

Livermore School District to Remove Arroyo Mocho Crossing Behind Granada High School

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By Patricia Koning

If the Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District and Zone 7 Water Agency have their way, the concrete footbridge behind Granada High School will be gone by the time school starts in late August. The crossing goes over the Arroyo Mocho from Murrieta Street.

“This project is good for the school and the community,” said Granada Principal Chris Van Schaack. “We’re helping the environment and providing the safest place possible for our students. We have concerns about the ease with which non-students can access the campus at this location.”

At last week’s meeting of the Livermore Board of Education, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services Mike Martinez explained that the footbridge impedes the enforcement of the closed campus at Granada High School and is not necessary for evacuation or emergency access. In fact, vandals have driven across the bridge to steal copper wire from school buildings. In addition, the bridge encourages jaywalking on Murrieta Avenue and provides a hidden location for illicit activity. People camping on the Granada side of the Arroyo can’t be seen from Murrieta because of the thick brush.

Removal of the crossing also will have many positive environmental effects, including eliminating an obstacle to potential steelhead migration. The project is supported by both the Friends of the Arroyo and Altamont Creek Alliance.

“The crossing has been identified as a barrier to future fish migration in Arroyo Mocho once steelhead habitat restoration within the large Alameda Creek watershed is successful,” said Jeff Miller, Altamont Creek Alliance director. “The barrier is an impediment to natural stream flow. Removal of the crossing will also reduce the amount of trash that gets into the Arroyo and improve water quality for fish and other wildlife.”

Removal of the crossing will be the first project in Zone 7’s StreamWISE program, a forwardlooking suite of multi-benefit projects designed by scientists, engineers, and community leaders to implement the Stream Management Master Plan.

“We consider this our poster child for the StreamWISE program,” said Zone 7 General Manager Jill Duerig. “This is a winwin for multiple agencies.”

Under a partnership agreement, the District is responsible for the actual removal of the crossing and Zone 7 is responsible for obtaining permits from regulatory agencies, including the Department of Fish and Game, and subsequent hydroseeding along the banks for erosion control.

Vulcan Materials is accepting and recycling the concrete at no cost to the District, which will provide significant savings for the project. Currently Zone 7 is awaiting permit approval, but is confident the approval will come in time to finish the project before the start of school.

For more information see <http://zone7water.com/streamwise/>