



Friends of Sausal Creek

Promoting Watershed Protection

www.aoinstitute.org/sausal
(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

May 2002

THREE CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Earth Day Team Leaders and Volunteers Get Results

On Saturday, April 20th, in celebration of Earth Day, nearly 200 volunteers bestowed their considerable elbow grease and good will upon Sausal Creek, and it shows: we got a whole lot of work done! FOSC Team Leaders guided groups in activities watershed-wide.

Invasive species had a bad day in Dimond Canyon. Sam Cohen and Paul Amato led seek-and-destroy missions to clear the dreaded Scotch broom. Abe Doherty and team hauled off daunting piles of acacia felled by Oakland Parks & Rec (Martin Matarrese's crew). Elliott Smith, Ron Gartland and Linda Morse relieved large swaths of hillside of their noxious ivy cover to make room for plants. Ralph

Kanz led a team to liberate trees suffocating in ivy—I watched as they uncovered a beautiful alder made invisible by ivy. Our recent plantings were protected from the threat of hemlock and ripgut

brome by the skilled hands of Charlotte Bell and Martha Lowe. Mark Rauzon spearheaded maintenance work at the Montclair golf course slide area (first revegetated by the Friends in 2000). Two hundred ready-to-flower French broom seedlings were removed, about 50 gorse plants were pulled, and yards of black plastic, once used to establish the restoration of willow, were removed, marking the formal end to this erosion control project.

A concerted weed pulling effort transformed the appearance of the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. Teams led by Anne Hayes, Michele Belevu, Laurie Kunit and Jennifer Stanley carefully distinguished weeds from their native neighbors, pulled them out, and hauled them off. At Barry Place, Frank Vastano's group filled over ten large trash bags with debris, and hauled off a pile of large junk pieces. This group wins the Earth Day gross-out award: they found a dead turtle with stinky liquid dripping from its skull!

Robin North, Mark Lane, Nancy Jones, Au Ta Kieu and Karen Paulsell led work at the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery. Compost piles were created, the entrance was weeded and landscaped, plants were transplanted, and the shadehouse was reorganized.

The last moments of this busy, boisterous celebration found several of us standing at the El Centro trailhead, leaning over the creek, transfixed by the sight of three beautiful rainbow trout! What a great reward and fitting finale for our Earth Day labors. —Monica Stafford

The 788-Hour Day

The Julia Morgan School for Girls held their second annual work-a-thon in Dimond Canyon on Saturday, April 27th. Over 213 students, teachers and family members spent a combined 788 hours in a whirlwind of activity. Tasks accomplished included transplanting 900 blue-eyed grass for the nursery, filling 2 dump trucks with green waste and planting 15 alders and dogwoods into the stream bank and over 100 plants into the demonstration garden. Thank you, parents, students and supporters from the Julia Morgan School!

Don't miss the Friends' monthly meeting, May 15, 7-9pm at the Dimond Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave.

There's a Space for Us

On April 21st, the Friends participated in the Chabot Space and Science Center's Earth Day celebration. About 35 kids stopped by our outdoor tables, where we helped children plant yarrow and let them take home a plant of their own to nurture. Our presence was noted and appreciated: in an internal email after the event, Chabot staff reported "FOSC ... are the quintessential partner for Chabot in making the EnviroGarden a valuable, renowned and popular natural science education resource in the Bay Area." Well, a great big thanks goes to Chabot, both for hosting such a fun and successful event, and also, because they have been providing a site for FOSC board meetings through June. We look forward to a strong and lasting partnership between our organizations.

If Anyone Can, Ralph Kanz: May Friend of the Month

For Earth Day, long-time Friends stalwart Ralph Kanz made tools his mission. He started by making an inventory of the Friends tools and coordinating with FOSC members to devise a list of tools still needed. He then worked with city staff to get those tools, and personally went to pick them up. The Friends used them again the following weekend for the Julia Morgan School event. Without Ralph's help, we'd have been hard-pressed to accommodate so many eager workers in Dimond Park and Dimond Canyon the last two weekends in April. Thank you Ralph for seeing a need and stepping in to fill it!

—Anne Hayes

Bird Monitoring Branches Out

The Bird Monitoring Group is ruffling its feathers, and planning a few birding trips in and near our watershed. On Saturday, May 11, we will hike from Joaquin Miller Park down through Dimond Canyon, looking to see what birds are migrating through. Bring a pair of binoculars if you have them, and join us for an easy two to three mile hike downhill. We will meet at 8:30am at the Dimond Rec Center parking lot and carpool hikers up to Joaquin Miller Park. Everyone is welcome, but group size is limited, so please call 501-FOSC to reserve.

The group will continue to meet and bird on the 2nd Saturday of every month, but will monitor the usual sites only four times a year, in January, April, July and October. Twice a year, in May and September, we will hike down the watershed, birding as we go. In June and December, we will

assist the Audubon Society with their annual Breeding and Christmas Bird Counts. November, February, and March, we will have educational birding field trips to other nearby birding spots such as Arrowhead Marsh, Coyote Hills, and other Bay Area creeks. And in August 2002 we will institute an Annual Birders Picnic! This year we hope to hold it near the Sequoia Arena, where we can leisurely scan for raptors, and maybe even see our pileated woodpecker. So mark your calendars and join us. For more information, email Martha Lowe at info@indigodev.com, or call 501-FOSC.

—Sally Kilburg

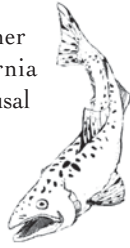


REFLECTING POND REFLECTING POND

There is only one nature—the division into science and engineering is a human imposition, not a natural one. Indeed, the division is a human failure; it reflects our limited capacity to comprehend the whole. —Bill Wulf

Fishing in Sausal Creek? Please Don't!

In response to a request from the Friends, Heather Brashear, a fisheries biologist from the California Department of Fish and Game, paid a visit to the Sausal Creek watershed in April to reassess fishing regulations along the creek. Fishing is permitted on Sausal, and the creek is home to a small population of rainbow trout—probably no more than six to ten. And we've lost fish recently: in February, a beautiful 13-inch trout was found dead with a hook in its mouth in a pool along the creek.



Current sport fishing regulations allow summer fishing in Sausal Creek, with a five-trout daily bag limit. Given that the entire population in Sausal Creek is something on the order of five fish, the Friends have requested that the creek and its headwaters be closed to all fishing. When the Fish and Game Commission met last summer to consider changes to the regulations, the Friends' request was denied; the commissioners agreed, however, to send a biologist to determine the status of Sausal's trout population.

Once she has collected sufficient information from her visit and other research, Ms. Brashear will make a recommendation about a change in the regulations. The matter will be considered again when the commission meets again—in the summer of 2003.

Until then, the Friends are advocating a look-but-don't-touch approach to the rainbow trout in Sausal Creek. We'd like to protect the few fish that are living in the watershed, so that we can see their numbers increase, rather than decrease, over time. For more information, call 501-FOSC.

—Adapted from an article by

FOSC president Anne Hayes, which will appear in the *MacArthur Metro* in May.

FOSC Needs Construction Professionals

Big plans are afoot for the Native Plant Nursery in Joaquin Miller Park. We will be building a wood pergola with propagation benches, a greenhouse, a toolshed and records office, and a Learning Circle for our educational programs. We will also install 6,000 square feet of irrigation for sunny growing areas, and plant a Heritage Oak Grove complete with picnic tables and an information kiosk. Once it's done, the nursery will have the capacity for up to 60,000 plants per year. Pending funding, we hope to begin construction this summer. We need construction and design professionals to help us order and oversee the construction work. If you can help, call 501-FOSC.

—Sally Kilburg

Friends of Sausal Creek

P.O. Box 2737
Oakland, CA 94602
(510) 501-FOSC
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FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Monthly Meetings

~5th Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday, May 15
 - Wednesday, June 19
 - **no meeting in July!**
- 7pm-9pm; Dimond Library,
3565 Fruitvale Ave.

Board of Directors Meetings

~2nd Wednesday of the month~

- Wednesday, May 8
 - Wednesday, June 12
 - Wednesday, July 10
- 7pm-9pm; Chabot Space & Science
Center. Everyone welcome. Info:
Anne Hayes, 237-0663.

Dimond Canyon Planting

~every Saturday~

9am-noon; meet at the El Centro
Trailhead. Info: Monica, 459-0644.

Plant Propagation

~every Saturday~

Saturdays, 9am-noon and 1:30-
4:00pm; meet at the Joaquin Miller
Park Nursery. Info: Monica,
459-0644. Alternating Thursday
mornings (5/2, 5/16, 5/30, etc). Info:
Robin North, 336-1861.

Planting & Propagation with Children

~every Wednesday~

9am-noon; at Dimond Park or
the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery.
Preschedule with Sue Morgan
at 531-6293.

Oyster Monitoring with Save the Bay

~1st Saturday of the month~

- Saturday, June 1
 - Saturday, July 6
 - Saturday, August 3
- 9am-noon; meet at the Fruitvale
Bridge. Info: Charlotte Bell,
339-8168.

Lower Watershed Water Monitoring

~2nd Saturday of the month~

- Saturday, May 11
 - Saturday, June 8
 - Saturday, July 13
- 10am-1pm; meet at the Unity
Council. Info: 501-FOSC.

Bird Monitoring

~2nd Saturday of the month~

- Saturday, May 11
 - Saturday, June 8
 - Saturday, July 13
- For time, location, and other
details, contact Martha Lowe at
530-7923 or info@indigodev.com.

Aquatic Insect Sampling

~5th Sunday of the month~

- Sunday, May 19
 - Sunday, June 16
 - Sunday, July 21
- 9:30am-noon; info: Emma
Brown, 527-2507 or
lightbrown@onemain.com.

*The Friends are sponsored by the Alameda County Flood Control
and Water Conservation District and the City of Oakland,
with additional support from the San Francisco Foundation
and the Conservation Fund/Kodak Greenways.*

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email to jxstanley@yahoo.com.

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