

## STEELHEAD TROUT IN ALAMEDA CREEK GET HELPING HAND



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CONTACT: Jeff Miller (510) 499-9185  
Alameda Creek Alliance

**Fremont, CA** – Two adult steelhead trout migrating up Alameda Creek were rescued below a migration barrier this morning and moved upstream into Niles Canyon. This is the ninth consecutive winter the Alameda Creek Alliance has documented ocean-run steelhead trout in the creek. One large steelhead, 31” long and weighing 11 pounds, was the largest steelhead documented in the creek since 1997.

The steelhead rescued today were initially observed in the lower Alameda Creek flood control channel Thursday and Friday, attempting to migrate upstream to spawn. Migratory fish are currently blocked below the BART weir, a barrier to fish migration in the Alameda Creek flood control channel in Fremont. Alameda Creek Alliance volunteers and an East Bay Regional Park District Fisheries Biologist captured the steelhead and moved them upstream to suitable habitat, operating under state and federal permits. Photos and video of the fish and the rescue will be available on the ACA web site on Sunday night, at [www.alamedacreek.org](http://www.alamedacreek.org).

Steelhead trout were listed as a federally threatened species in 1997 and the Alameda Creek Alliance has been advocating since then for dam removals and construction of fish ladders to allow migratory fish to reach spawning habitat further upstream. There are now 12 local, state, and federal agencies cooperating on fish passage projects in Alameda Creek, including dam removals and construction of fish ladders and fish screens. The projects will allow adult steelhead, currently blocked by barriers in the lower creek, to access up to 15 miles of spawning and rearing habitat in and above Sunol Regional Wilderness.

Until fish passage projects are completed, fisheries biologists and volunteers have been given annual permits by the California Department of Fish and Game and the federal agency National Marine Fisheries Service to move blocked or stranded fish from the Alameda Creek flood control channel to suitable habitat upstream.

The Alameda County Water District and Alameda County Flood Control District are pursuing funding for fish passage projects in the lower creek. In May 2005, the ACWD received a \$1 million grant to fund two projects that will help improve passage for steelhead trout in the flood control channel. This summer and fall, the ACWD will remove an inflatable rubber dam and install a fish screen at a water diversion in the lower creek. This year the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission plans to remove two abandoned dams from Niles Canyon.

For more information about Alameda Creek fish restoration and photos of past fish rescues, go to [www.alamedacreek.org](http://www.alamedacreek.org). The ACA is a community watershed restoration group with over 750 members, dedicated to protecting and restoring Alameda Creek and its tributaries.