

## 1.0 Introduction

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### 1.1 Summary

The City of Cupertino proposes to construct an approximately ¼ mile segment of Stevens Creek Trail. The project would extend the existing Stevens Creek Trail from Blackberry Farm Park to Stevens Creek Boulevard, provide connections to the bicycle lanes and bus stops on Stevens Creek Boulevard, provide parking modifications, and open 5 acres of land at the Stockmeir orchard parcel to the public. The 5 acres would be incorporated into the creek corridor open space, which is focused on passive recreation, habitat restoration, and environmental education. The project would also include creek restoration on the portion of Stevens Creek between Blackberry Farm Park and Stevens Creek Boulevard. This project was contemplated in the Stevens Creek Trail Master Plan Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) prepared in 2006; however, the City has decided to prepare a new IS/MND due to changes in the current project description.

According to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, a public agency shall prepare a proposed Negative Declaration or a Mitigated Negative Declaration when:

1. The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment, or
2. The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects, but:
  - Revisions in the Project plans made by, or agreed to by the applicant before a proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Initial Study are released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur, and
  - There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the Project as revised may have a significant effect on the environment.

This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), Public Resources Code §21000 *et seq.*, and the State CEQA Guidelines, California Code of Regulations (CCR) §15000 *et seq.*

### 1.2 Lead Agency

The Lead Agency is the public agency with principal responsibility for carrying out or approving the Project (CEQA Guidelines §15367). The Lead Agency for the Project is the City of Cupertino. The contact information for the Lead Agency regarding the Project is:

City of Cupertino  
Department of Public Works, attn. Gail Seeds  
10300 Torre Avenue  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
Email: [capitalprojects@cupertino.org](mailto:capitalprojects@cupertino.org)  
Phone: 408-777-3354

### 1.3 Document Organization

This Initial Study is organized as follows:

- Chapter 1.0 Introduction explains the purpose of this Initial Study and the organization of the document.
- Chapter 2.0 Project Description describes the Project location, existing site conditions, history and objectives, project features, and the permits and approvals needed for the Project. The chapter also identifies the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that have been incorporated into the Project to reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels to that impact so that the Project would not have a significant effect on the environment.
- Chapter 3.0 Environmental Checklist identifies the potential environmental impacts of the Project and the significance of each impact, and the Mandatory Findings of Significance.
- Chapter 4.0 References identifies the sources used in the preparation of the Initial Study.
- Chapter 5.0 Report Preparers lists the preparers of this report.
- Appendix A: Santa Clara Valley Water District Best Management Practices
- Appendix B: Cultural Resource Assessment, Stevens Creek Corridor Master Plan, Basin Research Associates
- Appendix C: Parking Assessment for Proposed Stevens Creek Park and Restoration Phase 2 Project, Hexagon Transportation Consultants
- Appendix D: Tree Impacts List

## 2.0 Project Description

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This chapter describes the Project location, existing site conditions, the features and operating characteristics of the proposed project and surrounding area, and the permits and approvals needed for the Project. The chapter also identifies the Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other elements that have been incorporated into the Project that would reduce potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels.

### 2.1 Overview

The project includes the construction of a trail and creek restoration between Blackberry Farm Park and Stevens Creek Boulevard. The project will open to the public 5 acres of floodplain open space (Stockmeir property) along Stevens Creek purchased by Cupertino in 1999. This parcel will be incorporated into the creek corridor open space which is focused on passive recreation, habitat restoration, and environmental education. Although Phase 2 project elements were addressed in the 2006 IS/MND, the City has decided to prepare a new IS/MND due changes in the project description.

This Stevens Creek Corridor Park and Restoration Phase 2 project would:

- Complete the trail between Blackberry Farm Park and Stevens Creek Boulevard (along the west side of the Blackberry Farm Golf Course and across the Stockmeir property) with connections to bike lanes and bus stops on Stevens Creek Boulevard, The total length of this trail is approximately 1,300 feet, or 0.25 mile.
- Install a bike/pedestrian bridge across Stevens Creek to connect the Stockmeir property to Blackberry Farm Park via the proposed new trail,
- Reconfigure the parking lot at the Blackberry Farm Golf Course to create trail access and additional parking spaces for trail users,
- Install trail amenities such as benches, protective fencing, signage, and trash receptacles,
- Restore approximately 1,400-foot reach of stream by widening the channel, removing invasives and installing plants from the watershed,
- Remove concrete and riprap channel lining and widen creek to the east to create pool and riffle habitat and fish habitat structures including 3 pool-riffle sequences, and an anticipated 4 log jam fish habitat structures, 1 log crib wall, and 2 buried log habitat structures in the backwater,
- Create approximately 90 new lineal feet of willow swale/backwater wetland habitat,
- Remove invasive species including giant reed (*Arundo donax*), Himalayan blackberry (*Rubus discolor*), vinca (*Vinca major*) and ivy (*Hedera helix*),
- Install approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of riparian and wetland plants,
- Install approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of oak woodland plants and understory to create edge habitat along Stevens Creek.

### 2.2 Background

In 2006, the City of Cupertino approved the IS/MND prepared for the Stevens Creek Corridor Park Master Plan and Restoration Plan. Phase 1 of the project completed in 2009 involved improvements to the Blackberry Farm Park and McClellan Ranch Park properties. These improvements included modifying the City-owned Blackberry Farm Park property from a fee-based seasonal-use group picnic grounds with swimming pool complex, and opening the site as a year-round community park, realigning and restoring Stevens Creek, restoring in-stream and riparian habitat, enhancing adjacent upland woodland habitat, trail construction, a

new golf maintenance facility, and improvements, upgrades or modifications to various recreational amenities and infrastructure.

Phase 2, the current phase of the project, would extend a section of the Stevens Creek Trail downstream of the current end of the trail at the Blackberry Farm Park parking lot. The trail would pass along the west edge of the golf course and through what is known as the Stockmeir property, which was acquired by the City in 1999. This is the only orchard remaining along Stevens Creek from San Francisco Bay in Mountain View to the foothills in Cupertino; the majority of the orchard would be preserved under this project. The area would become part of Cupertino's parklands and open space that are open to the public within the Stevens Creek Corridor.

### **2.3 Project Location**

The Phase 2 project is primarily located at the city-owned Stockmeir property as well as along the west side of the Blackberry Farm Golf Course. The Stockmeir property is located south of Stevens Creek Boulevard and west of Blackberry Farm Golf Course, north of the Blackberry Farm Park area, and east of Stockmeir and Dean Courts. Residential development surrounds the Blackberry Farm and Stockmeir properties, and McClellan Ranch Park lies to the south. Topography of the site is relatively flat, with elevations ranging from 290 to 310 feet above sea level.

### **2.4 Project Site Description**

The Stockmeir site currently includes Stevens Creek along the eastern boundary, a home and outbuildings near Stevens Creek Boulevard, and an approximately 2.5-acre orange/mixed fruit orchard on the remainder of the property. The orchard contains approximately 140 orange trees and 30 other orchard trees (walnut, loquat, olive, lemon, and tangerine). The orange orchard, for the most part, is in fair to good condition and is still productive. However, the orchard is not currently maintained and could benefit from regular care. Some trees are past their prime or are dying. The Stockmeir home, dating back to 1903, has been extensively remodeled, but has been identified as a City of Cupertino Commemorative Site in the Cupertino General Plan.

### **2.5 Project Objectives**

The purpose of the project is to continue implementation of the Stevens Creek Corridor Master Plan and Restoration Plan by extending the pedestrian and bike trail and improving stream conditions through restoration. The proposed trail connection would expand the city's network of pedestrian and bike facilities, for both recreation and transportation purposes. The project would connect Blackberry Farm Park and McClellan Ranch Park to pedestrian and bike facilities on Stevens Creek Boulevard. The proposed creek restoration would enhance the habitat quality, structure, diversity and ecological function of the existing riparian and woodland forests, and improve riverine habitat to support Central California Coast steelhead, support native plant communities and maintain creek hydraulic capacity and reconnect the stream with the floodplain. The proposed project is consistent with the City's goals to increase walkability and expand the bicycle network, as outlined in Cupertino's General Plan (2010), Pedestrian Transportation Guidelines (2002) and Bicycle Transportation Plan (2011).

## 2.6 Proposed Project

### 2.6.1 Trail

As stated above, the proposed trail would be approximately 1,300 feet long (0.25 mile) and connect the existing trail at Blackberry Farm to bus and bike facilities on Stevens Creek Boulevard. The trail would start at the north end of the Blackberry Farm Park parking lot adjacent to the restored creek. It would follow the east side of creek from where it enters the golf course to near the 8<sup>th</sup> hole. A protective fence would be constructed between the trail and the golf course along this stretch, as needed, to protect trail users from errant golf balls. It is likely to be a recurved fence (see Photo 2.6-1) or similar style.



**Photo 2.6-1. Example of a Recurved Fence.**

The trail would then cross Stevens Creek on a new pedestrian bridge, where it would enter the Stocklmeir property. An additional short footpath off the main trail and a spot for creek viewing may be created. These would provide trail users a location off the main path to stop and observe creek views and provide opportunities for nature education groups to gather without obstructing traffic on the main trail. It is anticipated that the additional footpath would be for pedestrian only use (i.e., no cyclists and no dogs). Possible locations for a short footpath could be where the new trail connects to the terminus of the current trail near the north end of the Blackberry Farm parking lot; or near the new backwater where there is an existing view to the creek channel without removing native vegetation; or elsewhere as suitable. It is also possible that a creek viewing spot could be created adjacent to the new bridge on the west side of the creek. A viewing spot at this location would similarly provide a place to observe the creek without impeding trail use, and this site would be at a location that is already subject to human presence due to use of the bridge. The exact location of the additional short footpath and/or viewing area, if implemented, would consider wildlife and habitat. This document's analysis includes the impacts of all of these probable locations for this short footpath and/or viewing area as it is considered part of the proposed project.

After crossing the bridge and entering the Stocklmeir site, the trail would then travel through or along the old orange orchard and connect to the existing Stocklmeir property driveway. The specific trail alignment through the property has not been determined, but again, this document analyzes the "worst case" scenario. The City Council discussed this topic at

public City Council meetings earlier this year, and the Council's direction was to consider alignments that were located no farther west than the "second row of orchard trees", i.e. the row of orange trees that is second-closest to the property line which abuts The Meadows of Cupertino. A conceptual graphic of this potential westernmost zone for trail alignment is shown on Figure 2-3. The Council's further direction was to consider a trail alignment located along the easterly side of the orchard generally paralleling the creek and allowing an adequate buffer area along the creek edge. A conceptual graphic of this potential easterly zone for trail alignment is shown on Figure 2-3. The size and configuration of an appropriate buffer of native plantings and habitat along the creek will be developed in consultation with a biologist. Refined trail alignment options will be evaluated during the upcoming design work. A feasible, preferred alignment may vary from the graphics and will depend on a wide variety of factors, including but not limited to presence of riparian tree root zones; orchard trees to be preserved; proximity of residences; wildlife and habitat considerations; sight lines; user safety; site drainage; soil or subsurface conditions; effects of nearby golf play; views; constructability; and similar factors that would affect the trail design. However, the final layout through the orchard area is currently expected to be no farther west or east than shown in the Figure 2-3 graphics. Orchard trees would typically remain in place except where removal is needed to accommodate the new trail improvements, create the backwater area, respond to tree health issues, install project elements or address other project considerations.

After exiting the Stocklmeir parcel, the trail would then head east along Stevens Creek Boulevard where the existing sidewalk may be upgraded and would serve as a trail connection. Trail users would be able to cross Stevens Creek Boulevard using a new crosswalk at Phar Lap Drive (see Photo 2.6-2).



**Photo 2.6-2. Stevens Creek Boulevard and Phar Lap Drive.**

A trail crossing at Stevens Creek Boulevard is needed to assist residents living to the north to cross Stevens Creek Boulevard and access the trail, and to provide a connection to the roadway for bicyclists who must follow the rules of the road which include riding with the flow of traffic. Bicyclists wishing to head west on Stevens Creek Boulevard, toward Foothill Boulevard and Rancho San Antonio County Park, must cross the street to enter the existing bicycle lanes. The crossing at Stevens Creek Boulevard would be located on the west side of the Phar Lap intersection. The crosswalk would include safety and traffic calming measures. As space allows, a median island which serves as a pedestrian refuge would be installed in the center of Stevens Creek Boulevard to enhance the crosswalk safety and to provide some traffic calming in this area. Flashing warning lights would also be installed on Stevens Creek Boulevard on both sides of the crossing to alert motorists of crosswalk use. This trail crossing solution provides the

connection to Stevens Creek Boulevard in a logical location, near the trail exit from the Stockmeir site and close to the local bus stops.

The proposed trail surfacing will be an all-weather, fully accessible material that meets ADA Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) standards and is compatible with the creekside and floodplain setting. It is also intended to be compatible with the existing Stevens Creek Trail in Blackberry Farm and McClellan Ranch parks. Asphalt would not be used. The surfacing may be a stabilized crushed or decomposed granite material; or porous colored concrete (similar to Phase 1); or some other appropriate material. It may also be more than one material. For example, the surfacing used along the east side of the creek connecting to Blackberry Farm Park may be a different material from the surfacing used in the Stockmeir orchard.

Leashed dogs would be allowed only on the proposed primary trail. Due to its location in a flood plain, the trail would close during seasonal flooding events.

### 2.6.2 Bridge

The proposed new bridge will be similar to and compatible with the existing bridge to the west bank group picnic area at Blackberry Farm Park installed as part of Phase 1. This existing bridge is a clear span. It is made of painted steel with a wood plank deck and an inside width of approximately ten feet.

### 2.6.3 Parking

The proposed project would reconfigure the existing parking lot at the Blackberry Farm Golf Course/Blue Pheasant Restaurant. The existing parking lot contains 91 parking spaces. The proposed parking lot would add an anticipated 9 spaces, for a total of 100 spaces. The proposed project also includes striping on Stevens Creek Boulevard to provide a drop-off area for an additional 2 buses and striping for additional car parking, expected to be approximately 8 to 10 stalls.

### 2.6.4 Creek Restoration

The restoration and enhancement goals of the creek restoration proposed in Phase 2 are generally the same goals as those for the first phase of the project that was completed in 2009. These are:

- Enhance the habitat quality, structure, diversity and ecological function of the cottonwood-sycamore riparian and oak woodland forest by restoring a native plant understory and mid-level canopy and augmenting the overstory tree canopy to support self-sustaining habitat communities.
- Improve the riverine habitat conditions to support the recovery of the Central California Coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) by removing barriers to fish passage and enhancing the quality and complexity of the creek habitat for spawning and rearing.
- Remove nonnative invasive plant species to support self-sustaining native plant communities including cottonwood-sycamore riparian forest and oak woodland.
- Maintain pre-project channel conveyance capacity and reconnect the stream to the floodplain.

These goals would be accomplished by implementing the following activities proposed as part of Phase 2:

- Restore approximately 1,400-foot reach of Stevens Creek on City-owned parkland by widening the channel, removing invasive plant species, and installing native plants from the watershed.
- Remove concrete and riprap channel lining and widen the creek eastward approximately 10 to 15 feet in a restoration reach approximately 580 feet long to create over 500 feet of pool and riffle stream habitat. The widened channel will include new in-stream bankfull benches and gentler slopes on the east bank (see Figure 2-4). The bankfull bench width will range from approximately 4 feet to 12 feet (bankfull benches are located above the low flow channel but are flooded during storm events). Channel features and fish habitat structures targeted at the federally threatened Central California Coast steelhead will be installed, including an anticipated:
  - 3 pool-riffle sequences
  - 1 log crib wall
  - 4 log jam fish habitat structures
  - 2 buried log habitat structures in backwater
- Create approximately 90 feet of new willow swale/backwater wetland habitat in the adjacent orchard.
- Remove invasive arundo donax, Himalayan blackberry, vinca and ivy.
- Install approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of riparian and wetland plants at the backwater wetland habitat and upper banks and along the restored stream channel.
- Install approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of oak woodland plants and understory to create edge habitat.

#### Creation or Restoration of Wetland and Riparian Habitat

The project will create riparian and backwater wetland habitat by laying back and widening the east bank by approximately 10 to 15 feet and excavating a backwater channel off the west bank of Stevens Creek. The newly excavated creek banks will be secured with boulder toe protection and a variety of logjam fish habitat structures, using the same techniques that were successfully implemented in Phase 1 of Cupertino's Stevens Creek Park and Restoration project completed in 2009. These actions will remove an impediment to fish passage during times of low flow (see Fish Barrier Removal below) and improve conditions for federally threatened steelhead and a variety of other special-status species (see Improvement of Special Status Species Habitat below). The newly created habitat will be planted and the existing tree canopy interplanted with approximately 50 plant species native to the Stevens Creek watershed. These new plants represent wetland, sycamore-cottonwood riparian forest and oak woodland species. The total area to be planted is estimated to be approximately  $1\frac{1}{4}$  acres. The new oak woodland plantings will be installed as a buffer and to improve habitat values between the creek channel and the Stevens Creek Trail alignment and to buffer the Blackberry Farm Golf Course which exists on the east bank. Buffer distances will vary depending upon the location, and on the west bank along the orchard portion of the Stocklmeir site may typically range between 10 and 25 feet. On the west bank along the orchard, it is estimated that native plantings zone may typically extend roughly 30 to 40 feet from the current channel centerline, however the planting width will vary depending on the specific site conditions and final design. On the east bank along the golf course, the restored in-channel creek banks will be planted with native species including riparian trees and shrubs. On the top of the east bank along the creek widening zone, a band of native plantings is anticipated that is compatible with golf play. Nonnative species will be removed as part of the project (see Section 2.5.5 Invasive/Exotic Plant Removal and Revegetation below). Cupertino will maintain the site after construction, and plans to monitor the progress of the restoration for up to 5 years.

### Improvement of Special Status Species Habitat

Stevens Creek is considered “critical habitat” for the federally threatened Central California Coast steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*). The site of the restoration is located within Santa Clara Valley Water District’s designated “Cold Water Management Zone” that is intended to support steelhead spawning and rearing. Steelhead inhabit this part of the creek as eggs, fry, young and mature adults returning to spawn. The project will improve conditions for this species at all stages throughout its life cycle. The project will also support a fully native fish assemblage that includes three-spined stickleback, Sacramento sucker and California roach. The project will create a pool and riffle stream channel and a new backwater and will restore the riparian forest and adjacent oak woodland. All of these elements are important enhancements for the native fish population as well as several other species of special concern.

The habitat improvements will support the Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*), San Francisco dusky-footed woodrat (*Neotoma fuscipes annectens*), big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) and Yuma myotis bat (*Myotis yumanensis*) populations that breed within the corridor. The stream enhancement will provide basking locations and improved foraging conditions for turtles. In 2009, staff found a Western pond turtle in the creek corridor for the first time in several years. The expanded restoration provided by Phase 2 will benefit this species. The diverse plant palette of approximately 50 locally collected and native plant species includes many foods favored by the dusky-footed woodrat. Well over 100 species of birds are found in the 60 acres of city-owned land along the creek. White-tailed Kites, Red-shouldered Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, American Kestrels, Western Screech Owls and Barn Owls are among the species known to nest along the creek in Cupertino. These raptors along with dozens of migratory birds and local reptiles and amphibians will benefit from the improved habitat. Widening the channel along the Blackberry Farm Golf Course and creating a backwater wetland within the Stocklmeir orchard will expand the riverine, riparian and transitional upland habitats for all species.

### Fish Barrier Removal

The Phase 2 project will remove failing riprap, gunite and concrete channel lining along the creek banks. Portions of the concrete lining have collapsed into the channel, creating scour and a vertical drop. This vertical drop has worsened and is now believed to be limiting juvenile steelhead movement during summer flows within spawning and rearing habitat (See Figure 5-5. Project Site Photos), as well as smaller size individuals of the other three native fish species that inhabit the creek. Juvenile steelhead and small native sucker, stickleback and roach may be trapped downstream of this barrier in the summer and unable to access the three miles of high quality habitat located upstream. Just upstream of the project site, outstanding habitat exists at McClellan Ranch Park and the restored creek reaches in Blackberry Farm Park, but it is believed inaccessible to juveniles except during higher flows. The Phase 2 project will remove the failing hardscape materials. All concrete and riprap will be removed from the banks and channel, except as required at outfalls, and will be replaced by earth and vegetation, selected boulders and log/rootwad structures [fish habitat] and a short log crib wall. The restored channel will have deep pool and riffle habitat with gravel beds to support spawning and will add large woody debris and native plants to support rearing.

#### *2.6.5 Invasive/Exotic Plant Removal and Revegetation Planting*

The nonnative giant reed (*Arundo donax*) along the creek bank in the Stocklmeir property will be removed and replaced with a backwater channel, as shown in Figure 2-3. New native planting will be installed along the east and west sides of the creek and on the restored creek bank areas, to enhance the existing riparian corridor and to improve habitat function and conditions. This planting, combined with the restored and improved habitat just upstream at

Blackberry Farm, is intended to result in increased value of the corridor for the animals that use this area.

Invasive and exotic plants would be removed throughout the project area and replaced with appropriate oak woodland and creekside plants and understory similar to Phase 1. The list of typical plant species to be used for revegetation and habitat enhancement have been determined based on existing native plants found along the creek, historical native plant species recorded along the creek, and species observed in similar tributary creeks within the watershed. The plant species to be used for revegetation have been further broken up into three habitat zones found along the creek (see Tables 2.6-1, 2.6-2, and 2.6-3, below). These habitat zones would be determined by elevation areas ranging from the waters' edge to the outer floodplain, groundwater hydrology and soil substrate. Intergradation of the plant palettes in each zone would occur as site conditions demand and a site-responsive plant layout would result.

**Table 2.6-1  
Zone 1 Low Riparian/ Within Bank Flow**

This is the first zone of planting, right above and within the ordinary high water (OHW) line. This zone occurs on the lower channel bars and waters' edge, lower bank, and lower bankfull benches located below the top of bank. (See Figure 2-4 for bankfull bench.) These species will generally be planted within 15 feet of the low-flow shoreline of the creek, so they can access water year-round, develop root structures that stabilize the channel banks and provide important instream shelter cover for fish, and reduce stream temperatures through shading of the creek. Typical species to be planted would include:

- Sand bar willow (*Salix exigua*)
- Mugwort (*Artemisia douglasiana*)
- Nut sedge (*Cyperus eragrostis*)
- Bulrush (*Scirpus microcarpus*)
- Willow-leaved dock (*Rumex salicifolius*)
- White alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*)
- Red willow (*Salix laevigata*)
- Arroyo willow (*Salix lasiolepis*)
- Black cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*)
- Wild grape (*Vitis californica*)
- American dogwood (*Cornus sericia*)
- Douglas' false-willow (*Baccharis douglasii*)
- Western sycamore (*Platanus racemosa*)

**Table 2.6-2  
Zone 2 Middle and High Terrace Riparian**

This zone is classified as the upper bankfull bench, upper bank, top of bank, and inner floodplain areas. The species in this zone can tolerate periodic to infrequent flooding, and are typically found on the upper creek banks, top of bank, and occasionally along the low flow shoreline. Typical species to be planted would include:

- Western virgin's-bower (*Clematis ligusticifolia*)
- California blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*)
- Valley oak (*Quercus lobata*)
- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)
- Snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*)
- California bay (*Umbellularia californica*)
- California buckeye (*Aesculus californica*)
- Wild rose (*Rosa californica*)
- Box elder (*Acer negundo*)
- Blue elderberry (*Sambucus mexicana*)
- Chaparral clematis (*Clematis lasiantha*)

**Table 2.6-3  
Zone 3 Upland/Meadow**

These species are found in outer floodplain areas and upland areas. Typical species to be planted would include:

- Coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*)
- Hollyleaf cherry (*Prunus ilicifolia*)
- Hillside gooseberry (*Ribes californicum*)
- Wild cucumber (*Marah fabaceus*)
- Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*)
- Osoberry (*Oemlaria cerasiformis*)
- Blue wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*)
- Purple needlegrass (*Nasella pulchra*)
- California melic (*Melica californica*)
- California brome (*Bromus carinatus*)

Specific revegetation within the project area includes the new backwater channel and portions of the creek banks. As with Phase 1, plants used for revegetation will be grown from locally derived stock to the extent feasible. The replacement ratio for the removal of coast live oak trees as a result of the project is 3:1 according to resource agency standards. Replacement of other riparian habitat would be according to a ratio specified during the Streambed Alteration Agreement process with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Temporary and permanent irrigation and plant quantities and plant establishment requirements would be specified in the plans and specifications documents prepared prior to construction.

#### Exotic Species Control and Removal

Part of enhancing the habitat within the project area would be to remove and/or control exotic plant species. Decreasing the acreage of exotic species found along the creek would increase the potential for quality native habitats to become established, and thus improve conditions for terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. Methods of removal vary greatly depending on the target species. Some methods that may be used include hand removal, use of selected herbicides that are safe for the setting, or mechanical removal (e.g. chainsaws, weed wackers).

## 2.7 Measures Included in the Project to Reduce or Avoid Impacts

### 2.7.1 Revegetation and Habitat Enhancement

Extensive revegetation and habitat enhancement are included as part of this project. This includes the installation of an estimated  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of wetland and riparian plants and an estimated  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of oak woodland plants and understory, as well as invasives/exotic species removal. See section 2.5.5 above. This revegetation and habitat enhancement which is included in the project design will offset the indirect impacts of increased human presence and dogs on leash within the corridor. The amount of revegetation and enhancement proposed for Phase 2 is greater in size than what was previously provided as mitigation for these indirect impacts in the original master plan. In the original master plan, one acre of new plantings was deemed to offset the indirect impacts for one mile of new trail, which included the  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of trail that is within this Phase 2 project. Also note that the Phase 1 project ultimately installed 6 acres of new native plantings, providing a considerable expansion of habitat beyond what was required.

### 2.7.2 Santa Clara Valley Water District BMPs

The 2005 Best Management Practices Handbook provides a list of Santa Clara Valley Water District's (District) Best Management Practices (BMPs) and references. The purpose is to assist environmental planners and project teams to identify measures that should be recommended for incorporation into project designs, and operation and maintenance activities to avoid, prevent, or minimize adverse environmental impacts (SCVWD 2005a). The Santa Clara Valley Water District (District) analyzed many of the same activities proposed in the restoration portion of this project. The District's Best Management Practices (BMPs) were approved by all the stakeholders and regulatory agencies that have jurisdictional authority over these activities. These BMP's are considered the latest approved and appropriate measures. To avoid or reduce project impacts on special status species, biological functions and values, hydrologic functions and values, and geologic functions, the contractor implementing this project would use the applicable BMPs. A listing of BMPs from the 2005 BMP Handbook that will be incorporated into this project as appropriate is found in Appendix A of this document.

### 2.7.3 BAAQMD Basic Construction Mitigation Measures

For all proposed projects, BAAQMD recommends implementing the *Basic Construction Mitigation Measures*, listed in Table 8-1 of the BAAQMD's CEQA Guidelines (Updated May 2011), to meet the best management practices threshold for dust, whether or not construction-related emissions exceed applicable thresholds. This project will implement the following measures based on the BAAQMD guidelines.

1. Water exposed surfaces (e.g., unpaved parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas, and unpaved access roads) daily or as needed for dust control.
2. Cover haul trucks transporting soil, sand, or other loose material off-site.
3. Use vacuum street sweepers or other suitable method daily or as required to remove visible mud or dirt track-out onto adjacent public roads.
4. Vehicle speeds on unpaved roads shall not exceed 15 mph.
5. Roadways, driveways, and sidewalks to be paved shall be completed as soon as feasible.
6. Minimize equipment idling times to 5 minutes.
7. Properly maintain and tune all construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.
8. Post a publicly visible sign with the telephone number and person to contact regarding dust problems.

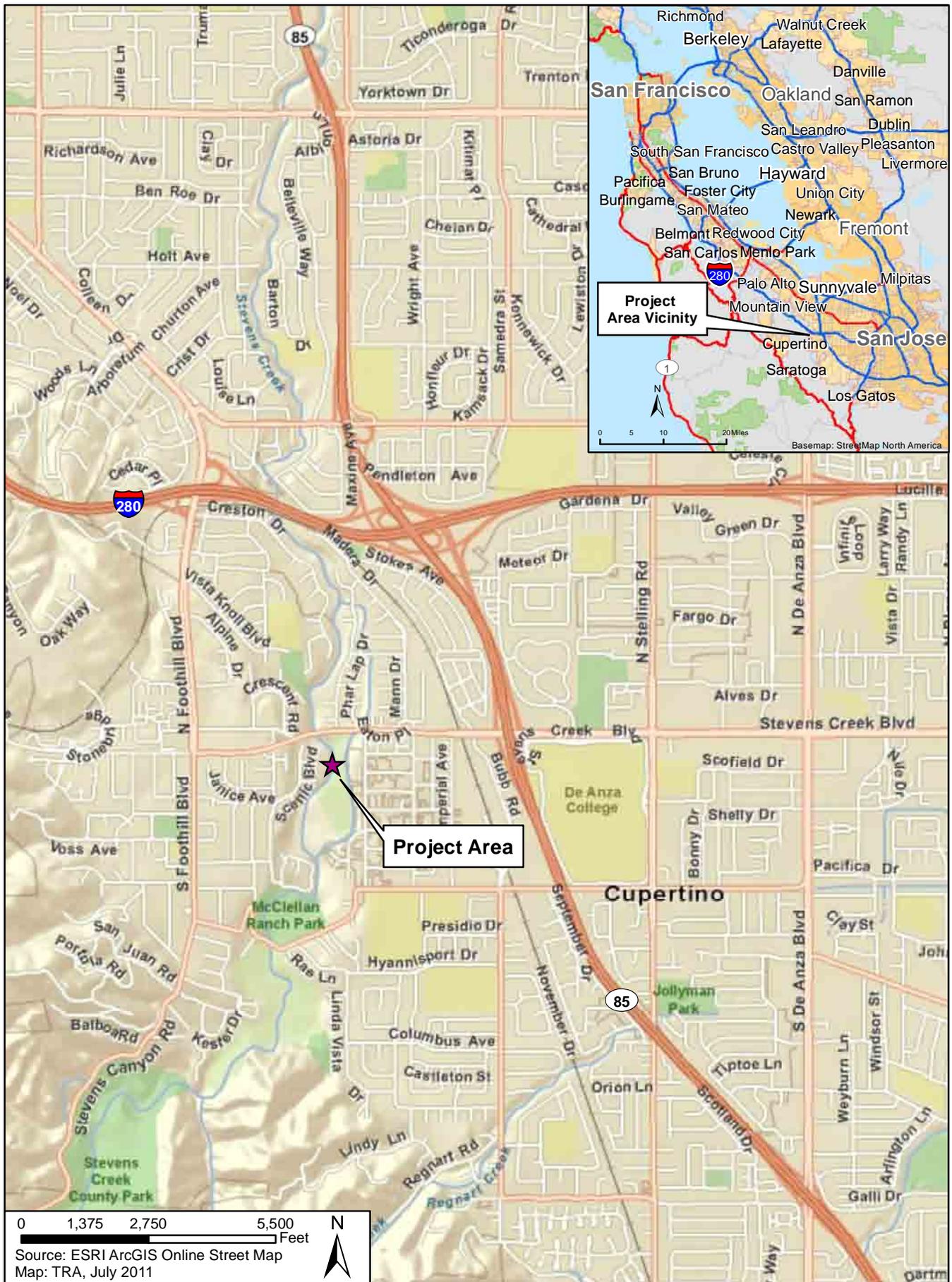
#### 2.7.4 Stormwater Quality BMPs

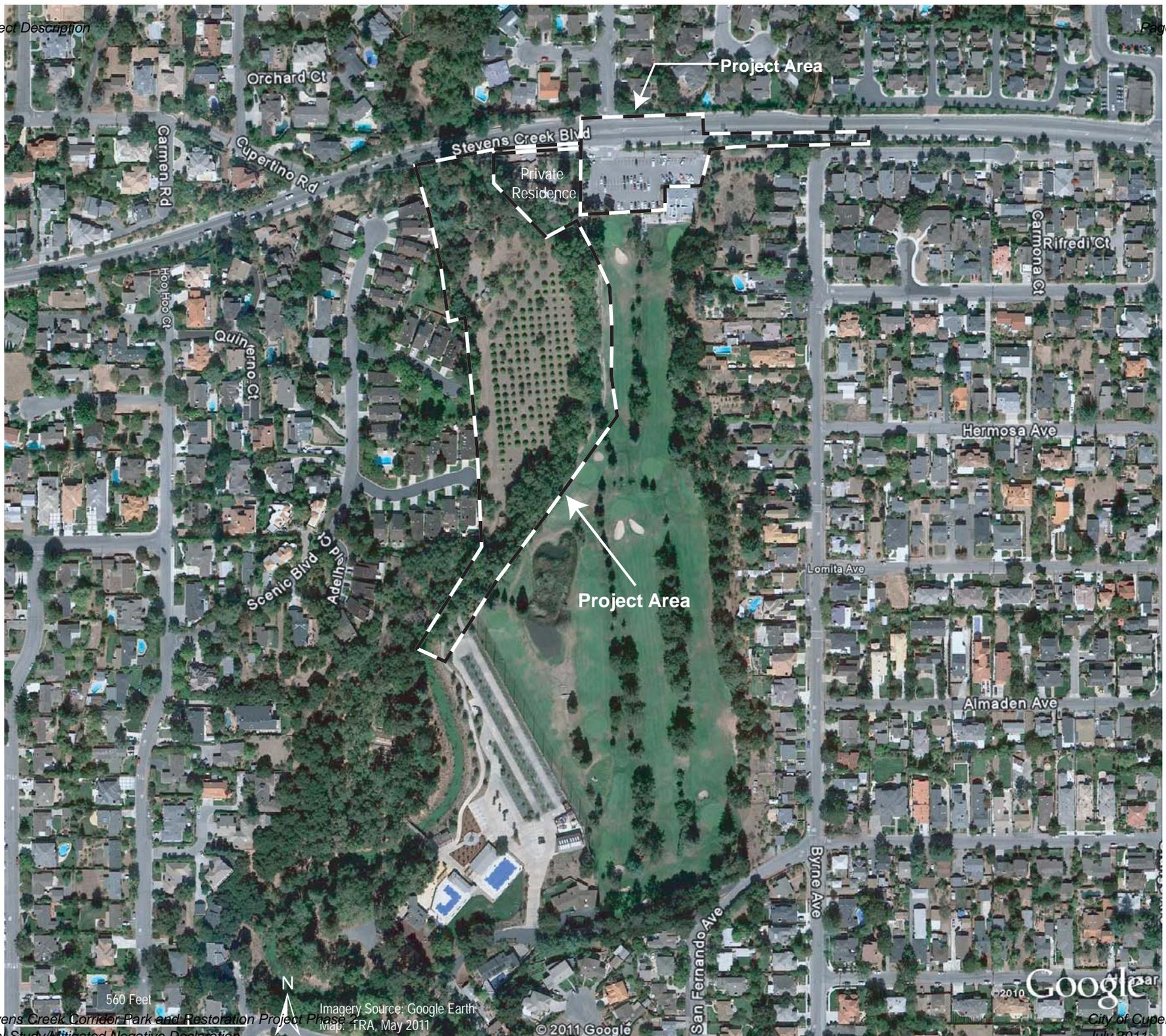
Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program lists BMPs through “Blueprint for a Clean Bay” (Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (2004). These BMPs include: dewatering the site, using cofferdams or dikes (as appropriate); placing silt fences on the downslope along the trail construction zone; and scheduling construction activities for periods of dry weather if feasible. These BMPs would be in the project specifications and preconstruction BMPs must be in evidence before construction commences. The Contractor would be responsible for implementing all BMPs as required. City of Cupertino would be responsible for confirming that BMPs are in evidence.

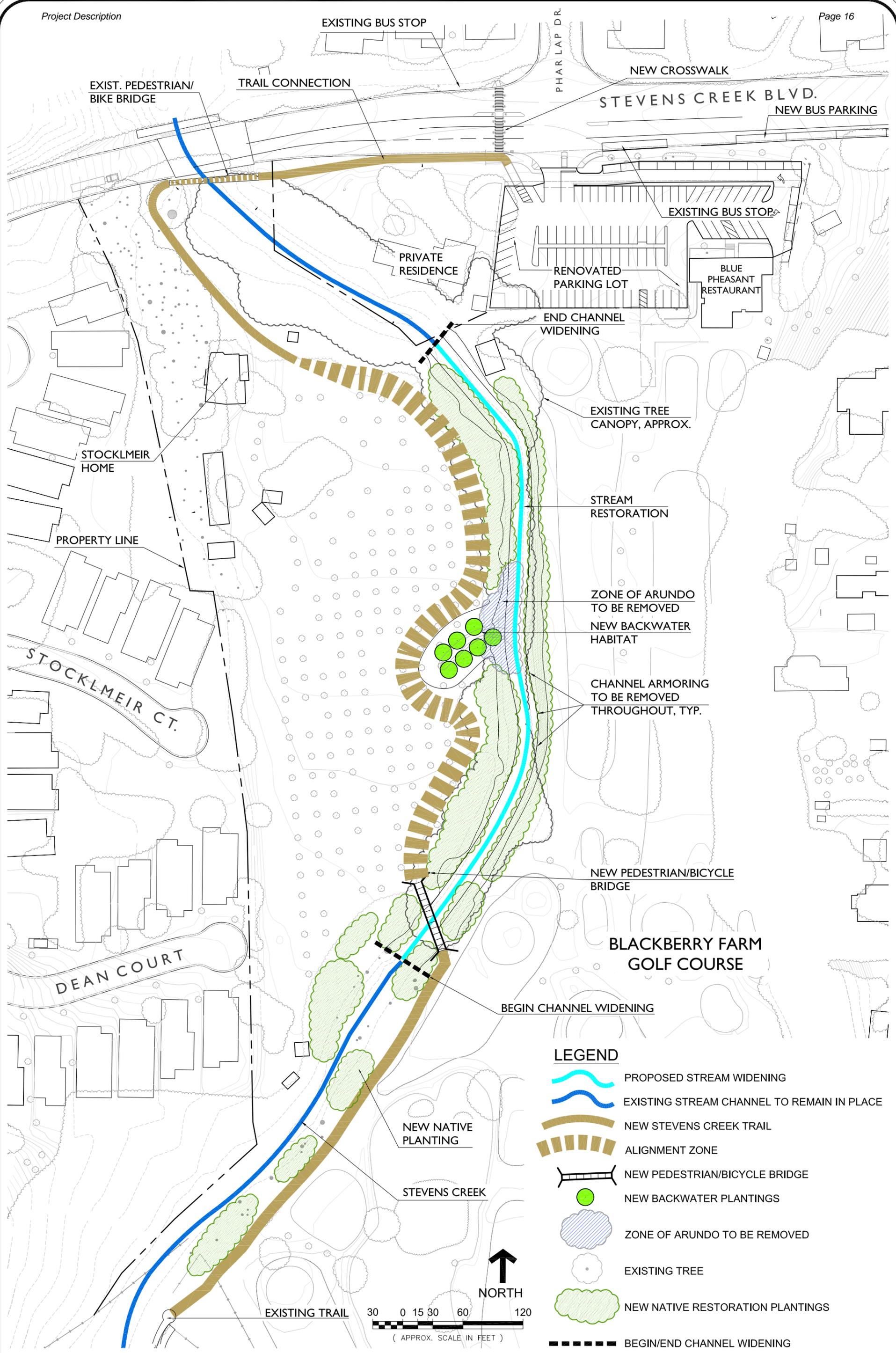
### 2.8 Permits and Approvals Required

The following permits or approvals are expected to be required for this project:

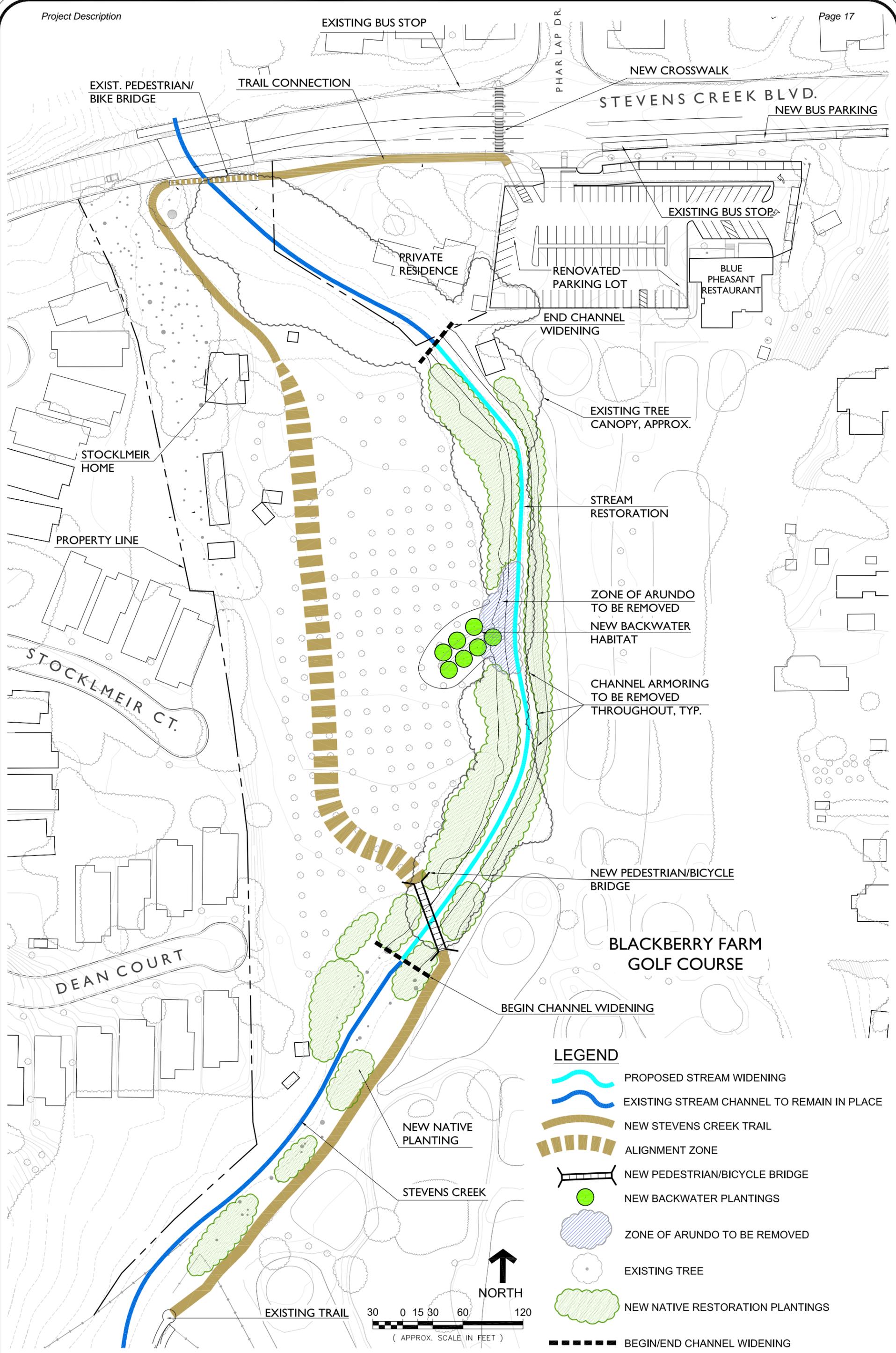
- Army Corps of Engineers Clean Water Act Section 404 Nationwide or Individual Permit
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA Fisheries) Biological Opinion
- Regional Water Quality Control Board Section 401 Water Quality Certification/Waiver
- California Department of Fish and Game 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Santa Clara Valley Water District Encroachment/Construction Permit as needed
- Cupertino Sanitary District (for relocation of sanitary sewer line for creek realignment)
- City of Cupertino Streamside Permit



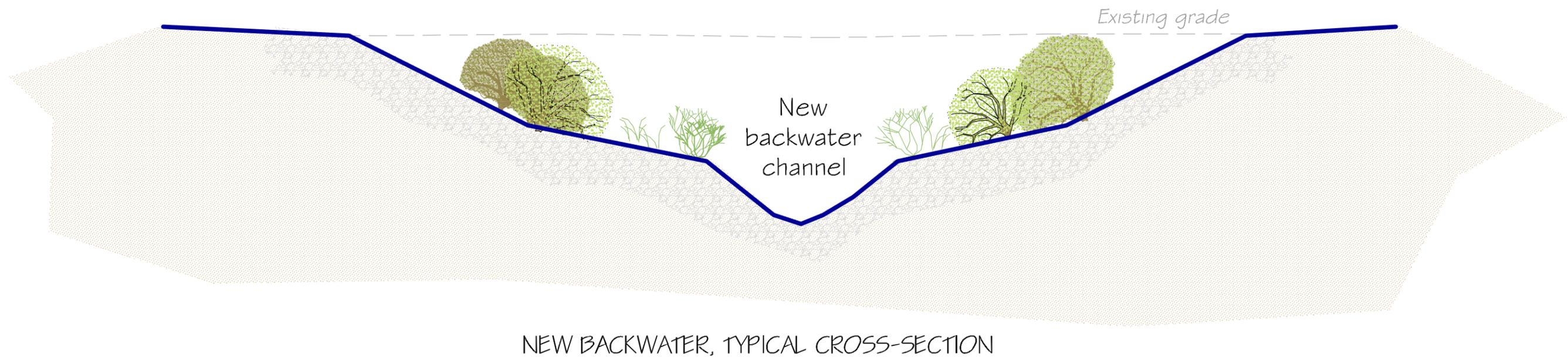
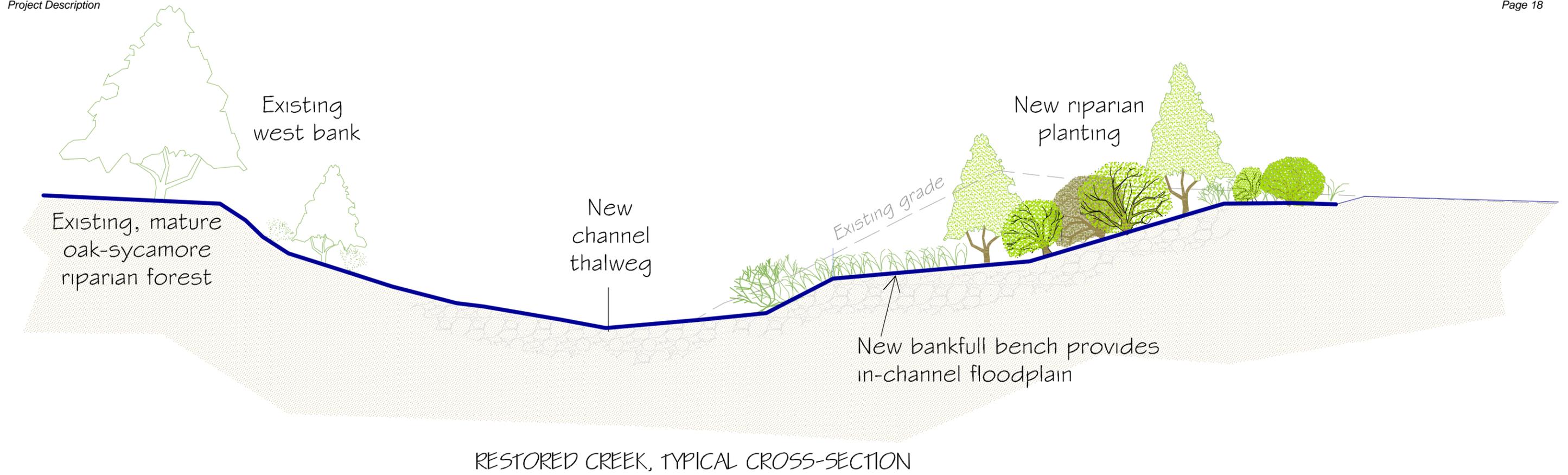




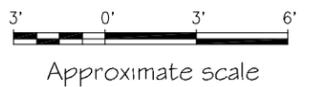
**STEVENS CREEK CORRIDOR PARK AND RESTORATION PROJECT  
PHASE 2 SITE PLAN - EASTERN TRAIL ALIGNMENT ZONE**



**STEVENS CREEK CORRIDOR PARK AND RESTORATION PROJECT  
 PHASE 2 SITE PLAN - WESTERN TRAIL ALIGNMENT ZONE**



**Figure 2-4. Stevens Creek Corridor Park and Restoration Project, Phase II Channel and Backwater Cross Sections Stevens Creek, City of Cupertino**



### Figure 2-5. Site Photos



Photo 1.  
View of east side of the orchard on the Stockmeir property, looking south.

Photo 2.  
View of Stockmeir orchard (right) and creekside vegetation (left), looking south.



Photo 3.  
Stockmeir property driveway, looking south.

### Figure 2-5. Site Photos (continued)



Photo 4.

Concrete channel lining armors much of the east bank of Stevens Creek along the Blackberry Farm Golf Course.

View of creek channel looking upstream.



Photo 5. Concrete channel lining is failing on part of the east bank and has fallen into the creek channel. View of creek channel looking downstream.

Photo 6.

View of Stevens Creek near north/downstream end of golf course looking upstream, at location of Photo 5 above.



Figure 2-5. Site Photos (continued)



Photo 7. Blackberry Farm Golf Course along east bank of creek, view looking south/upstream.



Photo 8. Blackberry Farm Golf Course along east bank of creek, view looking south/upstream.



Photo 9. View of the existing parking lot at the Blackberry Farm Golf Course and Blue Pheasant Restaurant.