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Can't make the tour?
Need some inspiration?
Check out the SF Bay
Joint Venture's great new
[video](#) about this project!

We welcome your
feedback and submissions
for the next
edition of Watershed
Lookout. [Contact us](#)
to submit your ideas.

Volunteers. So much of the work done in the Alameda Creek Watershed would not be possible without them. In our last issue, our calendar featured numerous Earth Day events – events that were successful thanks to dedicated volunteers giving their time to help keep our watershed healthy. In a few months, thousands of volunteers throughout California will participate in the state-wide Coastal Clean Up Day, including right here in the Alameda Creek Watershed. This year we also celebrate 20 years of the Alameda Creek Alliance—an organization that relies heavily on volunteers to protect and restore this watershed. Many of the individuals involved in our very own acwForum participate as volunteers too!

This issue of the Watershed Lookout aims to recognize the importance of volunteers in the Alameda Creek Watershed by highlighting projects in which volunteers and citizen scientists have played a critical role. The acwForum thanks the volunteers working to make our watershed a better place, and the organizations support them.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August

Salt Pond Restoration Project Tour

The South Bay Salt Pond Restoration Project hosts a public tour and stakeholder forum on the Eden Landing Restoration on Aug. 15. Tour begins at 11:30am; stakeholder forum and public meeting to follow. Learn more: <http://www.southbayrestoration.org/events/Events-sf-wg-joint.html>

September

Coastal Cleanup Day

Saturday, Sept. 16 marks the 33rd annual California Coastal Commission's Coastal Cleanup Day. Join in one of the many events in the Alameda Creek Watershed to help stop trash where it starts! Find an event near you: <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/cleanup/#/map>

California Stormwater Quality Association's Annual Conference

The 2017 CASQA conference will be held Sept. 25-27 in Sacramento, and focuses on communication and collaboration to ensure successful management of the quality and quantity of stormwater in California. <https://www.casqa.org/events/annual-conference>

Second Niles Canyon Stroll & Roll

Niles Canyon will be closed to cars for a day, opening for walking and bike tours of the canyon and sites for the proposed Alameda Creek Trail on Sept. 30. Learn more: <http://www.alamedacreek.org/upcoming-events/events.php>

October

Alameda Creek Alliance 20 Year Anniversary Dinner

Help celebrate two decades of working to protect and restore Alameda Creek on Oct. 8, from 5:30-8:30 PM. Dinner, wine, speakers and live music at Chouinard Winery. <http://www.alamedacreek.org/upcoming-events/events.php>

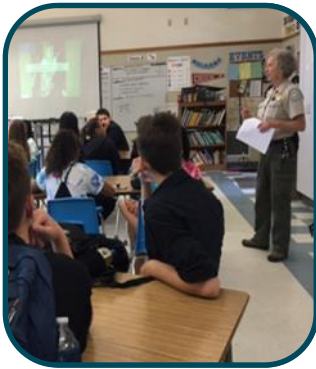
State of the San Francisco Estuary Conference

Presented by the San Francisco Estuary Partnership, the conference focuses on the management and health of the SF Bay-Delta Estuary, showcasing the latest information about the estuary. Oct. 10-11. Register now: <http://www.sfestuary.org/soe/>

HIGHLIGHTS

EarthTeam Volunteers Help with Conservation Efforts at the Springtown Preserve

In Fall 2016, [Earth Team](#), [Friends of Springtown Preserve](#), and representatives from numerous other Livermore-area organizations gathered to create a plan to promote the preservation of the Springtown Preserve. Located in northeast Livermore, the Preserve supports a unique ecosystem, providing habitat to some of California's rarest plants and animals. With support from an [Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program](#) Community Stewardship Grant, Earth Team worked with 25 student volunteers from Christensen Middle School to teach them about the Preserve, and to develop education and outreach materials.



Prior to visiting the preserve, LARPD Ranger Naturalist Patty Cole presented to the students, sharing information about the species that inhabit the Preserve, and the importance of conserving and restoring its precious habitat. Students also learned about the amazing variety of protected plants and animals found at the site - including golden

eagles, burrowing owls, California red-legged frogs, and the Livermore tarplant.

Students then took a walking tour of the Preserve, viewing in-person many of the plants and animals they had previously studied. In addition to the tour, student volunteers acted as citizen scientists, using the iNaturalist app to conduct a Bioblitz. Students took pictures and recorded species seen during their tour, helping further highlight biodiversity at Springtown Preserve.



Students will continue their work in September, designing signs for the Preserve to promote public awareness and engage the community in the conservation of this unique, beautiful, and often forgotten natural area in the Alameda Creek Watershed.

Sinbad Creek Stewardship Project

The Alameda Creek watershed hosted significant populations of steelhead trout until the middle of the 20th century. Helping return trout to the watershed has been one of the primary goals of the [Alameda Creek Alliance](#) since their formation in 1997.



Sinbad Creek - a tributary of Alameda Creek - is the focus of one of the Alliance's current stewardship projects. Based on gravel size, flow velocity, migration barriers and historical evidence, it is likely that Sinbad Creek once supported migrating steelhead during the in-migration period (Nov-April).

In 2013, the Alliance first surveyed Sinbad Creek and reached out to Sunol residents about stewardship opportunities along the creek. Strong community support for activities such as water quality and biological monitoring, invasive species removal, green infrastructure, and general restoration planning, prompted the Alliance to undertake their current stewardship project.

The stewardship project includes a number of monitoring activities, which will provide the baseline data necessary for targeted and effective stewardship activities, and bring the community one step closer to achieving their restoration goals.

The Sinbad Creek Stewardship Project consists of three parts: (1) mapping, (2) water quality sampling, and (3) sharing findings with the Sunol community. The stream will be mapped by volunteers using GPS technology. Water quality samples will assess temperature, E. coli and total coliform levels, and macroinvertebrate presence. To gather all of this information, data logging device locations throughout Sinbad Creek are visited monthly by trained volunteers who record measurements and collect samples. Macroinvertebrate sampling will be done via multiple citizen-science volunteer events dedicated to sampling, identifying and counting these animals.

The maps produced and information collected from this project will be used to create a report, which will be distributed to the Sunol community and will inform future stewardship activities and efforts to return steelhead to their historic habitat.

WATERSHED TOOLKIT

Water-Efficient Landscape Rebates

Despite record rainfalls last winter, the State Water Board continues to stress the need for ongoing water conservation throughout California.

Agencies in Alameda County have taken note, and continue to offer Water-Efficient Landscape Rebates through 2017. Help conserve water in the Alameda Creek Watershed by voluntarily converting a water-wasting yard! Before you start work, find out if there is a rebate for you by visiting the following links →

[East Bay Municipal Utility District](#)— up to \$2,500 for lawn conversion and irrigation updates

[Zone 7](#)— up to \$750 for lawn conversion and \$75 for irrigation updates

[City of Pleasanton](#)—Up to \$250 for lawn conservation and irrigation updates (in addition to Zone 7 rebates)

[Save our Water \(State of CA\)](#) - Up to \$2/square foot for lawn conversion

[City of Hayward](#)—Up to \$0.75/square foot for lawn conversion in addition to State of CA rebates.

SPOTLIGHT

Ralph Johnson

This month's spotlight highlights someone who is no stranger to working and volunteering in the Alameda Creek Watershed. Ralph Johnson started working in the Alameda Creek Watershed over 45 years ago! Fresh out of UC Berkeley with a Civil Engineering degree, Ralph was hired by the Alameda County Flood Control District in 1970.



During his time with the Flood Control District, Ralph worked on a variety of projects, ranging from ground-water basin studies in Zone 7, setting drainage guidelines for new development in Southern Alameda County, County Service Area management, storm-water quality management, flood channel design and sediment management. After 30 years with the District, he retired as Deputy Director of Public Works.

After retiring from the Flood Control District in 2000, Ralph did what any normal retiree would do... He went back to work! Ralph continued to work part time for the flood control district until 2012, focusing on sediment management studies in Alameda Creek. As part of this project, he became an initial stakeholder in the Alameda Creek Watershed Management Studies project, and has continued his involvement with the group as it evolved over the years.

Ralph also worked on the team that formed the Bay Area Flood Protection Agencies Association, and played a key role in the restoration of several salt ponds in the Alameda Creek Watershed as part of the South Bay Salt Pond Restoration project. Ralph notes that the Salt

Pond Restoration was the most professionally satisfying project he's been involved with, as it involved coordination with Federal and State agencies as well as other flood control districts and utilities agencies.

In 2012, Ralph retired again – this time a bit more in the traditional sense of the word. In retirement, he remains active as a volunteer with a wide range of organizations and agencies operating in the Alameda Creek Watershed, including his current role as the Vice Chair of the [acwForum](#). He is also one of the original proponents of the upcoming Alameda County Watershed Symposium, and continues to be actively involved in its planning. Since 2012, Ralph has been appointed to the boards of four(!) different agencies operating within the Alameda Creek Watershed, including the East Bay Dischargers Authority Board and the Castro Valley Sanitary District Board.

Recently, the Castro Valley Sanitary District Board of Directors were honored with the Bay Hero Award from the San Francisco Bay Institute for their innovative response to sea level rise in the Bay, specifically recognizing their work on horizontal levees near the southern edge of the water pollution control facility jointly owned by Oro Loma and Castro Valley Sanitary Districts.

Ralph has been a committed public servant and volunteer in the Alameda Creek Watershed for nearly 50 years – an impressive feat to say the least – and we are happy to recognize his hard work and dedication in this month's Watershed Lookout Spotlight feature!

We know there are plenty of dedicated people working within the Alameda Creek Watershed who deserve acknowledgment! Send information about your recommended individual to rachelle.hedges@acr.cd.org

acwForum

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acwForum Signatory Members:

- Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (ACFC&WCD)
- Alameda County Water District
- Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRCO)
- East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD)
- Friends of the Arroyos
- Livermore Area Recreation and Park District
- City of Livermore
- City of Fremont
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board (SFBRWQCB)
- Zone 7 Water Agency

ABOUT US

The Alameda Creek Watershed Forum (a.k.a., acwForum) is a voluntary, non-regulatory stakeholder group that supports the community's interest in protecting and achieving a healthy and sustainable Alameda Creek watershed.

acwForum stakeholders include signatory members—agencies and organizations with stewardship interests and purview in the Alameda Creek watershed that have signed the Letter of Understanding—and other interested local agencies, watershed organizations, landowners, land managers, and residents.

The purpose of the acwForum is to facilitate communication among watershed stakeholders and demonstrate their commitment to understanding, protecting, and restoring the Alameda Creek watershed.

www.acwForum.org

Funded by ACFC&WCD with support from Zone 7 Water Agency