek during a single storm event – enough to **fill SAP Arena**



Coyote Valley contains half of Silicon Valley's remaining undeveloped **aquifer recharge area**

## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Most of San Jose's land near creeks and over its aquifer has been developed, polluting its waterways and aquifer, increasing stormwater runoff, and exposing billions of dollars of property to damage when creeks flood. These heavily developed landscapes lack the resilience and ecosystem services that were provided by the lands in their former natural state.



As climate change causes more frequent and intense floods and droughts, the future is likely to be very different from the past, creating new challenges for cities on top of growing regulatory requirements. Cities like San Jose are spending enormous sums in developed areas to remediate the effects of urbanization in exchange for incremental, localized improvements in water quality and habitat enhancement. Addressing the effects of urbanization is expensive.

Development of Coyote Valley will reduce or impair natural floodplain functions, requiring costly mitigation measures. If developed, the full restoration potential of Fisher Creek and Laguna Seca would not be realized for habitat and other conservation values. **Conserving and enhancing Coyote Valley could be a model** for utilizing natural infrastructure that buffers the City of San Jose in the face of more frequent and intense storm events, working to alleviate downstream flooding, protecting groundwater recharge, and improving water quality.

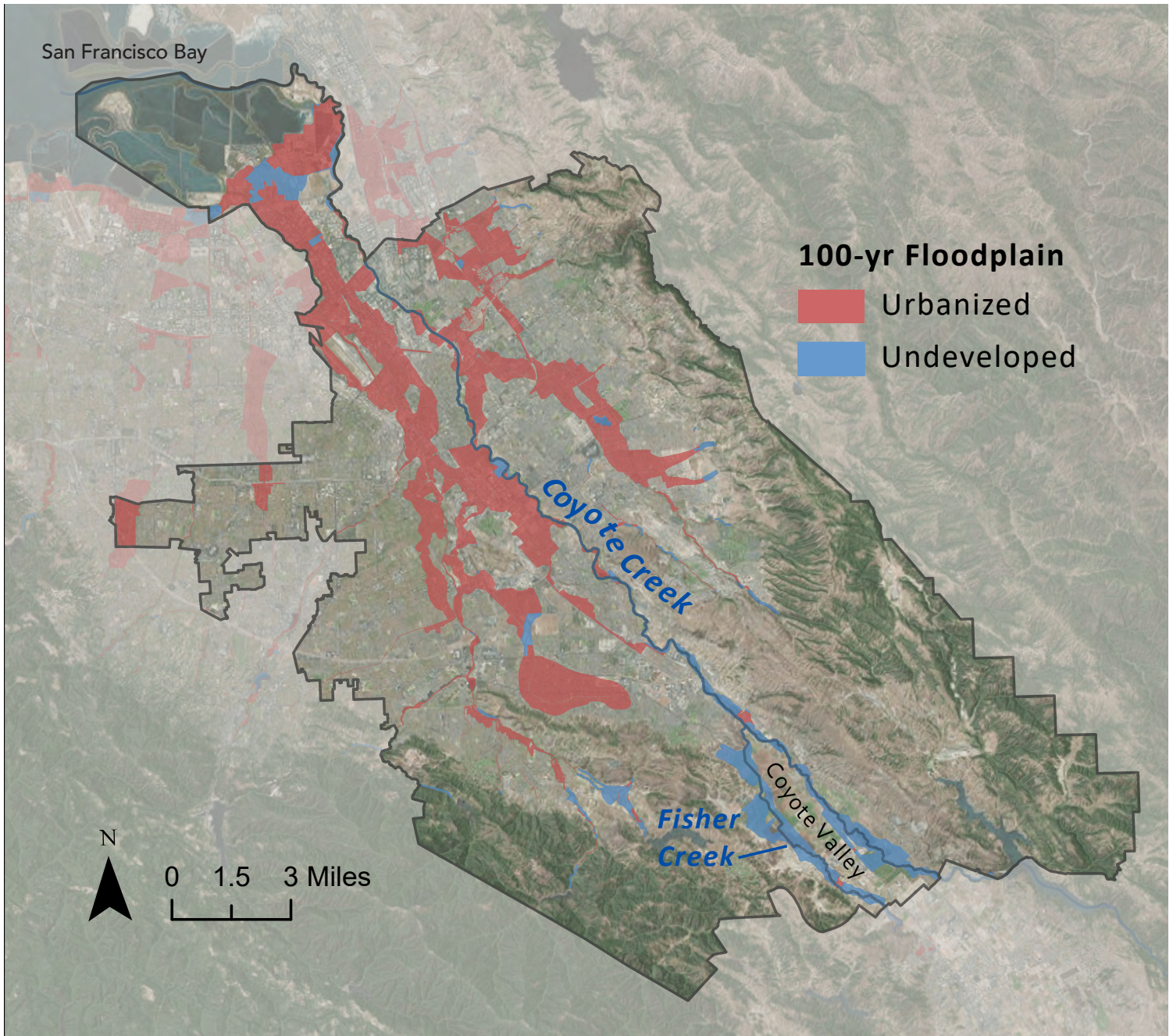
"Our city experienced some of the worst flooding in 20 years in 2017.

While the Coyote Creek flood taught us valuable lessons in resilience and disaster recovery, it also highlighted the role of nature based solutions – so-called 'green infrastructure' such as floodable plains and open spaces – to facilitate rainwater and stormwater re-entering the water cycle."

– *Climate Smart San Jose*



# FLOODPLAINS IN THE CITY OF SAN JOSE AND ITS SPHERE OF INFLUENCE



This map shows 100-year floodplains within San Jose's Sphere of Influence. Red areas show the extent of the City's floodplain that has been developed. The undeveloped floodplains in Coyote Valley, upstream of downtown San Jose, are the largest remaining intact assemblage along Coyote Creek. Protection of the natural floodplains in this strategic location provides an unparalleled opportunity to absorb floodwaters upstream of urbanized areas. These floodplains can be preserved and enhanced to maintain floodplain function, and can be managed to reduce flood impacts and preserve and enhance groundwater recharge.



## INVESTING IN COYOTE VALLEY'S NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Modernizing San Jose's flood system includes recognizing that managed flooding in Coyote Valley can help protect downstream areas while also supporting water quality protection and sensitive ecosystems. Avoiding development in sensitive areas in Coyote Valley would maintain room for more water to be stored upstream of downtown San Jose, providing opportunities to further **buffer San Jose from flooding, improve water quality** flowing into Coyote Creek, and **protect a groundwater aquifer and recharge area that is susceptible to contamination**. This work would also support large-scale ecosystem restoration opportunities on the valley floor.

The western foothills and valley floor of Coyote Valley could be used to capture stormwater in a network of expanded floodplains, swales, and ponds, slowly releasing it to a restored Fisher Creek and the Laguna Seca wetland complex before slowly draining into Coyote Creek. This would help reduce the risk of flooding downstream, buffer groundwater from declines during drought years, and protect water quality in Coyote Creek.

Conservation investments would increase **climate resilience** for natural and built communities while providing **other benefits** including habitat connectivity, water for sensitive habitats, carbon sequestration, increased agricultural viability, and recreation opportunities.

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Work with willing landowners to protect lands within the Fisher Creek floodplain to preserve its natural attributes and prevent contamination of shallow groundwater areas and water that flows into Coyote Creek.
- Restore and enhance wetland and riparian areas along Fisher Creek and Laguna Seca where managed flooding can benefit sensitive ecosystems, support natural flood control, and improve water quality flowing into Coyote Creek.
- Leverage public-private partnerships and funding sources to integrate water resource investments with co-benefits like improved habitat and wildlife crossings, agricultural land preservation, park and recreation opportunities, and greenhouse gas mitigation.
- Plan natural flood control improvements in coordination with Santa Clara Valley Water District's Coyote Creek flood protection effort from Montague to Tully Road, to optimize Coyote Valley's contribution to public health and safety.
- Investigate opportunities to provide watershed-scale benefits that align with the California Department of Water Resources' California Water Plan. Model projects after other multi-benefit floodplain protection projects, including the Yolo Bypass near Sacramento, Napa River, Los Angeles River, and areas around Houston, Texas.

Photo credits: Tanya Diamond, Patty Eaton, Tom Grey, cc Gary Nafis, Derek Neumann

### MORE INFORMATION

- Reducing Climate Risks with Natural Infrastructure (CA Landscape Conservation Partnership)
- A Flood of Benefits: Using Green Infrastructure to Reduce Flood Risks (The Nature Conservancy)
- Coyote Valley Water Resource Investment Strategy: Phase 2 Report (SCVOSA/SCVWD - in preparation)
- Coyote Valley Landscape Linkages: A Vision for a Resilient, Multi-benefit Landscape (SCVOSA)
- [www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley](http://www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley)

# Climate Resilience



Coyote Valley offers an unparalleled opportunity for San Jose to leverage partnerships and funding to increase the region's climate resilience – the ability of our natural and urban communities to respond and adapt to extremes in temperature and precipitation, leading to drought, fire, and flooding.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- San Jose has a unique opportunity to protect and restore existing **natural infrastructure** in Coyote Valley to buffer the effects of a changing climate.
- Nature as infrastructure can be **more efficient, more resilient**, and a **better long-term investment** than built infrastructure, and includes many other benefits such as connected landscapes for wildlife, healthy recreation opportunities, and a thriving agricultural economy.
- By protecting the **multi-benefit natural infrastructure** of Coyote Valley, San Jose can leverage local, regional, and state funding, and model innovative leadership.



Coyote Valley contains **thousands of acres** that can recharge aquifers and absorb flood waters



Agricultural lands produce **less than 2% of the greenhouse gas emissions** produced by urbanized areas



Investments of **\$600M+** in open space statewide have reduced CO<sub>2</sub> by an estimated **4.27M metric tons**

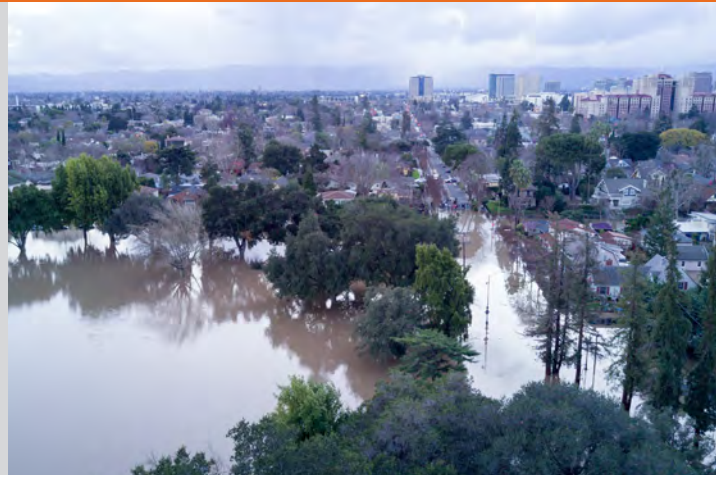


## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Climate change is increasing the frequency, severity, and unpredictability of storms, flooding, drought, and wildfire.

As we have seen, the recurring economic and social costs of responding to these disasters are immense.

With significant growth projected in Santa Clara County over the next 30 years, now is the time to plan our communities and landscapes to increase our climate resilience and prepare for this new normal.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- **Invest** in Coyote Valley's natural infrastructure to help **meet goals of Climate Smart San Jose**, such as avoiding greenhouse gas production.
- **Work with the Open Space Authority and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to protect and restore remaining floodplains and aquifers** along Fisher Creek and Coyote Creek to provide natural flood control and clean water for San Jose.
- Identify projects that further the climate goals of Plan Bay Area, MTC, ABAG, and others, and **leverage partnerships and external funding sources** such as state bond measures and regional grant programs.
- **Protect key agricultural lands** identified in the **Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan** to prevent their conversion to urban uses and the corresponding production of greenhouse gas emissions. These lands can also sequester carbon and curb sprawl and associated vehicle miles traveled.



## CASE STUDY: NAPA COUNTY

In 1986, the Napa River flooded, causing three deaths and an estimated \$100M in property damage. Instead of building higher levees, the County worked with the water district and the Army Corps to remove bridges, restore floodplains, and restore 900 acres of wetlands, returning the river to its natural course.

When waters rise, they are diverted into a bypass, significantly mitigating flooding and saving \$26M in damages annually – and also providing bird habitat and recreational trails.

Photo credits: Tom Grey, Kevin Lowe, Tyler MacNiven, Derek Neumann

## MORE INFORMATION

- Healthy Lands & Healthy Economies: Nature's Value in Santa Clara County (SCVOSA)
- Nature as Infrastructure for Climate Resilience - Protecting Coyote Valley (SCVOSA)
- Climate Smart San Jose Phase 2: Natural and Working Lands
- [www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley](http://www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley)

# Agriculture



With thousands of acres of scenic and productive farms, orchards, and ranches, **Coyote Valley offers an opportunity to reinvest in our agricultural economy** – increasing our local food supply and protecting our cultural heritage, while also benefiting the environment and quality of life throughout the region.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Farms in Santa Clara County directly provide **more than 8,100 jobs**, and in 2014 created a total of **\$1.6B in economic output**.
- Investments that increase agricultural production in Coyote Valley can triple the profitability of farming and generate an estimated **\$50M** in annual production and agritourism revenues.
- Agricultural lands can **sequester carbon** and **prevent sprawl**, and are key to meeting California's **2030 greenhouse gas reduction targets**.
- Well-managed agricultural lands in Coyote Valley can help **mitigate flooding downstream**, recharge aquifers, and provide valuable wildlife habitat.



Most of Coyote Valley is agricultural, including **5,600 acres** of prime farmland



Coyote Valley represents **30% of the value** of crop production in Santa Clara County



Keeping **100 acres** in farmland (vs. urban use) annually equates to removing **1,340 cars** from roads



## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

California is losing an average of 50,000 acres of farmland to development each year. Coyote Valley represents some of our region's last remaining farms, orchards, and ranches – our cultural heritage and a local food supply.

Agricultural lands naturally buffer urban areas from the impacts of storms and climate change. In Coyote Valley, farms also prevent our groundwater aquifers from being paved over – protecting a clean water supply.

These farmlands provide forage and cover for wildlife species living in and moving through Coyote Valley.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- **Protect key agricultural lands identified in the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan** through fee purchase, conservation easements, and other voluntary incentives.
- Create and invest in a **countywide agricultural conservation easement program**.
- Work with local farmers and water resource agencies to **leverage stormwater management funds** to preserve floodplains and encourage flood-tolerant crops.
- **Promote sustainable agricultural practices** such as no-till farming to increase carbon sequestration.
- Strengthen Santa Clara County's zoning and **Right-to-Farm ordinances**, and maintain LAFCO's strong agricultural preservation policies.
- Coordinate with other cities and the County to **expand agricultural zoning districts**.



## CASE STUDY: YOLO BYPASS

The Yolo Bypass is a functioning floodplain west of Sacramento that incorporates productive farmland and wildlife habitat. This multi-benefit landscape can serve as a model for Coyote Valley.

When rains are heavy, a system of low dams allows water to spill over into the bypass, protecting Sacramento from flooding. The land is also used for flood-compatible crops, and provides valuable wetland habitat for fish and birds.

Photo credits: Cait Hutnik, Derek Neumann

## MORE INFORMATION

- Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan (Santa Clara County and SCVOSA)
- Santa Clara Valley Greenprint (SCVOSA)
- Sustaining Agriculture and Conservation in Coyote Valley (SAGE)
- Santa Clara County Crop Reports (Santa Clara County Division of Agriculture)
- American Farmland Trust
- **[www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley](http://www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley)**

# Wildlife Connectivity



The Coyote Valley offers an **irreplaceable and unique opportunity to link landscapes** and connect habitats for plants and wildlife, protecting biodiversity, and allowing for adaptation to climate change.

Protection of significant portions of the valley floor is required to ensure the **resilience and integrity of the 1.13+ million acres of core habitat** in the surrounding Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The ecologically rich landscape of Coyote Valley offers an **unparalleled opportunity** to protect irreplaceable remnants of rare habitat, restore habitat, and protect resident and migratory wildlife.
- The valley is the **best opportunity to link** the Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range, required for species and habitats to disperse, migrate, and shift ranges in response to climate change.
- Restoration of **wetland and riparian habitat**, especially in Laguna Seca and along Coyote Creek and Fisher Creek, is our best chance to protect wildlife pathways while buffering the San Jose region from stormwater.



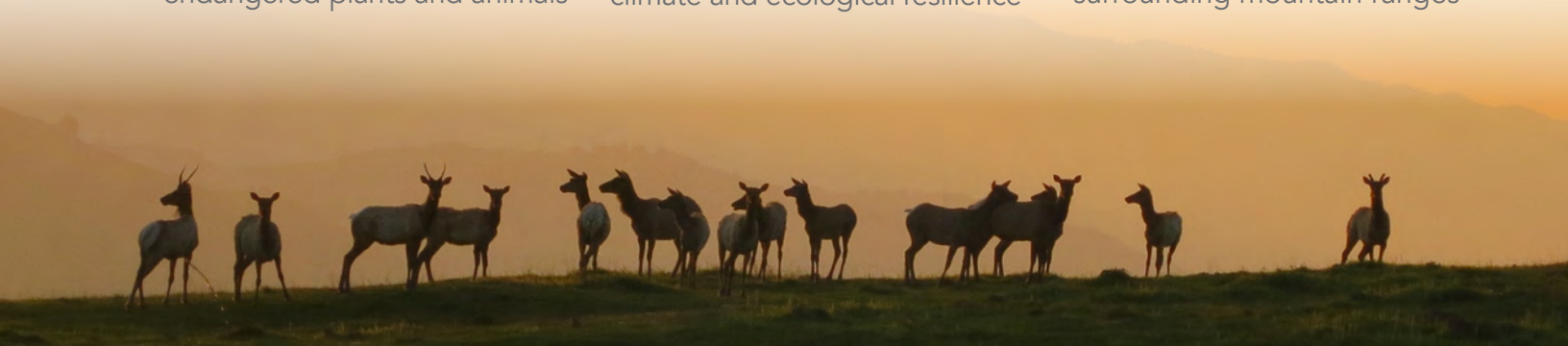
Coyote Valley hosts **12 species** of rare, threatened, and endangered plants and animals



Restoration of **hundreds of acres** of wetlands would offer climate and ecological resilience



Coyote Valley links **1.13 million acres** of core habitat in surrounding mountain ranges

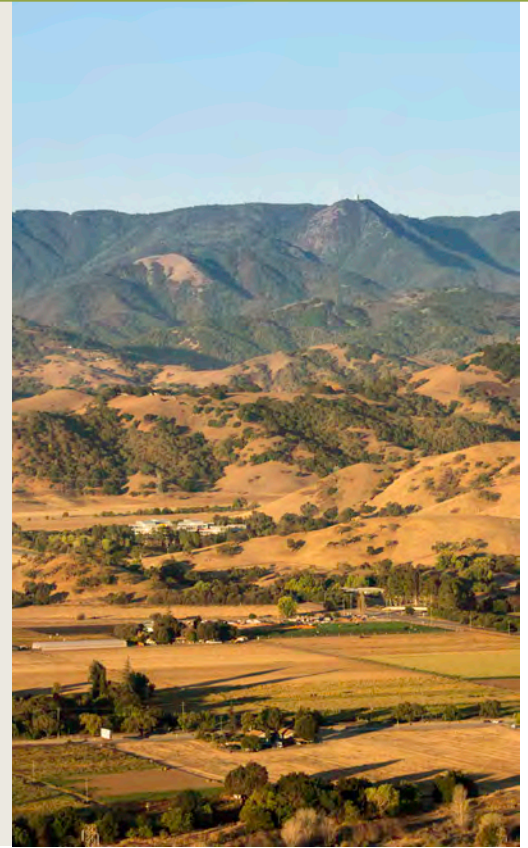


## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

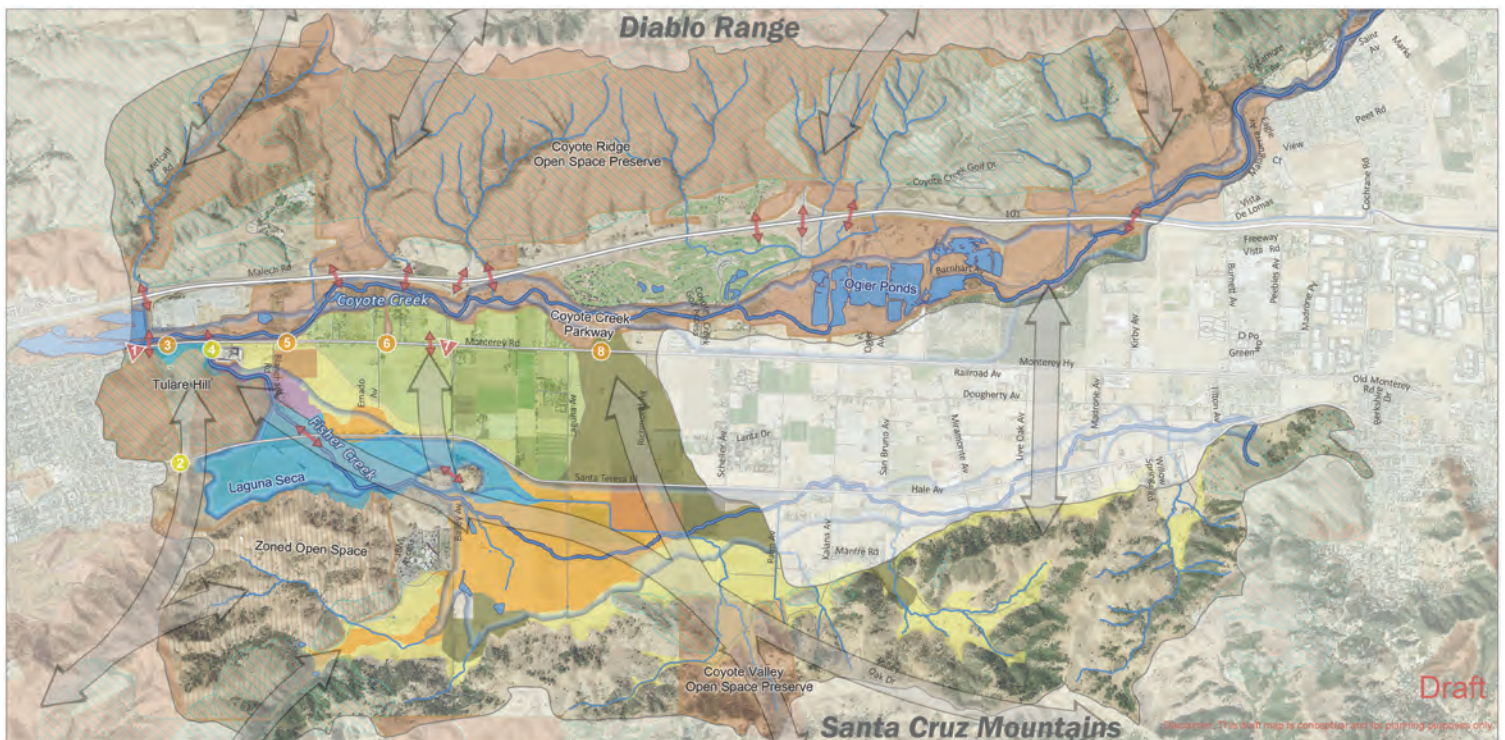
Many state and regional agencies recognize the importance of **connecting habitats via linkages**. Wide-ranging species such as mountain lion, American badger, coyote, and bobcat need large areas of connected habitat or could become locally extinct.

The *Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP)* and other state and regional assessments have identified Coyote Valley as the essential opportunity to link landscapes and connect habitats to protect biodiversity in the Santa Cruz Mountains and Diablo Range – now and in the face of climate change.

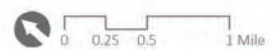
Coyote Valley presents a unique opportunity for investment that benefits the natural and urban environment. By protecting and restoring the landscape for wildlife connectivity, we also preserve San Jose's floodplain and water supplies, create a unique opportunity to connect people to the land, and help ensure that the City grows in a way that is more efficient and climate-smart.



The **Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage** vision was developed by a multi-disciplinary team of scientists who determined the necessary essential elements for protecting and restoring a broad and resilient landscape.



- |                                |                    |                                 |                      |                       |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| ↔ General Wildlife Pathways    | ● Enhanced Culvert | ■ Oak Savanna                   | ■ Willow Grove       | ▨ Serpentine          |
| ↔ Documented Wildlife Pathways | ● New Culvert      | ■ Oak Woodland / Orchard        | ■ Freshwater Wetland | ■ Restored Floodplain |
| ■ Protected Lands              | ▲ New Overpass     | ■ Wildlife Friendly Agriculture | ■ Wet Meadow         |                       |



Draft

©2022 City of San Jose. This draft map is conceptual and for planning purposes only.

## PROTECTING RARE SPECIES

Coyote Valley is one of the last opportunities to enhance valley floor habitat and protect breeding **burrowing owls** in Santa Clara County, where numbers have declined drastically.



By restoring valley oak savannas, willow groves, and native grasslands, the County could meet habitat and wetland mitigation goals developed in the *Santa Clara Valley Habitat Plan* that will be difficult to meet elsewhere, and could restore breeding habitat for the owl and the threatened tricolored blackbird, and also benefit many other species.

This restoration would also help the City of San Jose reach carbon sequestration goals through the retention of more carbon in wetland soils and restored vegetation.

## SAFE PASSAGE FOR MAMMALS

Scientists from UC Santa Cruz are studying radio-collared **bobcats** in Coyote Valley to better understand where land protection and restoration will be most helpful to maintain functional habitat connectivity.

Early data suggest that the Coyote Creek Parkway and Fisher Creek are critical movement pathways. Restoration of Fisher Creek could improve this corridor and provide many other benefits.



The study also shows frequent road crossings and fatalities along Bailey Avenue, Santa Teresa Boulevard, and Old Monterey Highway – where B02, a radio-collared female also known as Elderberry (above), was killed by a vehicle.

The scientists are working to identify road-crossing hotspots where safe passage infrastructure can significantly reduce or mitigate wildlife-vehicle conflict and mortality.

## WETLAND RESTORATION

The historic Laguna Seca wetland complex, within Fisher Creek's floodplain, was once a 1,000+ acre freshwater wetland complex and an important stopover for migratory waterfowl on the Pacific Flyway.

Despite being dredged and partially drained in 1916 to clear the land for agriculture, the area still retains some wetland characteristics due to its low elevation and heavy clay soils, and waterbirds continue to use this habitat.

Restoration of this increasingly rare wetland habitat could support rare species like the **California tiger salamander**, and expand habitat for many fish, bird, amphibian, reptile, and mammal species.



Numerous other species will be attracted to the wetland complex, especially during times of severe drought. Restored wetlands would also capture stormwater and improve water quality, making them an important component of regional climate resilience.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- **Protect Coyote Valley from imminent development threats** that could significantly diminish the functionality and vitality of the region for wildlife.
- **Leverage funding** from Prop 1, Prop 68, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Valley Habitat Agency, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, California Wildlife Conservation Board, and US Fish and Wildlife Service to meet shared goals.
- **Restore Laguna Seca**, the County's largest freshwater wetland, which will **increase ecological resilience** along the Pacific Flyway, one of the most threatened wildlife migration corridors in the Bay Area, and also **store stormwater and reduce downstream flood impacts**.
- Identify projects that further goals of the **Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan, Critical Linkages Bay Area and Beyond**, and others, and leverage partnerships and external funding sources.
- Partner with the **High Speed Rail Authority**, which has included in its preliminary design nine proposed state-of-the-art underpasses for wildlife in Coyote Valley.
- **Reduce the high rates of wildlife-vehicle collisions** by making it easier for wildlife to cross Monterey Highway, the Union Pacific rail line, Santa Teresa Boulevard, Highway 101, Bailey Avenue, and other roads by adding wildlife underpasses, overpasses, and directional fencing, removing debris, restoring vegetation, and providing gaps in the medians.
- Use Coyote Valley as a location for **endangered species habitat mitigation** for development projects in other areas of the city.
- **Encourage sustainable farming and ranching practices that support biodiversity** in the region. Agricultural lands can provide permanent habitat for wildlife in field margins, hedgerows, buffer strips, riparian corridors, and woodlots, important foraging habitat for raptors, and temporary habitat as species move between larger areas of suitable habitat.



Photo credits: Tom Grey, cc Gary Nafis, Derek Neumann, OSA wildlife cam, Ryan Phillips, Laurel Serieys, Eric Smith

## MORE INFORMATION

- Coyote Valley Landscape Linkage: A Vision for a Resilient, Multi-benefit Landscape (SCVOSA)
- Critical Linkages: Bay Area and Beyond (Bay Area Open Space Council)
- Coyote Creek Watershed Historical Ecology Study (San Francisco Estuary Institute)
- Santa Clara Valley Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan
- [www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley](http://www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley)

# Recreation and Public Health



Just 10 miles from downtown San Jose, Coyote Valley offers the opportunity to create an **unparalleled natural urban preserve** that will provide access to open space and trails – improving quality of life, benefitting public health, and contributing to the local economy.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Coyote Valley is a key connection for regional recreational opportunities and trail networks, which will improve **physical and mental health**, wellbeing, and **quality of life** for more than a million residents.
- The **significant economic value** of parks and trails includes tourism, improved public health, improved private property value, and regional investment due to quality of life, as well as the natural infrastructure services they provide.
- Parks and open space are **educational and cultural resources** that connect us to nature and provide a sense of place.



Coyote Valley connects **500,000 acres** of parks and protected open space



Local parks and trails annually attract more than **\$125M in tourism spending**



By facilitating outdoor exercise, local trails and open space save **\$25M+ in medical costs** per year



## WHAT'S AT STAKE?

Cities around the world are struggling to re-green paved-over landscapes; San Jose has an opportunity to save a significant assemblage of wildland within the city limits, creating its own "Central Park."

As San Jose's urban nature preserve, Coyote Valley can become a world-class destination, offering diverse landscapes, impressive views, a healthy agritourism industry, unparalleled wildlife viewing, and a regionally interconnected trail network. This is an opportunity for San Jose to provide meaningful and educational experiences in nature, clean our air, and benefit the local economy and real estate values.



## OPPORTUNITIES

- Partner with **Santa Clara County Parks, Land Trust of Santa Clara Valley, Peninsula Open Space Trust, and Amah Mutsun Land Trust** to link parks, construct trails, and encourage public access.
- Work with **Santa Clara Valley Water District** and **Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency** to use mitigation lands as recreation opportunities.
- **Leverage local, state, and regional funding** from One Bay Area, Santa Clara Valley Water District, Santa Clara County, California Department of Parks and Recreation, and Prop 68.
- Partner with the **Bay Area Ridge Trail Council** to make the trail connection between the Diablo Range and the Santa Cruz Mountains.
- **Complete the Fisher Creek Trail Alignment**, connecting the Coyote Creek Trail to the east and the Bay Area Ridge Trail to the west.



## CASE STUDY: BOSTON PARKS

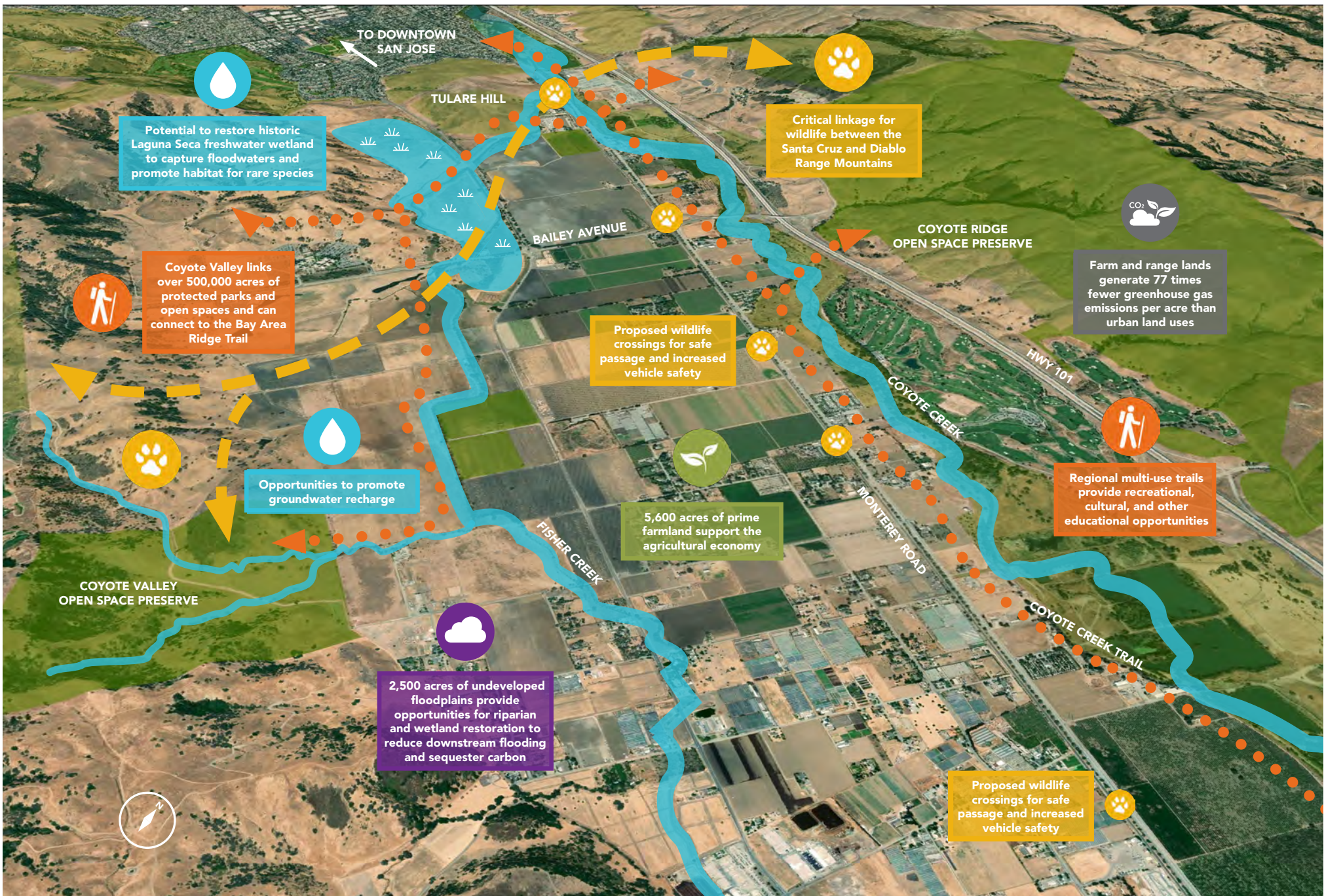
A model of landscape-level open space in close proximity to a large urban center, Boston's **Emerald Necklace** is a network of seven parks.

Created through public-private partnerships, the 1,200-acre network offers recreational opportunities in the heart of the city. The Emerald Necklace connects residents to nature and attracts more than a million visitors each year.

Photo credits: Annie Burke, Ron Horii, Cait Hutnik, Derek Neumann

## MORE INFORMATION

- The Economic Benefits of the Park & Recreation System in San José, CA (Trust for Public Land)
- Greenprint (now Activate San Jose) (City of San Jose)
- Santa Clara County Parks Countywide Trails Master Plan
- Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System (Trust for Public Land)
- The Central Park Effect (Central Park Conservancy)
- **[www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley](http://www.openspaceauthority.org/coyotevalley)**



## MAP OF COYOTE VALLEY CONSERVATION VALUES

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## Water Resources

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- Homes and businesses around Coyote Creek suffered \$100 million in damages in the 2017 floods.

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- Restored floodplains in Coyote Valley could prevent ~450 acre-ft of water from flowing through Coyote Creek during a single storm event – enough to fill SAP Arena.

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority. 2014. GIS data from *The Santa Clara Valley Greenprint: A guide for protecting open space and livable communities*. San Jose, CA.

- Coyote Valley contains half of Silicon Valley's remaining undeveloped aquifer recharge area.

## Climate Resilience

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- Investments of \$600M+ in open space statewide have reduced CO<sub>2</sub> by an estimated 4.27 million metric tons.

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- Napa County Case Study.

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<https://www.openspaceauthority.org/conservation/current-projects/santa-clara-valley-agricultural-plan.html>

- Agricultural lands produce less than 2% of the greenhouse gas emissions produced by urbanized areas.

## Agriculture

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- Keeping 100 acres in farmland (vs. urban use) annually equates to removing 1,340 cars from roads.

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- Coyote Valley represents 30% of the value of crop production in Santa Clara County.

## Wildlife Connectivity

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- Coyote Valley hosts 12 species of rare, threatened, and endangered plants and animals.

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- Coyote Valley links 1.13 million acres of core habitat in surrounding mountain ranges.

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<https://www.openspaceauthority.org/conservation/conservation-priorities/coyote-valley/coyote-valley-landscape-linkage.html>

- Restoration of hundreds of acres of wetlands would offer climate and ecological resilience.

## Recreation and Public Health

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- Local parks and trails annually attract more than \$125M in tourism spending.
- By facilitating outdoor exercise, local trails and open space save \$25M+ in medical costs per year.



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**The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority** conserves the natural environment, supports agriculture, and connects people to nature, by protecting open spaces, natural areas, and working farms and ranches for future generations. The Authority has protected over 25,000 acres of open space, natural areas, watersheds, and wildlife habitat.

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