



Annual Program Summary Report for Watershed Awareness Program July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

PUBLIC OUTREACH - EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Friends of Sausal Creek Member Meetings were held in September and November at the Dimond Library, in January at Fruitvale-San Antonio Senior Center, and in March at the Dimond Park Recreation Center. In May we offered a geology walk in Shepherd Canyon rather than finding another venue for an indoor meeting during the Dimond Library renovation. We moved our annual Meet & Greet potluck from July to June to coincide with Summer Solstice 2017, and we combined the potluck with a tool sharpening workday, holding it adjacent to the Scout Hut in Dimond Park. For the indoor meetings, speakers presented on envisioning urban creek daylighting, San Francisco Bay's birds, Sausal Creek's fish and frogs, the peregrine falcons at the creek's mouth, Oakland's urban greening program, fungi of the watershed, and iNaturalist. We averaged 35 attendees per indoor meeting this past fiscal year.

In January we released the *Walkable Watershed Concept Plan* in English and Spanish thanks to the pro bono consulting help of Skeo Solutions and the technical assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program. We continue to receive help from our RTCA liaison and are working to implement the first pilot projects in Fruitvale. More information and the concept plan are available at: www.sausalcreek.org/walkablewatershed.

Enthusiastic volunteers continued to represent FOSC by **tabling at community events**. FOSC tabled at the Dimond Park Picnic, Dimond Oaktoberfest, two Walkable Watershed Open Houses, City of Oakland Volunteer Appreciation Party, San Leandro Environmental Forum, and Oakland's EarthEXPO. FOSC also had informational tables at our largest annual Dimond Park events: Creek to Bay Day (92 volunteers) and Earth Day (67 volunteers). Our 11th annual Native Plant Sale and Open House (309 attendees) included a FOSC informational table as well as a talk on gardening for bees; a workshop on propagating native plants; tablers on native pollinators, gardening, and water conservation; a station to construct native bee boxes; face painting; and live music.

Walks and Tours: As part of the grand opening celebration for the Sausal Creek Restoration Project at Dimond Park, FOSC led a bird walk, participated in two public tours of the new project area, and led a tour of the 2001 Dimond Canyon restoration project area. We offered two history walks along the waterfront—one during January's King Tides and one during Jingtletown's Open Studios in June. We also led a walking tour of the pallid manzanitas in the watershed for Endangered Species Day. We led a tour of Austin Square and Josie de la Cruz Park for Mills College Business and Public Policy School; a team of students consequently produced the *Friends of Sausal Creek Walkable Watershed Resilience Strategy*. As mentioned above, we offered a geology hike, and the walk handout "Rocks of Shepherd Canyon" is available on our Natural Resources of the Watershed web page.

We added the following **new web pages** to our website: Walkable Watershed, Resources for Homeowners of Creekside Properties, and Sausal Creek Erosion Control Restoration Project in Dimond Canyon.

In partnership with EarthTeam, we led a **student march against litter** through the Fruitvale neighborhood, with 100 participants raising awareness by carrying signs and chanting while picking up trash.

We replaced all of the laminated native plant signs in our **native plant demonstration garden** along the nursery fence with more durable aluminum signs and created more plant signs to identify additional species for garden visitors.

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.

We participated in the California Invasive Plant Council **Weed Management Training for Volunteers** East Bay session and provided information on our volunteer activities.

Other forms of public outreach included FOSC's **newsletter, listserv, website** (www.sausalcreek.org), **Facebook** page (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 Invasive Plant Week and Native Plant Week. Our Facebook page Likes increased from 528 to 634 over the course of the year. For the final monthly newsletter of the year, circulation was 2,885 email recipients. Listserv membership increased from 617 to 691 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.

FOSC was featured in the *East Bay Times* **article** on the Dimond Park daylighting project dedication: <http://www.eastbaytimes.com/2016/07/20/oakland-sausal-creeks-restoration-dedicated/>.

FOSC was featured in the city's *East Bay Times* **articles** on Creek to Bay Day, EarthEXPO, and Earth Day.

FOSC continues to maintain relationships with **community partners** including 4-H, Alameda High School Sierra Club, Albany High School Key Club, Boy Scouts of America, buildOn, Campolindo High School Key Club, Castro Valley High School Key Club, Civicorps, College of Alameda, CSU-East Bay, Diablo Valley College, EarthTeam, East Bay Academy for Young Scientists, Girl Scouts of Northern California, Hands on Bay Area, Hayward High School Interact Club, Holy Names University, Laney College, Merritt College, Oakland High School Key Club, Piedmont Community Service Crew, Piedmont High School Key Club, Skyline High School Key Club, Skyline High School Leadership Club, Student Conservation Association, and UC Berkeley Circle K International. Partnerships with **other local community groups** include Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay, California Invasive Plant Council, California Native Plant Society-East Bay, Chabot Space and Science Center, 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, Jingtletown Arts & Business Community, Keep Oakland Beautiful, Montclair Village Association, Nomadic Press, Oakland Wildland Stewards, Oakmore Homes Association, Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association, Shepherd Canyon Homeowners Association, Unity Council, and Youth Employment Partnership.

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 on site restoration plans; and contribution of native plants grown at our native plant nursery. This year a new recurring monthly workday was added on the first Saturday of each month at the Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden. We transitioned the monthly volunteer workdays at the Chabot Space and Science Center pallid manzanita colony into a more formal Pallids Crew to recruit dedicated volunteers committed to supporting the habitat enhancement and monitoring efforts.

- Three (3) workdays at Barry Place
- Ten (10) public workdays and one (1) private workday at Beaconsfield Canyon, plus many hours of invasive plant removal by dedicated park stewards
- Thirteen (13) public workdays and four (4) private workdays at Bridgeview Trail
- Twenty-four (24) workdays at Bridgeview Pollinator Garden
- Eight (8) workdays and three (3) monitoring days at Chabot Space and Science Center pallid manzanita colony
- Five (5) public workdays and one (1) private workday in Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon Park, plus many hours of invasive plant removal by dedicated park stewards
- Three (3) workdays in the Dimond Park Native Plant Demonstration Garden
- Twelve (12) public trail crew workdays and one (1) private trail maintenance workday in Dimond Canyon Park
- One (1) private corporate workday at Fern Ravine
- Two (2) workdays at Fruitvale Bridge Park
- Three (3) workdays led by Jingletown Arts & Business Community, including the first annual MLK Day of Service in partnership with FOSC staff
- One (1) workday at Joaquin Miller Court in Joaquin Miller Park
- Twenty-five (25) public workdays and one (1) private workday at the FOSC Native Plant Nursery
- Two (2) public workdays and one (1) private workday in Joaquin Miller Park, plus many hours of invasive plant removal by dedicated park stewards in Joaquin Miller Park
- One (1) workday at the Police Activities League (PAL) camp in Joaquin Miller Park
- Two (2) private workdays at Redwood Glen in Joaquin Miller Park
- Seventeen (17) workdays at Marj Saunders Park
- Twelve (12) workdays at Montclair Railroad Trail led by Friends of Montclair Railroad Trail
- One (1) workday at Monterey Redwoods
- One (1) workday at Shepherd Canyon Park
- Twelve (12) workdays at William D. Wood Park

- Twelve (12) propagule collection hikes and three (3) live stake collection workdays
- Two (2) creek cleanups in Sausal Creek working upstream from the El Centro Trailhead
- Two (2) field trips on benthic macroinvertebrates for college classes
- Four (4) bird monitoring events
- Ten (10) water quality monitoring days
- Five (5) Eagle Scout projects completed yielding a stairs extension and a handrail at Barry Place; five trail map boxes installed around the watershed; fern benches for the nursery shade house; stairs on the nursery hillside to access the demonstration garden; and a trail that traverses the demonstration garden on the inside of the nursery fence connecting to these stairs
- **Board of Directors:** 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 FOOSC listserv.

SCHOOL-AGE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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, water quality testing, stream restoration strategies, and native and nonnative plant identification. Many programs also include 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 include hikes through the woods and/or along the creek and silent reflection activities.

This year we started a new “Follow Your Creek” field trip program focused on schools within walking distance of the creek’s mouth at Fruitvale Bridge Park. We developed lessons and activities on:

- Birdwatching
- Adaptions lesson: birds and chaparral plants
- Estuary Bingo
- Food web
- Litter timelines, collection, and materials analysis
- Marine debris
- Storm drain study and stormwater pollution discussion
- Watershed connections: creek/bay/ocean
- Tide exploration: overview, habitat connection, and reading a tide table
- Site habitat survey
- Water quality testing
- Ethnobotany

FOOSC staff led 49 field trips this past school year, and FOOSC volunteers led an additional 10 field trips. In addition to these field trips, student service organizations volunteered for weekend workdays year-round.

During summer of 2016, we partnered again with Oakland Parks, Recreation & Youth Development 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. This partnership is continuing during the summer of 2017.

During summer of 2016 we began a new partnership with Team Oakland, an Oakland Public Works job training summer employment program for local youth. Working with three teams of 10 youth, FOOSC provided a special project one shift each week for the 6-week program. Instead of the primary Team Oakland activity of picking up trash, FOOSC staff led team members in a variety of other tasks in local parks, including invasive plant removal projects in Wood Park, Dimond Canyon Park, and Joaquin Miller Park; spreading mulch at the Bridgeview Pollinator Garden (and picking blackberries!); transplanting plants at the FOOSC nursery; visiting Barry Place; and participating in lessons and discussions on litter and its impacts on creek health and on aquatic insects. This partnership is continuing during the summer of 2017.

FUNDING

Additional funding in 2016-17 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, 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 Community Foundation (prizes from East Bay Gives), East Bay Municipal Utility District, Hillside Gardeners of Montclair, JiJi Foundation, National Environmental Education Foundation, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Bay Watershed Education and Training Program (procured by Girl Scouts of Northern California), National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Ocean Guardian School Program (procured by Joaquin Miller Elementary), organization donations, business contributions and employee matches, and individual contributions. In addition, we received the in-kind services described above from the National Park Service RTCA Program and Skeo Solutions to support our Walkable Watershed planning effort. FOOSC continues to work to identify other potential funding sources for our programs.

SUMMARY

Volunteer visits: 4,051
Volunteer service hours: 10,472
Students participating in field trips or summer service learning projects: 1,289
Plants planted by FOOSC: 4,208
Plants donated for school and city projects: 228