

THE HERON

Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District

Fall 2021

**Major
Construction
Milestone**

Completion of Phase 1: Recycled Water Expansion

Progress Continues on Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade/Recycled Water Expansion Project

Earlier this year, the District reached a significant milestone in the multi-year, \$64 million Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade and Recycled Water Expansion Project. In mid-March, the District announced that the Recycled Water Expansion component of Phase 1 has been completed.

The expansion of the plant's recycled water facility effectively quadruples its maximum production capacity to over 5 million gallons of water per day. With this portion complete, the District is delivering recycled water from the expanded facility to the North Marin Water District and the Marin Municipal Water District, who then sell it for use in landscape irrigation, car

washes, cooling towers, commercial laundries, and toilet flushing.

The expanded production of recycled water is particularly important with California entering a drought of historic proportions. As of June, 94% of the state is reported to be in a "severe" (or worse) drought condition, while 73% of the state is in the even-worse "extreme" drought category—which includes Marin County. Every gallon of recycled water produced means a gallon of fresh drinking water is preserved for other critical uses. The District is proud to be an important part of helping conserve the supply of fresh drinking water.

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New Secondary Clarifier #1 under construction

Trails, Ponds, Wildlife, and Views

The Reclamation Area is for All to Enjoy

The District's Reclamation Area is a favorite local destination. During the height of the pandemic, people were cautious about encountering others in the Area, and the usual number of visitors was much lower. More recently, with many of the restrictions of the past 18 months lifted, more people are returning to this wonderful recreational area (there will still be some periodic limited access due to facility construction—see box below).

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Construction May Affect Reclamation Area Access



Ongoing construction at the District's facilities will require periodic temporary closure of the Smith Ranch Road access to the Reclamation Area parking lot and trails. This may affect your ability to visit the Reclamation Area. When they occur, such closures are typically on weekdays from 4 AM to 5 PM. Be sure to check the District website at lgvsd.org for information prior to visiting, and comply with any on-site signage regarding parking or access.

Photo: Lisa Louis



Careers in Wastewater Management

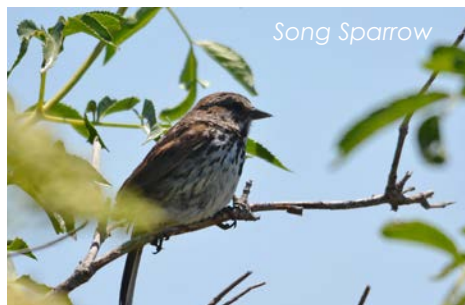
Continued operation and treatment of wastewater is absolutely critical to public health. Over the years, environmental regulations associated with wastewater treatment have increased, and the need for skilled wastewater treatment plant operators has grown. The essential role wastewater professionals play continues non-stop regardless of the emergencies around us, whether a pandemic, fires, power outages, or other disasters.

This is an exciting, expanding, and important field of work, and right now there's an industry-wide demand for skilled treatment plant operators. The District recently hired one operator and employs a total of six. Plant operators perform a variety of operational, mechanical and electrical tasks to ensure the wastewater treatment plant and associated facilities are operated and maintained at their peak performance levels.

Throughout the industry, these are well-paid jobs, many of which require various levels of certification. Training is available through trade schools, local colleges, and universities. There are opportunities for advancement, personal growth, job satisfaction, and most positions typically include very good benefits. As populations grow, more water- and wastewater-treatment services will be needed for the communities they serve, including increasing production of recycled water. New treatment plants, along with expansion of existing plants, are anticipated to continue to create jobs for operators, management, and environmental STEM experts.

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The 383-acre Reclamation Area includes a freshwater pond with three islands providing nesting sites for various bird species, two storage ponds (containing highly-treated recycled wastewater), and 3.5 miles of easy, even-ground trails for walkers and bicyclists. Nature lovers, birders, photographers, artists, and families enjoy the fresh air and sunshine, wildflowers, a variety of wildlife, migrating and resident birds, and beautiful views of San Pablo Bay, Mt. Tamalpais, and bay wetlands.

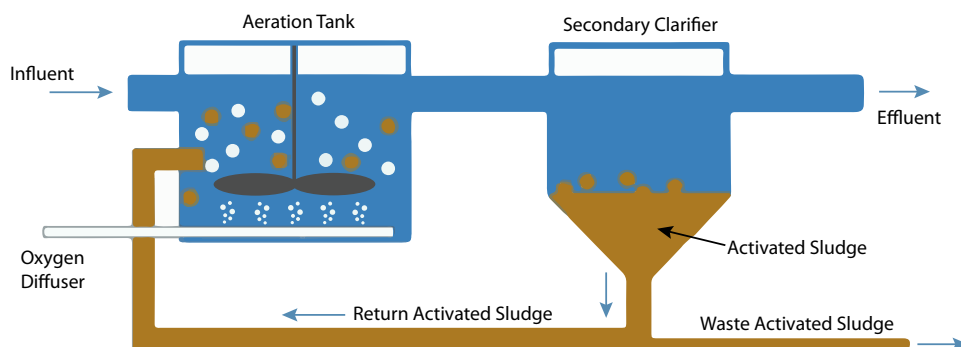


The Audubon Society has cataloged over 200 species of birds within the area, and many visitors are thrilled to see raptors, blue herons, egrets, pelicans, and

even the endangered clapper rail. Others have reported observing elusive river otters, and of course reptiles, amphibians, and small mammals abound throughout this riparian area.

The 3.5-mile trail is a designated segment of the San Francisco Bay Trail, a planned recreational corridor that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays with a continuous 500-mile network of bicycling and hiking trails. To date, approximately 338 miles—about 70 percent of the total length—have been completed. To see how our trail relates to the San Francisco Bay Trail system, please visit the Bay Trail website at www.baytrail.org.

The Reclamation Area is a local treasure that we can all enjoy, and it's everyone's responsibility to help protect the area's sensitive environment. Please observe the simple rules posted on-site, and help protect animals in the Reclamation Area by not feeding wildlife.

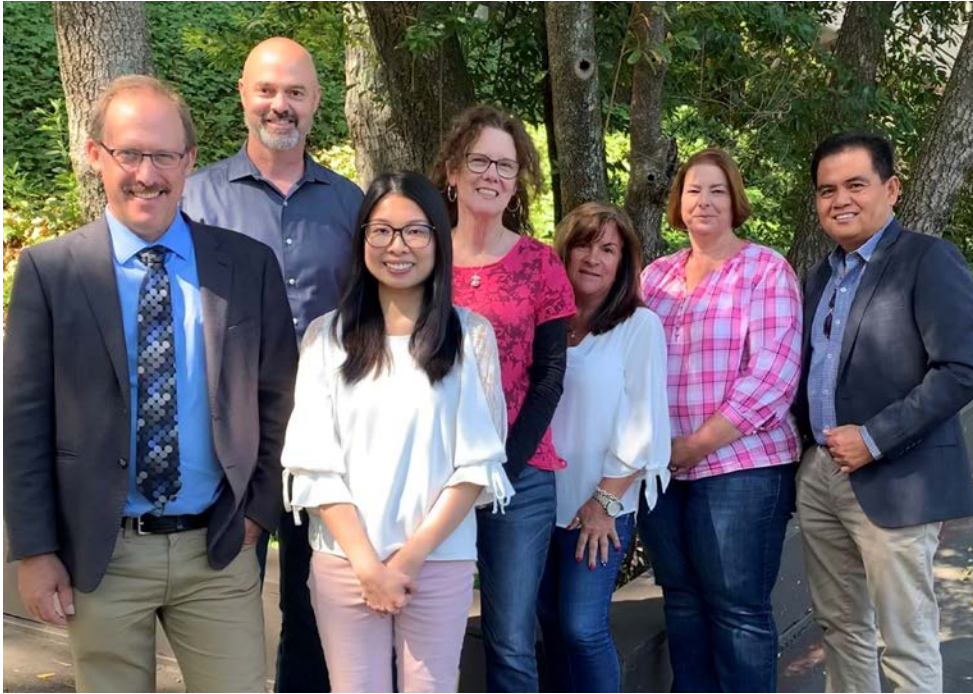


How Activated Sludge is Used in Wastewater Treatment

Activated sludge is used in a biological process to help break down and remove organic materials that are present in wastewater. It refers to the particles produced in wastewater by the growth of microorganisms in aeration tanks where oxygen is supplied to promote respiration of those microorganisms. These particles contain many living organisms (mostly bacteria) that consume organic matter as their "food" — an important step in cleaning the wastewater. The District is presently in the process of shifting to an activated sludge system, to replace older, outdated technology.

Department Spotlights:

Administration and Engineering



Pictured above from left to right: Mike Prinz, General Manager; Dale McDonald, Administrative Services Manager; Irene Huang, Associate Engineer; Teresa Lerch, District Secretary; Pam Amatori, Administrative Assistant; Amy Schultz, Administrative Financial Specialist; Michael Cortez, District Engineer

Administration Department

At the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District, the Administration Department is responsible for managing the organizational and governmental functions of the District, providing excellent customer service to District ratepayers. There are five positions in Administration: General Manager, Administrative Services Manager, District Secretary, Administrative Financial Specialist, and Administrative Assistant.

The General Manager reports directly to the District's Board of Directors and has a wide range of responsibilities encompassing all aspects of how the District operates and functions, in a highly-regulated and publicly-transparent environment. Some of these duties range from general oversight of personnel, operations, and capital improvements, strategic planning, and implementing the policies of the Board, to working with local and state agencies and regulators, and reporting to the Board of

Directors with proposed budgets and recommendations.

The Administrative Services Manager is responsible for the District's human resources, budgeting and accounting, risk management, information technology, public communications, and other administrative functions.

In addition to providing administrative/office support to District management and staff, the administration team supports the other operational departments, namely the plant and collection system operations. The District secretary is the official recordkeeper of the District and serves as the Board Secretary, handling all aspects of coordinating Board meetings, preparing meeting agendas and minutes, processing District documents, and arranging Board elections. The Administrative Financial Specialist assists in planning, coordinating, and implementing accounting,

finance, administrative, and human resources projects. The Administrative Assistant provides office support including preparing and processing forms, applications, correspondence and reports, and is the initial point of contact for the public and contractors that visit the District office.

"The Administrative and Engineering Departments have large roles in ensuring the present and future of the District are healthy, vital, and sustainable."

Engineering Department

The District's Engineering Department may have just two staff members—but it plays an essential role in ensuring that the District's design, project management, and other engineering functions are carried out. The District Engineer and the Associate Engineer perform a wide variety of civil engineering work related to the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of the District's wastewater treatment plant, collection system, recycled water plant, and related facilities. This includes managing construction and capital improvements projects, preparing and reviewing designs and bid documents, and ensuring project conformance with approved plans and specifications. The District Engineer also has overall responsibility for all engineering functions, and ensures compliance with engineering principles and practices, District standards, and federal, state, and local regulatory requirements.



District offices at 101 Lucas Valley Road

101 Lucas Valley Road, Suite 300, San Rafael, CA 94903
Phone (415) 472-1734 • Fax (415) 499-7715
www.lgvsd.org

Board of Directors

Megan Clark
Rabi Elias
Craig K. Murray
Judy Schriebman
Crystal Yezman


Board Meetings are

held at 3:30 PM on
the first and third
Thursday of each month,
presently via Zoom
teleconference

ECRWSS – Postal Customer

District Administration: Mike Prinz, General Manager

LGVSD is the Recipient of Special District
Leadership Foundation's 2019 District
Transparency Certificate of Excellence

 Printed on recycled paper using soy-based inks.



**Mobile App
for Waste/
Recycling
Collection**

Marin Sanitary Service has a new calendar tool and upgraded mobile app for its garbage/recyclables collection programs. Visit marinsanitaryservice.com/where-does-it-go-joe.

Sign up for waste collection and service disruption notifications, and download your collection schedule to your calendar.

You can also easily find out if a specific material can be reused, recycled, composted, or disposed.

"Careers in Wastewater Management"
continued from page 2

It's a career opportunity worth exploring!

Check out Solano Community College and Santa Rosa Junior College for related programs, and the Bay Area Consortium for Water & Wastewater Education's scholarships in wastewater technology training (bacwa.org/education/bacwwe).

"Major Construction Milestone" continued from page 1

Other Phase 1 work included:

- Force main pipeline was rerouted
- Construction of aeration basins to expand secondary treatment capacity for flows up to 18 million gallons per day
- Construction of a new primary effluent pump station
- Electrical systems at the plant were upgraded and a new standby generator was added
- Existing PG&E overhead power lines were realigned underground and a new utility transformer was installed

Moving forward, several key components of Phase 2 (of the three phases) are well underway. This includes many major elements that will ensure an enhanced, reliable, efficient wastewater treatment facility, to serve the community today and in the future.

Phase 2 includes:

- Realignment of a portion of the treatment plant's perimeter road above sea level rise elevation
- Construction of two new secondary clarifiers
- Upgrading of the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system
- Modifications to the existing disinfection system
- Other related work such as grading, fencing, pipelines, landscaping, and paving

The District's Secondary Treatment Plant Upgrade and Recycled Water Expansion Project, the largest capital improvement project in the District's history, got underway in early 2019 and is anticipated to continue through 2022.



Do Your Part to Save Water

Minimal rainfall has left reservoirs throughout Marin County at historically-low levels. The Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District urges you to visit the websites below to find water conservation tips and drought information:

marinwater.org/conservemwd.com/save-water