



SAVE OUR TREES

CASE STUDIES

ALAMEDA CREEK FLOOD CONTROL CHANNEL

The Alameda Creek Flood Control channel was constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1960s and 1970s to provide flood protection for the cities of Fremont and Union City. The creek drainage basin is situated in the Coast Range adjacent on the east side of the southerly arm of San Francisco Bay. The drainage extends easterly from the bay to Livermore Valley. The 13 mile facility is maintained by the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District in accordance with Corps of Engineers Maintenance and Operations Manual.

The Creek and the associated levees extend for nearly 14 miles from its estuary at San Francisco bay to the vicinity of its confluence with Dry Creek in the cities of Union City and Fremont. The 100-foot wide channel contains fresh water habitat that transitions into salt marshes towards the bay. These marshes and the adjacent bay plain are now part of the South Bay Salt ponds restoration project and provide habitat for a host of wildlife species including, the endangered steelhead, saltmarsh harvest mouse, saltmarsh wandering shrew and a host of waterfowl. Along the levee tops are recreational trails managed by the East Bay Regional Park District.

This new Corps policy on vegetation on levees conflicts with nearly all federal and state regulatory Agencies policies and efforts to restore creek corridors to provide essential habitat for species. Alameda Creek is crucial in their effort to restore endangered Steelhead to Alameda County.

SAN MATEO COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT

The San Mateo County Flood Control District (District) is opposed to the proposed Army Corps policy. The District currently does not own or maintain Army Corps built/certified levees or flood walls. Therefore, the District's flood control channels are not expected to be impacted by the proposed policy as they exist today. If the District were to pursue Corps funding and certification of future projects then the new policy would have impact to those projects. The District is only responsible for providing flood protection for certain zones within the County, not the entire County. In terms of environmental habitats and endangered species impacts, certain areas along the District maintained flood control channels do contain habitats for Clapper Rails, San Francisco Garter Snakes and California Red-legged Frogs. The District was required to construct and maintain a 3-acre habitat mitigation site which included planting trees and shrubs along the levee of one of our channels for a recent channel widening project.

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SONOMA COUNTY

The Sonoma County Water Agency maintains nearly 90 miles of streams in its service area and is currently operating under the Russian River Biological Opinion issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service to preserve endangered species of salmon including Coho, Chinook and Steelhead trout. While these streams are not directly affected by the Army Corps' new policy, it does directly contradict what the Water Agency is currently implementing under its Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Department stream maintenance permits. The Russian River and its tributaries play a major role in providing habitat for fish, recreation for thousands of tourists each year and drinking water for more than 600,000 residents in portions of Sonoma and Marin counties.

SOLANO COUNTY

The Solano County Water Agency is responsible for operations and maintenance of the Green Valley Flood Control Project. The Project was constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers in 1962. The Water Agency has a reach of approximately a quarter of a mile that is affected by the Corp's vegetation policy. The vegetation in contention does not have any negative impact on flood conveyance but the riparian habitat value does benefit endangered Steelhead trout present in the system. The Water Agency has not determined cost impacts but the greatest concern is the ability to get the appropriate environmental permits in order to conduct the work to satisfy the Corp's one size fits all policy.