

ROSS VALLEY FLOOD PROTECTION AND WATERSHED PROGRAM

Storm Drainage Fee Update Report



Marin County
Town of Fairfax
City of Larkspur
Town of Ross
Town of San Anselmo

June 2026

Prepared by:
Kristin Lowell, Inc.

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Attachment A: Owner Listing

CERTIFICATES

The undersigned respectfully submits the enclosed Final Storm Drainage Fee Update Report as directed by the Board of Supervisors of the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

Dated: June 12, 2026

TERRANCE E. LOWELL, P.E.,
for Kristin Lowell Inc.,
Engineer of Work

By Terrance E Lowell

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the enclosed Final Storm Drainage Fee Update Report was filed with me on the _____ day of _____, 2026.

Carla Kacmar, Assistant Clerk of the Board, County of
Marin, California

By _____

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the enclosed Final Storm Drainage Fee Update Report was approved and confirmed by the Board of Supervisors of the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, on the _____ day of _____, 2026.

Carla Kacmar, Assistant Clerk of the Board, County of
Marin, California

By _____

ENGINEER'S STATEMENT

This Report is prepared and submitted, as directed by the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors ("District BOS"), pursuant to the Health and Safety Code Section 5473.1, as supplemented by Article XIID Section 6 of the California Constitution.

The program which is subject of this report will be designed to:

Reduce damage due to flooding; maintain natural creek functions; reduce pollutants entering the Bay; incorporate habitat enhancements; and improve fish passage.

Fiscal Year 2026/27 represents the final year of the authorized storm drainage fee program, and therefore the final year in which the fee will be levied and collected. The estimated budget for the flood protection and stormwater management programs to be funded during Fiscal Year 2026/27 is provided in Exhibit B.

Funding for these programs and improvements will continue to be generated through the property-based storm drainage fee assessed on parcels that contribute runoff to the Ross Valley Watershed. The fee for each parcel is calculated in accordance with the methodology adopted as part of the original fee program. A detailed description of the assessment methodology, including the basis for allocating costs among benefiting parcels, is provided in Exhibit C.

This report includes the following attached exhibits:

EXHIBIT A: Description of the program.

EXHIBIT B: The estimate of the program cost to be financed through the fee program.

EXHIBIT C: A statement of the method by which the undersigned determined the proposed storm drainage fee to be charged against each parcel, based on the relative stormwater runoff.

EXHIBIT D: A list of the names and Assessor Parcel Numbers of the owners of real property along with the proposed fee.

Respectfully submitted,



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terrance E. Lowell".

TERRANCE E. LOWELL, P.E.

ANNUAL UPDATE and FEE EXPIRATION

In July 2007, the District Board of Supervisors approved the levy of a storm drainage fee on parcels that contribute runoff to the Ross Valley Watershed. The purpose of the fee was to fund a portion of the ongoing costs associated with the District's flood protection and stormwater management programs, which are designed to reduce flooding risks, protect public and private property, maintain drainage infrastructure, and enhance the overall resiliency of the watershed. A detailed breakdown of the programs and associated costs funded through the fee is provided in Exhibit A.

At the time of approval, the storm drainage fee was established with a twenty-year term to provide a stable and dedicated funding source for these critical services and capital improvements. Consistent with the original authorization, the fee is scheduled to sunset at the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2026/27, unless further action is taken by the District in accordance with applicable legal and procedural requirements.

Any revenues collected through the storm drainage fee that remain unexpended at the conclusion of Fiscal Year 2026/27 shall continue to be restricted for use on eligible flood protection, stormwater management, drainage maintenance, and watershed improvement activities within the Ross Valley Watershed. Because these revenues were collected from parcels that contribute runoff to the watershed and receive the benefits of the District's flood protection and stormwater management programs, any remaining funds will be used exclusively for projects, services, and improvements that provide drainage, flood protection, and watershed management benefits to those same parcels and the watershed area from which the revenues were generated.

The expiration of the fee authority does not affect the District's ability to expend previously collected revenues for their authorized purposes. Any remaining fund balance may be allocated toward future capital improvements, infrastructure rehabilitation, drainage system maintenance, flood mitigation projects, environmental enhancements, or other watershed-related activities identified through the District's planning and capital improvement programs. The continued use of these funds for eligible projects will ensure that the benefits derived from the fee extend beyond the final year of collection, while maintaining a direct relationship between the properties that funded the program and the improvements and services received. All expenditures of remaining funds shall be subject to the District's normal budgeting, reporting, and oversight procedures.

As part of the annual administration of the storm drainage fee, the District is required to prepare and approve an annual report authorizing the levy of the fee for the upcoming fiscal year. The annual report summarizes the programs and services funded by the fee, identifies the proposed revenue and expenditures, and confirms the fee amounts to be levied on benefited parcels.

Pursuant to the fee authorization, the District may increase the fee by up to three percent (3%) annually to account for rising program and operational costs. For Fiscal Year 2026/27, however, the District Board of Supervisors has elected not to implement an annual increase. Accordingly, the storm drainage fee rates for all land use classifications will remain unchanged from the prior fiscal year.

EXHIBIT A: PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

History

The Ross Valley Watershed experienced flooding from a storm resulting in a 100-year flood on December 31, 2005. Engineers use that term to describe a storm that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year, not a storm that occurs only once in 100 years. In fact, Ross Valley has experienced two 100-year storms since 1980 (1982 and 2005). Much of Ross Valley's drainage system currently provides a 6-year level of flood protection, meaning that it can be overwhelmed by a storm that has a 16.7% chance of occurring in any year.

After the 2005 flood event, the Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) led efforts to create the Ross Valley Flood Protection & Watershed Program (Program), a multi-jurisdictional, regional effort with the District as the lead agency. The Program was developed as a partnership between the District, County of Marin, Towns of Fairfax, San Anselmo, Ross, and City of Larkspur along with the unincorporated communities of Greenbrae, Kentfield, Sleepy Hollow and Oak Manor.

In 2007, property owners in Ross Valley voted to assess themselves the Stormwater Drainage fee each year for 20 years. In March 2024, residents of the Town of San Anselmo voted to withdraw from Ross Valley Flood Zone 9 via Measure F. The vote results have no impact on the projects that are currently underway due to prior agreements that were executed when San Anselmo was an active member of Flood Zone 9.

The overall mission of the Program is to substantially reduce the frequency and severity of flooding throughout the Ross Valley Watershed in an economically viable manner while prioritizing public safety and minimizing environmental impacts.

The fees collected since 2007 have accomplished the following:

Watershed Planning, Outreach, and Administration

- ✓ Ross Valley Watershed Program \$2 million, including:
 - Capital Improvement Plan Study (2011) outlining measures that could achieve a 100-year level of flood protection (1% chance of occurring in any one year) across the entire watershed
 - A 10-Year Work Plan (2012) outlining a subset of the Capital Improvement Plan Study measures in addition to several additional measures required to achieve 25-year flood protection (4% chance of occurring in any one year) across all areas of the watershed
- ✓ Outreach and Administration \$3 million, including community and advisory board meetings

Engineering and Feasibility Studies

- ✓ Corte Madera Creek Units 2, 3, and 4 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) \$2 million
- ✓ Phoenix Lake IRWM Project \$3.3 million
- ✓ Detention Basin Studies (Lefty Gomez, Loma Alta Preserve, Deer Park, and Memorial Park) \$1 million
- ✓ Sleepy Hollow Creek/Morningside Feasibility Study (within Town of San Anselmo) \$100,000

- ✓ Lower Corte Madera Creek Project (includes Local Levee Evaluation and dredging studies in Larkspur) \$4.3 million - assessed the condition of the levee and creek system downstream of the concrete channel and provided recommendations for improvements.

Capital Improvement Projects

- ✓ San Anselmo Flood Risk Reduction \$19.1 million - Sunnyside Detention Basin Construction, Design, and Environmental Compliance
- ✓ Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management Project \$8.6 million - Pump Station and Access Ramp Construction, Design & Environmental Compliance
- ✓ Hillview Pump Station and Storm Drain Project \$1million – led by City of Larkspur with funding from the fee measure and Caltrans

Coordination with Cities and Towns on Creek and Bridge Improvements

- ✓ Creek Enhancement \$1.5 million - Implementation of a coordinated creek enhancement program to help Ross Valley cities and towns to manage debris, sediment, and flow-restricting vegetation.
- ✓ Culvert Inspections, Replacements and Repairs \$250,000
- ✓ Bridge Projects with City and Town Partners \$2 million - in which the District partnered with the Towns of Ross, San Anselmo, and Fairfax to advance final design and environmental review for bridge upgrades that will improve creek flow and reduce flooding, with Caltrans funding secured for seven of the bridges.

Leveraging fee funds with outside agencies to fund work on several program projects:

- ✓ Caltrans (bridge funding to reduce creek obstructions in Towns of Fairfax, Ross, San Anselmo, and to construct a new pump station in City of Larkspur),
- ✓ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corte Madera Creek Project, Units 2, and 3, and 4), and
- ✓ Department of Water Resources (San Anselmo Flood Risk Reduction Project, Phoenix Lake Prop 1E Grant Migration, and Local Levee Evaluation Program for Lower Corte Madera Creek and Units 2 and 3 of the Corte Madera Creek Project).
- ✓ American Rescue Plan Act funds for restoration of lower Corte Madera Creek (construction currently underway).
- ✓ Marin County Emergency Preparedness funds – Installed new gauges and upgraded rain and stream gauges, along with associated websites, to improve weather data reporting and enhance emergency response.

Program Goals and Objectives

The initial goal of the Program's first 20 years was to increase the existing 6-year level of protection to between 10-year and 25-year level of flood protection. The District intended to meet these goals through the following actions:

- Increase creek and floodplain capacity to convey floodwaters by:
 - Enlarging some channels through the removal, modification or replacement of existing obstructions to flow, such as structures or bridges
 - Containing flood flows as they move through the watershed
 - Conducting regular creek and channel maintenance

- Reduce and attenuate flows by increasing floodplain detention storage and stormwater infiltration
- Community flood education including flood preparedness real-time rain and stream monitoring, flood response checklists and information

However, due to community opposition, several of the planned floodplain detention storage facilities have been removed from the Program and therefore the 10-year and 25-year level of flood protection may not be achievable with the funds available under the current voter approved storm drainage fee Measure.

Subsequent program phases depend on securing funding sources such as grants and a renewal of the storm drainage fee for the typically required local matching funds and could focus on work toward achieving a target goal of 25-year to 100-year level of flood protection. It must be noted that higher levels of flood protection will require community acceptance of converting single-purpose public open spaces, parks, and ball fields into multipurpose facilities with periodic flood storage capacity.

Proposed Projects and Program Activities

The Ross Valley Watershed Storm drainage fee, along with the other funding sources listed above, will support the continued development and implementation of the projects and activities outlined in the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Work Plan, described in more detail below. The District may explore financing options this fiscal year to ensure necessary cash flow is available during anticipated project construction.

Please visit the Program website at <https://marinflooddistrict.org/flood-control-zone-9-ross-valley/> for more information.

1. Corte Madera Creek Flood Risk Management Project

The goal of this project is to reduce the frequency and severity of flooding and to protect human life and property in the communities of Ross and Kentfield by enhancing and improving Corte Madera Creek. The project has made improvements to the concrete channel that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) built in the 1960-70s. The project area starts upstream at Lagunitas Road in the Town of Ross and ends downstream at the earthen channel in Kentfield. The proposed channel improvements reduce flood risk for the 25-year flood event to residents and businesses within the Town of Ross and Kentfield. The project includes elements that would increase flow conveyance capacity, provide flood protection, and enhance habitat within Corte Madera Creek.

The project includes these elements:

- *Natural Channel Transition and Raised Floodwalls:* Remove a fish ladder and lower the channel within Unit 4 to remove an impediment to flood flow and install taller floodwalls in Units 2 and 3 to control flood flows
- *Fish Resting Pool Improvements:* Create larger fish resting pools within the concrete channel in Unit 3 to improve fish passage

- *Granton Park Pump Station*: Install a stormwater pump station to control flooding in the Granton Park neighborhood (constructed 2024) and a maintenance access ramp (constructed 2023)
- *Lower College of Marin Restoration*: Remove portions of the concrete channel from Stadium Way downstream to the natural earthen channel to improve fish and wildlife habitat (constructed 2025)

In Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the locally led project incorporated input from previous public workshops and community feedback to produce a Final EIR and complete the CEQA process.

In Fiscal Year 2022-2023 coordination with District Partners including Town of Ross, College of Marin, Friends of Corte Madera Creek, and regulatory agencies finalized the project plans and specifications and constructed some portions of the overall project that did not require FEMA review. The District submitted environmental permitting applications and worked with the US Army Corps of Engineers for Title 33 United States Code Section 408 approval, as established under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, to modify the existing Corps project.

In Fiscal Year 2023-24 the District completed the Granton Park stormwater pump station construction.

In Fiscal Year 2024-25 the District finalized the project design plans and specifications for the Lower College of Marin Restoration construction component and advertised the contracting opportunity. Temporary construction easements with College of Marin were finalized and Permanent real estate easement acquisitions continued within Unit 4 natural channel reach between concrete channel and Lagunitas Road Bridge. The District worked with consultants to prepare submittals for the hydraulic model of project design elements for FEMA review to allow Unit 4 construction.

In Fiscal Year 2025-26, the Lower College of Marin Restoration component was constructed. Analysis was performed for the CLOMR application to FEMA associated with fish ladder removal, Unit 4 improvements, and fish resting pools. Results of this analysis led to a pause in the project to reassess public and stakeholder priorities for the CMCFRMP.

In Fiscal Year 2026-27, it is anticipated that the assessment of public and stakeholder priorities will be concluded and implementation of a plan, based on that input will take place. Possible outcomes include: continue flood risk reduction proposed where feasible (e.g., habitat improvements, such as fish resting pools, and flow improvements, such as fish ladder removal); invest in tidal flood protection; maintain and repair existing infrastructure; provide assistance to property owners after flooding; and reserve funds for future projects. Additionally, post-construction monitoring and maintenance will be performed for the Lower College of Marin Restoration.

Learn more by visiting the project page: <https://marinflooddistrict.org/corte-madera-creek-flood-risk-management-project/>

2. San Anselmo Flood Risk Reduction Project

The District has been working since 2016 on the San Anselmo Flood Risk Reduction Project (SAFRR), which is a significant and complex effort to protect lives and property by decreasing flood risk during severe storms. The SAFRR Project reduces flood risk by attenuating peak flows and by removing major obstructions to creek flow. These improvements will help reduce flood risk for over 500 properties and support the Town of San Anselmo future Creekside Park Project.

The project includes these elements:

- The completed Flood Diversion and Storage (FDS) Basin, at 3000 Sir Francis Drake Blvd in Fairfax. The FDS Basin detains overflows from Fairfax Creek in an off-line facility at the former Sunnyside Nursery
- The future removal of Building Bridge 2 (BB2) with creek bank stabilization, at 634 San Anselmo Avenue in San Anselmo. BB2 is a major hydraulic constriction and obstruction in San Anselmo Creek at high flowrates, which exacerbates historic flooding in Downtown San Anselmo and the Town of Ross
- The future flood mitigation of privately owned structures along San Anselmo Creek, just downstream of BB2
- The completed off-site habitat mitigation site at San Geronimo Park located along San Geronimo Creek, west of Woodacre.

In Fiscal Year 2020-21, the buildings on top of BB2 were demolished and construction began on the Sunnyside FDS Basin.

In Fiscal Year 2021-22, construction continued on the Sunnyside FDS Basin.

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, construction was completed, plantings were installed, and post-construction monitoring began at the FDS Basin. The offsite mitigation planting plan at San Geronimo Park was also developed.

In Fiscal Year 2023-24, BB2 Removal was designed. Additional mitigation plantings were installed at the FDS Basin and San Geronimo Park and the first annual monitoring report was completed.

In Fiscal Year 2024-25, a geomorphic repair was constructed adjacent to the FDS Basin outfall in Fairfax Creek. Additionally, the Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) application for BB2 Removal was developed for FEMA review. Post-construction monitoring and maintenance was performed for the FDS Basin and San Geronimo Park.

In Fiscal Year 2025-26, the District conducted public outreach efforts to help the community understand how the CLOMR application was developed. The District responded to comments from FEMA on the CLOMR application and was informed by FEMA that until evidence of mitigation action has been completed and received, FEMA will not issue a LOMR. Many downstream property owners did agree to the proposed downstream mitigations, but a few refused. Without a path forward, the District ended the BB2 Removal element of the SAFRR project. Post-construction monitoring and maintenance was performed for the FDS Basin and San Geronimo Park.

In Fiscal Year 2026-27, it is anticipated the District will evaluate whether grant funds intended for BB2 Removal can be used for other flood risk reduction improvements, including for tidal flooding. Additionally, post-construction monitoring and maintenance will be performed for the FDS Basin and San Geronimo Park.

Learn more by visiting the project page: <https://marinflooddistrict.org/san-anselmo-flood-risk-reduction-project/>

EXHIBIT B: COST ESTIMATE

The following table identifies the *approximate* cost to provide the program related work as outlined in Exhibit A for Fiscal Year 2026/27.

Program Description	Program Cost
Flood Protection Programs FY 2026/27	\$2,900,000*
Total Cost Assigned to FY 2026/27 Fee	\$2,622,865

* On January 28, 2026, the advisory board recommended a 2-year baseline budget for fiscal years 2026-27 and 2027-28 which can be found on the District website:

[Zone 9 Advisory Board Meeting: January 28, 2026 – Marin County Flood Control District](#)

Baseline budgets cover standard operation and maintenance expenses and staff time working on projects but DO NOT include major project expenses as those vary significantly from year to year. When a construction or design contract is approved by the Board of Supervisors, an accompanying budget adjustment must be approved as well since that work is outside the baseline budget. The advisory board makes recommendations for these budget adjustments in addition to recommending the baseline budgets.

**** Total remaining estimated cost for projects approved and underway, described in Exhibit A, is \$14.2M. The total remaining expected grant revenue for projects approved and underway is \$5.8M.**

EXHIBIT C: FEE METHODOLOGY

General

The Health and Safety Code allows the District BOS to charge a fee for acquiring, constructing, reconstructing, maintaining, and operating storm drainage facilities. As discussed in Exhibit A, the District has outlined the intended storm drainage improvement programs to alleviate the localized flooding. In order to fund these improvements, the District intends to levy a fee to parcels that drain into the watershed.

Fee Methodology

The fee for each property is related to how much stormwater runoff it generates. Land that is developed, for example, with a house, commercial building, or parking lot, creates more stormwater runoff than a vacant piece of land. The more hard surface coverage a parcel has the more “impervious” area and stormwater runoff it generates. Typically, the smaller sized developed parcels have a higher impervious factor than the larger size developed parcels with the same amount of hard surface coverage. The reason being is that the smaller size parcel has less undeveloped ground to absorb the stormwater. Generally, an impervious surface is a hardened surface (concrete, rooftop, asphalt, compacted gravel, etc.) that does not absorb stormwater. Such features do not allow stormwater to soak into the ground thereby generating runoff. This runoff may increase the potential for flooding, pollutants flowing into the water basin and lower stream base flows, and decreased infiltration of storm water into the soil.

Even though every parcel drains into and uses the storm drainage system, not all parcels use the system to the same degree. To determine the benefit relationship between the parcels we assign a “Basic Drainage Unit” (BDU) factor to every parcel. In this way we relate the single-family parcel, the most common land use, to all other land use types; multi-family, condominium/townhome, commercial/industrial. The median single-family parcel in the Watershed is approximately 0.19 acres with an average impervious factor of 31%. As an example, a parcel consisting of a completely impervious parking lot without any landscaping would be considered 100% impervious. Within each land use type, we have further defined parcel sizes into 5 size categories. Each land use type is separated into the following parcel size categories, in acres.

0 - 0.15,
0.151 - 0.25,
0.251 - 0.50,
0.501 – 1.0,
1.0 and greater.

Each land use type also has distinct impervious surfaces by size category. The following table illustrates the BDUs for each land use type by size category and basic drainage unit factors.

Basic Drainage Unit (BDU) Factors

Acres	Single Family, BDU	Condos/ Townhomes, BDU	Multi Family, BDU	Commercial/ Industrial, BDU
0.0 - 0.150	0.862	0.240	0.687	1.251
0.151 - 0.250	1.000	0.879	1.120	2.300
0.251 - 0.500	1.183	0.000	1.577	5.168
0.501 - 1.00	1.684	0.000	2.418	9.130
> 1.01	2.791	0.000	Individual*	Individual*

*Individual BDU calculation is described in 'Fee Calculation' section below.

Fee Calculation

As discussed, each parcel is assigned a BDU factor. One BDU will receive a stormwater fee amount of \$153.76. That is to say that a single-family parcel in the 0.151 - 0.25 size category will be charged a fee of \$153.76. Whereas a condo/townhome parcel in the 0 - 0.15 size category will be charged a fee of \$36.92 because its BDU factor is 0.240 ($\$153.76 \times 0.240 = \$36.92$). All land use types, and size categories are calculated in a similar manner with each receiving a unique fee amount. *Note: the BDU and fee amounts are rounded to the third and second decimal place respectively which may vary slightly when calculated by hand.* Single Family Residence fees are capped at \$221.40. Because of the unique characteristics and development of the parcels greater than one acre for multi-family and commercial/industrial, each of those parcel's fee amounts will be calculated individually. The individual calculation for multi-family commercial/industrial parcels greater than one acre incorporates the acreage, impervious percentage of the individual property, and single BDU cost of \$153.76 to determine the individual fee amount.

The following tables illustrate the fee amount for each land use type and size category.

Single Family:

Acres	Drainage Fee per BDU	# of Parcels in Range
0.0 - 0.150	\$132.48	3,402
0.151 - 0.250	\$153.76	4,319
0.251 - 0.500	\$181.86	2,710
0.501 - 1.00	\$221.40	1,235
> 1.01	\$221.40	740

Condos/Townhomes:

Acres	Drainage Fee per BDU	# of Parcels in Range
0.0 - 0.150	\$36.92	1,579
0.151 - 0.250	\$135.08	6
0.251 - 0.500	\$0.00	0
0.501 - 1.00	\$0.00	0
> 1.01	\$0.00	0

Multi Family:

Acres	Drainage Fee per BDU	# of Parcels in Range
0.0 - 0.150	\$105.64	235
0.151 - 0.250	\$172.20	232
0.251 - 0.500	\$242.38	120
0.501 - 1.00	\$371.80	41
> 1.01	Individual	24

Commercial/Industrial:

Acres	Drainage Fee per BDU	# of Parcels in Range
0.0 - 0.150	\$192.32	167
0.151 - 0.250	\$353.56	75
0.251 - 0.500	\$794.50	84
0.501 - 1.00	\$1,403.62	51
> 1.01	Individual	43

EXHIBIT D: OWNER LISTING and FEE AMOUNT

The total estimated fee revenue for Fiscal Year 2026/27 is \$2,622,865.

The complete owner's listing and fee amounts are included in Attachment A.