



Friends of Sausal Creek

PROMOTING WATERSHED AWARENESS

## Annual Program Summary Report for Watershed Awareness Program July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

### PUBLIC OUTREACH - EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

**Friends of Sausal Creek Member Meetings** were held in September, November, January, March, and May at the Dimond Library. For July, we continued our new tradition of a Meet & Greet potluck, this year at Dimond Park. In January we held the third annual State of the Creek meeting, bringing together residents from throughout the watershed and featuring a presentation on erosion control techniques. Topics for the other indoor bimonthly meetings covered pruning, mountain lions and East Bay wildlife, East Bay riparian birds and native bees, and dragonflies. The trend of increased attendance at our meetings continued—we averaged 46 attendees per indoor meeting this past fiscal year.

Enthusiastic volunteers continued to represent FOSC by **tabling at community events**. FOSC tabled at the annual Dimond Picnic, Dimond Oaktobfest, Dimond Winterfest, and Dimond Night Out; the Friends of Joaquin Miller Park and Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association annual meetings; an open house at Joaquin Miller Park Ranger Station; the State of the Estuary poster session; Friends of San Leandro Creek's Environmental Forum; EarthEXPO in downtown Oakland; the Peralta EcoFair at Laney College; the Oakland Museum of California near our exhibit; and the Lunchbox Project at Fruitvale Station. FOSC also had informational tables at our annual Dimond Park events that draw the largest numbers of volunteers: Creek to Bay Day (116 volunteers), Winter Solstice Planting Day (32 volunteers), and Earth Day (59 volunteers). Our 8<sup>th</sup> annual Native Plant Sale and Open House included a FOSC informational table as well as speakers on the natural and cultural history of the East Bay and on native landscaping; tablers on chickens and urban farming, pollinators, gardening, and arachnids; face painting; and live music.

We also talked about FOSC to various **special groups**, including the annual East Bay Hills Hike through Dimond Canyon, and the Insect Sciences Museum of California at a meeting at Lake Merritt Rotary Nature Center. We led tours in the watershed for Oakland Heritage Association, Oakland Museum of California Docents-in-Training, Oakland Wild, Holy Names University biology students, and retirees from the Environmental Protection Agency.

We had two month-long displays at the **Dimond Library**: October 2013 on native plants and May 2014 on native bees.

We completed signage for the native plants in **planters** on LaSalle Avenue in Montclair Village to create an educational native plant walk. This partnership with Montclair Village Association also included audio versions of the native plant walk on their website ([montclairvillage.com/sausalcreekeducationalplanters/](http://montclairvillage.com/sausalcreekeducationalplanters/)).

Other forms of public outreach included FOSC's **bi-monthly newsletter**, **listserv**, and **website**, [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org). Our completely revamped website was launched in April 2014. Circulation for our bimonthly email newsletter grew from 1,968 to 2,280 recipients over the course of the year. See attached for the newsletter from the final quarter of the fiscal year.

Listserv membership increased from 439 to 508 members. We submit information on member meetings and volunteer events to print and digital publications and neighborhood listservs.

FOSC distributed several thousand copies of the *Trails and Tributaries of the Sausal Creek Watershed* **map brochure** which includes information on keeping creeks healthy. Brochures were distributed via the tabling outreach events described above and were made available at watershed trail map boxes, local libraries, and recreation centers.

Working closely with the volunteer site leaders, FOSC produced **restoration plans** for Barry Place, Bridgeview Trail, and Palo Seco Creek at Joaquin Miller Court.

FOSC continued to implement the *Fern Ravine Restoration Plan* through workdays with Civicorps Learning Academy and high school student groups.

We assisted the Oakland Fire Department with the update of the **Goat Grazing Plan** so that grazing could be best timed with removal of invasive plants prior to seeding and so that native plants could be protected from grazing.

FOSC continues to maintain relationships with **community partners** including 4-H, AmeriCorps Reading Partners, Boy Scouts of America, buildOn, Chabot Space and Science Center, Circle K International, Civicorps, College of Alameda, EarthTeam, East Bay Academy for Young Scientists, Fremont High School, Girl Scouts of the USA, KIDS for the BAY, Hands on Bay Area, Holy Names University, Laney College, Lawrence Hall of Science TEAMS, Merritt College, Oakland High School's Green Academy, Piedmont High School Key Club, Skyline High School's Eco Club, Student Conservation Association, and UC Berkeley. Partnerships with other local community groups include Diablo Firesafe Council, Dimond Business and Professional Association, Dimond Improvement Association, Friends of Joaquin Miller Park, Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail, Friends of Wood Park, Glenview Neighborhood Association, Jingtowntown Arts & Business Community, Montclair Village Association, Oakmore Homes Association, Peralta Creek neighbors, Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association, and Shepherd Canyon Homeowners 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, 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 and special group volunteer events included:

- Three (3) workdays at Barry Place
- Twelve (12) workdays at Beaconsfield Canyon
- Twenty-six (26) workdays at Bridgeview Trailhead
- One (1) workday at Chabot Space and Science Center West Ridge Trail around pallid manzanitas

- Fifteen (15) workdays in Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon
- Four (4) workdays at Fern Ravine in Joaquin Miller Park
- Two (2) workdays at Fruitvale Bridge Park
- Two (2) workdays in Jingletown
- One (1) workday at Joaquin Miller Court
- Fifty-three (53) workdays at Joaquin Miller Native Plant Nursery
- One (1) workday in Joaquin Miller Park (behind native plant nursery)
- Fourteen (14) workdays in Marj Saunders Park
- One (1) workday at the Monterey Blvd. redwoods site
- Seven (7) workdays at Shepherd Canyon
- Twenty (20) workdays at William D. Wood Park
- One (1) workday at Woodbine Corner
- One (1) Sudden Oak Death (SOD) treatment training and one bioblitz
- Fifteen (15) seed hikes and one (1) botany walk
- Four (4) in the creek clean-up walks
- Two (2) watershed walks for college students, three (3) watershed tours for special groups, one (1) nursery tour for a special group, and one (1) community walking tour
- Two (2) crew leader training events (topics included managing volunteers; installing erosion control materials; and planting native plants)
- Twelve (12) aquatic insect monitoring events by the bioassessment team plus nine (9) special aquatic insect monitoring events for student groups
- Three (3) quarterly bird monitoring events
- Nine (9) water quality monitoring days

**Board of Directors:** We were pleased to recruit one new member to our board of directors for 2014, Dee Rosario, who recently retired from the position of Park Supervisor for East Bay Regional Park District's Redwood Regional Park.

## 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. Youth activities include a discussion of the Sausal Creek Watershed, stormwater pollution prevention, stream restoration strategies, and native and nonnative plant identification. The programs also include a hands-on restoration component such as removal of invasive, nonnative plants; vegetation monitoring; and planting of native plants propagated at our nursery. We hosted 49 field trips groups this past school year. This sharp increase was due to a year-long program with all Grade 2 classes at Joaquin Miller Elementary; the students learned about the full restoration cycle through monthly field trips to either Beaconsfield Canyon or our native plant nursery (accounting for 27 of the field trip groups). In addition to field trips, student service organizations volunteered for Saturday workdays year-round.

During summer of 2013, we partnered again with City of Oakland Office of Parks and Recreation to work with their *Touch the Earth* and *Shake, Rattle & Roll* day camp programs in the Joaquin Miller Park redwood area. Nineteen groups of campers learned about the Sausal Creek Watershed, discussed stormwater pollution prevention, and participated in restoration activities including removal of invasive, nonnative plants. This partnership is continuing during the summer of 2014.

Our summer high school intern program grew to ten students in 2013. Each student volunteered on at least 10 days, contributing at least seven hours a day on a variety of restoration projects in Dimond Canyon and Joaquin Miller Parks and at our native plant nursery. A past FOSC student volunteer affiliated with Girl Scouts of the USA and Student Conservation Association helped lead the summer 2013 education programs as a paid intern. The summer 2014 summer intern program has ten students participating.

## FUNDING

Additional funding in 2013-14 came from the Alameda County Fish and Game Commission, Bill Graham Supporting Foundation of the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund, Bonita Garden Club, California Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program (Proposition 84 grant), The Clorox Company Foundation, East Bay Municipal Utility District, Hillside Gardeners of Montclair, JiJi Foundation, Mary A. Crocker Trust, San Francisco Estuary Partnership Small Grants Program, The Strong Foundation for Environmental Values, Thomas J. Long Foundation, and individual contributions. FOSC continues to work to identify other potential funding sources for our programs.

## SUMMARY

Total volunteers visits: 4,288

Total service hours: 9,854

Total students participating in field trips or summer service learning projects: 962

Native plants propagated and planted: 3,867