

Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed

A Publication of Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed

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care for our yards. The following is a list of ways you can work to protect your watershed. Share them with your neighbors. Together, your actions are cumulative, and can make a difference in the health of your watershed:

- Landscape with plants native to your region; they don't require the pesticide and fertilizer applications that are common watershed pollutants.
- Reduce the size of your lawn or replace it altogether with a water-wise "ecolawn" or a meadow of native wildflowers and grasses. This will not only attract birds and beneficial insects, but requires no pesticides and infrequent mowing.
- Seek diversity. By choosing a variety of plants with different root depths and structure, you can improve the stability of your soil and the drainage of rainwater into the ground.
- Limit the amount of storm water and run-off leaving your property with densely planted buffer areas along your property's perimeter; or create a storm water marsh.
- Utilize new and existing wetlands and land features as habitat and storm water run-off filtration.
- If you live near a stream, protect or restore the riparian zone. Plant trees or other vegetation to shade the water, provide food and habitat for aquatic wildlife, and act as a buffer against erosion and run-off.
- Water efficiently. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation early in the morning or at night to avoid water loss through evaporation. Situate your plants according to their watering needs.
- Recycle yard debris in your own yard or participate in your community's recycling program.

Did you know?

To report spills in the creek call: (510) 724-9010 or (800) NO DUMPING.

To report graffiti in the Pinole Creek area, contact the City of Pinole Public Works at (510) 724-9010.

To find out more about the Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed, contact llacabanne@aol.com.

Backyard Habitats Contribute to Healthy Watersheds

As a gardener for wildlife, you can take steps to make your yard a home for wildlife. Now is a good time to step back and consider how your yard fits into the bigger picture: your watershed!

Human impact on groundwater, local waterways, and water bodies has become the stuff of headlines—polluted beaches, contaminated drinking water, poisoned lakes, declining fish runs, and more. What don't make the headlines are the things we can do in our own backyards and communities to not only benefit the people and wildlife in our neighborhoods, but also the people and wildlife downstream.

Find out what watershed you live in. Wherever you live, you live in a

watershed. A watershed is a drainage area defined by the hilltops and ridges where rainfall and groundwater collect in a common body of water, like a river or a lake. Everything you do in your backyard affects the water quality of your watershed, and the wildlife that depend on it.

Plant and maintain your habitat for the benefit of the wildlife you won't see, as well as for the wildlife you will. Not everyone can live on the banks of a stream, river, or lake—but we all influence the health of aquatic creatures in those habitats by the way we manage and

Excerpted from *Saving Watersheds: Backyard Habitats Contribute to Healthy Watersheds, Habitats, 1998*. National Wildlife Federation.

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Meetings, News & Events

Fish Passage for I-80 Almost a Reality

One of the Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed's main focus is the restoration and enhancement of Pinole Creek and its tributaries. Members have worked for more than a decade to draw attention to the anadromous fish resource that exists in this unique Bay Area watershed.

The Pinole Creek watershed has a healthy population of resident rainbow trout, in addition to a steelhead population of unknown size. During the spawning season, steelhead have been observed spawning in poor conditions downstream of the I-80 culverts during dry periods. In more favorable flow conditions, steelhead have been recorded far upstream in the upper watershed.

A box culvert at I-80 is a barrier at high and low flow conditions in Pinole Creek, preventing fish from entering the mid and upper watershed. It is the only significant barrier in the creek that limits access to several miles of suitable spawning habitat.

The Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed support the effort to install a fish passage device in this area and are excited about the opportunity to improve fish passage at the I-80 culvert. We fully look forward to a successful project and to seeing more steelhead in the upper watershed of Pinole Creek. More details on this subject will follow as they develop.

Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed Events

Global Positioning System (GPS) Pinole Creek Surveys — Saturdays, September 13 and October 4, 9 am–3 pm

Join us for GPS creek surveying this season—Data collection in the creek is a fun and informative way to explore parts of your urban environment which most people never get a chance to see. Creek surveys provide up-to-date information on the state of the creeks, helping identify sources of pollution and areas for habitat restoration. The scientific data collected during the surveys are used by a number of organizations working to protect and restore our aquatic resources in the Bay Area. If you're interested in volunteering for the GPS surveys, please contact your watershed coordinator, Lisa Lacabanne at llacabanne@aol.com. For more information regarding the GPS surveys, contact Michelle Luebke at (925) 335-1315 or e-mail: mlueb@cd.cccounty.us.

Garden Workdays at the Pinole Library — Saturdays, September 27, October 25, and November 29, 9 am to Noon.

Get together with the Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed and other community volunteers as you dig in the dirt, plant California natives, and enhance a small but lovely area directly behind the Pinole Library. Great for groups or anyone interested in learning more about native plant gardening. Bring gloves and water, and wear sturdy shoes. Call Tim at (510) 223-4350 for more information.

SAVE THE DATE! FOPCW Hike — November 8, 2008, 10 am–2pm

Wind down before the holidays with a hike in Pinole's watershed on the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Details to follow.

Events Going on Around the Bay

2nd Annual Native Plant Fair — Saturday, October 18, 10 am–3 pm; and Sunday, October 19, Noon–3 pm

Native Here Nursery, 101 Golf Course Drive, Tilden Park, Berkeley (across from the Tilden Golf Course entrance)—The nursery of the East Bay Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will be holding their 2nd Annual Native Plant Fair at the Native Here growing grounds in Tilden Park. Besides offering the best local California native plants, there will be vendors and speakers throughout the event. Check the website: www.ebcnps.org for updates as they happen. Hope to see you all at the Native Plant Fair!

FREE After-School Kids Program — Wednesdays, October 22, November 5, November 19, and December 3, 2008

Booker T Anderson Community Center, 960 South 47th Street, Richmond—Looking for a great outdoor science experience for kids and students in South Richmond? They can join a new after-school creek lab—and it's free! They'll spend four weeks learning everything they ever wanted to know about creeks through fun field trips and activities. Please register in person at the Booker T Anderson Community Center or contact Juliana Gonzales at (510) 665-3538, or e-mail: juliana@thewatershedproject.org; or visit www.thewatershedproject.org.

CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference: Strategies and Solutions — January 17–19, 2009

Sacramento Convention Center and Sheraton Grand Hotel, Sacramento—This conference will bring together over 1,000 scientists, university students and researchers, conservationists, professional and amateur botanists, and public policy makers, local and regional land use planners and natural resource managers from all regions of the state and beyond to share and learn about the latest developments in conservation science and public policy. This meeting is a unique opportunity for diverse audiences to exchange knowledge, experience, and ideas and promote effective solutions to California's conservation challenges. Participants will also have excellent opportunities to network and establish new partnerships. Anyone interested in the flora of California, plant science, sensitive plant and habitat conservation, vegetation ecology, and landscape-level planning should participate. Visit www.cnps.org for more information.