

Fri, May. 09, 2003

Steelhead fest on tap Saturday

By Bonita Brewer
CONTRA COSTA TIMES

FREMONT - The fourth annual Alameda Creek Steelhead Festival and Watershed Awareness Fair will be held Saturday at Niles Community Park in Fremont.

The festival is an educational event and a celebration of the progress made toward restoring native steelhead trout and salmon runs along Alameda Creek from San Francisco Bay to Sunol Regional Wilderness.

It runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and is free to the public. The creekside park is on Third Street between G and H streets in Fremont's Niles District.

A 10-kilometer race will begin earlier, at 9 a.m., and a 5-kilometer run will begin at 9:30. Race registration, including a T-shirt, is \$25 the day of the event and benefits the steelhead restoration effort.

Activities at the festival will include educational and informational displays by organizations and agencies working to restore Alameda Creek and other creeks in the East Bay.

Local fly-fishing groups will teach fly-casting and fly-tying, and promote fish conservation and catch-and-release fishing. The California Department of Fish and Game will provide tanks with live steelhead, salmon and other native fish on display.

There will also be walking tours of proposed restoration sites in lower Alameda Creek, creative activities for kids, food and a live bluegrass band, Bump City Bluegrass Jam.

This year's festival is co-sponsored by the Alameda Creek Alliance, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Alameda County Water District, City of Fremont, East Bay Regional Park District, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and the Union Sanitary District.

For information about the festival or the Spawning Run, call 510-845-2233.

The Alameda Creek Alliance has been working to restore native steelhead trout to Alameda Creek since 1997.

A fisheries restoration workgroup of 11 local, state, and federal agencies has been cooperating on a number of migratory fish restoration projects. Several dam removal and fish ladder construction projects are planned that will allow adult steelhead from the Bay to reach spawning and rearing habitat upstream through Sunol Regional Wilderness.