

UP YOUR CREEK!

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER Issue 12 ● July 2001

Come Celebrate the First
Alameda Creek Dam Removal!

Friday, August 17, 11 AM - 1 PM
Sunol Swim Dams
Sunol Regional Wilderness

Wear your ACA T-shirt

On **Friday, August 17**, the East Bay Regional Park District will begin removing two concrete swim dams to enhance trout and steelhead habitat in Alameda Creek, within Sunol Regional Wilderness. The dam removal will improve steelhead access to spawning habitat once fish passage projects in lower Alameda Creek are completed. The streambanks at the site will be stabilized and re-vegetated. There will be a ceremony and celebration at Sunol Regional Wilderness from 11 am to 1 pm on the 17th. For more information please contact Rosemary Cameron, EBRPD Public Affairs at (510) 544-2003.

PLEASE ATTEND THIS HISTORIC EVENT AND
WEAR YOUR ACA T-SHIRT

t-shirts will be available at cost at the event

TO REACH SUNOL PARK:

From the Fremont area, drive north on I-680 and exit at Calaveras Road. Turn right on Calaveras Road.

From the Oakland/Berkeley area, drive east on I-580 to the junction with I-680 in Pleasanton. At the junction, go south on I-680 and exit at Calaveras Road/Highway 84 just south of the town of Sunol. Turn left onto Calaveras Road.

From the Walnut Creek/Danville area, go south on I-680 and exit at Calaveras Road/Highway 84 just south of the town of Sunol. Turn left onto Calaveras Road.

From Calaveras Road proceed to Geary Road, which leads directly into the park.

The Alameda Creek Alliance meets the last Tuesday of every month (except during summer) at the Sunol Glen School, 11601 Main Street, in the town of Sunol.

NEXT ACA MEETING

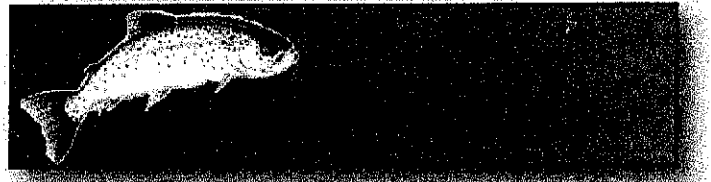
Tuesday, September 25, 7 - 9 PM
Sunol Glen School, Sunol

TO REACH SUNOL GLEN SCHOOL:

From Hwy. 680, take the Hwy. 84 exit (about 7 miles south of 680/580 interchange). Go west on Hwy. 84 (Niles Canyon Road) ¼ mile, go straight through the stop sign at four corners. Go over the bridge (over Arroyo de la Laguna) and turn right into Sunol. The school will be immediately on your right.

From Fremont/Hwy. 84, go east on Hwy. 84 (Niles Canyon Road), up Niles Canyon. At the top of the canyon, take the Sunol exit into town. Continue through town on Main Street past the brew pub and the post office, over the railroad tracks, and the school will be on your left.

We meet in the Community Room in the temporary building in the back of the schoolyard.



Contact the Alameda Creek Alliance at:

P. O. Box 192

Canyon, CA 94516

Phone (510) 845-4675

e-mail: alamedacreek@hotmail.com

web site: www.alamedacreek.com.

ALAMEDA CREEK RESTORATION

PROGRESS UPDATES

Section 1135 Project

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has initiated a Preliminary Restoration Plan (PRP) for the restoration project in the flood control channel. This project will construct fish ladders at barriers in the lower creek and fish screens at Alameda County Water District (ACWD) diversions. The PRP should be completed by August 2001, before the beginning of the Corps fiscal year 2002 in October.

The next phase of the project is a more comprehensive Ecosystem Restoration Report (ERR) prepared by the Corps, which could move forward in 2002. The \$500K needed for the ERR would be available in 2002 if other Corps restoration projects were not yet ready to proceed, and either the ACWD and/or the Alameda County Flood Control District (which own the barriers in the lower creek) sign a letter of intent to be the local sponsoring agency for the project (and contribute 1/4 of the project costs).

At this point the 1135 project is still potentially on track to complete construction by fall of 2003. The Conceptual Design and Cost Estimates report for the fish passage project can be viewed at <http://www.cemar.org/alamedacreek/reports.html>

SFPUC Dam Removal

The SFPUC has allocated \$1 million in its upcoming budget for the removal of Sunol and Niles Dams in Niles Canyon and is seeking matching funds for the project. The SFPUC has already completed a Feasibility Study and an Analysis of the Impacts of Dam Removal as well as a Historic Resources Report for these dams. These reports can also be viewed at: <http://www.cemar.org/alamedacreek/reports.html>

These dams could be removed as early as fall of 2002.

Levee Reconfiguration

The Alameda County Flood Control District (ACFCD) is investigating removing or setting back the levees which contain the mouth of Alameda Creek, to facilitate sediment transport out of the flood control channel and into the Bay. The project would alleviate the need to dredge the lower creek channel, while restoring tidal wetlands and providing nursery and smolt habitat at the creek mouth for steelhead. This

project may tie in with the much sought-after restoration of Cargill salt ponds north of the creek mouth (although the proposed S. F. Airport expansion may inhibit tidal wetlands restoration in the south Bay by changing sediment circulation patterns).

ACFCD is hiring a consulting firm for a Phase I investigation of the levee reconfiguration and has submitted a draft Scope of Work for Phase II to the State Water Board. If the Phase II operations include wetlands restoration, the California Coastal Conservancy may offer matching funds for the project.

Stonybrook Creek

ACFCD has finished a report on road culverts which are potential migration barriers to fish in Stonybrook Creek, a steep tributary in Niles Canyon. Five of the eight culverts need to be replaced to provide fish passage, two can be retrofitted, and one is not a passage barrier. There is at least a mile of promising trout spawning habitat above these barriers which could be made accessible to steelhead. Unfortunately the current estimate to remove these barriers runs as high as \$1.8 million.

Fisheries Investigations

Biologists working for the SFPUC began studying the landlocked steelhead populations behind San Antonio and Calaveras Reservoirs this spring - conducting smolt trapping in tributaries to the reservoirs and trapping fish for fin clips to determine the genetic makeup of these populations. These fish populations are presumed to be genetically most similar to the original steelhead run in Alameda Creek and may be used to "jump-start" a run in the creek below the major dams. The results of these surveys and the genetic study are expected this fall.

Sedimentation Issues

The USGS collected sedimentation data in Alameda Creek in the winter of 1999. Preliminary results indicate that ~33,000 cubic yards of sediment passed through Niles Canyon that winter. Since a greater amount passed through Arroyo de la Laguna, some deposition of sediment appears to be occurring in upper Niles Canyon. USGS will also be studying possible sediment flux from the Bay into lower Alameda Creek. The ACFCD will be completing the last of four de-silting projects in the lower creek this year, and expects to remove 25,000 cubic yards from the channel.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE WATERSHED

Vargas Plateau

In yet another assault on open space, SummerHill Homes has proposed to build a gated community of 480 homes and two golf courses on 1,429 acres of the Vargas Plateau east of Fremont. The Vargas Plateau, bounded by Niles Canyon and Alameda Creek on the north and Highway 680 on the south, is an important wildlife migration corridor. Portions of the proposed development have been designated as Critical Habitat for the California red-legged frog and there is suitable habitat for the Alameda whipsnake as well.

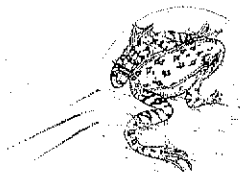
In order for the development to proceed, most of the site would have to be annexed by the City of Fremont, which is prohibited by the city's Hillside Initiative. The development would cause considerable traffic problems on Highway 84 and increase sediment and pollution problems in Alameda Creek. Moreover, there are already 3 existing golf courses within 5 miles of the site.

What you can do:

Send a brief letter to the Fremont City Council and Planning Department opposing the annexation and development of this area. Write to:

**Fremont City Council
City Council Chambers
39700 Civic Center Drive
Fremont, CA 94537**

**Steve McHarris, Project Planner
City of Fremont
39550 Liberty Street
Fremont, CA 94537**



Driving endangered species to extinction

Sunol Gravel Quarry

S. F. Supervisor Chris Daly is leading the movement to rescind the Mission Valley Rock (MVR) lease for Water Temple Field (Sunol Valley north of Hwy. 680). In April, the Board of Supervisors passed his resolution to instruct the S. F. Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to cancel the lease and asking the City Attorney's office to explore avenues for doing so without costing the City the millions threatened in law suits by MVR.

This does not mean the quarry expansion will not happen without more public pressure. The resolution is not binding on the PUC and the City Attorney must look for a viable way out of the lease agreement. Several new developments make this more likely.

The Alameda Creek Alliance made the Supervisors and PUC aware of numerous water and air quality violations reported by MVR to the respective regulatory boards, but swept under the carpet in the quarry expansion EIR and at many public hearings. The Regional Water Quality Control Board is investigating the numerous water discharge violations. Save Our Sunol (SOS) has also discovered that MVR never completed its permit process with the Air Quality Management Board.

Alameda County Measure D, the Open Space Initiative, requires that any project lacking all of its permits after D's enactment must go before a vote of the county to proceed. Experts on Measure D are confident that the new quarry does not qualify as vested. Supervisor Daly has instructed the S.F. City Attorney's office to send a letter to MVR informing them that they can seek a vote of Alameda County residents to continue with the project, or they can consider the lease null and void. Save Our Sunol is cautiously optimistic that this avenue will, after seven years of effort, save Water Temple Field.

What you can do:

- Contact the S. F. Board of Supervisors and SFPUC Commissioners and encourage them to cancel the lease.
- Contact the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and insist they defend Measure D in the Mission Valley Rock vs. Water Temple Field case.

Addresses and further information about this issue can be found at the Save Our Sunol web site at www.sunol.org

Fish & Game Commission Opening

The Alameda County Fish and Game Commission has an opening. The Commission advises the County Board of Supervisors on fish and game matters. Supervisor Gail Steele is looking to appoint a commissioner from her district, which includes Hayward, San Lorenzo, Newark, Union City, and parts of Fremont. Two ACA members have served on the Commission in the past, and the Commission gave the ACA a critical \$5,000 grant when we were starting out. The Commission distributes annual grant \$ from a portion of the Fish and Game fines in the County.

IF YOU LIVE IN SUP. STEELE'S DISTRICT & WOULD LIKE TO SERVE ON THE COMMISSION, CONTACT THE ACA.

The Commission needs members who are activist-oriented to become more involved in habitat protection and restoration and to take a stand on issues that impact fish and game resources in the County.

Fisheries Workgroup

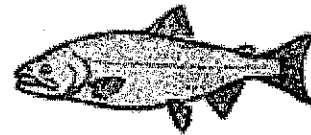
The Fisheries Workgroup is the stakeholder group that is working out the details and timing of how to proceed with steelhead restoration in the watershed. The next Fisheries Workgroup meeting will be held on Monday, July 30, 9:30 am at the ACFCD offices, 951 Turner Court in Hayward. If you are interested in attending a Fisheries Workgroup meeting, please contact the ACA.

StreamKeeper Program

The Alameda Creek Alliance is beginning a StreamKeeper program for watershed residents who would like to adopt a local section of the creek to monitor, protect, and restore. The StreamKeeper program will help train and coordinate volunteers to identify, map, and monitor fish spawning habitat. As well as being the eyes and ears of the ACA on the creek, StreamKeepers can help the restoration effort by working with local landowners to identify streambank problem areas and opportunities for habitat restoration; monitoring water quality and pollution; organizing creek clean-ups; and discouraging poaching.

Contact the ACA if you would like to be a StreamKeeper

Bay Area Fish Symposium



Salmon and Steelhead in Your Creek:
Restoration and Management of Anadromous Fish
in Bay Area Watersheds

November 14-15, 2001
The Oakland Museum

- Progress of restoration activities
in Bay Area watersheds
- Regulatory agency perspectives
on local fish populations
- Restoration funding opportunities

Day 1 will focus on sharing information about the status of fish resources in the Bay Area. Guest speakers include:

Mr. Robert Leidy - U.S. EPA Region IX Fisheries Biologist, a leading expert on fishes in the Bay Area

Dr. Jennifer Nielsen - U.S. Geological Survey, an expert on the genetics of steelhead and salmon in California

Day 2 of the symposium will focus upon restoration of anadromous fish runs, including:

- Resource agency recovery plans
- Restoration programs in local watersheds
- Successful strategies for restoring anadromous fish in urbanized regions

Speakers on the second day will include:

Mr. Dennis McEwan - Team Leader, Native Anadromous Fish Team, Calif. Dept. of Fish and Game

Mr. Miles Croom - Coordinator of the Central Coast ESU Recovery Team, National Marine Fisheries Service

To get on the mailing list for registration materials, or if you have questions, please send a message to symposium@cemar.org

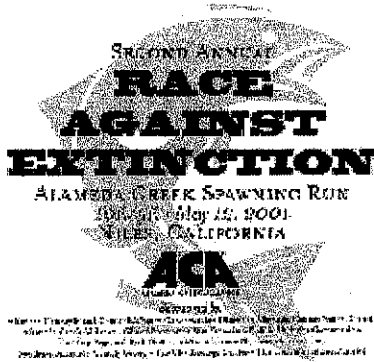
ACA T-SHIRTS

We still have many gorgeous five color t-shirts left over from this year's Fremont Steelhead Festival. These are available at cost for \$8 postage paid (see design below).

Beautiful ACA fundraiser t-shirt (see design below) available for \$20 postage paid. Free t-shirt with membership of \$25 or more. Check payable to ACA. Specify size (S, M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL).

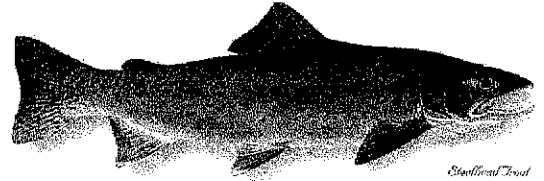


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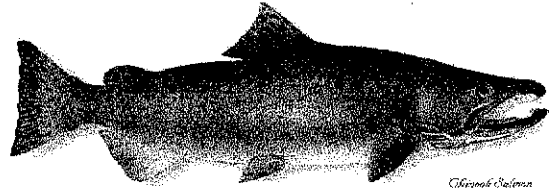


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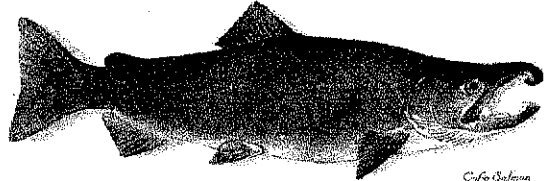
Three Reasons to Save and Restore Alameda Creek



Steelhead Trout



Chinook Salmon



Coho Salmon



ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Alameda Creek Alliance and receive the newsletter *Up Your Creek!* Enclosed is \$10 or more for a one year membership. For a membership of \$25 or more you will receive an Alameda Creek Alliance T-shirt (please specify size). Make checks payable to Alameda Creek Alliance.

Name _____ **\$10 Fry**

Address _____ **\$25 Parr**

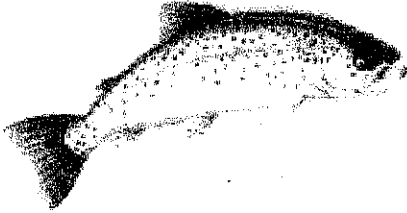
City _____ **Zip** _____ **\$50 Smolt**

Phone _____ **\$100 Spawner**

e-mail _____ **Send me a bumpersticker**

Mail to: Alameda Creek Alliance, P.O. Box 192, Canyon, CA 94516

Alameda Creek Alliance
P.O. Box 192
Canyon, CA 94516



Up Your Creek!

ACA Newsletter #12

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- ☞ August 17 Sunol Dam Removal, Sunol Wilderness (see page 1)
- ☞ September 25 Next ACA Meeting, Sunol (see page 1)
- ☞ November 14-15 Bay Area Fish Restoration Symposium, Oakland (see page 4)