



# Estuary Partnership Awards Small Grants for Watershed Protection

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Habitats and water quality around the Bay region will soon see improvements due to a new grant program recently unveiled by the San Francisco Estuary Partnership. The Estuary Partnership has awarded \$50,000 in grant funds to 11 non-profits and special districts working in watersheds across the Bay Area.

This is the first round of awards for the Estuary Partnership's Watershed Program, designed with two goals in mind: to build support for community-based watershed protection work, and to increase the capacity of Bay Area watersheds to adapt to climate change impacts. Grantees were selected based on several criteria, including how well proposals met the program goals, level of local support and capacity, and project sustainability and originality.

Caitlin Sweeney, Watershed Program Manager said: "We were thrilled to receive applications for numerous fantastic projects from all over the Bay Area. Narrowing it down to these eleven outstanding projects was certainly challenging." Sweeney added, "We believe each of these grants will facilitate the increased health and resilience of our regions' watersheds, and help spread the word about the importance of healthy watersheds for all of us -- of all species -- who live here."

Grant recipients will be invited to submit posters about their projects for the Partnership's biennial State of the Estuary conference, which will be held in Oakland on October 29 and 30, 2013.

A brief summary of funded projects follows. For more complete information, visit <http://www.sfestuary.org/small-grants-release>.

## **In Alameda, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties:**

- **The Tuolumne River Preservation Trust** will use grant funding to take its "That's the Tuolumne in my Tap!" education program to grades four through six, in areas where the majority of drinking water comes from the Tuolumne. The project should reach 5,000 students and coordinate five community service projects.

## **In Alameda County:**

- **Friends of Sausal Creek's** project supports **volunteer-led efforts at several restoration sites** on Sausal Creek, in Oakland. Funding will enable training and mentoring volunteer leaders who can lead restoration work. See [www.sausalcreek.org](http://www.sausalcreek.org).

## **In Contra Costa County:**

- A grant to the **Martinez Unified School District** for **New Leaf Watershed Science Projects** will support ecoliteracy projects and monitoring, public engagement, and climate change awareness programs. New Leaf Academy is an alternative high school diploma program in the Alhambra Creek watershed, Martinez. See [www.martinez.k12.ca.us/schools/briones/esa](http://www.martinez.k12.ca.us/schools/briones/esa).
- **The Watershed Project** has been funded **to support restoration of Rheem Creek**, on the western border of WanLass Park in San Pablo. Volunteers will remove invasive vegetation and re-plant the creek banks with native plants. Staff will educate volunteers about stormwater

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pollution prevention and the importance of creek stewardship to climate change adaptation. See [www.thewatershedproject.org](http://www.thewatershedproject.org).

#### **In Marin County:**

- **Gallinas Watershed Council's** project will **increase community-based watershed stewardship** in the Gallinas Creek watershed, in San Rafael; and facilitate collaboration among watershed groups in the county. Grant funds will support family activities, hikes, bike tours, and creek cleanups. See [www.gallinaswatershed.org](http://www.gallinaswatershed.org).
- **The Greenwood School**, in Larkspur, will participate in Earth Day Marin Festival: Climate Change Solutions with a grant-sponsored event, **The Sea Party**, put on by seventh and eighth graders. The student-run program will focus on the health of our oceans. See [www.greenwoodschool.org](http://www.greenwoodschool.org).

#### **In Napa County:**

- **The Napa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District** received funding for **Building a Community Rain Garden, Growing Community Stormwater Awareness** a project on the campus of Vintage High School, which is bordered by Salvador Creek. The District and partners will construct a 13,000 sq. ft. rain garden next to a reach of the creek that supports a thriving beaver population, as well as steelhead and other fish. This will be the first demonstration garden in the Napa River watershed.

#### **In Santa Clara County:**

- **Acterra**, in Palo Alto, received an award for **Citizen Science for the Stevens and Permanente Creek watersheds**. Funds will support monthly water quality monitoring, macroinvertebrate sampling, and education events for children, students, and local residents. See [www.acterra.org](http://www.acterra.org).
- **Committee for Green Foothills** will hold a **Permanente Creek Watershed Tour** in Los Altos on May 4, 2013, highlighting watershed management, habitat restoration, current issues, climate change impacts and the historical ecology. See [www.greenfoothills.org](http://www.greenfoothills.org).

#### **In Sonoma County:**

- **Friends of the Petaluma River** will hold a **Petaluma River Cleanup** on May 4, 2013. The funded project will include pre-event trash scouting activities and coordination with local social service agencies. See [www.friendsofthepetalumariver.org](http://www.friendsofthepetalumariver.org).

#### **In Solano County:**

- **The Solano Land Trust's** project will support an **intern to launch the California Phenology Project** on properties owned by the Trust. Working at Lynch Canyon Open Space Park in The intern and volunteers will measure climate change and its biological impacts, and share data with the USA National Phenology Network. (Phenology is the study of periodic plant and animal life cycle events.) See [www.solanolandtrust.org](http://www.solanolandtrust.org).

*The San Francisco Estuary Partnership is a coalition of resource agencies, non-profits, citizens, and scientists working to protect, restore, and enhance water quality and fish and wildlife habitat in and around the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary. The Partnership is a program of the Association of Bay Area Governments.*