

# Protecting steelhead among goals of water district

by Wes Bowers  
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The Alameda County Water District is planning several public outreach meetings to discuss ongoing projects in Alameda Creek.

The water district has completed several projects in the creek over the last few years aimed at protecting a variety of fish, including steelhead trout, and preserving the county's water supply.

"We need, as Alameda County Water District, to ensure we continue our operations of diverting water into the Alameda Creek," spokesperson Robert Shaver said. "And we need to modify several locations along the creek so we don't endanger the steelhead."

The district completed a fish screen along the creek at Mission Boulevard and the Union Pacific Railroad bridge in 2008, and completed the Bunting Pond fish screen in early 2010.

The former project consisted of the installation of a fish screen that included multiple self-cleaning cylindrical fish screens, fencing, control panels and electrical boxes, and a section of new pipe that connected the fish screens' pipe manifold to a diversion pipe. The screen prevents juvenile steelhead trout from being carried into the diversion pipeline and adjacent groundwater recharge pond.

The latter project included modification of the water diversion intake and installation of a fish screen, fencing, control panel and trail modification.

The fish screen system consists of one self-cleaning cylindrical screen with a track system on a concrete pad along the bank of the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel. The screen system and diversion intake is used to divert water from the flood control channel to Bunting Pond. The screen will prevent juvenile steelhead trout from being trapped in the pond.

A rubber dam replacement project near Quarry Lakes Recreational Area was also completed in early 2010.

That project consisted of the removal of the fabric portion of a rubber dam and a portion of its foundation to allow for fish passage in the lower portion of the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel under low flow conditions.

The district currently has two fish ladder projects underway that it hopes to have completed by 2015.

One of the projects includes the design and installation of a fish ladder along the northern embankment of the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel, a district rubber dam and a Bay Area Rapid Transit weir, also near the Quarry Lakes Recreational Area. The fish ladder will help facilitate fish migration in the lower section of Alameda Creek.

Shaver said the district hopes to have this project completed by 2014.

The second fish ladder project is near Mission Boulevard and the railroad tracks, which the district hopes to have done by 2015.

Two fish screens and Kaiser and Shinn ponds are also planned, and both are expected to be completed by 2014.

Along with the fish screen at Shinn Pond, the district also has plans for a gravity re-diversion pipeline there, to also be completed by 2014.

The project consists of installing a new 48-inch gravity re-diversion pipeline with an intake structure in the bank of Shinn Pond, a flow metering vault, isolation gate vault and an outlet structure into Stevenson Pond. A new pipeline will be installed underneath active Union Pacific and BART tracks, which are located at the Quarry Lakes adjacent to the Rancho Arroyo Park.

A final project is a rubber dam replacement along the creek near Quarry Lakes, to be completed by the fall of 2014.

The district held the first of its public outreach meetings Nov. 13 at Niles Elementary School. Shaver said more meetings will be announced in the coming year, and the district will constantly be updating its own website, Facebook and Twitter pages to help keep the public up-to-date.

"We see this as interactive communication to help keep the community abreast of the overall program," Shaver said of holding public meetings.

More information about the district's projects can be found at [acwd.org/index.aspx?NID=456](http://acwd.org/index.aspx?NID=456).