

CALIFORNIA STREAMING



News from CUSP Partners Around the State



A word from co-founders of the California Urban Streams Partnership

It has been a minute since our last newsletter and the world has shifted dramatically. The COVID-19 pandemic and the on-going civil unrest triggered by the police killing of another Black person offer us all this moment of individual and societal introspection. What will be the new normal? is an often-banded question misses the opportunity to interrogate the (ine)quality of the previous “normal” and aspire for more. Perhaps, how can we make the new normal better? As always, the answer will reside in the younger generation who appear up to the task as they take to the streets in sustained protest for social justice.

CUSP is fortunate to have two new staff members since last newsletter: Emanuel Peterson (Project Manager) and Jackie Van Der Hout (Education and Outreach Director). Both bring a tremendous amount of energy and passion to their work. A special thanks to Jackie for getting this newsletter across the finish line and in front of you. Congratulations to Emanuel and his wife, who welcomed their first child in June!

We hope you enjoy this issue of California Streaming. The articles include a feature on a long running issue for our partners: homelessness and the pollution impacts of homeless encampments on waterways. Chris Brokate provides an inspiring model that engages homeless people as part the solution and provides trash-removal services. This issues also includes the relatively new topic for California “urban creek freaks” -- management beaver reappearing in areas they once historically inhabited, even in densely populated cities! Worth a Dam reports cities in California with beaver include: Martinez, Concord, Walnut Creek, Suisun, Napa, Winters, Sacramento, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. Worth A Dam’s article ends on a pensive note because vegetation removal for flood reduction has reduced the use of beaver on Alhambra Creek for habitat. CUSP is involved on this issue with the Alhambra Creek Watershed Council, working on finalizing a vegetation management plan for the multiple objectives of flood, erosion and habitat management.

People associate involvement of tribes with only rural streams. The Run4 Salmon story is an example where both urban and rural tribes and indigenous people are involved in waterway protection. CUSP has worked with the urban Ohlone and Miwok people on Wildcat Creek in Richmond and San Leandro Creek in the City of San Leandro and intends to increase our partnership with tribes around California.

IN THIS ISSUE	
GREETINGS	PAGE 1
CUSP UPDATES	PAGE 2
NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE	
WorthADam	
Clean River Alliance	
Cooper Gulch	
Urban Restoration at Home	
Run4Salmon	PAGE 5
STATEWIDE VIEWS	
	PAGE 13
UPCOMING EVENTS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
	PAGE 14



A Blast from the past: citizens blocking US Army Corps excavators and chainsaws on Tamalpais Creek, Marin Co. 1969

Jessica Hall reminds us through her story on Cooper Gulch that urban streams are paradoxically located in some of the most rural enclaves such as Humboldt Bay. Even the tiny Victorian town of Ferndale in Humboldt County has an active constituency restoring Francis Creek over the past decades.

While we have heard many stories of ranchers and farmers getting equipment out of barns to restore damaged streams running through their properties, CUSP is unaware of city property owners paying up out of their own pockets to restore an urban creek in contiguous back yards, and so we give a shout -out to the Lamont family in Berkeley for their project on Codornices Creek!

A big thanks goes out to Mike Wellborn and the California Watershed Network for their continual tracking of legislation in Sacramento. We have been informed by state legislators that this session will focus almost exclusively in homeless and housing; fire hazards and Covid -19 issues. CUSP appreciates the support of many of our partners in the 2018 effort to pass the environmental bond act proposition 3. We also appreciate all the letters of support and phone calls that went into our California Watershed Coalition Bill AB933 authored by a strong supporter of watershed organizations, Assembly Woman Cottie Petrie-Norris. This bill would have formally codified the popular state Watershed Coordinator grant program and put it on more stable financial footing. An unusual political glitch derailed this bill at the very end of the legislative process. This gives us hope that we can return to the legislature for another try.

Ann L. Riley and Josh Bradt

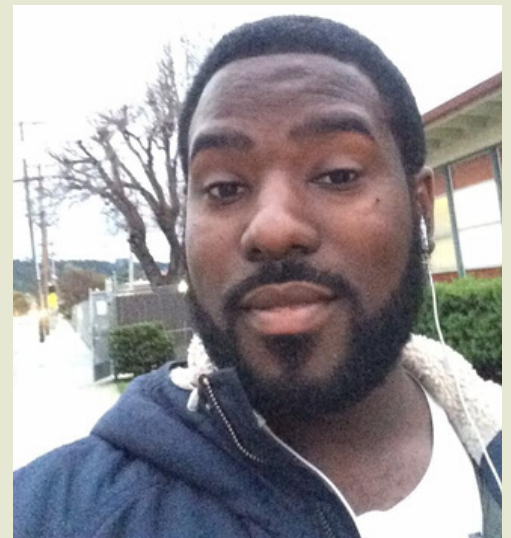
What's New with CUSP?

Staff Updates

Emanuel Peterson

Project Manager

Emanuel Peterson is a Richmond native, who learned and honed his riparian knowledge during his 5 years as a Green Collar Corps-member with The Watershed Project, a non-profit providing environmental education and stewardship organization in the East Bay. Emanuel's skills include plant identification, project site maintenance, and plant nursery management. His work leading and teaching youth groups make him an excellent communicator, which is helpful when assisting homeowners with creek concerns or speaking with state legislators about watershed issues in urban settings. As CUSP's Program Manager, Emanuel conducts site visits, assists in developing all outreach materials, and schedules special events. While juggling work and family, Emanuel is also pursuing a Business Administration degree at Cal State-East Bay. In his off time enjoys video games, movies, sports, and a multitude of games.





Jackie Van Der Hout

Education and Outreach Director

Jackie Van Der Hout has a background in environmental science and community organizing and is passionate about building relationships between humans and their environments. Jackie grew up in San Francisco and received her BA/BS with a focus on freshwater science and political ecology from the Evergreen State College. Prior to working with CUSP, Jackie worked at Watershed Stewards Program at the SF Bay Water Board where she monitored streams throughout the Bay Area, taught a bilingual curriculum on Watersheds to elementary students and organized urban creek restoration events. Jackie is excited about furthering CUSP's mission through education and outreach, as well as continuing to keep her hands in the dirt and planting willows.

We want to hear from you!

[Take Our Partner Survey Here](#)

The California Urban Streams Partnership is conducting a brief survey of our partner organizations to learn more about the overall goals of the urban streams movement in 2020. We are also soliciting nominations for CUSP's "Restoration Hall of Fame" for our upcoming newsletters. Thank you for your participation in this survey and for all you do for California's Urban Streams!

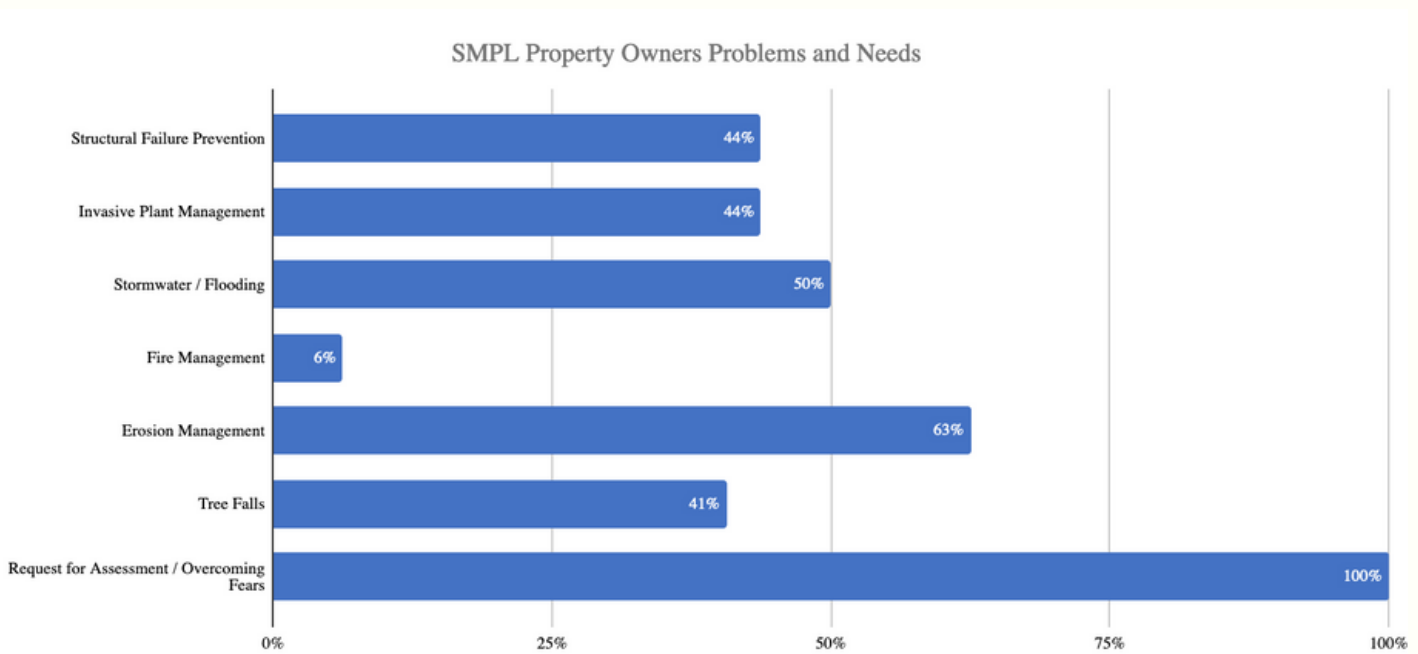
The Streamside Management Program for Landowners

BY EMANUEL PETERSON

Beginning in 2018 CUSP has run the Streamside Management Program for Landowners (SMPL), a stream stewardship and restoration program in partnership with Contra Costa County Flood Control and the Contra Costa Resource Conservation District (CCRCD). Drawing on years of experience, CUSP and the CCRCD work to address stream management needs and environmental protection along urban and rural private properties throughout Contra Costa County. Property owners who fear that they have problems relating to stream bank stability, stormwater and flooding are referred to CUSP by the county Public Works Department, towns, and cities in the county. SMPL has made it simple for homeowners to understand permitting requirements and implement the best ecological practices available to address their property-creek issues. CUSP staff perform site visits and assessments, as well as on-site restoration assistance in partnership with the CCRCD. SMPL is a revamped version of the partnership between the Urban Creeks Council, Contra Costa County, and Region II Water Board, that ran from 1999 until the Great Recession.

Providing this free service to the public of Contra Costa County has taught us a great deal about what stream-related problems landowners in Contra Costa County are grappling with. Reflecting on the reasons landowners have contacted the SMPL program for initial site visits and assessments provides us with insight into the overall problems that face our streams.

The most common reason landowners are referred to CUSP through SMPL is due to a fear of unknown hazards. Every property owner we have worked with has had some general fear about the creek running along their property. Most of this concern is based on a lack of knowledge about preventing and responding to issues of creek stewardship and management. Oftentimes, property owners revert to using environmentally damaging riprap, concrete, gabions, and channelization in and alongside the creek due to this fear, causing further damage to the creek ecosystem. SMPL provides landowners with information to face their fears around streambank management so that they can manage their streams with environmentally sensitive strategies. The solutions we provide to homeowners achieve results in streambank stabilization through low-cost and high impact soil bioengineering solutions and native plant installation.



The second most frequent need for assistance is erosion management. Nearly 63% of the homeowners we have visited within a year have had varying degrees of erosion issues. Erosion is detrimental to water quality, fish habitat, stream structure and can be dangerous for properties built too close to a creek. Other common requests relate to concerns around stormwater and flooding (50%), invasive plants and vegetation management (43.7%), fire management (6.25%) and tree falls (40.6%).

Working with property owners throughout Contra Costa County, we help to address these concerns by working with homeowners, neighbors, and local creek groups on implementing best management practices, achieving regulatory compliance for stream restoration and management, and installation of inexpensive remedies to address property concerns. Similar programs have successfully been adapted in other parts of the state through RCDs and non-profits. By offering this free service to the public, many harmful property owner stream bank projects have been circumvented, and many community groups, neighbors and people have lent a hand to restoring their neighborhood streams.

Lessons learned from implementing the SMPL program are plentiful. This pilot program has taught us about the potential for public, non-profit, and private parties working together to achieve better stream management practices. Implementing similar models in other areas may be a way to bring the urban streams movement into backyards across California. CUSP looks forward to continuing to partner with interested groups about SMPL and growing the program to increase community stream stewardship.

If you would like to have an assessment of your creek and are in Contra Costa County you can contact CUSP at our email, custreams@gmail.com. Assessments can provide management options that are quick and relatively simple to solve common stream issues. If there are extensive needs for your home CUSP may be able to host a workshop on your property to involve your local community and install streambank stabilization solutions.

PLEASE VISIT
WWW.CALIFORNIAURBANSTREAMSPARTNERSHIP.COM/
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES, INCLUDING A SOIL
BIOENGINEERING HANDBOOK, PLANTS LISTS, AND MORE.



News from Around the State

Worth A Dam

BY HEIDI PERRYMAN

Alhambra creek in Martinez California was the home of some pretty famous beavers from 2007 to 2017. Townspeople rallied around them and forced the city to take steps that allowed them to remain. The nonprofit: 'Worth A Dam' was started in their honor and has been responsible for twelve festivals, an internationally visited website and beaver education from California to Caledonia. Because of the beavers the city has been featured in several books, magazines like Ranger Rick and at least two documentaries.

Back when the beavers showed up in the sleepy town of Martinez it caught everyone by surprise. No one could remember anything like this happening before and everyone said it was very unusual to have a family of beavers take up residence in a city creek.

What Worth A Dam has since learned is that as the beaver population continues to recover from the decimation of the fur trade, beaver appearances in urban settings have grown more and more common. In fact in 2015 our study showed that some 38 states reported issues with beavers in urban settings. You can read more about this in a monograph presented recently at the first the Beaver convention on the east coast BeaverCon 2020.

Beaver in urban streams aren't that surprising when you think about it. Urban creeks often have low gradients, which beavers prefer. They often serve as neglected wildlife corridors, which suit beavers very well. And helpful cities usually line these creeks with trees: we do it to beautify and combat erosion but beavers think it's delicious!

The truth is, if beavers haven't come to your city yet, they are probably on their way soon. Recently there has been discussion about incorporating planning for beavers into urban settings, and how to let their ecosystem services pick up where city planners left off. One recent paper observed that this could benefit the entire green belt noting that "Beaver can be integrated into the design of new and established urban green spaces to improve ecosystem functions."

This comes as no surprise to the residents of our town that lived alongside beavers for a decade. Certainly in Martinez we saw the biodiversity of our creek change with the beavers' help: wood duck, mink, river otter and steelhead were more frequently observed in their first year of their residence. By the second year we noted new species that hadn't been seen before: like the Sacramento split tail, snipe and hooded merganser. Of course all of these benefits were sadly lost after the beavers themselves departed.



Of course all of these benefits were sadly lost after the beavers themselves departed. Recently some prominent tree-chewing raised hopes that our beavers might have returned, but it appears to have been only a 'beaver drive by' - a beaver in transition looking for a place to live who takes a meal on the run in passing. Sadly no one has seen any sign of beavers in the area since that single occurrence.

In their absence, Alhambra creek, which had never dried during the decade of beavers, slowed again to a muddy trickle this summer. There have been no sightings of otter, mink or green heron because there is nothing for them to eat. Until they come back, this is one city that will be sorely missing its engineers.

Cooper Gulch

BY JESSICA HALL

For decades, the lower reach of Cooper Gulch, a perennial urban stream in the City of Eureka, flowed into a storm drain pipe for over four hundred feet. Cooper Gulch would then exit into First Slough, a tidal tributary slough of Eureka Slough, itself a significant estuarine waterbody connecting to Humboldt Bay. The storm drainpipe's profile created a barrier to fish migration upstream. As the pipe aged, it also triggered increased maintenance of the road infrastructure above it, including a major roadway, Myrtle Avenue.



Cooper Gulch before restoration

The city recognized the flood risk and hazard potential of this storm drain and daylighting of the stream was added to the city's capital improvement projects list. City staff and residents also appreciated the potential for the daylighted stream to serve as a community asset, and act as an extension of a nearby city park, Cooper Gulch Park. Other projects, however, needed to take precedence for the use of the small city's funds. In the fall of 2019, damage to Myrtle Avenue from the failing culvert prompted the City to take decisive action to daylight the stream.

Their team sought to not only improve the flow of floodwaters from upstream of Myrtle Avenue to First Slough, but to also promote fish passage and riparian habitat. Over a period of three months, the City worked closely with consultants and contractors on an emergency repair design that included an appropriate stream profile, cross-section based on reference geomorphic conditions, riparian plantings and an arch culvert under Myrtle Avenue with a natural stream bed. The stream has weathered its first season of rainfall with jute-covered banks and riparian plantings that are establishing well. We all await reports of returning salmonids.

If you are in Eureka, you can visit the stream. To find the newly daylighted stream, from Myrtle Avenue, turn right on 8th Street. The daylighted portion of stream is from Myrtle Avenue upstream to Cooper Gulch Park, approximately where Q and S Streets meet.



Cooper Gulch after restoration

Clean River Alliance

INTERVIEW WITH CHRIS BROKATE
BY JACKIE VAN DER HOUT

Chris Brokate is the founder and director of the Clean River Alliance, an organization based in the Russian River Watershed. The Clean River Alliance, a program of the Russian Riverkeeper, works to remove trash from the Russian River watershed and to provide education about the problem of trash in our waters by creating more public clean-up events. Chris got started with the work of cleaning up rivers in 2015, as he began noticing trash on the beaches after rainstorms. "I began organizing beach cleanup events and going out and cleaning up the river in canoes, something local groups didn't have the staff, funding or energy to do more than a couple times after a big rain event" Chris explained.

It became clear to Chris as he spent more time on the ground that a lot of the trash was coming from homeless encampments. That is when he got the idea to start going into the camps and asking if they wanted to leave trash for him to pick up on a certain date. When he couldn't find any local clean-up focused organizations in his local watersheds, he decided to start one. From there, the trash pickup programs for local encampments grew.

Currently, the Clean River Alliance does trash pickups along the Russian River serving hundreds of homeless people along the watershed spanning multiple cities twice a week. What we are doing picking up trash is just like the way that people with homes put their trash out and get it picked up”, Chris said of the program.

Outside of these pickups, the Clean River Alliance organizes trash clean ups at beaches, along highways, as well as river based clean ups and with schools and volunteers. There are hundreds of groups around the world with a shared goal of taking trash out of the environment, but the Clean River Alliance has created a new model through their partnerships with homeless encampments.



Working with the Clean River Alliance has also been a journey of personal growth for Chris. “When I first started doing this, I was not educated about how to work with the homeless community around anything except for the environmental aspect. It was a steep learning curve. I was at first kind of mad about all the trash. It wasn’t until I got to know people, who they are, and why they are homeless I got to realize how complex it is, and that no stories are the same”, Chris explained. When working with volunteers on cleanups, Chris has had to deal with prejudice and condescending attitudes towards people who are experiencing homelessness. One misconception that he frequently encounters is that people experiencing homelessness are recently arrived to the area.

“Mitigating the impacts of homelessness by providing trash services makes a huge difference that you can see on the beaches and in the rivers, and it helps out people living in these camps who really want to put their trash somewhere. We have lots of volunteers from homeless communities who help collect trash. People want to know ‘how much trash do we have to pick up before we can get a t shirt?’. I’ve learned through this work that homeless people do care about the environment, and want to be a part of community.”

-Chris Brokate

To the contrary, many homeless people in Sonoma county have lived there their whole lives and have been displaced from environmental disasters. “A lot of people living in encampments have been displaced by flooding from as far back as the 1990s. We’ve had massive wildfires in the last four years, and we have had an influx of homeless people who were displaced by those fires”, Chris explained, noting some of the major environmental disasters the area has weathered over the past few decades.

Sonoma county has seen an increase in dramatic increase in housing costs over the past decade as well, contributing to the crisis of displacement. “In Sonoma county, we have well over 3,000 homeless folks and only 750 beds available in the winter, and in the summer only 300. The math just isn’t there. People have no choice”, Chris noted. The best and only solution these myriad problems is to house people, Chris underscored. Housing people is the humane thing to do. It’s good for the river and it’s good for people. “Without housing, we are forcing this environmental degradation”.

Trash pickup services to encampments provide benefits to both people and to the watershed. One of the largest causes of trash entering the waterways is when encampments are evicted and forced to move. When people can stay in place and trash is picked up just like it would be from any house, levels of trash in the river decrease very significantly, as the Clean River Alliance has observed over their years of work.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Clean River Alliance has continued and expanded their efforts providing essential services to homeless people within the watershed, distributing 100 lunches a week, providing water, hygiene kits, and masks to help people stay safe during social distancing.

The county of Sonoma has also been working on expanding homeless services and moving some of the most vulnerable populations of people experiencing homelessness into hotels.

Chris Brokate wants you to know that creating a trash cleanup program for the homeless “wasn’t as hard or scary as you might think”. His advice: “Work with the local homeless populations, and don’t be afraid to approach them and see how they can help you- they might be a really good ally and want to take care of the creek. Most people care about the environment and want to help out”.

Partnerships have also been crucial to the success of the Clean River Alliance, from their founding partnership with the Russian Riverkeeper to working with homeless services, local Waterkeeper groups, the county of Sonoma, to collaborating with Rotary International. The model that the Clean River Alliance has pioneered has already been adapted at other organizations, such as the Inland Waterkeeper, and has been recommended through the California Coastkeeper to the State Water Board. To stay up to date with Clean River Alliance, find them online at cleanriveralliance.org/

City Property Owners Sponsor Restoration

BY ERIN BANKS RUSBY

Juliet Lamont and Phil Price had a problem. The creek that runs through the backyard of their north Berkeley home, Codornices Creek, had an inconvenient habit of turning into a spewing jet of water. When fall and winter rains struck, water rushed through the creek channel, causing erosion around crumbling concrete flood control structures. But Lamont and Price, both professionals in the environmental consulting field, had a vision—working with consulting firms and a variety of local experts, the couple realized their dream of restoring the creek channel in a way that naturally stabilizes the bank and provides habitat for local wildlife.

“It’s a solution to some short-term, immediate human issues, but it’s also a long-term give-back to the Earth,” said Lamont. Up the hill from the Lamont-Price house, the creek emerges from an underground pipe and flows down the hill, through the backyards of three houses, including their own. Overtime, the property owners along the creek had attempted to shore up the bank with different kinds of concrete walls and embankments. But by the time that Lamont and Price came into the picture, much of this infrastructure was breaking down, the water flowing so quickly that it ate away at the exposed parts of the creek bank, destabilizing it and undermining the structures. There were also many invasive, non-native plants along the creek bank, such as Algerian ivy.

When the couple bought the house two doors upstream, they decided to explore what it would take to restore their stretch of creek (Lamont’s sister lives in the house in between). Most notably, they wanted to avoid using the same failed concrete structures. “Let’s design with nature instead of fighting it,” said Lamont, describing their approach.

In other words, with some careful channel engineering using natural materials, they could create a creek channel that could withstand storms with minimal erosion and offer refuge to wildlife in suburban North Berkeley.

They reached out to consulting firms, seeking bids for the channel reconstruction work. Surprisingly, no one wanted to take on the project. The reason? Crews would have no way to let heavy machinery, like excavators, access the creek because houses were blocking it. They needed that equipment to move the hundreds of tons of rock and soil to reconstruct the creek channel. To navigate this hurdle, Lamont and Price decided to demolish the house two doors upstream from them - it had aged enough that it needed to be rebuilt anyway.

With access to the creek ensured for the heavy equipment, Lamont and Price worked to create a plan for the creek restoration. They hired two consulting firms to survey the land and draw up plans for the channel modifications and landscaping. They also needed a number of permits from the city as well as agencies like the Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

“I believe I have 15 different permits that I collected,” said Lamont. The permitting process entailed monitoring to learn what kinds of wildlife used the property. In one instance, researchers installed audio sensors to record the calls of bats, recording multiple species of bats on the property. Other pre-construction wildlife included chorus tree frogs and various bird species.

With the permits and plans in hand, it was time for channel modification. Starting in July 2018, excavators began their work, removing old concrete structures, giving the creek back some of its natural curvature, and sinking boulders into the channel. By October, crews had finished the heavy lifting and it was time for the living habitat enhancements—native plants.

Once the rain returned in October, Lamont, Price, and a professional gardener colleague worked countless hours to install over 600 native plants along the creek channel and on the slopes above. Plants were selected to support native pollinators, such as the pipevine swallowtail. Native trees were installed, including willows, buckeye and big leaf maples close to the water’s edge to help further stabilize the bank with their root systems.

It’s like this thick web of stuff that just gets stronger,” said Lamont. And over time, the services these growing plants provide only multiply—spaces like these offer not only more natural flood control mechanisms, but also sequester carbon as they grow. “You get all of this by embracing nature and healthy ecosystems,” she said. It’s like this thick web of stuff that just gets stronger,” said Lamont. “You get all of this by embracing nature and healthy ecosystems,” she said.

And over time, the services these growing plants provide only multiply—spaces like these offer not only more natural flood control mechanisms, but also sequester carbon as they grow. Nature has responded. In less than a year since beginning the restoration process, Lamont and Price have seen a big uptick in the bird species visiting and nesting on their property. They’ve spotted 56 different species of birds, many of which also choose to nest there. From hawks using the creek to bathe and crows foraging along the creek, there are a lot of great wildlife moments they enjoy daily now, said Price.

Having volunteered and worked with neighborhood creek advocacy groups before, Price and Lamont knew that there would be questions about the purpose and impact of the project. They approached the city of Berkeley and their neighbors, sharing their plans for the project and getting people bought in early—two years before any construction happened. Sometimes they even held neighborhood meetings in their backyard. Now, neighbors, visitors to Berkeley, and city officials ask to tour the property fairly regularly, she said.

“Most people come in here and scream, ‘this is gorgeous!’” said Lamont. It is being used as a kind of model of the potential for urban creeks, she added. Between the project’s usefulness as a teaching tool and the valuable restored habitat it offers, the couple thinks it will make a lasting difference in the local landscape. “We really see this as our legacy,” said Price. “Long after we’re gone, we hope this will still be here.”



Passage of Codornices creek before restoration



Passage of Codornices creek after restoration

The Run4Salmon

INTERVIEW WITH SHERIDAN NOELANI ENOMOTO BY JACKIE VAN DER HOUT

Native people in California are active in protecting both urban and rural waterways. The Run4Salmon is a journey that follows the 300 mile historical upstream migration of the native winter-run Chinook salmon that once ran from the bay delta to the Winnemem (McCloud River). The Run4Salmon was started by Winnemem Wintu Chief Caleen Sisk and a collective of Indigenous women, activists and allies in 2016.

I spoke with Sheridan Noelani Enomoto, a community and policy advocate about her participation in the Run4Salmon journey for the last four years. Sheridan was brought to her work with watersheds and shorelines through her participation in the Run4Salmon which began four years ago.

Dedicated to protecting the waters, restoring the salmon runs and revitalizing indigenous lifeways from the San Francisco Bay to Buliyum Puyuk (Mt. Shasta), the Run4Salmon brings people together to honor water, the source of life, and to understand and honor place, history, and the future of salmon. The two-week journey from the delta to the mountains has annually brought together people from around the world to run, bicycle, canoe, walk and ride horses for the return of the salmon and indigenous sovereignty.



The Run4Salmon brings together urban and rural communities throughout the journey to learn about and celebrate their watersheds. Sheridan organizes and works in communities spanning from Bayview Hunters Point in San Francisco to the Laytonville rancheria, and has found that even though environments may be different, everyone has the same needs: access to clean water and health. Organizing for environmental justice and public health ties directly into this understanding. On their journey, the salmon do not differentiate between travelling through urban and rural areas. The Winnemem Wintu have been protecting their waters, salmon and way of life since the construction of the Shasta dam. The changes in the watershed that resulted from the dam included the flooding of Winnemem Wintu sacred sites, traditional territories, and the loss of salmon from the rivers.

Sheridan explained how the run itself personally transformed her. “Every year and day of the run is an educational experience, very much like the salmon themselves when they transform from saltwater to freshwater, and this is kind of what happens when you run through all of these different environments,” expressed Sheridan.

To understand the salmon is to understand them not only as fish but also as a series of relationships, Sheridan highlighted. It is important to understand that salmon are not just fish- just as most creatures are not just one thing. As a keystone species, the salmon exist in relationship to everything else. They feed other animals such as whales and bears and they carry nutrients from the sea to the inland forests. For many indigenous people in what is now California, including the Winnemem Wintu, the salmon are not just fish, they are relatives.

Salmon and water are at the heart of the issues that bring people together for the journey, a coalescing of environmental justice, tribal sovereignty, food protection and urban landscapes. And the stakes are increasingly high. Wild chinook salmon in California were one so plentiful that Winnemem Wintu stories tell of being able to walk across the rivers on their backs. Salmon from the McCloud watershed have been found in New Zealand, where they had been shipped in the late 1800s. The Winemnem Wintu have been advocating for the return of these surviving salmon back to their native watershed. Now, the salmon that remain in their native watershed face a web of interconnected threats. Giant dams and infrastructure, climate change, and water use politics in California threatens not only the salmon but also sacred sites and essential habitat for many other plants, birds and marine life.

Water is at the heart of the Run4Salmon. “When we understand where our water comes from and where it goes, we peer into how water works and connects us all, how it transforms and how it impacts us. Sea level rise and climate change are not the only kinds of water. There is water we don’t see underneath us- water from the creeks we’ve covered in concrete, there is illegal dumping, there is urban water infrastructure,” Sheridan emphasized. “The run for salmon brings us back to the source.”

The Run4Salmon comes out of this history of protection. The Run4Salmon continues to raise awareness of the need to protect the waters, fish and indigenous ways of life of the Winnemem Wintu, which are all interconnected. A proposed height raise to the Shasta dam by 18.5 feet will result in the inundation of future spawning grounds on the McCloud River and flood Winnemem Wintu sacred sites, according to the Run4Salmon website. “The Run4Salmon teaches us about the absolute necessity of including indigenous people in water use decisions in California,” Sheridan explained. “Indigenous exclusion from the public process is a violation of civil rights”.

The Run4Salmon has inspired its many participants to continue to act, educate and work for the return of the salmon to the river. The journey itself reflects the interconnectedness and relationships that comprise an environment, an antidote to bureaucracy and single-issue politics. Just as the environment works in relationship, not isolation, the movements for environmental justice, indigenous sovereignty, fish, and water that lead in to and out of the Run4Salmon do the same.

“Remember, they thought that this run of chinook would be extinct. The chinook salmon of the middle river people is the definition of resilience,” Sheridan stated. “They will return”.

This year’s public health crisis has paused the 2020 journey; however, the ceremony will resume in 2021, beginning for the first time at the McCloud River and ending at the ocean.

Learn more and support the Run4Salmon!

- **Follow the Run4Salmon** on [facebook](#), [instagram](#) and [twitter](#) and at www.run4salmon.org
- **Donate** to the [GoFundMe](#) to help bring the salmon home
- **Call your senators** and ask what they are doing to ensure the Winnemem Wintu Tribe’s way of life is preserved and their voice is heard in California’s water planning. Tell them to build a volitional swim way around Shasta Dam for the Chinook Salmon, and to bring the McCloud River Salmon home from New Zealand.
- Check out and share the [Run4Salmon Curriculum](#) designed for teachers
- Learn more: Watch the film [Dancing Salmon Home](#)

Statewide Views

Summer 2020 Legislative Update

By Michael Wellborn

California Watershed Network

Legislature. Aside from the devastation caused by the Covid-19 virus, the Legislators have been squabbling over a range of proposed bills. The most substantial for environmental issues are the two massive General Obligation bond bills: SB 45 Allen (D-Santa Monica) and AB 352 Garcia (D-Coachella).

SB 45 currently lists \$5.5 billion in available funds while AB 352 lists at \$3.9 billion. However, there are many aspects of these bills still being worked out by staff and the authors to unify language acceptable to both houses and the Governor. If the two houses come to agreement, it is likely that we will see the resulting proposal on the November 2020 ballot. As the proposed allocations of funds for both bills are still in flux, the best suggestion is to regularly log into the Legislature's site at leginfo.legislature.ca.gov to review amendments and progress.

Another bill that we are tracking is SB 1372 – Monning (D-Carmel) “Wildlife corridors and connectivity: Wildlife and Biodiversity Protection and Movement Act of 2020.” This bill would require the Department of Fish and Wildlife to investigate, study, and identify impacts to those wildlife corridors from state infrastructure projects, including transportation and water projects, large-scale development projects not covered by an existing natural community conservation plan or habitat conservation plan, and planned or potential land conversions. The bill would also require the department to prioritize wildlife movement and habitat data development in those areas of the state that are most essential as wildlife corridors and habitat linkages.

On the progressive enviro front, AB 1839 – Bonta (D-Alameda) “Climate change: California Green New Deal” came out in January. This bill would create the California Green New Deal Council with a specified membership appointed by the Governor. The bill would require the California Green New Deal Council to submit a specified report to the Legislature no later than January 1, 2022. However, the Assembly leadership has not assigned this bill to a committee, leaving its future somewhat in limbo.



Finally, AB 2518 – Wood (D-Napa) “Voluntary stream restoration and owner liability.” This bill would exempt a landowner who voluntarily allows land to be used for such a project to restore fish and wildlife habitat from civil liability for property damage or personal injury resulting from the project if the project is funded, at least in part, by a state or federal agency that promotes or encourages riparian habitat restoration, unless the property damage or personal injury is caused by willful, intentional, or reckless conduct of the landowner or by a design, construction, operation, or maintenance activity performed by the landowner.

There are no expectations given the increasing impacts from the Covid-19 virus. There is a giant pile of bills to sort through, amend, and settle concerns not only from fellow legislators but also lobbyists and constituents, so stay tuned and watch the show!!

--Michael Wellborn

Editor's note:

CUSP is working with members of the legislature to assure an equitable geographic distribution of funds under the proposed bond acts based on a projection of need for specific pending urban streams and river projects.

Upcoming Events

Beginning this fall and winter, CUSP will be hosting community restoration events on a newly-daylighted portion of Codornices Creek, located on Kains street near the Berkeley and Albany border. Contact us if you would like to be involved!



Additionally, look for us at the next Salmonid Restoration Federation conference, presenting a session on *Opportunities for Community Involvement in Urban Stream Restoration*. We also plan to continue with our public workshop series on soil bioengineering and urban stream restoration in the winter.

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The Mountain School



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