

ATTENTION: You will be removed from our mailing list unless you respond to the enclosed card. (Except if you did it last month.)



Friends of Sausal Creek

Promoting Watershed Protection

www.sausalcreek.org

(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

DECEMBER 2002

**FOSC Solstice Party and Potluck
Saturday, December 21, 4-7pm**

There is no monthly meeting in December. Instead, join with other FOSCers to celebrate the Winter Solstice at 4115 Oakmore Road in Oakland. Bring some food or drink to share. Eggnog, both leaded and unleaded, will be served as well as hot cider and mulled wine. Gather 'round the fire and welcome the lengthening days with your Friends.

Newsletter Goes Bi-Monthly: Please Advise

Beginning February 2003, this newsletter will be published on a bi-monthly basis. This is an excellent opportunity to appraise its content and format. If you have thoughts or ideas about how the newsletter might be improved, or about things you would like to see, please send an email to newsletter@sausalcreek.org.

Friends of the Year

A special thanks goes to the following individuals, businesses, government and non-profit agencies, and charitable foundations that have supported FOSC this year (so far ... there's still time! See below.) Consider joining the illustrious company of:

Alameda County Flood Control and Conservation District, Alameda County Clean Water Program, Patricia Bacchetti, Dave Baker, Hoang Banh, CH2MHill, Charlotte Bell, David and Pearl Bell, John Bowers, Margaret Bowman, Janet Broughton, Emma Brown, Christa Burgoyne, City of Oakland, Public Works Agency, Environmental Services Division, Sam Cohen, Federick and Antoinette Conrad, Conservation Fund, Contra Costa Hills Club, James Cropsey, Chuck Dekker, Mike & Laura Doyle, Eleanor Dunn, A.P. Fischer, Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, Glenview Lock and Key, Bruus Grayson, Leanne Grossman, Kelly Aiken & Jim Hafner, Frances & William Hayes, Friedrich Hochfellner of Pacific Realtors, Edy Horwood, Sally Kilburg, Carol Kuelper, Nancy Lindsay, Debbie Long, Mike Mannix, Karen Marie Schroeder, Karen Paulsell, Zarka Popovic, Howard and Joan Poulter, Doris Ransom, Mark & Suzanne Rauzon, Tim & Stephanie Reed, Fred Reichert, Maria Del Rosario Rocha, Jim Ryugo, San Francisco Foundation, Save the Bay, Robyn Hope Scherr, Ivy Schlesinger, Oakland City Councilmember Dick Spees, Monica Stafford, Michael Thilgen, Beebo Turman, Ultimate Grounds Coffees and Teas, United Way, Peter Van der Naillen, Gail Wallace, Kathy Welch, Molly West, Elizabeth Wong, Youth Service America

Status Report Available

A short status report on the native plant revegetation efforts in Dimond Canyon is now available online. Written by FOSC boardmember Michael Thilgen, the report provides an overview of what that project accomplished and how volunteers were integral to its success. Following is the summary from the report. The full report is available at www.sausalcreek.org/pdf/status_report_12-02.pdf (also in the Dimond Canyon area of the website's Volunteer section.)

During the dry season of 2001, a creek channel restoration project was constructed on Sausal Creek in Dimond Canyon. Project goals include improving the hydrological functioning of the creek, enhancing aquatic habitat, and replacing invasive exotic vegetation with local native plants.

Failing concrete structures were removed, the creek channel was reconfigured, creekbanks were protected with bioengineering techniques, and areas of adjacent slope were cleared of invasive exotic vegetation. During the rainy season of 2001-2002, neighborhood volunteers placed approximately 20,000 nursery containers representing approximately 60 species of local native plants on the slopes of the canyon.

One year after planting, some areas are almost covered with native vegetation, and some are poised to fill in the next year. Other areas have failed to establish and will need to be replanted this season. While trampling took a major toll, the primary cause of plant mortality appears to be competition from hydroseeded plantings. These introduced species have produced a second generation that is now germinating aggressively, presenting a challenge for the future.

~Michael Thilgen

For the Birds

The bird monitoring team will hit the trails on Saturday, January 11, 2003 for its first outing on a quarterly (vs. monthly) basis. Stalwart FOSC birders have concluded that quarterly monitoring is sufficient to provide data about the watershed's birds, and invite everyone to join them at these periodic outings. "Going on hikes with experienced birders gives a great new perspective on the watershed," noted novice birder Charlotte Bell. "It makes walking along the creek even more interesting when you can identify a bird by sound or sight. And it's not hard to learn the basics." For more information about January's birding foray, stay tuned to www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/teams.html or call 501-FOSC.

GIVE THE GIFT OF WATERSHED AWARENESS



This year, give the gift of watershed awareness: a donation to FOSC in a friend or family member's name. To accomplish our mission—"promoting watershed awareness"—we need to build and expand our support. Please help the Friends continue our efforts on behalf of the Sausal Creek watershed by making a donation on behalf of yourself or as a gift to a loved one. Happy Holidays!

Mail this form with check made payable to "Friends of Sausal Creek" to: Friends of Sausal Creek, P.O. Box 2737, Oakland, CA 94602. FOSC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and your contribution is fully tax-deductible. A receipt will be sent for your files.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Amount of Donation

\$100 \$50 \$25 \$12 Other: _____

**DONATION
IDEAS**

Matching Gifts: Can your workplace match your donation? If your workplace has a matching gift program, please let us know.
In Kind: We can always use in-kind donations. Contact us to donate tools, equipment, office supplies, or anything else.

Friends of Sausal Creek

P.O. Box 2737
Oakland, CA 94602
(510) 501-FOSC
www.sausalcreek.org



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The Seeds of Sausal Creek's Future

There are three ways to learn native plants and their names: repetition, repetition, and repetition. You can get plenty of practice to hone your native-plant knowledge, explore the Sausal Creek watershed, and help restore the watershed by joining the Friday morning seed collecting hikes. The seeds and cuttings we gather are used in the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery.

On one morning, the team hiked in Joaquin Miller Park, starting near the Horse Arena. We went west on the Sequoia-Bayview trail, down the Chaparral trail part way, then back to the Sequoia-Bayview trail, to the horse area shortcut and back to our cars.

We collected alder cones with seeds, got a couple of fistfuls of big leaf maple seeds, and a lot of coffee berries. We collected honeysuckle seeds during the whole trip and wound up with a great, goopy baggie-full.

We explored a spot with some of the rarest plants in the watershed: brittleleaf manzanita, golden chinquapin, and chamise. They are remnants, we think, of what was once a more widespread chaparral community. The whole patch could disappear into the shade of encroaching bay trees, since fires no longer keep the bays at bay.

Not far away, we ducked off the trail again to visit the small remnant patch of *Dirca occidentalis*, western leatherwood, a Bay Area endemic. Most of its leaves had fallen, so it was largely nondescript light-brown sticks. "But feel it!" said Kristen Hopper, our nursery manager and field coordinator. The slender stems are so flexible that you could tie them in a knot! We must visit again, to see the flowers.

Although few seeds, mainly Toyon, remain to be collected by December, the seed-collecting crew will continue its study of the plants and trails of the watershed. If this kind of learning adventure is for you, contact Robin North at 336-1861 to find out the next Friday the team plans to hike and collect seeds. Hikes are short, usually less than 2 miles, and take 2-3 hours. ~Karen Paulsell

Report Dumping and Spills in the Creek

- For dumping in progress, call 911.
- For sewer backups and spills and storm drain flooding, call 615-5566.
- For other spills and dumping in Oakland creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call 238-6600.

December newsletter contributors:
Charlotte Bell,
Karen Paulsell,
Jennifer Stanley,
Michael Thilgen

FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, call 501-FOSC to get information about all activities. Also, for details about ongoing projects, check the Volunteer section of the Friends' website at www.sausalcreek.org.

Monthly Meetings

~3rd Wednesday of the month~

No meeting in December—party instead! See reverse for details.

- Wednesday 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, etc. 7pm-9pm; Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave.

Board of Directors Meetings

~2nd Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday 12/11, 1/8, 2/12, etc. 7pm-9pm at the Chabot Space & Science Center. Everyone welcome!

Dimond Canyon Workdays

~Saturdays~

9:00am-noon. Meet at the El Centro Trailhead. Info, Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or field@sausalcreek.org.

Plant Propagation

~Saturdays~

1:30-4:00pm at the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery. Info, Kristen Hopper, 387-9744 or field@sausalcreek.org.

Outdoor Education Docents

~Wednesdays~

9:00am-noon at Dimond Canyon or the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery. Preschedule with Sue Morgan at 531-6293 or class@sausalcreek.org.

Seed Collecting

~occasional Friday mornings through the winter • **please call first to confirm & for location**~
Info: Robin North, 336-1861.

Bird Monitoring

~Quarterly outings~
Saturday, 1/11/03. For information, call or watch the website at www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/teams.html.

Aquatic Insect Sampling

~3rd Sunday of the month~
• Sunday 12/15, 1/19, 2/16, etc. 9:30am-noon; info: Emma Brown, 527-2507 or lightbrown@onemain.com.

Water Quality Monitoring

~1st Saturday of the month • **please call first to confirm & for location**~
• Saturday 1/4, 2/8, 3/1, etc. 9am-noon; info: Mark Lane, 219-8036.

The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland, with additional support from the San Francisco Foundation and CH2M Hill.