

Watershed Lookout

Alameda Creek Watershed
Forum



Welcome to the first issue of *Watershed Lookout*, a quarterly e-newsletter for acwForum members and stakeholders! The intent of this e-newsletter is to provide information on upcoming events, highlight recent activities, and provide opportunities to report on member’s interests in the Alameda Creek Watershed. Help us develop the next issue of *Watershed Lookout* by sharing your feedback and updates on projects, people, and activities via [email](#).

We also encourage you to visit www.acwForum.org, where you will find a calendar of events, a map of the watershed with project summaries, and a sign-up page for the *Watershed Lookout*. Your participation is necessary to increase the projects displayed on the website. To submit a project summary, contact [Haley Burgardt](#) to request login credentials.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 20 Alameda Creek Watershed – Creeks to Bay Cleanup Events

September 20th is California Coastal Cleanup Day. A number of volunteer events will be taking place throughout the Alameda Creek Watershed. Join in and help out at one of the following events:

- **Alameda Creek in Niles (Fremont)**
- **Lake Del Valle (south of Livermore)**
- **Downtown Livermore (multiple sites)**
- **Old Alameda Creek (Union City)**
- **Dublin (3 sites on Saturday 9/13/14)**

Visit the acwForum website for more details from cleanup event organizers on how to get involved! www.acwForum.org/calendar

November 6 Restoration in the Alameda Creek Watershed

The acwForum’s fall technical symposium is coming up! This half-day afternoon event will explore the challenges and benefits of restoration projects, especially riparian enhancement within and near our watershed.

Many agencies, consultants, and non-profit groups are involved in voluntary and permit-driven restoration projects. For the experienced practitioner, the nuts and bolts may be obvi-

ous. For those less experienced, the process of planning and executing a restoration project may be elusive. Unanticipated complications can plague any project, from climate change to pests, voracious wildlife, and pathogens. There are many lessons to be learned from others’ experiences and expertise.

The event will be held at the Castro Valley Library. Stay tuned for registration information.

Send us your [upcoming event](#) for the next *Watershed Lookout*, or add a calendar item to www.acwForum.org/calendar by contacting [Haley Burgardt](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

Alameda Creek Watershed Council / acwForum Annual Conference, March 13, 2014 – *The View Upstream*

This year's Annual Conference, *Perspectives on the Alameda Creek Watershed: Resources, Restoration and Resilience from the Bay to Ridge—and Beyond*, drew nearly 70 people to the Shannon Community Center in Dublin. Topics ranged from sea level rise adaptation strategies to restoration projects to storm water pollution prevention using green infrastructure.

The conference included presentations, quick round-robin updates and an interpretive creek walk, hosted by the City of Dublin. The Annual Conference serves to transfer watershed information to acwForum stakeholders, while also providing networking opportunities.



Annual Conference Creek Walk, NRCS

A big thank you to the event sponsors and those who helped make the event possible. Please see www.acwForum.org/calendar for the agenda. Presentations can be downloaded from www.acrcd.org/WatershedCouncil.aspx.

Alameda Creek Watershed Forum / acwForum Transition

The *Alameda Creek Watershed Council (ACWC)* was renamed the *Alameda Creek Watershed Forum (acwForum)* early this year, and a new www.acwForum.org website was launched in March 2014. The website features a calendar of watershed events, a map and summaries of watershed enhancement projects submitted by signatories, a quarterly e-newsletter, background information on the ACWC/acwForum, and other resources. Website improvements are in

WATERSHED TOOLKIT

ACE Provides Boots on the Ground

American Conservation Experience (ACE) is a non-profit organization that recruits, coordinates, and trains young volunteers and aspiring professionals in natural resources conservation and management. Services range from project site restoration assistance to professional internships. ACE crews, which have completed basic training, can be hired to work on restoration projects, providing a competitively-priced option for contract labor.



ACE crew at work at Sabercat, ACRC

Locally, as part of BART's Warm Springs Extension Project mitigation requirements, the Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRC) hired ACE crew services in early 2014 to enhance a 2.2-acre site along Sabercat Creek in

the works for later this year, and initial feedback from stakeholders is being taken into consideration.



<http://www.acwForum.org/projects>

acwForum Steering Committee
The ACWC Planning Workgroup was renamed the acwForum Steering Committee, a group that helps plan and conduct acwForum activities. The group is chaired by Elke Rank, Water Resources Planner for Zone 7 Water Agency.

Alameda County Resource Conservation District (ACRC) staff roles
ACRC provides administrative support for the acwForum with funding from Alameda County Flood Control & Water Conservation District (ACFC&WCD).

Earth Day Cleanup – Alameda Creek, Niles Canyon, April 19, 2014.

Nearly 20 members of the community, ACRC's Hands-on Conservation program and the Alameda Creek Alliance worked together to clean up trash from the banks of Alameda Creek along Old Canyon Road. Invasive English ivy and vinca were also removed from the riparian woodlands along the creek.



Volunteers at Niles Canyon, ACRC

Share your local and regional watershed projects or happenings in the [next issue](#) of Watershed Lookout.

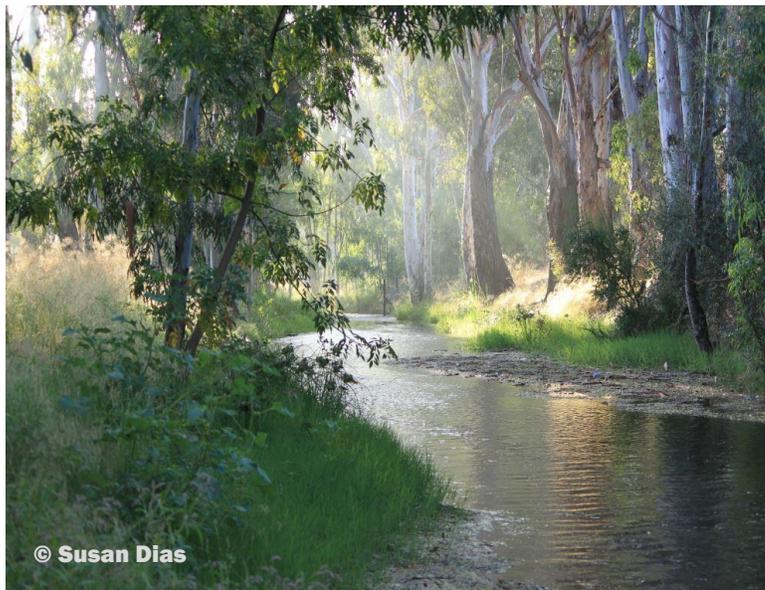
Fremont. ACE removed non-native invasive species such as English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, and palms, as well as elms infected with Dutch elm disease. The project mitigates the temporary loss of habitat functions and values imposed by the BART project. ACE finished the work under budget and ahead of schedule, allowing the crew to improve a larger area than originally planned.

Recognizing ACE's riparian habitat work for ACRC, the City of Fremont contracted ACE to complete a similar adjacent

restoration project along Sabercat Creek. There, ACE crews hand-weeded around planting units, removed non-native invasive Himalayan blackberry and English ivy, applied weed matting and mulch around planting basins, and installed browse protection cages. They also protected existing native shrubs and trees and planted additional native vegetation.

Beyond its crew training and services, ACE provides high school and college students and recent graduates with experiential opportunities to apply

acwForum



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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.

ACE Provides Boots...

the principles and practices of land management through its internship program. For example, ACE employee Steve Zwerber works as a project assistant for ACRCO, providing a professional conservation experience. Steve earned a degree in Environmental Science from the University of Wisconsin in 2012. He completed over 900 hours of volunteer service with ACE before joining ACRCO in March 2013 as a paid ACE intern. Steve has conducted vegetation

monitoring throughout (and beyond) the Alameda Creek Watershed. His primary day-to-day role supports the SFPUC with plant establishment on several mitigation sites including coordination of monitoring and maintenance activities in the field.

For more information on ACE services, visit their website: www.usaconservation.org.



Initial unwanted vegetation cleared.
ACRCO

We want to feature your tools, tips, and topics of interest in an [upcoming issue](#) of Watershed Lookout.

SPOTLIGHT

Ian Howell, Resource Conservationist, ACRCO

Since joining ACRCO in 2013 Ian has become involved in watershed-wide projects, including his role as a coordinator for the acwForum. He also manages ACRCO's Alameda Creek Healthy Watershed Program, funded by a grant from the EPA's San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund, with support from ACFC&WCD and SFPUC.

The Healthy Watershed Program supports implementation and monitoring of best management practices (BMPs) that provide beneficial water quality outcomes on public and private land. For example, landowners can receive funding to cover a portion of the cost to install vegetative filters near creeks, fence-

ing to reduce livestock impacts to riparian areas, improvements to road-stream crossings, creek restoration practices, and more.

For more information, contact Ian at ian.howell@acrcd.org.



Recognize a watershed advocate in the [next issue](#) of Watershed Lookout.