



UP YOUR CREEK!

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER Issue 15 • Fall 2002

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE

Protecting and restoring the natural ecosystems
of the Alameda Creek watershed

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NEXT ACA MEETINGS

October 29

November 26

January 28

7 - 9 PM, Sunol Glen School, Sunol

(for directions visit www.alamedacreek.org/Next_Meeting/meetings.html)

NATIVE PLANT NURSERY

The Alameda Creek Alliance is helping to start a native plant nursery for riparian restoration projects and fish habitat enhancement along Alameda Creek. A greenhouse and nursery on private land in Niles Canyon will be used to propagate native trees and plants from seed stock collected within the watershed. These plants will be available for re-vegetation and restoration projects on private and public land along Alameda Creek and its tributaries, and also will be given to interested landowners that live along creek sections with salmonid fish habitat.

The native plant project will be developed over the next year. Once the greenhouse and nursery facilities are operational, volunteers will be needed to collect native seed stock, propagate plants, water and weed, run and maintain the nursery, and distribute and plant the native trees as part of riparian habitat enhancement and restoration projects.

The native plant nursery project is intended to improve riparian habitat along Alameda Creek and its tributaries, benefitting steelhead trout and salmon spawning and rearing habitat in the watershed, as well as habitat for other native fish, amphibians, and birds. The project is also intended to involve volunteers in hands-on restoration projects and to promote stewardship of the creek and the watershed among landowners.

We hope to eventually expand the nursery to grow native plants for a butterfly garden in the Fremont area, in cooperation with the California Native Plant Society, and also to propagate native grasses and wildflowers.

SUNOL QUARRY LAWSUIT FAVORABLE PRE-TRAIL RULING

The Alameda Creek Alliance joined Save Our Sunol earlier this year in a lawsuit to stop the proposed gravel quarry expansion north of Hwy. 680 onto Water Temple Field in Sunol. This project would have potentially severe impacts on stream flow in the Sunol Valley and would affect a number of sensitive species.

At a pre-trial hearing on September 20, Judge Burr rejected an attempt by Mission Valley Rock, Alameda County, and the City and County of S. F. to throw the lawsuit out. The next phase of the lawsuit is to determine whether the proposed quarry is a new project, rather than an expansion, and thus subject to Measure D. If SOS and ACA prevail on this argument, Mission Valley Rock would have to put the project to a vote of all of Alameda County. For more information about the lawsuit or the quarry, contact:

Save Our Sunol - Pat Stillman

Phone (925) 862-2263, bpstillman@cs.com

PROTECT THE FREMONT HILLS SUPPORT MEASURE T

Volunteer to help the Friends of the Ridglands get the word out on Measure T, the Fremont Hill Area Initiative 2002. The ACA and other environmental groups have endorsed Measure T, to protect the Fremont Hills from subdivision and to preserve open space and wildlife habitat on Mission Peak and the Vargas Plateau. Volunteers are needed before Nov. 5.

Friends of the Ridglands - Susan Gearhart

(510) 656-7703 or Grasslandladyvrn@aol.com

web site: www.fremonthills2002.org

CORPS DECISION ON FISH LADDER PROJECTS DUE THIS FALL

A Preliminary Restoration Plan (PRP) for the proposed fish ladder and fish screen project in the Alameda Creek flood control channel has been completed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The PRP is the first step in the Corps process for ecosystem restoration projects pursuant to Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986, and could lead to \$5 million in federal funds for steelhead restoration in Alameda Creek. The Corps is expected to determine this fall whether Alameda County Water District facilities (including the 3 rubber dams and numerous water diversions) are eligible for inclusion in the project. If the project moves forward, the Corps will prepare a \$500,000 ecosystem restoration plan, and the project will be on schedule for completion by 2005. The PRP can be viewed at www.cemar.org/alamedacreek/index.html

WINTER FISH SURVEYS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SMOLT TRAPPING

Volunteers are needed again this winter to work with SFPUC biologists on a smolt trapping study of the landlocked steelhead trout populations above Calaveras and San Antonio Reservoirs. These fish will likely be used to help "jump-start" a steelhead run in lower Alameda Creek. Volunteers will assist with daily checks of fish traps for out-migrants (smolts) and upstream migrant spawning adults in tributaries to these reservoirs. Volunteer days consist of 4-6 hours in the field checking and cleaning traps and collecting fish data along beautiful and remote streams. Over 40 volunteers went out in the field last winter - contact the ACA if you are interested.

STEELHEAD CRITICAL HABITAT

The Alameda Creek Alliance has joined a large coalition of environmental and fishing groups in suing the National Marine Fisheries Service to restore "critical habitat" protection for all listed salmon and steelhead populations in the Pacific northwest. In response to a lawsuit by developers and water agencies, the Bush administration rescinded critical habitat designations for 19 threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead populations (including portions of Alameda Creek). The critical habitat provision of the Endangered Species Act is the most important protection for endangered species since it provides protection for habitat, rather than just individual animals.

MUWEKMA OHLONE TRIBE

The Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe, the original inhabitants of the Alameda Creek watershed, has been struggling to gain federal recognition. Unfortunately, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) issued a disappointing ruling in September, declining to acknowledge the Tribe under its recognition regulations. The Muwekma Tribe is now examining its options for responding to the BIA ruling. If you are interested in the Tribe's efforts or for more information on the Muwekma Ohlone, visit their web site at www.muwekma.org

CREEK CLEANUPS

Thank you to the ACA and Save Our Sunol volunteers for helping to pull trash out of Alameda Creek! During our September creek cleanup, over 25 volunteers collected 35 large bags of garbage from Alameda Creek in Niles Canyon (at the at Sunol Dam) and from Sinbad Creek in Sunol. Over 25 volunteers are signed up for our October 26 cleanup of Niles Canyon as part of Fremont's "Make a Difference Day."

KLAMATH RIVER FISH KILL

The Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior caused an unprecedented fish kill in the lower Klamath River this fall by failing to release enough water for fish. Estimates indicate as many as 30,000 adult fall-run chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead trout have died in the lower Klamath River, below the point where the Trinity River joins the Klamath.

This avoidable catastrophe was caused by Interior Secretary Gale Norton's pandering to "wise use" interests and her decision to sacrifice the third largest fish runs on the west coast to provide water for Klamath basin farmers. Fish runs will likely be decimated for several years, and fishermen, tourist industries, and Native American tribes that depend upon these fish will be severely impacted.

To learn more about the Klamath issue and how to get involved, read the articles in the most recent issue of FishSniffer Magazine, "River of Death" and "Fishermen File Lawsuit Against Klamath Ten Year Plan" at www.fishsniffer.com or visit the web site of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations at www.pcffa.org/klamath.htm/

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE
Membership Renewal Request

Dear _____:

Thank you for your past support of the Alameda Creek Alliance. I encourage you to renew your membership and help us to continue our work to restore steelhead to Alameda Creek. After 5 years in existence, the Alameda Creek Alliance has become an effective community organization advocating for local fish and wildlife habitat protection. Our efforts during the last year include:

- **Fish passage:** We continue to push forward the Army Corps project for fish passage and fish screens in the flood control channel. This \$6-7 million project is on track for completion by 2004/2005. The SFPUC has budgeted \$1.25 million to remove Niles and Sunol Dams from Niles Canyon in 2004 and environmental review for the project is underway. Lawrence Livermore Lab will remove a stream crossing from Arroyo Mocho in Livermore next year and PG&E is also moving forward with design proposals for fish passage at their gas pipeline crossing in the Sunol Valley.
- **Political action:** The ACA and Save Our Sunol have sued to stop the proposed SFPUC gravel quarry north of Hwy. 680 in Sunol. The ACA is opposing S. F. ballot Measure A, which calls for enlarging Calaveras Dam by 7 times.
- **Volunteer projects:** Our StreamKeeper program is off to a good start, with almost 50 ACA volunteers participating in the first year of a smolt trapping project above Calaveras and San Antonio Reservoirs. We have had two successful creek cleanups this fall. We are also constructing a native plant nursery in Niles Canyon for volunteer-based replanting and restoration projects along Alameda Creek and its tributaries with fish habitat.
- **The ACA helped form a new creek protection & restoration group for the Amador-Livermore Valley, Friends of the Arroyos.**

- Jeff Miller, Director

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new web site: www.alamedacreek.org

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Yes, I would like to renew my membership in the Alameda Creek Alliance. Enclosed is \$10 or more for a one-year membership. For a membership of \$20 or more you will receive an Alameda Creek Alliance T-shirt (please specify size). Please make checks payable to Alameda Creek Alliance.

Name _____

\$10 Fry

Address _____

\$25 Parr

City _____ Zip _____

\$50 Smolt

Phone _____

\$100 Spawner

e-mail _____

Send me a free ACA bumpersticker

Mail to: Alameda Creek Alliance, P.O. Box 192, Canyon, CA 94516

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www.alamedacreek.org

- A red check in this box means this is your last issue of the newsletter unless you contact us.

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ACA Newsletter #15
