

## **Quarter 3: January -March 2023 SCWA Program Updates**

### **1. OneCreek Putah Creek Seasonal Restoration Technician Program**

PCC staff has planned, initiated, and coordinated the OneCreek program during this quarter, for a start date of April 5, 2023. We received 29 applications from applicants from a variety of backgrounds, including applicants who are interested in a career change to the conservation and restoration fields, and selected eight highly interested applicants. A majority of applicants are current students or recent graduates of UC Davis.

Staff time was spent:

- Arranging partnerships and scheduling work days with local agencies including SCWA, Solano RCD, Yolo RCD, Solano County Parks, the City of Davis Open Space, the UC Davis Reserve System, and the UC Davis Riparian Reserve.
- Advertising the program and recruiting applicants by emailing college advisors in Solano, Yolo, and Sacramento counties, press releases, and posting on local job boards.
- Reviewing applications, interviewing, hiring and coordinating scheduling with applicants.
- Researching and compiling program materials including relevant readings and a variety of restoration activities.

The planned work days include:

- A variety of restoration site maintenance activities at a number of restoration sites in the region.
- Nursery work days which will include plant propagation, and seed collecting and processing.
- Closing a social trail and planting over it at Lake Solano Park.
- Restoration site maintenance at the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve.
- Trail rehabilitation and building with the UC Davis Reserve system.
- Native plant installation at Peterson Ranch.
- Hedgerow plant installation at Peterson Ranch.

Challenges:

The OneCreek Program didn't run for Winter because there was not enough time between the end of the Fall OneCreek season and the Start of the Winter Quarter to feasibly go through the

application process. For this reason, the OneCreek season was planned for the Spring quarter. This also gave Putah Creek Council time to find a new Education Program Manager, and for the Stewardship Program Manager to fill in during the time we didn't have an Education Manager.

## 2. Creek Explorers

The departure of Lauren Bradt, Education Program Manager, in late January put a hold on the Creek Explorers program while we searched for a new Program Manager. The selected candidate, Brenda Brinkhous-Hatch, is scheduled to start on April 10, 2023. Unfortunately this meant that the three Creek Explorers events scheduled for March had to be canceled. Creek Explorers will resume on April 15, 2023.

## 3. Planning Updates

The Stewardship Program Manager continued looking into grant opportunities for Sackett Ranch and other potential Putah Creek projects. The Sackett Ranch Restoration Plan was reviewed and determined more information would be needed to make the plan comprehensive. This plan is expected to be finalized by June, 2023, so long as there are no delays in completing plant surveys.

Staff time was spent conducting planning meetings for the Sackett Ranch project plan, gathering research and data for, and updating the plan. Time was also spent looking forward to Winters Putah Creek Nature Park and what opportunities to complete that project might be available in the future. The Stewardship Program Manager filled in for the Education Program Manager's position, planning CreekSpeak, Docent events, and OneCreek.

Challenges: Inclement weather prevented a comprehensive tree and vegetation survey for the restoration areas in the project locations. Grant application availability and projects don't line up for completion by June, 2023. Delays were also due to staff shortages.

## 4. Stewardship Events

There were three SCWA-funded Stewardship events held during Quarter 3. Staff time was spent coordinating with nursery staff and staff of partner organizations to schedule stewardship days, managing volunteer signups, cleaning, organizing, ordering, and caring for supplies and tools, attending workdays, taking and organizing photos, advertising stewardship days, and writing stewardship updates for PCC's newsletter.

- February 22, 2023: Eight volunteers from the Yolo Master Gardeners, three Water Agency employees, and two PCC staff planted the native plant demonstration garden at Sackett Ranch (125 D40s and 60 grass plugs planted).

- February 24, 2023: Two PCC staff and four Americorps members with Center for Land Based Learning constructed approximately 70 berms around tree plantings at Winters Nature Park (trees installed by SLEWS in February).
- March 11, 2023: Ecological restoration workday at UCD Riparian Reserve. Fifteen volunteers, three PCC Staff, and one PCC Stewardship Team member participated in restoration work in the Riparian Reserve guided by Miles DaPrato. Activities included hoeing milk thistle, planting Western ragweed plugs, and sowing forbs including showy and narrowleaf milkweed, Indian tobacco, primrose, tarweed, yarrow, western sunflower, vinegar weed, alkali heath, mugwort, naked buckwheat, Spanish clover, gumplant, wild cucumber and madia. We also reinstalled missing plot marker stakes and built brush piles for wildlife habitat.



3/11/23: Volunteers after a very wet workday at UC Davis Riparian Reserve.



2/22/23: Master Gardeners, PCC and SCWA staff after planting the native plant demonstration garden at Sackett Ranch.

Challenges: We had to reschedule the UC Davis workday due to rain, and even on the postponed date, we still received quite a bit of rain after deciding to proceed with a small chance of rain forecasted. Regardless, spirits were very high and we had a great group of determined volunteers.

##### 5. Creek Cleanups

PCC held three community creek cleanups in Winters Putah Creek Park (January 19, February 17th, and March 18th). Staff time was spent attending the cleanups, advertising the events, and disposing of waste collected.

- Thursday, January 19th (10-12): Three PCC staff members collected five bags of trash as well as some glass drink bottles and a large inflatable frog.
- Friday, February 17th (1-3): Two staff members collected two bags of trash and one plastic car mat near the sewer outlet in the park by the bioswale.
- Saturday, March 18th (10-1): Two staff members collected five bags of trash from fenceline near community center and parking lot across foot bridge (and area underneath foot bridge). Park was very flooded on this date which we believe contributed to low signups.

Challenges: The cleanups continue to not attract as many volunteers as other stewardship events. We posted fliers advertising the cleanups in areas close to Winters Nature Park such as Steady Eddys, the Winters Library, and the Winters Post Office. We also tried different days of the week and time slots this quarter to boost attendance, and six volunteers did register for the Saturday cleanup in March, however none attended (due to weather, illness, or needing a ride from Davis). We are planning on advertising our Earth Day cleanup in the Winters Express and Davis Enterprise to boost cleanup attendance.

Flooding and wet ground in the park has also made the cleanups a bit difficult and washed a lot of trash downstream. We have also been carrying all trash out of the park and up to our vehicles, but are going to speak with Winters public works about piling it in the floodplain and having someone come and get it on the Gator.