



# Friends of Sausal Creek

PROMOTING WATERSHED AWARENESS

## Annual Program Summary Report for Watershed Awareness Program July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

### 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 Beaconsfield Canyon. In January we held the fourth annual State of the Creek meeting; this year's meeting served as a community meeting for FOSC's Sausal Creek Erosion Control Restoration Project in Dimond Canyon funded by the Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program. Topics for the other indoor bimonthly meetings covered butterflies; raptors, rats, and riparian areas; iNaturalist.org; and mushrooms. We averaged 37 attendees per indoor meeting this past fiscal year.

Enthusiastic volunteers continued to represent FOSC by **tabling at community events**. FOSC tabled at Pawfest 2014 in Dimond Park, We Love Water in Berkeley, Dimond Oaktobefest, and Dimond Night Out; Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association annual meeting; and Friends of San Leandro Creek's Environmental Forum. As part of Peet's Coffee & Tea week-long Holiday Giving campaign, we had a display in the Dimond store and had volunteers present each day to interface with the public. FOSC also had informational tables at our annual Dimond Park events that draw the largest numbers of volunteers: Creek to Bay Day (123 volunteers), Winter Solstice Planting Day (45 volunteers), and Earth Day (122 volunteers). Our 9<sup>th</sup> annual Native Plant Sale and Open House (292 attendees) included a FOSC informational table as well as tablers on raptors, arachnids, pollinators, gardening, and urban farming; face painting; and live music.

We also **presented** about FOSC and the Sausal Creek Erosion Control Restoration Project to the Walnut Creek Watershed Council and at the Alameda Creek Watershed Forum Fall Technical Symposium.

We led a **tour** in the watershed for Court Appointed Special Advocates and hosted a **history walk** along the waterfront during the "king tide" in January 2015.

We had a month-long **display** at the Dimond Library in October 2014 on butterflies.

We **distributed information** on the New Zealand mudsnail to the neighborhood listservs and posted informational signage at trailheads.

Other forms of public outreach included FOSC's **bi-monthly 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). We purged our newsletter email list to remove old email addresses, thus reducing monthly Constant Contacts costs; for the final newsletter of the year, circulation was 2,132 recipients. Listserv membership increased from 508 to 548 members. Outreach for member meetings and volunteer events was also done through announcements in digital and print publications, posts on neighborhood listservs, and flyers at trailheads and at tabling events.

We added **signs** with QR codes to the Sausal Creek Watershed trails map to trail map boxes so trail users can access the map with their cell phones and other personal electronic devices. We are in the process of reprinting the *Trails and Tributaries of the Sausal Creek Watershed* map brochure, which will include an updated map and new photographs.

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, Civicorps, College of Alameda, EarthTeam, East Bay Academy for Young Scientists, Fremont High School, Girl Scouts of the USA, Hands on Bay Area, Holy Names University, KIDS for the BAY, Laney College, 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 Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay, 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, Jingletown Arts & Business Community, Keep Oakland Beautiful, Montclair Village Association, Nomadic Press, Oakmore Homes Association, 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, 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 on site restoration plans; and contribution of native plants grown at our native plant nursery. In addition to an executive director and restoration and nursery manager, FOSC hired a summer intern and an intern to assist during the school year (September-May).

- Three (3) workdays at Austin Square, plus one (1) site tour for Skyline High School Y-PLAN students
- Three (3) workdays at Barry Place
- Eleven (11) workdays at Beaconsfield Canyon plus many hours of thistle removal by dedicated park stewards
- One (1) monitoring day at the Big Trees Trail pallid manzanita colony
- Twenty-five (25) public workdays at Bridgeview Trailhead and three (3) private corporate workdays at Bridgeview Trailhead for Chevron's Week of Caring
- One (1) workday at Castle Canyon
- One (1) workday at Chabot Space and Science Center pallid manzanita colony to clean up after 100 large trees were removed to allow light into the struggling manzanita colony

- Seven (7) public workdays in Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon and (3) private workdays (AmeriCorps Reading Partners, buildOn, and Student Conservation Association)
- Two (2) trail maintenance workdays in Dimond Canyon Park
- Four (4) private corporate workdays at Fern Ravine with The North Face, JanSport, and Google (through a partnership with Hands On Bay Area), AmeriCorps Reading Partners, and Thermo Fisher Scientific
- Thirty-three (33) public workdays at the FOSC Native Plant Nursery; volunteers included groups from All Saints Catholic Church, Americorps, buildOn, Church of Santa Maria in Orinda, CSU-East Bay, KIPP King Collegiate, Oakland High School, Oakland Technical High School, Piedmont High School, and Skyline High School; three (3) private corporate workdays with The North Face, JanSport, and Google (through a partnership with Hands On Bay Area) and with Apple; and one (1) private workday for members of the American Library Association
- Two (2) workdays at Fruitvale Bridge Park
- Two (2) workdays led by Jingtowntown Arts & Business Community
- One (1) broom removal workday in Joaquin Miller Park (part of Rebuilding Together Oakland project days)
- Fourteen (14) workdays at Marj Saunders Park plus additional hours watering and removing graffiti by park stewards
- Twelve (12) workdays at Montclair Railroad Trail led by Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail
- One (1) workday at Monterey Redwoods led by EarthTeam's intern team from Skyline High School
- Three (3) groups at Sanborn Triangle in Joaquin Miller Park plus many additional stewardship hours by site adopter
- Three (3) workdays at Shepherd Canyon Park
- Sixteen (16) workdays at William D. Wood Park
- Eleven (11) propagule collection hikes
- One (1) botany walk
- One (1) seed cleaning workday
- Three (3) creek clean ups in Sausal Creek working upstream from the El Centro Trailhead
- Seven (7) aquatic insect monitoring events and four (4) field trips on benthic macroinvertebrates for college classes (College of Alameda and Merritt College)
- Three (3) bird monitoring events
- Nine (9) water quality monitoring days
- One (1) observation hike of burn sites in Dimond Canyon to assess and map vegetation, in partnership with California Native Plant Society's East Bay Chapter

- Three (3) Eagle Scout projects completed, yielding eight new benches at the FOSC nursery and two picture posts at the Fern Ravine Restoration Area (<http://picturepost.unh.edu/> > List of All Posts > Joaquin Miller Park Fern Ravine – Redwood Understory and Wetland)

**Board of Directors:** We had a board and staff retreat in January 2015 consisting of a tour of all FOSC sites in the lower watershed. Our 14-member board of directors and executive director met every other month. Board of directors meetings are open to the public, and the agenda and staff report are posted on the FOSC listserv.

## 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. FOSC staff led thirty-one (31) field trips this past school year, and FOSC volunteers led an additional eight (8) field trips. In addition to these field trips, student service organizations volunteered for weekend workdays year-round.

During summer of 2014, we partnered again with Oakland 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 2015.

Ten students participated in our 2014 summer high school intern program. The 10-day program included a variety of habitat restoration projects throughout the watershed, special projects at our native plant nursery, educational and leadership activities, and explorative hikes. The summer 2015 summer intern program has seven students participating.

## FUNDING

Additional funding in 2014-15 came from the 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, Bonita Garden Club, California Department of Water Resources Urban Streams Restoration Program (Proposition 84 grant), City of Oakland (for trees and shrubs for the Sausal Creek Restoration Project in Dimond Park), The Clorox Company Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation (prizes from East Bay Gives), East Bay Municipal Utility District, Hillside Gardeners of Montclair, JiJi Foundation, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Ocean Guardian School Program (procured by Joaquin Miller Elementary), Peet's Coffee and Tea, Rose Foundation, Thomas J. Long Foundation, organization donations, business contributions and employee matches, and individual contributions. FOSC continues to work to identify other potential funding sources for our programs.

## SUMMARY

Volunteer visits: 3,706

Volunteer service hours: 9,610

Students participating in field trips or summer service learning projects: 748

Plants planted by FOOSC: 3,097

Plants donated for school and city projects: 453