

## **Up Your Creek!**

The electronic newsletter of the Alameda Creek Alliance

### **Alameda Creek Alliance Membership Dinner October 18 – Get Your Tickets Now!**

Join us for our quasi-annual Alameda Creek Alliance membership dinner on Saturday, October 18 at [Chouinard Winery](#) in Palomares Canyon, from 5:30 to 8:30 pm. There will be live acoustic music, good food, wine for sale by the glass or bottle, and updates on Alameda Creek restoration progress. More details on our web site soon.

You can buy advance tickets for the dinner (\$60 each) easily and securely by going to our web site ([www.alamedacreek.org](http://www.alamedacreek.org)) and clicking on “Upcoming Events.” We will also be mailing forms for purchasing tickets to members.

Help us celebrate our many accomplishments and plan for the future restoration of Alameda Creek and its fisheries. Come meet and mingle with other watershed residents and the Alameda Creek Alliance staff and Board of Directors. We look forward to seeing you on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Help Remove Invasive Plants From Sinbad Creek**

#### **August 30 – Sinbad Creek Work Party, Sunol**

Join us on Saturday, August 30th from 8 am to 11 am to remove invasive plants along beautiful lower Sinbad Creek in Sunol. We'll focus on removal of the highly invasive tamarisk (saltcedar), which has gotten a small foothold in the creek. While there are only a few individual tamarisks, we'll have to work carefully, as tamarisk can reproduce vegetatively from small pieces that break off and root in stream channels. For those interested this will also be an opportunity to clean trash from the creek before the winter rains come. We'll meet and be working at the [bridge over Sinbad Creek on Bond St., Sunol](#).

We'll be working in a fairly level section of creek, but the banks can be steep to climb, and rocky. Wear pants and appropriate footwear, including closed-toe shoes. There is a bit of poison oak in Sinbad Creek which we should be able to avoid. The creek is currently dry, so there's no risk of wet feet. However, the ground can be uneven. It can be warm and sunny in Sunol, so bring sunscreen and water in a re-usable bottle.

Please RSVP to Ralph Boniello at [Ralph@alamedacreek.org](mailto:Ralph@alamedacreek.org)

### **Other Upcoming Alameda Creek Events**

Save the dates for these upcoming Alameda Creek Alliance events. More information soon.

**September 20 – Alameda Creek Cleanup, Niles**

**October 4 - Science in the Park, Hayward**

**October 18 – Stonybrook Creek Cleanup**

**November 16 – Alameda Creek Cleanup**

## **Niles Canyon Bridge Replacement Projects**

### **Caltrans Bridge Replacement Project**

Caltrans is proposing to replace the 85 year old Alameda Creek Bridge in the middle of Niles Canyon, to meet modern seismic standards and Caltrans safety standards. The project would include removing the old bridge and building a new bridge with upgraded railings, realigning the bridge approaches, and adding standard 8' shoulders.

The new bridge footings will probably reduce the area of pillars and footings in the active creek channel compared to the current bridge. The new approaches will require cutting some trees – mostly smaller live oaks – and adding some retaining walls. We are waiting to get analysis from Caltrans about how many trees and what species would be impacted, and how much retaining walls would be built for the approaches under different project alternatives.

As part of the project, Caltrans is proposing to remove or modify an adjacent abandoned bridge footing to make it passable for migratory fish. The footing is about 4' high and a barrier for fish migration at low flows. The footing also backs up the creek and creates a warm pool that is habitat for invasive fish and frogs. Removing the footing from the creek channel would improve habitat for native fish and amphibians.

In the spring, Caltrans held two scoping meetings to request input from the public, local agencies and local governments in determining the appropriate scope of the environmental document for the Alameda Creek Bridge Replacement Project. Check out the [March 4, 2014 scoping meeting presentation](#). Caltrans has since met with the ACA and permitting agencies to update us on the project.

Caltrans plans to put out a draft environmental review document for the project in late 2014, so stay tuned.

### **City of Fremont's Old Canyon Road Bridge Foundation Repair Project**

A 2010 bridge inspection by Caltrans revealed that scour conditions are critical at the bridge footings of the Old Canyon Road Bridge over the Alameda Creek flood control channel at the bottom of Niles Canyon.

The City of Fremont is beginning a project to remove and replace grouted rock rip-rap around the bridge piers to stabilize the bridge footings. The project will also improve fish passage under the bridge. The City of Fremont has consulted with the Alameda Creek Alliance and with regulatory agencies about the project. We concur that the project will have minimal environmental impacts and will significantly improve fish passage under the bridge at low-flow conditions.

The Fremont City Council is expected to adopt a draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the project on September 16. Project construction is expected to take place April 15 to October 15, 2015.

## **Sunol Watershed Center**

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission is moving forward with planning for a project to build the Alameda Creek Watershed Center in Sunol near the Sunol Water Temple, along with improving its existing facilities in the Sunol Yard.

The current watershed center plan would include multiple buildings clustered around an open courtyard designed to complement the existing natural and built environment. The Center would be intended to provide a place for people to gather, with an inside meeting room for public use and attractive grounds and native landscaping outside. There will be exhibits, interpretive displays and artwork where visitors can learn about and appreciate the Alameda Creek watershed, its natural resources, role as part of the SFPUC water supply system, and the history of the Sunol Valley. Educational programs for school children would also be supported at the Center, as well as activities associated with the Sunol Ag Park and volunteer opportunities in the watershed and at the Center.

Construction for the Center is expected to start in 2015-2016, pending project approval. More info about the watershed center, the design and the planning process can be found [here](#).

## **Alameda County Watercourse Protection Ordinance**

Alameda County is proposing revisions to its Watershed Protection Ordinance, to apply to streams in unincorporated areas of Alameda County. Unfortunately, the County is moving forward with a severely flawed ordinance that does not present a science-based plan for protecting and restoring creeks in the watersheds of the unincorporated areas of Alameda County. The ordinance appears to be a flood control and right of way protection ordinance aimed at limiting the County's liability, rather than a true watercourse protection ordinance.

The County has been holding public workshops on the revisions to the Watercourse Protection Ordinance, and the Alameda Creek Alliance has been submitting comments on the flaws in the proposed revisions. We'll keep you updated as this process moves forward and there are opportunities for public comment.

## **How to Remove Your Lawn: Mow No Mo' Workshop**

Saturday, September 6, from 10 am to 3 pm in Livermore  
\$30 (registration required) [Register now](#)

Save money, save time, save water! Lose your lawn, get a garden—and get paid for it, too! In this hands-on workshop you'll learn how to remove your lawn, select native plants, and design a water-conserving, pesticide-free garden that attracts wildlife.

Brought to you by [Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour](#) and Zone 7 Water Agency.

## **Exploding Oil Trains in Fremont?**

Concerned that the oil trains slated to run through the East Bay pose a local threat from spills and explosions and a global threat because the oil they carry will contribute to climate change, a group of south Alameda activists are hosting an educational and organizing event. Titled "Exploding Oil Trains in Fremont?" the event will be held on Thursday, September 11, 7:00-9:00 p.m., at the Fremont Senior Center, 40086 Paseo Padre Parkway. The event is free. More info [here](#).

## **Regional Salmon Restoration News**

[\*\*World's Largest Dam Removal Unleashes U.S. River After Century of Electric Production\*\*](#)

National Geographic – August 26, 2014

[\*\*Westlands Bullies File TRO to Block Klamath Salmon Releases\*\*](#)

Daily Kos – August 26, 2014

[\*\*California Drought Has Wild Salmon Competing With Almonds for Water\*\*](#)

WUNC – August 24, 2014

[\*\*Reclamation Releases Additional Flows to Stop Klamath River Fish Kill\*\*](#)

Indy Media – August 22, 2014

[\*\*Federal Agency to Release Extra Water for Klamath Salmon\*\*](#)

San Jose Mercury News - August 22, 2014

[\*\*Scott River Salmon Rescue Draws Attention from National News\*\*](#)

Siskiyou Daily News – August 21, 2014

[\*\*Tribal Members Rally in Sacramento to Stop Klamath River Fish Kill\*\*](#)

Daily Kos – August 20, 2014

[\*\*California Allocates Vastly More Water Than Supplies Allow, Study Shows\*\*](#)

Sacramento Bee - August 19, 2014

[\*\*Klamath Tribes Worry Massive Fish Kill Is Close\*\*](#)

KCRA – August 19, 2014

[\*\*Back To Nature: Last Chunk of Elwha Dams Out In September\*\*](#)

Seattle Times – August 18, 2014

[\*\*Redwood Creek Coho Salmon Moved To Help Save Species\*\*](#)

Marin Independent-Journal - August 15, 2014

[\*\*Feds May Release Klamath Basin Water to Prevent Disease among Spawning Salmon\*\*](#)

The Oregonian - August 15, 2014

[\*\*Deal on Protecting Salmon from Pesticides Filed\*\*](#)

Sacramento Bee – August 14, 2014

[\*\*Judge Forces Pesticide Spraying Buffers on EPA to Protect Northwest Salmon Streams\*\*](#)

The Oregonian - August 14, 2014

[\*\*Governor Brown's Water Bond Will Be a Referendum on Tunnels\*\*](#)

Indy Media – August 13, 2014

[\*\*Intervention Needed To Save Salmon from Drought\*\*](#)

Santa Rosa Press-Democrat – August 12, 2014

[\*\*Dead Fish and Gill Rot in the Trinity River\*\*](#)

Lost Coast Outpost August 11, 2014

[\*\*Ten Mile River Getting Reef-To-Ridge Makeover to Save Salmon\*\*](#)

San Francisco Chronicle – August 9, 2014

[\*\*Klamath Basin Facing Catastrophic Fish Kill\*\*](#)

Eureka Times-Standard – August 8, 2014

**[Life on the Creek](#)**

Almanac News – August 6, 2014

**[Drying Times are Trying Times for Eel River Fish](#)**

Friends of the Eel River - July 29, 2014

**[Right vs. Reason in Severe Drought Conditions](#)**

Friends of the Eel River - July 29, 2014

***The Alameda Creek Alliance is a non-profit community watershed protection group. Please support our efforts by [becoming a member](#).***