

# Community Stewardship in the Scott Creek Watershed

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## Project Summary

Napa County community volunteers have come out in droves to enhance the riparian corridor of a side channel that feeds Scott Creek, a tributary of Carneros Creek. Revegetation of the riparian corridor was the capstone of a multi-year effort to transform the channel from a blackberry forest with failing dams to riparian splendor. In the early 2000s, three earthen dams in the side channel began eroding rapidly. Pacific Watershed Associates (PWA) estimated that the dams were responsible for more than half of the total amount of sediment that has entered Carneros Creek since their failure. Sediment build up in creek bottoms can prevent fish from successfully spawning, and is one of the biggest threats to the Napa River watershed's steelhead trout population. Accordingly, in 2009, the Napa County Resource Conservation District (RCD) collaborated with Pacific Watershed Associates, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Fish and Game, and State Water Resources Control Board to remove the eroding dams and establish a stable meandering channel. Revegetation of the new banks followed to provide stability and habitat for wildlife. A treasure trove of volunteers have installed and maintained the revegetation project.

## From Excavated Banks to Riparian Corridor

Across two days in November 2009, over 300 students from Harvest Middle School, along with teachers and community volunteers joined the RCD to plant over 1000 trees, shrubs, and herbaceous perennials along the banks of the newly shaped side channel. Students from Laura Lewis' and Karen Fleming's 7<sup>th</sup> grade science classes spent hours digging holes, staking plant protector tubes, and mulching.



Nicholas Hoffnagle coordinated his scout troop in planting over 300 grasses, sedges, rushes, and willow cuts in spring 2010. His leadership facilitated the completion of his eagle scout honor.

In fall 2010, SLEWS students from Napa's New Tech High School planted 150 plants that will be especially beneficial to insects.



## Killing Weeds with Kindness and Mulch

Mulching has been the primary weed suppression technique employed in this restoration project. RCD and Napa Valley Can Do have organized eight mulching parties since fall 2009. Volunteers have also dug out Himalayan blackberry, cocklebur, and purple star thistle.



## It Takes a Community to Raise a Restoration Project

Stewards of the Scott Creek Riparian Restoration Project:

### VOLUNTEERS

- Napa County RCD; Napa Valley Can Do
- Friends of the Napa River; Napa River Steelhead
- Pacific Watershed Associates; Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Napa Solano Audubon; California Native Plant Society
- Blue Oak School
- American Canyon High School
- Saintsbury Vineyards and Winery; Mary Pettis-Sarley
- New Tech High School
- Napa Valley Boy Scouts
- Napa Sustainable Winegrowing Group; Atlas Tree Service
- Walsh Vineyard Management; Nissen Vineyard Services
- The Volunteer Center of Napa Valley

### FUNDERS

- State Water Resources Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Game
- Scannell Properties

