



Friends of Sausal Creek

PROMOTING WATERSHED AWARENESS

## Annual Program Summary Report for Watershed Awareness Program July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

### PUBLIC OUTREACH - EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

**Friends of Sausal Creek Member Meetings** were held every other month at the Dimond Library. Topics for this year included the City of Oakland's upcoming Sausal Creek Dimond Park Restoration Project; an overview and discussion of the *Sausal Creek Watershed Enhancement Plan*; Ann L. Riley speaking on "Is Urban Stream Restoration Possible?"; presentations on the efforts of Friends of San Leandro Creek and on UC Berkeley's Strawberry Creek Restoration Program; and a photographic overview of birds of the Sausal Creek Watershed.

Public outreach via **tabling at community events** increased in 2010-2011 due to new enthusiastic volunteers. FOOSC tabled at a Dimond Improvement Association meeting; the annual Dimond Picnic and Dimond Oktoberfest; EarthExpo in downtown Oakland; the Laurel Summer Solstice Music Festival; the Friends of Joaquin Miller Park and Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association annual meetings; and community service fairs at Holy Names University and Piedmont High School and a social justice fair at Holy Names University. FOOSC also had informational tables at our annual Dimond Park events that draw the largest numbers of volunteers: Creek-to-Bay Day (175 volunteers), Winter Solstice Planting Day (92 volunteers), and Earth Day (140 volunteers).

FOOSC held a **community workshop** on gardening with native plants and attracting native bees to home gardens at our Dimond Park Demonstration Garden in May 2011.

The **Oakland Museum of California** invited FOOSC to collaborate on the new creek exhibit in the Oakland section of the natural history gallery, scheduled to be completed in summer 2012. FOOSC staff and board members met with museum staff several times and are currently finalizing plans for an interactive geographic representation of the Sausal Creek Watershed featuring film vignettes of FOOSC's restoration sites.

Other forms of public outreach included FOOSC's **bi-monthly newsletter**, **listserv**, and **website**, [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org). Listserv membership increased from 226 to 287 members. We added a page to our website on how to report various creek problems, [www.sausalcreek.org/contacts/report.html](http://www.sausalcreek.org/contacts/report.html), resulting in staff being contacted more frequently by the community about trash, sewage overflows, and other creek issues. In November 2010, we launched the FOOSC Kids website, [www.sausalcreek.org/kids](http://www.sausalcreek.org/kids). FOOSC continues to write articles for the MacArthur Metro, and submits information on member meetings and volunteer events to print and digital publications and neighborhood listservs.

In October 2010, the *Trails and Tributaries of the Sausal Creek Watershed* map brochure was reprinted (20,000 copies), which includes information on keeping creeks healthy. FOOSC also got permission to reproduce and distribute the *Gardener's Guide to the Sausal Creek Watershed: A Home Companion to Growing Native Plants* for the May 2011 community workshop, and now has copies on hand for ongoing distribution. In December 2010, FOOSC completed the *Fern*

*Ravine Restoration Plan*, which will guide our work in this headwaters area for years to come. FOSC continues to lead the Friends of Joaquin Miller Park's Redwood Committee in efforts to create a circulation plan for the larger redwood area to help reduce erosion and improve habitat.

FOSC's Restoration Committee began a series of **hydrology hikes** to assess storm drains and other erosion sites detailed in the *Sausal Creek Watershed Enhancement Plan* so that projects can be prioritized and funding sought for mediation. FOSC is working with city and county staff to begin implementing priority recommendations. The *Sausal Creek Watershed Enhancement Plan*, completed in March 2010, was the result of a \$226,000 study conducted over three years and overseen by FOSC to guide and prioritize watershed restoration efforts.

FOSC continues to maintain relationships with **community partners** including the Boy Scouts of America, buildOn, Chabot Space and Science Center, EarthTeam, East Bay Conservation Corps, Girl Scouts of the USA, Kids for the Bay, Holy Names University, Lawrence Hall of Science TEAMS, Oakland's Student Conservation Association, Piedmont High School Key Club, and Skyline High School's Excel and Eco Clubs. Partnerships with other local community groups include Dimond Improvement Association, Friends of Joaquin Miller Park, Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail, Glenview Neighborhood Association, Oakmore Homes Association, Peralta Creek neighbors, Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association, and Shepherd Canyon Homeowner's Association.

## CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT EVENTS

FOSC community volunteer events are held year round at restoration sites throughout the watershed. Some of the workdays are led by FOSC staff and interns, others are led by neighborhood volunteers. Volunteer-led worksites receive support from FOSC staff in multiple ways: assistance with workday outreach and volunteer recruitment; tools; consultation on site restoration plans; and contribution of native plants grown at our native plant nursery.

Community volunteer events included:

- Four (4) workdays at Barry Place
- Eleven (11) workdays at Beaconsfield Canyon
- Seventeen (17) workdays in Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon (including the Bridgeview Trailhead and Monterey Redwoods restoration sites)
- Seven (7) workdays at Fern Ravine in Joaquin Miller Park
- Two (2) workdays at Fruitvale Bridge Park at the mouth of Sausal Creek
- Forty-two (42) workdays at Joaquin Miller Native Plant Nursery
- Eleven (11) workdays at William D. Wood Park
- Seven (7) seed hikes and botany walks
- Four (4) quarterly bird monitoring events

FOSC staff and key volunteers were trained in **bioassessment** techniques following SWAMP protocol so that aquatic insect and water quality monitoring programs can be resumed in 2011-2012. The visual fish monitoring program continues with plans to train a team of community volunteers to expand the effort in 2011-2012.

**Interns:** Holy Names University (HNU) provided FOSC with two AmeriCorps interns in 2010-11, each of whom worked 300 hours assisting staff with leading restoration workdays and field trips and on other organization projects. Several other HNU students served as interns for class credit to support our restoration and monitoring programs. In summer 2010, several high school students who had volunteered the previous school year worked with our restoration and nursery manager on a variety of restoration projects in Dimond Canyon.

**Board of Directors:** We were pleased to recruit two new members to our board of directors for 2011, a civil engineer and an administrator from UC Berkeley. We are drawing upon their professional expertise for watershed plan implementation and grantwriting.

## SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN OUTREACH

Our activities with school-age children include leading environmental education field trips for school classes and restoration workdays for student community service groups. All youth activities include a discussion of the Sausal Creek Watershed, stormwater pollution prevention, stream restoration strategies, and native and non-native plant identification. The programs also include a hands-on restoration component such as removal of invasive, non-native plants; installation of erosion blanket and wattles; and planting of native plants propagated at our nursery. We hosted 21 field trips groups this past school year, in addition to working with several groups of young people during the summer of 2010. In addition, student service organizations volunteered for Saturday workdays year round. We more consistently followed up on field trip programs by providing teachers with evaluation forms; feedback on those received has been overwhelmingly positive.

## FUNDING

Additional funding in 2010-2011 came from the Alameda County Fish and Game Commission, Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program, buildOn (AmeriCorps Alums Grant), Clif Bar Foundation, The Clorox Company Foundation, Coastal Conservancy, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Environmental Protection Agency, JiJi Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (partnership with EarthTeam), Oakland Wildfire Prevention District, Ocean Guardians (grantee Joaquin Miller Elementary School), Rose Foundation, and individual contributions. FOSC continues to work to identify other potential funding sources for our programs.

## SUMMARY

Total volunteers visits: 2,195  
Total service hours: 6,416  
Total students participating in field trips: 686  
Native plants propagated and planted: 2,077