

SPAWNERS

San Pablo Watershed Neighbors Education and Restoration Society

Spring 2006

Native American History

Public Meeting

Wednesday, June 7, 7:00-9:00 P.M.
El Sobrante Library, 4191 Appian Way

Our special speaker is George Coles, currently an adjunct professor of anthropology at San Francisco State University. During his 35-year career, teaching anthropology at Contra Costa College, Professor Coles led excavations at 14 sites in Contra Costa County (2 on Brooks Island) identified as having been occupied by native California-Indians (belonging primarily to the Ohlone family). He has devoted his working life to the study of the Indians of the Contra Costa area, and is a leading expert in this field. He is one of the writers of the bill that created the Native American Heritage Commission, and is currently working on publication of the research material he has collected over the years.

An engaging speaker, Professor Coles will give a brief overview of the Native Americans who occupied the area in and around the San Pablo Creek watershed followed by a question and answer period. This will be a rare opportunity to learn from one of the very few experts in the field of California Native American history, and especially the history of the people who lived, for thousands of years, in our own backyard.

Our meetings are open to the public and we encourage newcomers to stop by.

GPS surveys begin

SPAWNERS is an active participant in the Contra Costa County Volunteer Creek Monitoring Program. This program focuses on GPS and bioassessment surveys, which measure creek location and health, respectively.

GPS surveys are conducted from the middle of the creek, and use GPS units to ascertain the exact location of the creek, and to note creek and creek bank characteristics and disturbances as we work our way downstream.

We are anxious to resume our GPS surveying program, but the creeks are still a bit high for our comfort levels. While we're waiting for the waters to recede a bit more, 6 sites in the

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Backyard Habitat Workshop

Saturday, June 10 2006
9:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

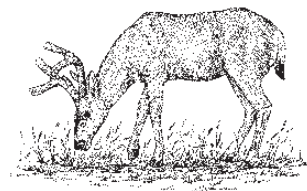
De Anza High School/Contra Costa R-9 Property
El Sobrante/Richmond, CA



Did you know that rare species like the Alameda whipsnake, red-legged frog, and western leatherwood still dwell in the San Pablo Creek Watershed? And the area around YOUR home can be a haven for our native birds, frogs, newts, butterflies, and mammals. Backyards can provide the basic needs (habitat) for dwindling wildlife species. Together, many backyards make up wildlife corridors where animals can live and travel safely.

Is your property a good home for our local wildlife? Find out in this new workshop for local residents. Our

classroom will be the grassland, field, and creek area on the County R-9 property behind De Anza High School. (The R-9 is the recreation service area for unincorporated El Sobrante.) Here, a local naturalist will demonstrate how to note existing habitat values (such as presence, and type of native and non-native plants; water features; water quality, etc.)



In the workshop you will learn:

- the wildlife that are native to this area
- what they need to secure food, shelter, and places to raise young
- how to determine what types of wildlife your backyard supports

Almost 90% of the lower San Pablo Creek Watershed is private property. By assessing habitat in local backyards, we can develop a better understanding of the current conditions available for native species and what we can do to improve the environment for all residents.

Free, fun, outdoors and educational! For more information, call (510) 665-3538 or email elizabeth@thewatershedproject.org. Call now to reserve your place in this workshop.

Visit our website at www.spawners.net.



the
watershed
project

SPAWNERS
1327 South 46th Street
155 Richmond Field Station
Richmond, CA 94804

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ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
Richmond, CA
Permit #226

**Dated Material - Please
Deliver by May 27.**

Join us for the next **SPAWNERS** meeting on Wednesday, June 7, 7:00 P.M.,
at the El Sobrante Library

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watershed will be sampled for our annual assessment of creek health based on the type, abundance, and diversity of benthic macroinvertebrates (BMI) collected. Historically, these six sites have all shown at least a small presence of the more pollution-sensitive BMIs, and this is a good thing! We look forward to receiving the results of this year's collections.

Our first GPS event will be Saturday, June 17, from 9am until 2pm on Wilkie Creek. We will be continuing last summer's survey, where we spent a wonderful day going downstream from Valley View Drive to Santa Rita Road surveying this lovely tributary of San Pablo Creek.

Depending on water levels and volunteer availability, we will be scheduling a weekend in July to tackle another section of lower (west of Hwy 80) San Pablo Creek. This is a beautiful stretch of creek, and in the summer the creek bed is cool and quiet. We'll have our eyes open for butterflies and fish!

We will be holding a training session on June 15 from 6pm – 8pm for those of you interested in learning about GPS and participation in our surveying events.

Please contact Lawrie McDonnell at lmay143@earthlink.net, or Elizabeth O'Shea at Elizabeth@thewatershedproject.org to sign up for the training, and for further details regarding our events. We look forward to hearing from you!

Newt rescues increase

Congratulations to Annabelle Travis and the many volunteers who have been rescuing newts during this incredibly long rainy season. The final count is 1,201 carried across a busy street and 119 killed. Also, one snake was killed and one spotted salamander was saved, and one spotted salamander killed. This is a record number of our wildlife helped by caring individuals.

Calendar of Events

SPAWNERS meeting

June 7

Wildlife Habitat Workshop

June 10

Restoration Days at the Library

June 3 & July 8, & August 12

GPS Training

June 15

GPS Field Days

June 17, July TBD

Earth Day Recap

The El Sobrante Earth Day community clean-up was a great success. Over sixty volunteers worked at improving the central part of town. They removed ivy that was killing trees along the creek, picked up trash along the main streets, cleared the banks at the B&G Club, and removed ivy and trash at the library restoration site and at the new view point at Oliver's parking lot. Many truck loads of trash were taken from these areas to the dumpsters. After all this hard work, volunteers were treated to a wonderful barbecue picnic. Thanks to all the volunteers who care for their community and to the Chamber of Commerce and the Boys & Girls Club who helped sponsor the event.

Who to Call for Dumping and Spills in the Creek

- For dumping in progress, call 911.
 - For spills and dumping in El Sobrante creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (925) 646-2441.
 - For spills and dumping in San Pablo creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 215-3030.
 - For spills and dumping in Richmond creeks, storm drains, and waterways, call (510) 412-2009.
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