



# PRFMA News

## Levee Project Construction to Begin in 2024

Late last month, local, state and federal officials celebrated the signing of the Project Partnership Agreement for the \$599 million Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project. Starting in 2024, work will begin to build and improve levees along the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks. The project will be fully funded by state and federal agencies, a first for a project of its kind in California.

### Questions?

### CONTACT US!

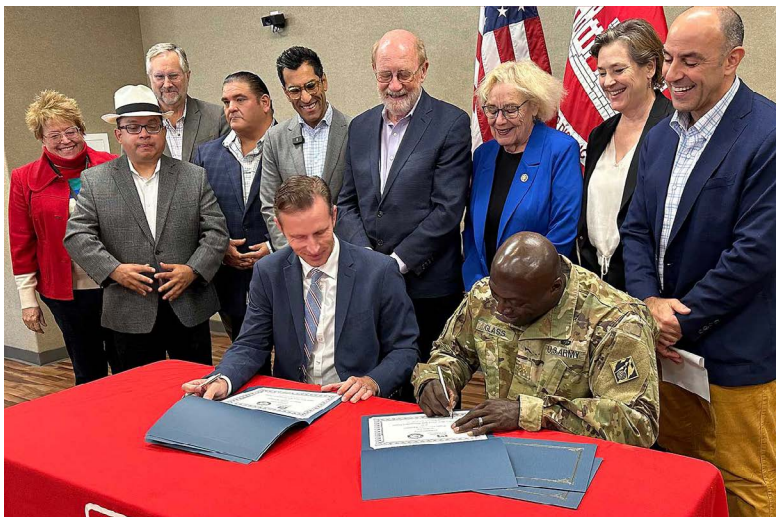


English  
**(831) 204-3769**

Spanish / Español  
**(831) 204-3000**



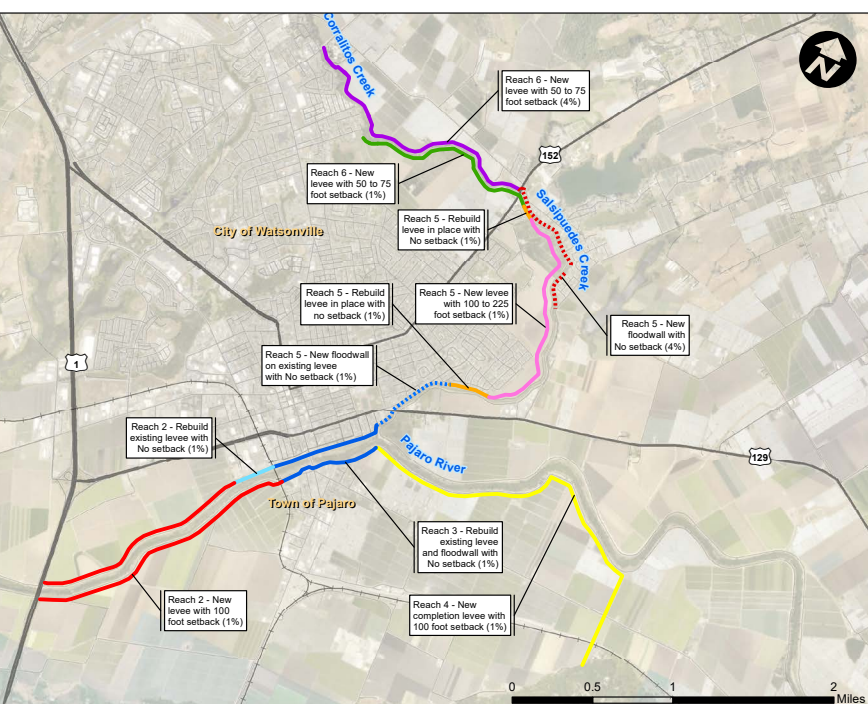
**info@prfma.org**



PRFMA Board Chair Zach Friend and USACE SF District Deputy Commander Shantel Glass commemorate the signing of the Project Partnership Agreement for the Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project. They are joined by (L to R) PRFMA Board Members Ari Parker, Luis Alejo, Glenn Church and Felipe Hernandez; CA Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas; CA Senator John Laird; US Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren; CA Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth; and US Congressman Jimmy Panetta.

The project will be built in stages. Construction will begin next year on Reach 6 along Corralitos Creek, between Green Valley Road and Highway 152 (see project map). To prepare for construction, PRFMA will conduct tree trimming in the area in early 2024. The agency is also working with individual property owners along the levee alignment to acquire right-of-way access and property, as needed.

In the meantime, the US Army Corps of Engineers has completed repair of the 400-foot levee breach on the Pajaro River that led to catastrophic flooding in Pajaro in March 2023. It's also working to complete repairs of storm-damaged levees under Highway 1 and at the downstream end of the levee (Monterey County side, near the ocean).



The Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project will be built in stages. Construction is scheduled to begin on Reach 6 in 2024.

## Levee Maintenance Program Update

PRFMA is continuing to work with Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties to transition management of the levee maintenance program. In the past several months, more than \$850,000 has been invested to reduce flood risk. Activities have included vegetation clearing and management, installation of a drainage culvert near the 2023 levee break location, and purchase of a generator for the Pajaro Village pump station near Watsonville.

## About the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency (PRFMA)

PRFMA's mission is to plan, finance and implement projects and programs to reduce flood risk from the lower Pajaro River and its tributaries in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Formed in 2021, PRFMA is a joint powers authority of the Counties of Monterey and Santa Cruz, the City of Watsonville, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, and the Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Zone No. 7. The Board of Directors meets monthly and includes one representative from each member agency. Directors are appointed by their respective governing boards/council.

### Board of Directors

#### Luis Alejo

Monterey County Water Resources Agency

#### Glenn Church

County of Monterey

#### Zach Friend

County of Santa Cruz

#### Filipe Hernandez

Santa Cruz County Flood Control and Water Conservation Zone No. 7

#### Ari Parker

City of Watsonville



### PAJARO REGIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT AGENCY

701 Ocean Street, Room 410  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060



## Questions? CONTACT US!



English

**(831) 204-3769**

Spanish / Español

**(831) 204-3000**



**info@prfma.org**



**www.prfma.org**

## Key State Legislation Makes Levee Construction Project Possible

**CA Assembly Bill 876 (Rivas)**, signed into law in October, streamlines the environmental process for the Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project. The legislation exempts the project from certain California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements for those areas also covered by federal environmental regulations and oversight. This eliminates duplication of efforts, saves money, and allows for construction to begin in 2024.

**CA Senate Bill 496 (Laird)**, signed into law in September 2021, directed the CA Department of Water Resources to pay 100 percent of the non-federal cost share for the project. Typically, local communities are required to pay 10 percent of all project costs, or \$59 million, in this case. The legislation marks the first time the state has covered the local cost share for a federal levee project.