



Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed

Creek Talk

February 2010

If you can't see pictures in this newsletter click [here](#) to view online.



The Mission of Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed is to protect, conserve, and restore Marsh Creek and its tributaries, and to inspire appreciation and conservation of the Marsh Creek Watershed.



**Disney
Give A Day Get A
Day**

UPDATE:

Opportunities fill up fast! If you would like to participate register with the DisneyParks.com website ahead of time and then sign up for an event as they come up. All opportunities show up 60 days before the event. Registration for April 24th Earth Day Events will come up on the Hands On Network Website on February 24th. FOMCW will send out a reminder on the 22nd.



*Join us this Thursday
and get your **FREE**
Watershed Calendar!*

Next Meeting:

February 4th

featuring

**Restoration Design
Group**

Discussing the interpretive themes to be featured at Creekside Park in Oakley.

Meeting will be held from
7 to 9 PM

At

Liberty Union High School District Offices
20 Oak Street, Brentwood

Click Here for directions
RSVPS APPRECIATED

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

Despite the Weather Everyone was Smiling!!!!

Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed along with the Cities of Oakley and Brentwood, Oakley Unified School District, East Bay Regional Park District and Save Mount Diablo celebrated an amazing turnout for the Martin Luther King Day of Service this past January 18th.

443 volunteers came out in the rain and hail to 12 different sites in Brentwood, Clayton and Oakley. There were different activities being done at different sites including trash removal, weeding, the spreading of mulch and the planting of native grasses. In less than 3 hours, three tons of trash was picked up, 40 cubic yards of mulch was spread, over 2000 linear feet of native gardens were weeded, and nearly 500 plants were planted!

Sites were supervised by volunteers from Terracare Landscape Services, REI, Oakley Unified School District and the Cities of Oakley and Brentwood. A volunteer team from Radback Energy and PG&E came out to help out to the Oakley Creekside Park site.

Last month we began featuring articles about our volunteers and committees to highlight the various activities that Friends of Marsh Creek Watershed is involved with. This month we will feature an article from Brian Curran, Committee Chair of the Monitoring Committee and President/Chairperson of the FOMCW Board of Directors, known as the Coordinating Committee

BMI Training and Monitoring Coming Soon!
Email info@fomcw.org
if you would like to join us in the creek!

INTERESTED?? Get Involved!!
If you are interested in learning more about how to get involved in the Monitoring Committee, contact Joan by emailing her at ratdoctor@gmail.com or simply send an email stating your interest to info@fomcw.org

FOMCW SPOTLIGHT:

MONITORING COMMITTEE

What is the FOMCW Monitoring Committee and What Exactly Do They Do?

By Brian Curran, Chair of the Monitoring Committee

As one of the founding members of the Friends of Marsh Creek, I was originally enthused about doing something immediate to make the creek a healthier and more natural place to visit. I wanted to explore the entire length of the creek, get down in the water, get muddy, remove trash and debris and find out what was living there. As a scientist by profession I wanted to get involved with testing the water, collecting bugs and monitoring the fish, frogs and invertebrates that live there. When the group proposed the formation of a monitoring committee I knew that's where I needed to be. I'm happy to say that the monitoring committee provides members an opportunity to do all these things and more.

Currently this committee is involved with the following projects:

1. In early spring we team up with the Contra Costa Clean Water Program to conduct a Bioassessment survey of 4 to 6 sites along upper and lower Marsh Creek. Briefly, this involves putting on waders, climbing into the creek and collecting bugs in nets to determine what is and isn't able to survive in the creek. The insects collected are sent off to a lab where scientists identify and count the various species. The resulting data provides us with a yearly indicator of just how healthy the creek is in different locations. If like me you've never quite outgrown the desire to play in the water and collect bugs, this is for you. It also allows volunteers to get involved with real science and is a fantastic opportunity for high school and college biology students.
2. In the fall we once again team up with the CCCWP to conduct mapping surveys of the creek using Global Positioning Systems (GPS). Since much of the upper creek where the surveys are conducted is dry at this time, there usually isn't a need to get wet. Volunteers traverse the creek mapping the physical attributes of the stream recording substrate, canopy cover, bank characteristics and the extent of native and invasive vegetation. This is a fun way to explore parts of the creek most people never get a chance to see. And once again, this is real science!
3. In the late fall/early winter we conduct Salmon walks along the creek between Delta road and the drop structure near the Brentwood Water Treatment Plant. Historically salmon migrated yearly up Marsh Creek from its mouth in the delta up to the upper watershed. Although the Salmon populations have decreased in recent years, we hope that by providing access through the construction of a fish ladder, Salmon will be able to return to good breeding locations and the populations in Marsh creek will begin to increase. We are always looking for volunteers to conduct these walks and provide training walks in the fall.
4. Recently, we have been working with the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board to develop a Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP) which involves routine monitoring of specific portions of the creek. In the past we have experienced fish kills along the creek and this program would allow us to obtain immediate water samples which would then be tested for toxins and hopefully lead to the cause and prevention of these fish kills. We are currently looking for volunteers to help with this monitoring and will soon have the equipment in place to conduct the water sampling.

As you can see, the Monitoring Committee provides a lot of opportunities for getting directly involved with the improvement of Marsh Creek and its tributaries. Whether you're like me and just never outgrew the love for playing in the creek, or you want to see what it's like to be involved with real environmental science projects, or you just like being out in nature and viewing new and unexplored wilderness, I encourage you to join us for one or more of these activities. See you in the creek!



“The world is
mud-luscious and
puddle-
wonderful.”
-EE Cummings



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Upcoming Activities

Thursday, February 4th FOMCW MEETING 7PM to 9PM

Representatives from the Restoration Design Group will be working with FOMCW on interpretive themes for the restoration project at Creekside Park in Oakley.

Saturday, February 13 9:30 to 4:30

BIRD WATCHING SAFARI with the Sierra Club

Call leader Tish Brown (925)754-3772 for more info.

Wednesday, February 17th Oakley Land Use Forum at Oakley City Hall

Starts at 6:30 For more information [click here](#)

Saturday, February 20th Planting Day at Creekside Park Brentwood

Join us as we plant native plants, weed, and spread mulch. Bring your work gloves, wheelbarrows and hand trowels. RSVP to info@fomcw.org

Wednesday, February 24th EARTH DAY Give A Day Get A Day REGISTRATION Day

Register to participate in Earth Day Community Service Projects and be eligible to get a free ticket to a Disney Park! Preregister at DisneyParks.com and on 2/24 several FOMCW community service opportunities will be listed to register for. These opportunities fill up in less than hours so plan to register as early in the morning as possible! We cannot register you but if you have a question you may email volunteer@fomcw.org with questions.

SAVE the DATE

EARTH Day Community Service Day April 24th

More Info to be coming!

CREEK CLEANUP PLANNING COMMITTEE

Creek Cleanup will be held on September 25th

Join us in early May as we start planning this important event!

LINKS

- **East Bay Regional Park District Activities**
- **Gardening in Contra Costa County**
(AMAZING RESOURCE for Gardeners!!!!)
- **California Water Solutions**
(*Interesting Read for those trying to understand the state water situation*)

Are You a Member?

Have you renewed your membership this year?

FOMCW now collects dues for membership. Regular membership dues are \$30,

Family Memberships are \$45 and Students are \$15.

To renew your membership or to become a new member fill out a membership

card at a meeting or mail your dues and card to

2063 Main St, #311,

Oakley, CA 94561

Membership cards can be found on the FOMCW website at

http://www.fomcw.org/files/fomcw_membership_signup.pdf