



## Annual Program Summary Report for Watershed Awareness Program July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

### PUBLIC OUTREACH - EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

#### Friends of Sausal Creek Member Meetings

Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) offered both indoor presentations and outdoor events to the community, drawing an average of forty-two (42) community members per event.

- Community-based experts spoke on exploring the urban forest and landscaping with natives. One very popular talk addressed the hummingbird: “Hummers Delight: A Brief Look at the Lifestyle of the World’s Smallest Birds.”
- Sixty-six (66) community members attended to the “State of the Watershed” annual meeting to learn from site leaders throughout the watershed about the current projects, priorities, and support needs.
- In addition to a community bird walk in Dimond Park, the final member meeting of the fiscal year was also out-of-doors in the Sausal Creek Watershed. On June 9 in Fern Ravine, FOSC combined the annual Meet-and-Greet potluck with a farewell tribute to long-time Executive Director Kimra McAfee and introductions of new staff members: Anna Marie Schmidt (Executive Director), Nicki Alexander (Education and Outreach Coordinator), and Jay Cassianni (Restoration and Nursery Manager).

#### Tabling at Community Events

During this year, FOSC staff and volunteers connected with community members by tabling at several events. These events included:

- **Dimond Park Picnic** (July 23)
- **2-day Dimond Oaktobefest** (September 30 & October 1)
- **CSU-East Bay Career Fair** (October 27)
- **City of Oakland Volunteer Appreciation Party** (November 2)
- **Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting** (January 29)
- **Chabot Space and Science Center First Friday** (June 1) event where FOSC offered a plant identification activity to support "The Science of Observing" theme.

FOSC increased its outreach to the Fruitvale District in Oakland, tabling at:

- **Día de los Muertos** (October 29)
- **Annual Reclaiming Cinco De Mayo** event at Josie de la Cruz Park (May 6)
- **Fruitvale Summer Nights Festival** (June 28)

FOSC's table typically included literature on stormwater pollution prevention, the watershed trails map, the *Sausal Creek Walkable Watershed Concept Plan* (copies in English and Spanish), and flyers on upcoming volunteer opportunities. FOSC displayed both English and Spanish versions of its tri-fold presentation board if appropriate for the audience. Community members

signed up at each event to be added to the FOSC monthly newsletter list, listserv, and/or the plant sale email list.

FOSC also had informational tables at our largest annual Dimond Park events:

- **Creek to Bay Day** workday (September 16); 120 volunteers
- **Earth Day** (April 21); 128 volunteers
- **FOSC 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Native Plant Sale and Open House** (October 22); over 381 in attendance. In addition to the FOSC informational table, participants enjoyed a talk on propagating native plants and information on native pollinators, gardening, and water conservation, along with a lively bluegrass group.

### Walks, Tours, and Presentations

Drawing from expert volunteers, FOSC hosted well-attended walks on local **geology** (“Rocks of the Dinosaur Era in Shepherd Canyon”) and on the **botany and geology** of Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon. Forty-seven (47) people came out for a popular January 1<sup>st</sup> **King Tides Walk and Estuary History** with a local historian at the Fruitvale Bridge Park, where Sausal Creek enters the estuary. On June 10, FOSC hosted a walking history and art tour of **Jingletown and the Estuary** in the same area. In addition, a FOSC board member presented and invited discussion on the FOSC mission and activities at the **Oakmore Homeowners Association** annual meeting. The FOSC nursery manager was invited to present on native plant gardening to the **Hillside Gardeners of Montclair**. On August 23, FOSC co-led a project tour of the **Sausal Creek Restoration Project** in Dimond Park with Oakland city staff and the project designer for 30 East Bay Regional Park District land managers.

The **Sausal Creek Erosion Control Project**, funded by the California Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program (Proposition 84), is a partnership with the City of Oakland, who co-sponsored FOSC’s grant application. The construction phase of the Sausal Creek Erosion Project was given the green light in June 2018 by the City, and FOSC immediately developed a community outreach strategy. FOSC informed the public of the impending construction and the opportunity to participate in a community tour via FOSC and neighborhood listservs, the FOSC website, FOSC newsletters, personalized emails to Dimond Canyon neighbors, and signage at high traffic trailheads and along trails. FOSC led a **Dimond Canyon Community Tour** (June 9) in partnership with the City of Oakland and participated in the Preconstruction Walkthrough (June 20) along with project managers, engineers, and an arborist from the City of Oakland, and D-Line Constructors, the project general contractor.

### Other Outreach

FOSC has been recognized and included in several publications and websites.

- FOSC was included in East Bay Municipal Utility District’s insert in the *East Bay Express* on East Bay watersheds and groups working to protect them.
- The Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden and the Sausal Creek Restoration Project at Dimond Park have been added to EBMUD’s new **sustainable landscape map web page**: <http://www.ebmud.com/water-and-drought/conservation-and-rebates/watersmart-gardener/sustainable-landscape-map/>.
- FOSC accompanied Oakland city staff and the project designer to accept an **Outstanding Environmental Project Award** for the Sausal Creek Restoration Project at Dimond Park at the State of the Estuary Conference.

FOSC strives to maximize outreach effectiveness across diverse community groups by distributing information (e.g. member meetings, volunteer events, workdays) in varied formats including announcements in digital and print publications, posts on neighborhood listservs, placement of flyers and maps (*Trails and Tributaries of the Sausal Creek Watershed map brochure*) in trail map boxes in Dimond Canyon Park and Joaquin Miller Park at trailheads, and personal contact at tabling events.

This year, FOSC made steady progress in employing multiple social media formats for public outreach including FOSC's **newsletter**, **listserv**, **website** ([www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org)), **Facebook** page ([www.facebook.com/FriendsOfSausalCreek](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfSausalCreek)), **Instagram** account ([friends\\_of\\_sausal\\_creek](https://www.instagram.com/friends_of_sausal_creek/)), and **Twitter** account (FOSC\_Field). Highlights on Facebook included daily posts during key events (e.g. Native Plant Sale). Our Facebook page Likes increased from 634 to 748 over the course of the year. Our June 2018 monthly newsletter had a circulation of 3,318 digital recipients (9 hard copies mailed). Listserv membership increased from 691 to 754 members during the last fiscal year.

Coordinating opportunities with other groups allows FOSC to leverage resources. **Community groups that volunteered directly with FOSC** during the year included:

4-H	CSU-East Bay	Merritt College
Alameda High School Sierra Club	Diablo Valley College	Oakland High School Key Club
Albany High School Key Club	EarthTeam	Piedmont Community Service Crew
Boy Scouts of America	East Bay Academy for Young Scientists	Piedmont High School Key Club
buildOn (various high schools)	Girl Scouts of Northern California	Skyline High School Key Club
Campolindo High School Key Club	Hands on Bay Area	Skyline High School Leadership Club
Castro Valley High School Key Club	Hayward High School Interact Club	Student Conservation Association
CiviCorps	Holy Names University	UC Berkeley Circle K International
College of Alameda	Laney College	

FOSC also partners with **other local community organizations and nonprofits** including:

Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay	Dimond Improvement Association	Nomadic Press
Brothers on the Rise	Friends of Joaquin Miller Park	Oakland Trails
California Invasive Plant Council	Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail	Oakmore Homes Association
California Native Plant Society-East Bay	Friends of Wood Park	Peralta Hacienda Historical Park
Chabot Space and Science Center	Glenview Neighborhood Association	Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association
Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice	Jingletown Arts & Business Community	Shepherd Canyon Homeowners Association
Diablo Firesafe Council	Keep Oakland Beautiful	Unity Council
Dimond Business and Professional Association	Montclair Village Association	Youth Employment Program

## CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT EVENTS

FOSC community volunteer events are held year-round at sites throughout the watershed. Some of the workdays are led by FOSC staff, while 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 about site restoration plans, and contribution of native plants grown at our native plant nursery. Citizen involvement events during fiscal year 2017-18 included:

- Two (2) workdays at Barry Place
- Eleven (11) public workdays and one (1) private workday at Beaconsfield Canyon
- Three (3) workdays at Bienati Creek Overlook
- One (1) public workday and one (1) private workday at Big Trees Trail Pallid Manzanita colony
- Twenty-five (25) workdays at the Bridgeview Pollinator Garden
- Fifteen (15) public workdays and two (2) private workdays on the Bridgeview Trail
- One (1) workday at Castle Canyon
- Three (3) Pallid Manzanita Crew workdays and one (1) monitoring training day at Chabot Space and Science Center pallid manzanita colony
- Thirteen (13) public workdays and four (4) private workdays in Dimond Canyon Park
- Ten (10) workdays in the Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden
- Three (3) private workdays at Fern Ravine
- Two (2) workdays at the Fruitvale Bridge Park
- Thirty-three (33) public workdays and one (1) private workday at the FOSC Native Plant Nursery
- Twelve (12) workdays by Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail
- Three (3) workdays in Jingtowntown
- Seven (7) workdays in Joaquin Miller Park
- One (1) workday at Josie de la Cruz Park
- Fourteen (14) workdays at Marj Saunders Park
- Seven (7) workdays at the PAL Camp in Joaquin Miller Park
- One (1) private workday at Redwood Glen in Joaquin Miller Park
- Thirteen (13) workdays at William D. Wood Park
- Eleven (11) public workdays and one (1) private Trail Crew workday in Dimond Canyon Park
- Six (6) seed collection hikes
- Four (4) bird monitoring events
- Ten (10) coliform sampling days (wet and dry season series)

- Six (6) Eagle Scout projects completed including:
  - the replacement of temporary fencing at the Monterey Redwoods restoration site with split rail fencing
  - construction of fencing at the bottom of the Bridgeview Trail switchbacks in Dimond Canyon
  - installation of bee boxes at the Bridgeview Pollinator Garden and the Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden
  - placement of a new run of steps to the FOSC Native Plant Nursery hillside trail;
  - sealing of propagation tables and nursery benches
  - construction of a new compost bin in the FOSC Native Plant Nursery.
- Board of Directors: Our board of directors and executive director met every other month. Board of Directors meetings were open to the public, and the agenda and staff report were posted on the FOSC website.

### SCHOOL-AGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Our activities with school-age children included leading environmental education field trips for school classes and restoration workdays for student community service groups. Youth activities range from discussions of the geography and resources of Sausal Creek Watershed, stormwater pollution prevention, water quality testing, stream restoration strategies, and native and non-native plant identification. Many programs also involve a hands-on restoration component such as removal of invasive, nonnative plants; vegetation monitoring; planting of native plants; or propagating plants in our native plant nursery. Some field trips also include hikes through the woods and/or along the creek and silent reflection activities. This year marked the second year of our “Follow Your Creek” field trip program focused on schools within walking distance of the creek’s mouth at Fruitvale Bridge Park.

FOSC staff and volunteer docents led sixty-four (64) field trips this past school year, some serving multiple classes. Many of the field trips involved the same classes over multiple days for the purpose of facilitating deep and broad engagement with the content and environment. We also provided four (4) in-classroom lessons, in partnership with buildOn and EarthTeam. One classroom visit, at Oakland High School, served as the kick-off to a series of field trips that occurred throughout the school year, emphasizing aquatic insect monitoring.

Field trip topics included understanding the Sausal Creek Watershed and the restoration cycle, the tides, and wildlife adaptations to estuary habitats. Students conducted a neighborhood health survey and recorded atmospheric condition measurements; conducted litter surveys while discussing stormwater pollution prevention; and monitored aquatic insects and water quality. Students actively engaged with the environment through hiking, sketching, removing litter from in-the-creek and project sites, birdwatching, and removing invasive, nonnative plants and planting native plants. Groups served were from the following schools:

Ascend Middle School	ASCEND Elementary School	Joaquin Miller Elementary School	Oakland High School
Achieve Academy	Aspire Triumph	Manzanita SEED	Skyline High School
ARISE High School	Epic Middle School	Melrose Academy	

We also led field trips for groups of students from various other schools, working in partnership with after-school programs led by Brothers on the Rise and Chabot Space & Science Center’s Champions of Science program.

Field trip locations included Beaconsfield Canyon, Dimond Canyon Park, Dimond Park, Fruitvale Bridge Park, Jingtletown, Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden, and Monterey Redwoods.

In addition to these field trips, student service organizations volunteered for weekend workdays year-round. Many other students volunteered during community workdays throughout the watershed, including students affiliated with the following:

Berkeley High School	College Park Key Club	Redwood Day School
Boy Scouts of America	East Oakland Leadership Academy	Skyline High School
buildOn (various high schools)	Oakland Technical High School	Student Conservation Association
Campolindo High School	Piedmont Elementary School	UC Berkeley
Circle K International	Piedmont High School	

FOSC staff again led several summer projects in invasive, nonnative plant removal for student groups including Holy Names University **Upward Bound** high school students (35 students), **Peralta Hacienda’s ACE Camp** students (24 students), and East Bay Regional Park District’s **Teen Eco Action Week** (17 students).

We partnered with **Oakland Parks, Recreation & Youth Development** during the summer of 2017 and June of 2018 to work with their Touch the Earth and Shake, Rattle & Roll day camp programs in the Joaquin Miller Park redwood area. Eleven groups of campers learned about the Sausal Creek Watershed, stormwater pollution prevention, “Leave No Trace” ethics, native plants, insects and other wildlife, and California native peoples and their practices. These groups also went on naturalist-led hikes through the redwoods and participated in restoration activities including removal of invasive, nonnative plants and propagation of native plants in our nursery.

FOSC continues the partnership with **Team Oakland**, an Oakland Public Works job training summer employment program for local youth. During July and early August FOSC staff worked with three teams of 10-12 youth. FOSC provided a special project one shift each week for the 6-week program. The teenagers tackled invasive plant removal projects at Barry Place, Dimond Canyon Park, Fruitvale Bridge Park, Jingtletown Native Plant Garden, Joaquin Miller Park, Wood Park, and Woodbine Corner; transplanted plants and dug trenches for irrigation lines at the FOSC nursery; picked up trash in-the-creek and at various FOSC sites; and participated in lessons and discussions on litter and its impacts on creek health. This partnership is continuing during the summer of 2018.

## FUNDING

Additional funding in 2017-18 came from:

- Alameda County Fish and Game Commission
- Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program Community Stewardship Grant Program
- Bill Graham Supporting Foundation of the Jewish Community Federation and Endowment Fund
- California Coastal Conservancy Explore the Coast Grant Program

- 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
- Rose Foundation
- Organization donations
- Business contributions and employee matches
- Individual contributions

#### SUMMARY

- Volunteer visits: 5,058
- Volunteer service hours: 13,023
- Students participating in field trips or summer service learning projects: 1,703
- Total students taught during classroom presentations: 111
- Plants planted by FOOSC: 2,963
- Plants donated for school and city projects: 228