



# Friends of Sausal Creek

www.sausalcreek.org  
(510) 501-FOSC (3672)

August-September '05

## Monthly Meetings

**August 17**—Come join us as we prepare for September's Creek to Bay Day and brainstorm about possible new funding sources.

**September 21**—Doug Johnson, Executive Director of the California Invasive Plant Council, will present an overview of ongoing work in California to address the spread of invasive plants. Topics include the use of herbicides, working with nurseries, the importance of local efforts, and current legislation to fund weed control projects.

## September 17: Creek To Bay Day 2005

During the life cycle of a native plant, the dryness of September soil and air leads to a period of dormancy, a clever adaptation to summer drought. One charismatic example of this is our wonderfully graceful silver-barked California buckeye. Dramatically leafing out as winter rains saturate the soil and moisten the air, this local favorite then races to produce and store food, flower, and set seed before the soil dries out. Once the soil has lost its moisture, the buckeye drops its leaves.

On Creek To Bay Day (CTBD), we celebrate this quiet period by cleaning up. This year CTBD will be held on September 17.

If you'd like to take on a leadership role, please attend our General Meeting at the Dimond Library on August 17. To volunteer in Dimond Park, Dimond Canyon, and Barry Place, come sign-in at the Dimond Park Scout Hut, behind the Recreation Center at 3860 Hanly Road. To volunteer at the Joaquin Miller Native Plant Nursery, sign-in at the Joaquin Miller Park Nursery, located at 3594 Sanborn Road, behind the Woodminster Amphitheater.



Please contact us with questions at 387-9744 or e-mail field@sausalcreek.org. This event is sponsored by the City

of Oakland: for more information, visit [www.oaklandpw.com/creeks/ctbd.htm](http://www.oaklandpw.com/creeks/ctbd.htm).

—Krieten Hopper

## Welcome New Board Member Harry Schrauth

We are extremely pleased to welcome long-time FOSC volunteer Harry Schrauth to the Board of Directors. Harry was born in Oakland, played in Sausal Creek as a child, and was present at the initial meeting of neighbors that helped launch FOSC years ago. Recently retired after 42 years of employment with the City of Oakland's Public Works Department, Harry brings much experience and knowledge of the city to us. When asked why he was interested in Board service, Harry replied, "I'd like to see the Board continue to grow and see more people volunteering with FOSC. As time moves on, we need to replace key volunteers who move away or move on. I also want to ensure that volunteers receive the best experience possible for their efforts, as they're

usually busy people." If you are interested in joining the Board, please contact me at [president@sausalcreek.org](mailto:president@sausalcreek.org)—we'd love to hear from you.  
—Sheelah Weaver

## NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES!

Speaking of volunteers, we need a few good FOSCers for occasional assistance with outreach, operations, and financial management. As we move into fall, we are looking for help with tasks including being the face of FOSC at events by staffing literature tables, helping with a few one-time administrative jobs, and using your business background to advise our Finance Committee or assist with our fundraising efforts. If any of these interests you and you'd like more information, please contact Sara at [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) or 501-3672. Thank you!

## FOSC Hires New Operations Manager

As the new Operations Manager for FOSC, I wanted to both thank Alisa Shor for her contributions and dedication this past year as well as introduce myself. Originally from the East Coast, I have lived in the Bay Area for ten years. Graduate work in Geography at San Francisco State University led me to better understand the natural and cultural landscapes that characterize California. Since 1999, I have worked for Bay Area nonprofit environmental organizations in various capacities including communications, outreach, fundraising, and reporting. I look forward to working with the Friends, taking on newsletter production, financial management, and other responsibilities while familiarizing myself with the Sausal Creek watershed and the community that helps sustain it. If you have thoughts or questions at any time, feel free to contact me.  
—Sara Marcellino

**Join our Listserve!** Want more regular contact with FOSC? Interested in learning more about what critters show up along the creek, what educational and fun events are taking place, and other tidbits about twice a week? Send your name and e-mail address to [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) and start receiving the FOSC e-mail listserv today!

## SUPPORT THE WORK OF FOSC

Please help us maintain and expand our efforts in the Sausal Creek watershed by making a donation today!

Mail this form with check made payable to:  
Friends of Sausal Creek, P.O. Box 2737, Oakland, CA 94602.  
**FOSC is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization** and your contribution is fully tax-deductible. A receipt will be sent for your records.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT OF DONATION

\$100  \$50  \$25  \$12  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Friends of Sausal Creek

P.O. Box 2737  
Oakland, CA 94602  
(510) 501-FOSC  
www.sausalcreek.org



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Don't miss our monthly meeting on August 17<sup>th</sup> and September 21<sup>st</sup> at the Dimond Library. Newsletter printed on recycled paper. Thanks for recycling!

### Fire Ecology in the Watershed: A Look Back



The primary management tool used by California's indigenous peoples was fire, and its regular use affected the landscape profoundly. In an ecological setting where annual rainfall is variable and streams and springs often dry up in the summer, fire was a food production technique far more efficient than agriculture.

Although there is little ethnographic or archaeological data on the Huchiun Ohlone—who would have inhabited the Sausal Creek

watershed—it is likely that they followed a subsistence pattern. They used fire, digging, pruning, and coppicing to increase plant resources for their benefit. The Huchiun must have co-evolved with the landscape, in the sense that they had millennia to learn what resources it held for them and how to manipulate those resources to their best advantage.

Many of California's ecosystems are adapted to fire because this process serves to rejuvenate communities by initiating secondary succession. It is well documented that plant production and diversity increase after fire due to reduction in cover, addition of nutrients to the soil, and increases in water availability. Therefore, indigenous people used fire ecology to manage the Sausal Creek watershed.

California's native peoples burned grassland on a frequent basis, annually to every few years, as grassland fires rejuvenate senescent perennial bunchgrasses and remove dead thatch, providing the opportunity for other forbs to germinate. By returning nutrients to the soil, grassland fires increase bulb production as well.

In chaparral, burns at intervals from 7 to 30 years result in an overall increase in the biodiversity and production of shrubs and herbaceous species, with both direct and indirect benefits for hunting and gathering. Fire reduces the shrub canopy, allowing grasses and other herbaceous plants to grow until the shrubs resprout and regain dominance. The seeds of some herbaceous

*continued >*

### FOSC ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, call 501-FOSC or email [coordinator@sausalcreek.org](mailto:coordinator@sausalcreek.org) to get information about all activities. For details about ongoing projects, check the Volunteer section of the Friends' website at [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org).

#### Monthly Meetings

*3rd Wednesday of the month.*

- Wednesday 8/17, 9/21, 10/19.  
7pm-9pm at the Dimond Library,  
3565 Fruitvale Ave.

#### Aquatic Insect Sampling

*3rd Sunday of the month.*

- Sunday 8/21, 9/18, 10/16.  
9:30am-noon; call Emma Brown  
to confirm 527-2507.

#### Board of Directors Meetings

*2nd Wednesday of the month.*

- Wednesday 9/14, 10/12, no  
August meeting. 7pm-9pm at the  
Chabot Space & Science Center.  
All welcome!

#### Bird Monitoring

*Quarterly. Sequoia Arena,  
Joachim Miller Park.*

- Saturday 10/8. 8am-noon;  
call Mark Rauzon to confirm,  
531-3887.

#### Saturday Workdays

*July 30-September 9, 2005,*

*Summer Hiatus.*

Info: Kristen Hopper, 387-9744  
or [field@sausalcreek.org](mailto:field@sausalcreek.org) or go to  
[www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/  
calendar.html](http://www.sausalcreek.org/volunteer/calendar.html).

#### Water Quality Monitoring

*Quarterly.*

- Sunday 10/16. 9am-noon;  
call Mark Lane to confirm,  
219-8036.

species are capable of lying dormant for many years and will only germinate following fire. Pallid manzanita, for example, is a species that depends on fire for reproduction.

In oak woodlands, fires at least every three to five years clear out the understory and reduce competition for water and nutrients, thus producing healthier trees while maintaining a diverse, herbaceous understory.

—Martha Lowe, excerpted from her *Master's Thesis*, The Upper Sausal Creek Watershed (Oakland, California): Historical and Contemporary Ecology, Watershed Assessment, and Recommendations for Ecosystem Restoration and Management.

#### August-September '05 newsletter contributors:

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