



Contra Costa County Climate Leaders Program

A project of Generation Green - a 501(c)3 Non profit organization

Find Links to Other Local Government Policy Opportunities at
www.cccclimateleaders.org

Protecting Creeks in Contra Costa County

WHAT? Each year, cities have the choice between using gallons of pesticides or using environmentally friendly methods of weed and pest control. They can enforce more stringent policies regarding new developments to decrease impermeable surface areas and prevent increased flooding and erosion. Cities have the choice to prevent chemical runoff and pollution in our creeks by a number of ways.

WHY? Creeks are an essential ecosystem, especially in the Contra Costa County where our creeks drain to reservoirs and the San Francisco Bay and Delta but many factors affect the decision to protect creeks:

- High property values - creeks are an ideal habitat for many aquatic plants and animals and provide us with a beautiful landscape.
- Creeks are areas of blooming biodiversity and, when properly maintained, serve as a passageway for fish populations to reproduce and feed.
- Water conservation-after creeks are restored, native plants would use half the amount of water that invasive species do. <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/nativeplants/>
- A city- run creek restoration committee can provide adequate representation of these vital waterways when new developments or legislature is being considered.
- Green approaches to weed and pest abatement, such as bait and trap methods and aphid use, can often be cost effective in the long run.
- Keeping pesticides away from schools, parks, and workers in charge of their application has many health benefits.

http://www.sfenvironment.org/downloads/library/certainties_in_hazard_exposure_assessments_susan_kegley.pdf

WHO? Engage your community to make creek protection a priority. Educate contractors, residents, and students on how they can keep their creeks clean. Create a creek restoration committee and choose greener methods of operation (pesticide reduction, new construction regulations, etc.) to keep harmful runoff out of creeks. Share your best practices with other cities and see what they are doing to keep their creeks, and cities, green and healthy at 4CL's website: <http://www.cccclimateleaders.org/text/cities.html>.

WHERE? Throughout the County, cities are doing their part to keep their creeks clean.

- Walnut Creek's guide to creeks <http://www.walnut-creek.org/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=3245>
- El Cerrito's revolutionary rain gardens <http://www.sfestuary.org/projects/detail.php?projectID=41>
- Contra Costa Health Services' use of goats to eradicate weeds http://cchealth.org/topics/pest_management/
- San Francisco's Permeable Landscape <http://www.plantsf.org/PermeableLandscaping.html>
- Oakland's Rain Barrel Program <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/PWA/o/FE/s/ID/OAK025822>

HOW? Please keep the following in mind when considering your city's plan of action.

- Green streets throughout the West Coast, http://www.sfestuary.org/userfiles/green%20streets%20Insert_10_10_6_web.pdf
- Hercules' hired help- Civicorps, <http://www.cvcorps.org/>
- Contra Costa County Cleanwater Program Resources- Materials, <http://www.cccleanwater.org/materials.html>
- Resources for harvesting water, <http://www.harvesth2o.com/resources.shtml> and rain gardens, http://www.bbg.org/gardening/article/rain_gardens/

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