



**PAJARO REGIONAL**  
**FLOOD MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

**OFFICIAL BALLOT**  
PROPOSED ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

**BOLETA OFICIAL**  
PROPUESTA DE IMPUESTO ANUAL

Property Owner (Propietario):

Parcel Number: Site Address; Proposed Assessment  
Número de parcela: Dirección de la propiedad; Propuesta de impuesto

Total Proposed  
Annual Assessments:

Impuesto anual total:

**DO NOT TEAR YOUR BALLOT IN HALF OR IT WILL NOT BE COUNTED**  
**NO CORTE SU BOLETA POR LA MITAD O NO SERÁ CONTADA**

**BALLOT QUESTION / PREGUNTA DE LA BOLETA**

Shall the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency establish a new \$1.2 million assessment commencing in fiscal year 22/23 and continue every year thereafter for levee operations and maintenance as set forth in the Preliminary Engineers Report dated April 13, 2022?

¿Debería la Agencia Regional de Gestión de Inundaciones de Pájaro establecer un nuevo impuesto que recaude \$1.2 millones de dólares a partir del año fiscal 2022/2023 y que continúe cada año para operaciones y mantenimiento de diques como se establece en el Informe Preliminar de Ingeniería con fecha del 13 de abril de 2022?

YES / SÍ

NO

THIS IS A WEIGHTED BALLOT. The total votes for this ballot are equal to the total annual assessments shown above.  
ESTA ES UNA BOLETA PONDERADA. El total de votos para esta votación es igual al total de las cuotas anuales que se muestran arriba.

*This assessment will not be imposed if a majority of the weighted ballots are opposed to the proposed maximum annual assessment. Property Owner/Authorized Representative must sign in his/her own handwriting for ballot to be counted.*

*Este impuesto no se impondrá si la mayoría de las papeletas ponderadas se oponen al impuesto anual máximo que se propone. El propietario de la propiedad / representante autorizado debe firmar con su propia letra para que se cuente la boleta:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE of Owner/Authorized Representative (DO NOT PRINT)  
FIRMA del propietario/Representante autorizado (NO IMPRIMIR)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date / Fecha

Attachment A  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Owner/Authorized Representative (PRINT)  
Nombre del propietario/Representante autorizado (MARCA)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature\*  
Firma del testigo\*

\*Only required if property owner is unable to sign due to illness or injury. In that case, he/she may make a mark witnessed by one person.

\*Sólo es requerido si el dueño de la propiedad no puede firmar debido a una enfermedad o lesión. En ese caso, él/ella puede hacer una marca presenciada por una persona.

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## **PAJARO REGIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

The Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency is proposing a \$1.2 million assessment to adequately fund levee operations and maintenance to secure \$400 million in federal and state funding for the Pajaro River Flood Management Project. **This is your official ballot to cast your vote in favor or against the proposed assessment.**

La Agencia Regional de Gestión de Inundaciones de Pájaro está proponiendo un impuesto que recaude \$1.2 millones de dólares para financiar adecuadamente las operaciones y el mantenimiento de los diques y así asegurar \$400 millones en fondos federales y estatales para el Proyecto de Gestión de Inundaciones del Río Pájaro. **Esta es su boleta oficial para emitir su voto a favor o en contra del impuesto que se propone.**

**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

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**PLEASE READ THE BALLOT INFORMATION GUIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION  
POR FAVOR LEA LA GUÍA DE INFORMACIÓN DE LA BOLETA PARA OBTENER MÁS INFORMACIÓN**

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### **HOW TO COMPLETE YOUR BALLOT**

1. Mark an "X" in the box next to "Yes" or No"
2. PRINT and sign your name and provide date
3. DO NOT TEAR YOUR BALLOT
4. Place the ballot into the official ballot return envelope and:
  - 1) mail the ballot; or, 2) deliver by hand to the **Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency, 701 Ocean Street, Room 410, Santa Cruz, CA 95060;** or 3) deliver by hand to the public hearing

Ballots must be received before the close of the public hearing.

Ballots received after the close of the public hearing cannot be accepted as per state law.

### **CÓMO COMPLETAR SU BOLETA**

1. Marque una "X" en el cuadro junto a "Sí" o No"
2. IMPRIMA, firme y proporcione la fecha
3. NO RASGUE SU BOLETA
4. Coloque la boleta en el sobre oficial de devolución de la boleta y:

1) Envíe la boleta por correo; o 2) Entréguela en persona a la Agencia Regional de Gestión de Inundaciones de Pájaro, 701 Ocean Street, Salón 410, Santa Cruz, CA 95060 o 3) Entréguela en persona a la audiencia pública. Las boletas deben recibirse antes del cierre de la audiencia pública.

Las boletas recibidas después del cierre de la audiencia pública no pueden ser aceptadas según la ley estatal.

## How To Complete & Return Your Ballot

- 1 Cast your vote by marking an "X" in the box next to "Yes" or "No"
- 2 Print and sign your name
- 3 Date your ballot
- 4 Place your entire ballot in the postage-paid return envelope

**IMPORTANT!** Do not tear off any portion of the ballot or it will not be accepted.



- 5 Return all ballots:
  - a) By mail: Ballots must be in the postage-paid security envelope, mailed and received prior to the close of the June 8 Public Hearing. Postmarks cannot be accepted.
  - b) By hand: Place in the security envelope and deliver to Santa Cruz County Public Works, 701 Ocean Street, Room 410, Santa Cruz.
  - c) By hand: Place in the security envelope and bring to the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 8, at the City of Watsonville City Hall City Council Chambers, 275 Main Street, Top Floor.
  - All ballots must be received by the close of the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 8, at the City of Watsonville City Council Chambers, 275 Main Street, Top Floor, Watsonville.
  - Any ballots returned unmarked, unsigned or after the close of the Public Hearing cannot be accepted and will not be counted. Ballots must be original (no photocopies), and not damaged or torn.
  - If you lose your ballot, need a replacement ballot, or wish to change your vote, call the Agency's Assessment Hotline at (831) 204-3769.
  - Joint owners of property may split their ballot in proportion to their ownership percentage. If you would like to split your ballot, please request replacement ballots by calling the Assessment Hotline at (831) 204-3769. Written documentation of ownership shares will be required.

Assessment ballots will be counted after the close of the June 8 Public Hearing. Each property's assessment ballot is weighted by the amount of the proposed assessment (e.g. \$1 = 1 vote). The assessment will not be imposed if the weighted vote against the assessment is greater than the weighted vote in favor. The results will be announced by Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency Board of Directors following verification of the results.

## Attend a Community Meeting & the Public Hearing

**Community Meeting (Virtual)**  
6:30 p.m., Thursday, May 5  
Zoom (visit [prfma.org](https://prfma.org) to log in)

**Community Meeting**  
6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 10  
Pajaro Valley Middle School  
Multipurpose Room  
250 Salinas Road, Pajaro

**Community Meeting**  
6:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 19  
Watsonville Civic Plaza  
Community Room, Top Floor  
275 Main Street, Watsonville

**Public Hearing**  
6:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 8  
City of Watsonville  
City Council Chambers, Top Floor  
275 Main Street, Watsonville

### "YES" or "No," What Happens?



If the proposed assessment is **approved** by property owners:

- The community will be eligible for \$400 million in state and federal funding for the Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project. Construction is expected to start in 2025 and be completed within 8 years. Once completed, properties will be removed from the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area.
- A Citizens' Assessment Oversight Committee will be created.
- The assessment will first appear on property tax bills in fall 2022.
- All assessment revenues will be used to maintain levees, existing and improved, in accordance with federal regulations.



If the proposed assessment is **not approved** by property owners:

- The community will lose \$400 million in state and federal funding for the Pajaro Regional Flood Risk Management Project. The levees will not be improved.
- There will be an increased risk of flood damages from year to year as levees continue to deteriorate. Climate change, to include sea level rise, will add to the growing risk.
- Properties will remain in the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area and be subject to associated mandatory flood insurance and building restrictions.

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

The Agency 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. The Agency's mission is to reduce flood risk through projects – such as levee improvements – and by performing levee operations and maintenance on behalf its member agencies.

### Board of Directors

**Luis Alejo**  
Monterey County Water Resources Agency

**Dr. Nancy Bilicich**  
City of Watsonville

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

**Zach Friend**  
County of Santa Cruz

**John Phillips**  
County of Monterey



## PROPOSED ASSESSMENT FOR LEVEE OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

# Official Notice & Ballot Information Guide

### Questions?

Website: [www.prfma.org](https://www.prfma.org)

Email: [info@prfma.org](mailto:info@prfma.org)

Hotline: **831-204-3769**

### Visit website for additional info:

- Assessment District Boundary Maps
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project information
- Community meeting dates and Zoom log in

## Attend a Community Meeting!

Look inside for dates and locations



## Why a Proposed Assessment?

The purpose of the proposed assessment is to provide adequate revenues to maintain levees that protect the City of Watsonville, the town of Pajaro and surrounding agriculture areas from flooding. The State and federal governments will invest \$400 million to improve the old, deficient levees on the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes Creek. To receive funding, however, the local community must promise to maintain levees to strict federal regulations. There is a \$1.2 million annual shortfall between existing and needed revenues to adequately maintain the levees, now and into the future. Proposed assessment revenues will be used to adequately fund levee operations and maintenance and secure \$400 million in funding for the levee improvements. Please read on to learn more.

## High Flood Risk for Watsonville, Pajaro & Surrounding Areas

The City of Watsonville, town of Pajaro and surrounding agricultural areas have extreme flood risk from the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks.

Levees that protect the city, town and surrounding areas from flooding are in poor condition. They were built in 1949, but broke twice by 1958. Levees failed and caused floods again in 1982, 1986, 1989, 1995, 1997 and 1998. The 1995 flood caused more than \$95 million in damages and two deaths. Levees almost broke in early 2017. Today, these levees provide only an 8-year level of flood protection, among the lowest in the state. Flooding is likely in the future if levees are not repaired.

## How Can We Reduce Flood Risk?

- Improve levees
- Properly maintain levees now and in the future

## State/Feds to Pay for \$400 Million Levee Improvement Project

The US Army Corps of Engineers, in partnership with the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency and the CA Department of Water Resources, is starting design of the \$400 million Pajaro River Flood Risk Management Project. The project will improve levees along the Pajaro River and Salsipuedes and Corralitos Creeks and provide up to 100-year flood protection to Watsonville, Pajaro and surrounding agriculture lands. Once completed, properties will be removed from the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, ending associated requirements for flood insurance and building restrictions. The project also benefits properties that aren't covered by flood insurance because it will significantly reduce the chances of flooding.

The USACE and state have agreed to pay 100 percent of the levee improvement project's design and construction costs, a first in California. This commitment equals an investment of about \$130,000 for every property that will be protected by the improved levees. However, to receive funding, the local community must agree to pay to maintain levees to strict federal regulations.

## Levee Maintenance to be Consolidated Under Single Agency

The Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency plans to take over responsibilities for levee maintenance on behalf of the counties. This will improve compliance with federal regulations, create efficiencies and long-term cost savings, and improve emergency response. The annual budget to adequately operate and maintain the flood protection system is \$3.8 million per year. Existing assessment revenues from Zone 7 (Santa Cruz County) and Zones 1/1A (Monterey County) generate \$2.6 million per year. The shortfall between existing and needed revenues for levee maintenance is \$1.2 million per year.

## What is "Levee Operations and Maintenance?"

The Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency will be responsible for maintaining the overall flood risk reduction system, which includes 24 miles of levees, 12 miles of channels, 15 pump stations, and 85 culverts. PRFMA will perform both channel maintenance and levee maintenance. Levee maintenance activities (separate from channel maintenance) include – among other things – erosion repairs (rock and rip rap), rodent control, mowing, soil compaction, levee top and access road maintenance, environmental and federal permitting, reporting, and compliance, and patrolling the levees 24/7 when water levels are high.



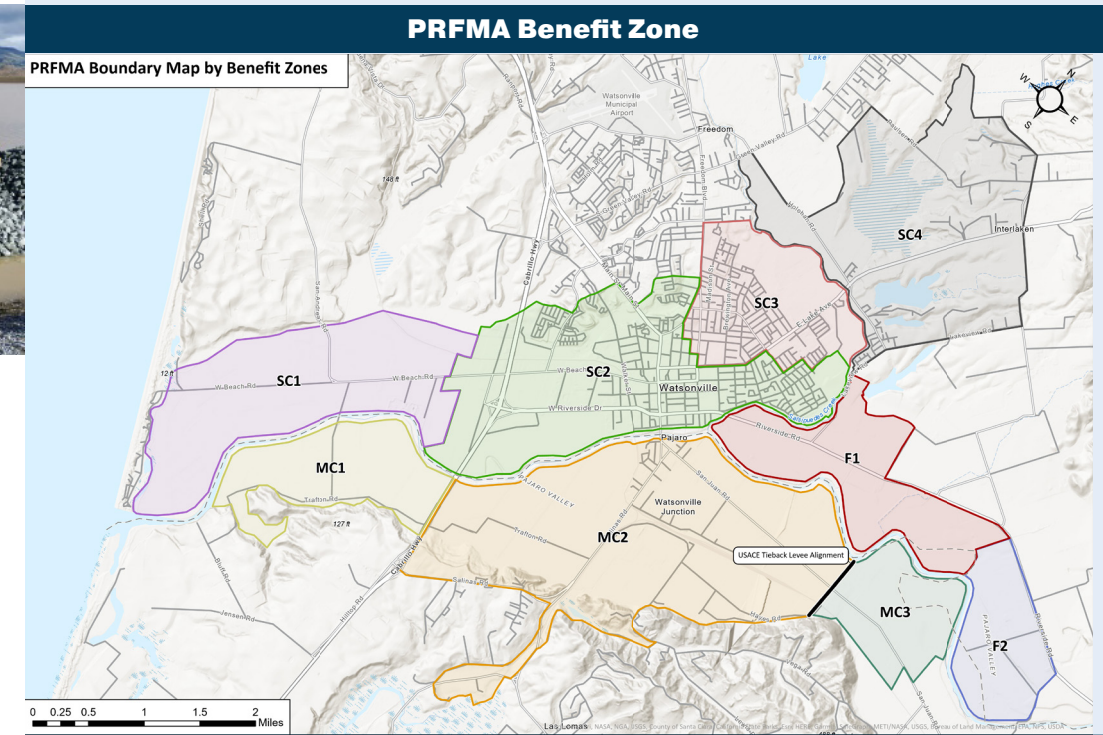
## Proposed Property Assessment Would Adequately Fund Levee Maintenance

The proposed annual assessment would bridge the \$1.2 million shortfall between existing and needed revenues for levee maintenance. The assessment would continue as long as levee operations and maintenance services are provided. The proposed assessment can be increased by no more than 4 percent, or the Consumer Price Index if it is lower. The increase is not automatic and must be approved on an annual basis by the PRFMA Board of Directors. If the assessment is approved by property owners, the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency Board would create a Citizens' Assessment Oversight Committee.

## How Proposed Assessments Are Calculated

Under CA Proposition 218 law, only properties that benefit from the Agency's levee maintenance activities can be assessed. The benefit to each property is the avoidance of flood damages to land and structures because of proper levee maintenance. Each property's assessment is different based on the benefit received. Individual parcel assessments are calculated based on the following factors:

<b>Relative flood risk</b> (location of property/Benefit Zone)	<b>Land-use type</b> (e.g. Single-family residential; Commercial; Industrial)
<b>Parcel size</b> (acreage)	<b>Square footage of any structures</b>
<b>Average depth of flooding</b>	<b>Percentage of parcel that is flooded</b>



A detailed description of the assessment methodology is included in the Preliminary Draft Engineer's Report, available online at [www.prfma.org/assessment](http://www.prfma.org/assessment), or by calling the Assessment Hotline at (831) 204-3769.