

Board backs pursuit of fed grant for flood control

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / February 28, 2025

Calaveras County's Board of Supervisors unanimously backed the initial step Tuesday to achieve a long-term solution to flooding along Cosgrove Creek.

On a 5-0 vote, the board gave the green light to apply for a \$900,000 federal grant to begin planning to develop a solution to flooding along the creek that has occurred repeatedly over the last 25 years and as recent as January of 2023.

If successful in the grant application process, the county will have to contribute a \$300,000 match.

"This is a first step we're taking," said District 1 Supervisor Gary Tofanelli. "We've tried other things in the past and we keep committing money to clean out the creek."

Clearing the creek of vegetation so far this rainy season has been successful, Tofanelli added. Although, "I was kind of freaking out" during the recent heavy rains.

However, providing a project that would be a permanent solution, "is a step in the right direction if we can get a shovel ready job," he said, and just getting plans in hand could open the door for other funding sources.

District 5 Supervisor Benjamin Stopper agreed with Tofanelli and said the recent vegetation clearing work helped "mitigate the issue" during the latest heavy rains.

The creek runs through Tofanelli's and Stopper's districts.

The application will go to the California Office of Emergency Services before being considered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Any award or agreement for the grant would come at the end of 2026.

In all, it could take five to eight years before a flood relief project would be completed.

The initial thought for a permanent solution to the flooding has been building a water retention basin on Calaveras County Water District property at State Route 26 and Hogan Dam Road.

Such a project would serve a dual purpose, according to Tofanelli, as a recreation site for children after each rainy season.