



# Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed

Dec. 2004/Jan. 2005

## Riparian Buffers - Protecting Our Creeks

Riparian buffers are one of the most efficient and cost-effective ways to protect our rivers and creeks. What is a riparian buffer? Simply put, it is the land next to a river or stream. In its natural state it has native plants growing on it: trees, shrubs, or grasses. As the name suggests, these plants "buffer" the stream from anything that might flow into it – polluted water, eroding soil, or toxic chemicals.

### Benefits of Buffers



#### *Reduce Water Pollution*

Non-point source pollution is responsible for most water pollution in the United States today. Water flowing over parking lots, industrial sites, roads, and lawns picks up heavy metals, toxics, trash, pathogens, sediment, hydrocarbons, fertilizers, pesticides, and other pollutants that can damage our creeks' health. An efficient and cost-effective way to keep these pollutants out of our water is to "trap" them by maintaining a buffer of natural plants along our creeks and rivers to absorb and filter pollutants before they enter the water.

#### *Protect property*

Using vegetated buffers to set back human developments and land uses from creeks and shorelines is cost effective protection against the hazards caused by flooding, erosion, and moving creeks. During floods, undeveloped land surrounding rivers acts like a sponge, absorbing rising and falling water.

#### *Provide Community Value*

Disguised as creekside parks, riparian buffers can host a range of activities with economic and educational value to the community.

#### *Improve Fish Habitat*

Buffers create and maintain fish habitat. Shade in summer maintains cooler, more even temperatures, especially on small creeks. Cooler water holds more oxygen and reduces stress on fish and other aquatic creatures.

Continued on Reverse



## Come to Our Holiday Potluck Party

**Monday, December 13, 6:30 - 8:30p.m.**  
**Fernandez Mansion**  
**100 Tennent Ave, Pinole**

Please celebrate with us at our annual Holiday Potluck Party! The agenda is to eat a lot of delicious food, enjoy the company of fellow creek enthusiasts, celebrate achievements, appreciate volunteers, and have fun. This is a great time to invite a friend or two along. All are welcome. Don't miss out on the fun!

**Please bring something to share.**

*RSVPs appreciated to Nicholle Fratus at (510) 231-5784 or nicholle@thewatershedproject.org.*

## January Meeting GPS Survey Results

**Wednesday, January 12, 6:30 - 8:30p.m.**  
**Public Safety Building**  
**Alex Clark Room**  
**880 Tennent Ave, Pinole**  
**(Where we held the GPS Training)**

In August and September, several of our enthusiastic volunteers waded through Pinole Creek to collect GPS data as part of a County-wide survey program. Join us as we welcome Aspen Madrone, Citizen Watershed Monitoring Coordinator, who will share with us the results of our GPS monitoring efforts of Pinole Creek including vegetation types, invasive species stands, outfall locations, and more!

## Special Thank You



Thanks to the **Richmond Sanitary District** for the donation of a debris bin that allowed the Friends to dispose of 10 cu. yds of invasive plants removed from the creek restoration site at the Pinole Library!



the  
watershed  
project

1327 South 46th Street  
155 Richmond Field Station  
Richmond, CA 94804

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
Richmond, CA  
Permit #226

**Dated Material - Please  
Deliver By December 11**



*Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed*

Join us at the **Friends of Pinole Creek Watershed** Holiday Potluck Party  
Monday, December 13, at 6:30 P.M. at the Fernandez Mansion, 100 Tennent Ave.

 Printed on recycled paper

## Riparian Buffers *Continued*

### *What Creek Groups Can Do*

Creek Protection Groups can promote the protection of buffers in the following ways:

1. Engage the public and land use decision-makers in learning about buffers;
2. Advocate for land-use regulations that protect buffers;
3. Encourage permanent protection through purchase of buffer land in fee or easement, by public agencies or private land trusts;
4. On the ground restoration;
5. Attend the Conversations about Watersheds Conference (*more info below*) to learn more about creek buffers and other important volunteer watershed stewardship topics.



*Portions of this article were excerpted from the following sources:*

- *River Voices, v9n1 (1998), a River Network Publication,*  
[www.rivernetwork.org](http://www.rivernetwork.org)
- *Urban Buffers, Connecticut River Joint Commission,*  
[www.crjc.org/riparianbuffers.htm](http://www.crjc.org/riparianbuffers.htm)

## **Conversations About Watersheds**

### **A Conference on Volunteer Stewardship**

**January 13 - 16, 2005**

An occasion for those who have a stake in the health of our watersheds and our communities to discuss obstacles and opportunities for Volunteer Stewardship in the East Bay and beyond. Topics include Bay Area Stream Buffers, Citizen Watershed Restoration, Volunteer Watershed Management, Land Acquisition, Organizational Development for Creek Groups, Revegetation for Watersheds, Volunteer Monitoring, Culture and Education in Watersheds, How to Organize Watershed Councils, and more...

*For more information contact the East Bay Watershed Center at [ecomerritt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ecomerritt@sbcglobal.net) or (510) 434-3840.*

**The Pinole Creek Watershed Awareness Program is sponsored by the Watershed Project. Support for the Pinole Creek Watershed Awareness Program is provided by the California Bay-Delta Authority, the Contra Costa County Fish and Wildlife Committee, the Rose Foundation, and the San Francisco Estuary Project.**

## Upcoming Events

For more information contact  
**Nicholle Fratus at (510) 231-5784**  
or [nicholle@thewatershedproject.org](mailto:nicholle@thewatershedproject.org)

### December

- Monday, December 13  
Holiday Potluck Party  
6:30 - 8:30 P.M.  
Fernandez Mansion  
100 Tennent Ave., Pinole

### January

- Wednesday, January 12  
Monthly Meeting - GPS Results  
6:30 - 8:30 P.M.  
Public Safety Bldg  
Alex Clark Room  
880 Tennent Ave., Pinole
- Saturday, January 22  
Creek & Garden Workparty  
9:30 A.M. - Noon, Pinole Library

### Call to Report Dumping and Spills in the Creek

- For dumping in progress, call 911.
- For spills and dumping in Pinole creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 724-9010.
- For spills and dumping in Hercules creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 799-8252.
- For spills and dumping in Contra Costa County creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (800) NO DUMPING.