

Festivities Mark Official Opening of Native Gardens

July 15, 2004

The public is invited to celebrate the official opening of Granada Native Gardens in Livermore on Saturday, July 17th, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The park is located on Murrieta Blvd one block south of Stanley Blvd in Livermore. Parking is available across the street at the Nob Hill shopping center. Please bring a favorite potluck dish to share.

The park is dedicated to the students at Granada High School in Livermore, and to raising public awareness on the use of native plants in landscaping. Building of the garden involved a diverse cross section of the community, including Friends of the Arroyos, Granada High School students, Boy Scout Troop 919, local quarry personnel, and neighbors.

Use of native plants reduces water usage, eliminates use of pesticides, saves money and reduces maintenance, while providing a home for many native species, such as bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and songbirds. Alrie Middlebrook, president of Middlebrook Gardens and leading expert on California

Native Gardening, designed the gardens. Alrie will lead a walking tour of the plants and their communities of chaparral, oak woodland, meadow, and riparian. Alrie said, "Granada Gardens is an example of what can happen when a community of people get together for the common good. It has been a pleasure to be part of this community's dream to witness Granada Gardens become a reality."

Additional activities on Saturday include: Rick Camacho providing a Native American celebration drumming song. Patti Cole (LARPD ranger) leading activities for kids including a search for critters in, on and above the water (bring shoes or sandals that can get wet). A talk presented by Zone 7 on wise water use. An opportunity to purchase "Eating California," a cookbook for California Natives (sales go toward the native plant nursery foundation). Entertainment will include folk music.

Recycled concrete was used building the picnic tables and benches, which feature custom mosaic art depicting local native species like burrowing owl, steelhead trout, and red-legged frog, all of which are endangered. These were designed by Alrie Middlebrook, as well. There are also three permanent educational displays which describe: 1) the use of the Arroyo Mocho (adjacent to the park) as a recharge channel for the local aquifer, 2) the Arroyo Mocho and Alameda Creek watershed map and steelhead trout history and restoration efforts, and 3) plant map of the Gardens and donor list. Granada Native Gardens was funded by the California Regional Water Quality Board through Friends of the Arroyos.