



# Friends of Sausal Creek

Promoting Watershed Protection

www.sausalcreek.org  
(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

August-September 2003

REMINDER • Monthly meetings, Wednesday, August 20 & September 17, 7-9pm, Dimond Library

## It's Creek-to-Bay Day Time Again!

The biggest creek cleanup of the year is just around the corner. Creek-to-Bay Day (known state- and world-wide as Coastal Cleanup Day) is September 20, and as usual will bring scores of volunteers to Sausal Creek to help us batten down the hatches for fall. The Friends will host volunteers in Dimond Park for cleanup, weeding, and garden maintenance, and at the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery for plant propagation and other tasks.



FOSC will need team leaders—no experience required—to supervise small groups of volunteers as they weed, seed, or whatever it is that we need. Team leaders will be briefed individually prior to the event, and tasks will be reviewed on Saturday morning before the volunteers show up at 9am.

Please pen CTBD into your calendar! We will be discussing plans for this fruitful day in more detail at the FOSC monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 17, at the Dimond Library from 7-9pm. If you can't make it, be sure to contact us with your good ideas or questions: (510) 501-FOSC or [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org). Also, stay tuned to [www.oaklandpw.com/creeks](http://www.oaklandpw.com/creeks).

## New East Bay Watershed Center

Oakland's Merritt College is home to the new **East Bay Watershed Center**. Envisioned as a resource serving the East Bay's creek and watershed community, the center will feature a library, a field workshop program, a science program, and a Watershed Forum: a place where folks from different creek groups can get together to pool resources, exchange ideas, etc.

See the Watershed Center during its Open House and Celebration on Saturday, August 16, from 10:00am-4:00pm. This day will feature a Watershed Assessment Workshop led by Laurel Marcus, an Edible Landscape Demonstration with David Strom, art, poetry, and informal discussions on East Bay watersheds. (And snacks too!)

A kick-off meeting for the Forum is being held on Thursday, August 14, 6:30-8:30pm, at Oakland City Hall, Hearing Room 4. For directions, or, if you cannot attend but are interested in learning more, please call Junko Bryant at (510) 434-3840 or Robin Freeman, program director, at (510)-434-3840.

## Sausal Creek Birding Brochure

A project of the FOSC Bird Monitoring Team, "Birds of the Sausal Creek Watershed" is waiting in the wings. This brochure, to be made available at trailheads, is for watershed visitors to use for bird watching and provides a checklist and related information to use in the field for identifying birds. The Bird Monitoring Team has two goals for the brochure: (1) to enhance visitors' experience to the watershed by helping them to focus on birds; and (2) to gather data about the presence of birds in the watershed. The checklist can be mailed to the Friends and we'll use the data as part of our larger monitoring efforts. The brochure was created through the volunteer efforts of Khati Hendry, Martha Lowe, Karen Paulsell, and Mark Rauzon, with help from Dolores Butkus, Sally Kilburg, and Jennifer Stanley.

## Grounds for Restoration

As the ground dries out and the drama of our summer drought reaches a cracked clay kind of crescendo, we are reminded of the uniqueness of our seasonal cycles. Throughout California there is an incredible range of temperature, rainfall, altitude etc., all of which contribute to our state's famed biodiversity. Right here in our own little slice of outer coast range-to-bay watershed we have a surprising array of different types of local ecological communities, from redwood forest to riparian corridor with mixed hard-woodland, chaparral and grassland in between.

The Restoration Committee has been working since its formation last year on a way to focus our talents and energies as a group dedicated "to protect and enhance" the watershed's ecological diversity. Currently, we are considering basing our program on an approach that addresses one site within each of our watershed's six eco-communities. This is not only an exciting way to focus our efforts but it will also bring educational opportunity to the work that we do on our regular Saturday work programs. We still will continue to triage work on explosive invasive plant populations but having this new framework will give us an opportunity to become truly familiar with each of the six, key eco-communities within the upper watershed. —Kristen Hopper




## Changing of the Guard—Board Officer Elections

FOSC's Board of Directors carries the responsibilities for program direction, fundraising, and finances. As August rolls around, we once again elect officers for a one-year term that starts in September. At the August Board meeting, a panel of candidates for officers will be recommended. If you have interest in joining the FOSC Board, please contact Linda Morse at [lmorse@ch2m.com](mailto:lmorse@ch2m.com). FOSC members will have a chance to meet and hear from the candidates and vote on the recommendations at the August monthly meeting. (Our current officers are President, Sally Kilburg, Vice President, Linda Morse, Secretary (interim), Pete Veilleux, and Treasurer, Diana Surber.) —Linda Morse

## Creeks, Wetlands, and Watersheds Conference

This fall the Aquatic Outreach Institute will hold its 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Creeks, Wetlands, and Watersheds Conference. With workshops led by local experts, the conference aims to provide inspiration and techniques to protect local aquatic resources. The conference is open to educators and the general public and is held over a series of weekends in October and November. Academic credit is available. For more information, go to [www.aoinstitute.org](http://www.aoinstitute.org) or call (510) 231-9430.

## Time's Flies

A stroll along a trail these dog-days of summer kicks up a lot of flies. These annual summer bugs are lazing in patches of sunlight, only to kick up when someone passes them. They don't buzz off, but loop around and hover in place before darting around again. That's why they're called  dance flies or dagger flies. These insects (Empididae) have stiletto-like  mouth parts for sucking other insects dry of bug juice. Moist soil is their habitat and unfortunately they dance around at one's mouth level so one needs to gauge one's speed of passage in coordination with one's breathing in order to not fly catch inadvertently. It's a temporary phenomena of nature and soon they will be dropping like their namesakes so that we can again breathe safely and appreciate the other invertebrate wonders like  darting dragonflies and fluttering butterflies. (Thanks to Alan Kaplan EBRPD for info).  
—Mark "What's the Buzz" Rauzon

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Don't miss our monthly meetings! Next ones are August 20 & September 17, 7-9pm at the Dimond Library. Newsletter printed on recycled paper. Thanks for recycling!

### How's the Water Quality? A report from the Sausal Creek Water Quality Monitoring Team

Once a month, several Friends monitor the quality of the water. The primary purpose of the program is look for any significant changes or anomalies with the data that might indicate a source of pollution. The water quality monitoring program started in March 1998. Current water quality team members are Mark Lane, Nick Kish, and Peter VanderNaillen.

The monitoring sites are the pool on the downstream side of the El Centro culvert, within one of the new meanders in the restoration area, and at a pool on Palo Seco creek a short walk up the Palos Colorados trail from the end of Joaquin Miller Court. The creek has also been monitored in the past near Hickory Avenue in the Fruitvale District and near the mouth of the creek as part of the oyster monitoring program. Recently, the team has also been measuring water quality parameters downstream of the concrete flume near the Liemert Bridge.

The water quality parameters monitored include dissolved oxygen, temperature, pH, and conductivity. These parameters are measured using instruments borrowed from the U.S. EPA laboratory in Richmond. Most aquatic organisms need oxygen to survive and grow. Temperature is important because it affects water chemistry and the functions of aquatic organisms. Temperature can influence the amount of oxygen that can be dissolved in water, the rate of photosynthesis by algae and other aquatic plants, and the timing of reproduction and migration of aquatic organisms. The pH is a measure of how acidic or alkaline the water is. Cellular metabolism necessary for survival and growth of organisms require a narrow pH range. Conductivity is the ability of water to conduct an electrical current. Dissolved ions in the water such as sodium, calcium, chloride and sulfate are conductors.

In general, the water quality data indicates that the creek can support aquatic organisms, and the fact we have seen fish in the pool below the El Centro culvert as well as other locations is an encouraging sign.

For more information on water quality monitoring program, contact Mark Lane at 510-219-8036.

—Mark Lane

<sup>1</sup>San Francisco Estuary Institute, Volunteer Monitoring Protocols

## FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, call 501-FOSC or email [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) to get information about all activities. Also, for details about ongoing projects, check the Volunteer section of the Friends' website at [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org).

**Saturday Workdays**, on summer schedule. Contact us for details.

- **Dimond Canyon**—starting 9/6 9:00am-noon. Meet at the El Centro Trailhead.
- **Plant Propagation**—call first 1:30-4:00pm at the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery.

### Monthly Meetings

~3rd Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday 8/20, 9/17, 10/15, etc. 7pm-9pm; Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave.

### Board of Directors Meetings

~2nd Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday 8/13, 9/10, 10/8, 11/12, etc. 7pm-9pm at the Chabot Space & Science Center. All are welcome!



Thanks to the Chabot Space and Science Center, Sausal watershed resident, for hosting FOSC board meetings.

### Aquatic Insect Sampling

~3rd Sunday of the month~

- Sunday 8/17, 9/21, 10/19, etc. 9:30am-noon; info: Emma Brown, 527-2507.

### Water Quality Monitoring

~1st Saturday of the month; please call first to confirm e<sup>3</sup> for location~

- Saturday 9/6, 10/4, 11/1, etc. 9am-noon; info: Mark Lane, 219-8036.

### Seed Gathering

Times and locations vary.

Help gather native seeds for propagation efforts. Call for more info.

### Creek to Bay Day

Saturday, September, 20, 9am-noon. See article on reverse. Please save the date!

### Bird Monitoring

~Quarterly outings~

Saturday, October 11, early in the morning. For more info, call, or watch [www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/teams.html](http://www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/teams.html) for information.

The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland.

### August-September 2003 Newsletter Contributors

Kristen Hopper, Mark Lane, Linda Morse, Karen Paulsell, Mark J. Rauzon, Jennifer Stanley, Pete Veilleux. To contribute to the FOSC newsletter, email [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) or call 501-FOSC.