



UP YOUR CREEK!

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

Issue 17 • Summer 2003

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE

Protecting and restoring the natural ecosystems
of the Alameda Creek watershed

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COMMUNITY WILDERNESS PLAN FOR SUNOL AND OHLONE PARKS

Local environmental and flyfishing organizations proposed an alternative management plan emphasizing the restoration of wilderness values for Sunol and Ohlone Regional Parks in the upper Alameda Creek watershed. The East Bay Regional Park District is conducting environmental review and taking public input on a proposed Land Use Plan that will determine management of the parks for the next 20 years.

The wilderness proposal, Alternative W, was submitted in August by Alameda Creek Alliance, Center for Biological Diversity, Livermore Flyfishers, Mission Peak Fly Anglers, Regional Parks Association, and Southern Alameda County Group Sierra Club. It calls for phasing out commercial cattle ranching operations in the parks, protecting stream habitat for trout and other sensitive species, removing unneeded roads and other infrastructure, and initiating an adaptive management plan to restore habitat for native species and preserve the wilderness values of the parks.

Although nominally designated as 'Wilderness Regional Preserves' over 3/4 of Sunol and Ohlone parkland is leased for cattle grazing, causing significant damage to habitat in Alameda Creek for native trout, amphibians and other sensitive species. Under Alternative W, commercial grazing would be phased out of the parks 1/3 at a time, allowing 3-5 years after grazing exclusion to monitor the results. The plan also calls for removing roads, culverts, fencing, and other infrastructure not needed for emergency or public access, ending use of poisons in the parks, exploring alternative fire management options, and involving the public through education and volunteer restoration projects.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write a letter supporting the wilderness plan to **Dan Sykes, Park Planner/East Bay Regional Park District/P. O. Box 5381/Oakland, CA 94605**

Send an e-mail request to ACA for a copy of Alternative W.

NEXT ACA MEETINGS

September 30

October 28 (vote for ACA Board)

7 - 9 PM, Sunol Glen School, Sunol
(for directions visit www.alamedacreek.org - next meeting)

APPERSON QUARRY ALERT

A proposed quarry on Apperson Ridge, east of the Sunol Valley (midway between Sunol Regional Wilderness and San Antonio Reservoir) will destroy wildlands habitat for at least four endangered species and displace the East Bay's only tule elk herd. Alameda County approved the Apperson Quarry in 1984. Oliver DeSilva, Inc. plans to mine hard rock on 680 acres of prime wildlife habitat in the heart of the home range of the San Antonio tule elk herd. The quarry will feature daily dynamite blasting that will be heard in Sunol Wilderness and the town of Sunol as well as up to 1,000 trucks per day on Calaveras Road.

The quarrying, blasting, and truck traffic will drive the elk herd out of their rutting and calving area and will also impact nesting golden eagles and peregrine falcons and damage habitat and disrupt migration for sensitive species such as the California red-legged frog, Alameda whipsnake, California tiger salamander and western burrowing owl. The quarry will potentially degrade habitat and impact water quality for landlocked steelhead trout in Indian Creek, above San Antonio Reservoir.

The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the quarry is 19 years old - several endangered species known from the site have been listed since then. In June the County issued grading permits for widening a ranch road for truck access to the quarry. The County has woefully inadequate mitigation for impacts to the red-legged frog and required absolutely no mitigation for impacts to other listed and sensitive species! The 1984 EIR proposed to relocate the tule elk herd to Ohlone Wilderness, a plan that has since been rejected by the Department of Fish and Game. The County has indicated they will allow the quarry to go forward with no further environmental review and with full knowledge quarrying will evict the San Antonio elk herd.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Write or call the County Planning Department and tell them displacing the San Antonio elk herd and impacting listing species without mitigation is unacceptable - insist they conduct a new EIR for the quarry. Write to: **Chris Bazar, Planning Director/Alameda County Planning Department/224 West Winton Avenue, Room 110/Hayward, CA 94544; or call (510) 670-5400.**

VOTE OCTOBER 28TH FOR ACA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Alameda Creek Alliance is incorporating as a formal non-profit organization. An interim Board of Directors is working on the incorporation process and creating the bylaws of the organization. The interim Board consists of Alameda Creek Alliance members Derrell Bridgman, Rich Cimino, Brendan Cummings, Larry Dennis, Jeff Miller, Peggy Olofson and Scott Taylor. The long-term purpose of the Board is to provide vision and strategic direction for the Alameda Creek Alliance, hire and direct the activities of any staff, organize volunteer committees, and help fundraise and do outreach for the organization.

A formal election of the Board of Directors will be held at the ACA membership meeting on October 28, at 7 pm in Sunol, at the Sunol Glen School. All ACA members in good standing will be able to vote for Board members at the Oct. 28 meeting or by mail or e-mail prior to the meeting. If you are not sure if you are an ACA member or not, please contact the ACA. You can become a member up to the day before the meeting and still vote. Ballots with candidate statements will be sent to all current members about 1 month before the election.

At least 6 of the 7 interim Board members will be running for election. **If you are interested in running for the Board and qualify**, please contact the ACA for more details and send a candidacy statement (75 words maximum) by **September 22**. We will elect 7 Board members for a one-year term. You can run for the Board if you have been an ACA member for at least 1 year, agree with the mission statement and purposes and goals of the ACA (listed below), and do not have a possible conflict of interest (i.e. work for any of the water or land management agencies in the watershed).

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE MISSION STATEMENT

The Alameda Creek Alliance is a community watershed group dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural ecosystems of the Alameda Creek watershed. Our primary mission is protecting and improving habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive native species.

Our initial efforts focus on restoring runs of steelhead trout and salmon attempting to ascend Alameda Creek to spawn. Our goal is to ensure self-sustaining populations of these fish. We will work to remove or modify barriers to fish migration and to supply

adequate water flows for spawning, rearing and out-migration of juvenile smolts to the Bay.

We will also work to restore and enhance fish habitat, improve water quality, and prevent habitat loss and degradation caused by development, livestock grazing, and channelization of streams. We will monitor the public agencies involved in management of the creek to ensure that they comply with existing environmental laws and protect the public trust, by providing for protection of fish and wildlife.

Participation or membership in the Alameda Creek Alliance is open to anyone committed to the above goals. Participation in the organization is on an individual basis, not as a representative of any agency, business, or political group. We will work with government agencies and private entities interested in supporting our goals.

We are an independent non-profit community group. Our membership meetings are publicly announced, accessible, and democratically run. We respect diversity of opinion and approaches, and will work through education, publicity, advocacy, public pressure, legal action, and volunteer work.

ALAMEDA CREEK ALLIANCE PURPOSES AND GOALS

- * To protect and restore the natural ecosystems of the Alameda Creek watershed
- * To educate the general public on the ecological, aesthetic, and recreational values of Alameda Creek and its tributary streams
- * To protect and restore habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species within the Alameda Creek watershed
- * To restore self-sustaining populations of steelhead trout and salmon in the Alameda Creek watershed
- * To help organize local residents and organizations who wish to carry out stream restoration projects
- * To fulfill the goals of the Alameda Creek Alliance Mission Statement

PLEASANTON/DUBLIN CREEK MAP

A creek map for Pleasanton/Dublin and vicinity is now available from the Oakland Museum - they are available for sale at the museum store, some local bookstores, and eventually on line at www.museumca.org or contact Christopher Richard (crichard@museumca.org).

FISH PASSAGE PROJECTS UPDATE

Flood Control Channel - Fremont

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has begun developing a Detailed Project Report for the restoration project in the Alameda Creek Flood Control Channel. When completed, this document will serve as the basis for approving construction of needed fish ladders and fish screens. This will be followed by development of project alternatives and a plan to meet project goals. The Alameda Creek Fisheries Workgroup is investigating a Re-graded Channel alternative, which would remove the middle ACWD rubber dam and the BART weir, consolidate all ACWD diversion facilities at the uppermost rubber dam, and re-grade the flood control channel to remove the gradient below the BART tracks. If found to be economically feasible while preserving flood control and water supply functions, the alternative would be presented to the Corps as the preferred project.

Niles Canyon

Sunol and Niles Dam removals

The SFPUC has completed a draft report on the conceptual engineering for the removal of Sunol and Niles Dams (posted at www.cemar.org). This is an engineering report; issues such as impacts to biological and cultural resources will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Impact Report for the project. The draft EIR is expected at the end of January 2004, the final EIR in May 2005, and both dam removals are scheduled for the 2005 dry season.

Stonybrook Creek culverts

A conceptual design is being prepared for modification of 2 County-owned Palomares Road crossing culverts in lower Stonybrook Creek for fish passage. The work will be partly funded by a \$40,000 fine imposed on the City of Fremont for an improperly conducted culvert project. The conceptual design will be used for future implementation grant proposals, will include cost estimates and barrier analysis, and involve outreach to landowners in Stonybrook Creek. The project, in combination with a Hwy. 84 road crossing improvement planned by CalTrans, would make about 3,000 feet of Stonybrook Creek accessible to steelhead once the Corps project in the flood control channel is completed.

Arroyo Mocho - Livermore

LLNL bridge replacement

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory plans to replace a low water concrete stream crossing in the Arroyo Mocho gorge with a high bridge that is above the 100 year flood mark. The crossing is 160 feet long and 40 to 80 feet wide, containing a pipe that delivers Hetch Hetchy water to LLNL. The crossing area will be re-graded into 4 small drops to minimize the downstream impact of the project and the new

bridge will house the water pipe. The cost of the project is \$500K. The bridge is located about 6 miles downstream of Mocho Falls. The project is on track to start June 2004 and should be completed by October 2004. The Army Corps of Engineers is the lead agency for the project.

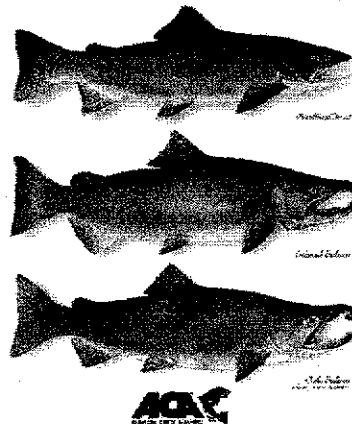
Arroyo Mocho/las Positas realignment

Zone 7 Water Agency has begun excavation on a project that will widen, realign, and restore sections of Arroyo Mocho and Arroyo las Positas in Livermore. The project will remove two existing fish passage barriers, add two fish ladders to steep sections of the creek, and restore a more natural stream channel with native vegetation and enhanced stream wildlife habitat.

Support the Alameda Creek Alliance

Help restore Alameda Creek
Free t-shirt with membership of \$20 or more

*Three Reasons to Save
and Restore Alameda Creek*



ACA 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. Membership of \$20 or more receives ACA t-shirt (please specify size). Checks payable to Alameda Creek Alliance.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

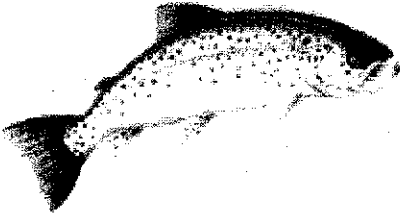
Phone _____

e-mail _____

- \$10 Fry \$25 Parr \$50 Smolt
 \$100 Spawner Send me a free bumpersticker

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

**Alameda Creek Alliance
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VOTE FOR THE ACA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SEE PAGE 2

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL WATERSHED GROUP

BECOME AN ACA MEMBER

SEE PAGE 3