



# The Splash

Summer 2010

## Member Meetings:

Tuesday, Aug. 10 7pm  
Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7pm  
San Leandro Main Library  
For more info: [www.fslc.org](http://www.fslc.org)

## Creek Updates:

Alameda County Public Works is in the planning stages of a project to remove or trim hazardous trees from certain points along the creek between McAurthur Blvd and E. 14th Street. After a series of public meetings and input from Creekside residents, ACPW will proceed with a plan and time line for the project. For more information visit: [www.acgov.org/pwa](http://www.acgov.org/pwa)

## Education Programs:

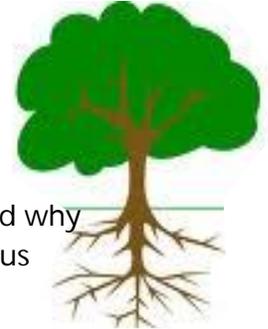
Over 350 K-6th grade students visited the creek at Root park during the 2009-2010 school year as part of FSLC's Watershed Education Program. Kids learned about storm water pollution prevention and other ways to keep the creek and watershed clean and healthy by doing water quality testing, looking at aquatic invertebrates, and seeing first-hand how stormwater runoff flows into the creek. Students even picked up trash and removed non-native, invasive plants from the creek.



FSLC would like to thank The Watershed Project for their generous grant that funded new education program supplies for the 2009/2010 school year.



## What is Riparian?



San Leandro Creek is a riparian habitat. What is riparian? What characterizes a riparian habitat and why are riparian habitats important to us here in our own urban habitat?

Riparian refers to the transitional zone between fresh water and land. It's characterized by certain vegetation, but riparian is not just about plants and trees. It is a fluid system, in more ways than one, of currents, sediment deposition, and fluctuating water levels that constantly carve and alter the stream channel. This progressive alteration gives rise to a constantly changing landscape.

In a riparian zone, soil plays a vital role as it acts like a sponge. The soil can hold enormous amounts of water for days or weeks after a storm. Plants draw upon this water as it's gradually released from the soil into the stream. Along with seeps and springs from groundwater, this is what keeps streams flowing, even when it hasn't rained in months. This is how riparian areas stay lushly green and hydrated year-round, even when surrounding areas like grasslands, chaparral, or oak woodlands are dry. You can pick out a riparian zone by its distinct canopy dominated by deciduous (seasonally green) species with broad and soft-textured leaves that create a clear, visual distinction between the riparian corridor and adjacent uplands.

Riparian zones are species-rich with willow, cottonwood, walnut, ash, oak, sycamore, and California bay trees creating a diverse canopy that supports many species of wildlife. The understory, or smaller shrubs

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Chris Richards, Webmaster

*riparian continued,*

and plants like wild grape, blackberry, and poison oak hold the soil in place, preventing erosion and supporting wildlife. It is this diversity that makes riparian zones highly productive, able to support a greater diversity of wildlife than any other habitat in California.

Birds are the most abundant, from hawks that nest high in the trees to wrens and thrushes that forage on the forest floor and in debris piles. Migrating birds use riparian zones as corridors in which to find food and shelter as they move north or south, as do migrating deer. Insects, amphibians, small mammals, and bats also find food and shelter.

San Leandro Creek is a vital riparian corridor in the East Bay. Even where it flows through the urban areas of San Leandro and Oakland it is open to the sky, a very unusual occurrence for an urban area where creeks are often seen as obstacles to development and end up channelized and culverted, buried under city streets. A creek's biodiversity and its ability to protect developed areas from flooding is eliminated by these practices. The creek becomes nothing more than a water transport system. Even though it hasn't been buried, San Leandro Creek has been altered in a major way...Chabot Dam.

*To Be Continued*



The San Leandro Creek Watershed Awareness Program is a comprehensive watershed education program funded by Alameda County Flood Control and Conservation District, with additional support from the City of San Leandro and implemented by Friends of San Leandro Creek. Thank you to the following for your continued support: Alameda County Industries, Alameda County Public Works, Robert and Lois C. Braddock Charitable Foundation, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and FSLC Members and Volunteers.



## Upcoming Events & Activities

### Member Meeting

Tuesday, October 12 7pm  
San Leandro Main Library

### Annual Creek Cleanup

September 18, 9:30am-12:30pm at Root Park

### Creek Restoration Day

Saturday, October 16, 9:30-12:30 at Root Park

### Watershed Hike

Saturday, November 13, 9am-12pm at Lake Chabot

For more information on all our activities visit our website at [www.fslc.org](http://www.fslc.org)

## Only Rain Down The Storm Drain!

Friends of the San Leandro Environment  
Friends of San Leandro Creek  
P. O. Box 202  
San Leandro, CA 94577-0020  
Phone: 510.577.6069



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