



## Message from the President

Nearly every time I am on the Stevens Creek Trail - enjoying an afternoon bike ride, walking with my girls, or working alongside volunteers to improve the creek habitat - I think back to how I became involved with the Friends. A coworker asked me and others on our team to participate in a trail cleanup. At its conclusion, I stuck around to chat with the Executive Director and Board members to learn more about the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail and what they do beyond organizing trash collection events. And at that, I was hooked.

### Board of Directors

Scott Walker, President  
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Up to that day I had enjoyed the Trail as a means of personal recreation and commuting for almost 20 years but had no idea the work happening behind the scenes to maintain and enhance it. I decided to give more of my time to 'pay it back' to those who made this resource available to me and all those who visit from both nearby neighborhoods and all around the world when visiting the Bay Area.

My participation in the Friends started on the Communications Committee, progressed to joining the Board of Directors, led to Race Director of the annual Trailblazer Race, and at the beginning of 2025 assuming the role of Board President.

Why would I lead our Annual Report by retelling my own story? Because it brings me great joy and personal satisfaction to be a substantial part of the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail, and you have the opportunity to share that same feeling. The Friends is just entering its fourth decade of existence and while the progress made is substantial, there is much work yet to be done to achieve our Vision of a contiguous trail from Skyline to the Bay. I challenge you to also join us in whatever way you are able. I trust that, like me, you will find that giving back is well worth it.

*Scott Walker*

Board President



## Get Involved

The work and accomplishments you will read about have been completed almost entirely by volunteers. We pride ourselves on being a grassroots organization with passionate supporters who identify trail alignments, maintain the riparian habitat of the creeks, and promote our mission at community events. If you or your team are interested in volunteering with us in any way, please visit [this site](#) to express your interest and someone will contact you to arrange an opportunity with you.

Our all-volunteer Board members bring a diversity of backgrounds, interests and profiles to the organization. They give their time in several ways - trail development, signage, outreach through communications, website and social media, engagement with cities and jurisdictions, strategy direction and planning, events, use of technology and fundraising. They love the trail and are a mix of avid bikers, walkers, and runners. If you have an interest in attending our Board of Directors meetings and / or have thoughts about joining our Board, contact [exec-dir@stevenscreektrail.org](mailto:exec-dir@stevenscreektrail.org).

## Trail Development

2025 has presented us with some successes in trail development, but also some disappointments. While some municipalities along the creek have moved forward toward trail development, others have taken a step backward.

### Trail Extensions in Cupertino

Unfortunately, we must report that our work in Cupertino has stalled and even regressed in 2025. The Varian Extension has been closed at the direction of the Cupertino City Council, and the stairs installed from Stevens Creek Boulevard down to the creek level have been removed by the City. This is an action that we could not prevent, and we currently have no direct recourse to reopen this dirt track.

Further, there has been no progress on the proposed connection from Linda Vista Park to Stevens Creek County Park due to the City of Cupertino's ongoing debate with the property owner over their development proposal.

If you are a resident of Cupertino and accessible trails and nature spaces mean something to you, we ask for your help. Contact the City Council and make your voice heard!



### Ameswell Bridge Installation

In 2002, reconfiguration of the clover-leaf interchange at Moffett Blvd. and 101 eliminated two of the loops, leaving behind an unused space southwest of the interchange. That combined with adjacent land from a former county vector control station that Mountain View had acquired for a gateway hotel was then

awarded for development to Broadleaf Capital Partners in 2016. The pieces all came together as a 10 acre site. The Ameswell Hotel, Roger restaurant, a mixed-use office building and a large parking structure were completed and opened in 2021.

One part of the plan remained unfinished: a bridge over the creek to connect the development with the Stevens Creek Trail. We are pleased to report that the bridge is finally open to public use; a dedication ceremony was held on November 3, 2025.



Many city and county politicians came to honor the occasion as well as Broadreach Capital, Ameswell representatives and many members of the public who wanted to be first to try out this new connection. Together with the separated bike and pedestrian paths on the property connecting to the bridge, there is now a safe route to the Stevens Creek Trail from Moffett Boulevard for not just Hotel guests and restaurant patrons, but also NASA employees and residents of the North Whisman neighborhood.

### Trail Extensions in Mountain View and Sunnyvale

The cities of Sunnyvale and Mountain View are coordinating plans to extend the trail to connect Fremont Avenue in Sunnyvale to Dale/Heatherstone Avenue in Mountain View. See the map below with the blue section indicating the existing trail, red to be built by Mountain View, and green to be built by Sunnyvale.



This new trail segment would connect several schools and provide a bike and pedestrian-friendly route for families in the area.

While the planning progress for the trail extension slowed for both cities in 2024, there has been forward movement in 2025 toward accomplishing this project.

For Mountain View, Project 20-50, Stevens Creek Trail Extension has been advertised as one of Mayor Kamei’s top five priorities and now has a project manager assigned to continue the project forward, a resource gap filled from the previous year.

For Sunnyvale, the previously unplanned study documents required by Caltrans stalled the project for nearly two years due to lack of funding for this effort. As of Fall 2025, a source of funding has been identified to

move the project forward once again. Environmental studies and preliminary design are now underway.

The Friends are actively engaged with city governments and other agencies, and will continue to publicize public meetings on these budget items so that the trail extension can move forward as quickly as possible. We encourage you to be an active voice in the Sunnyvale and Mountain View annual budgeting process and to contact your council members about the importance of these projects.

## Wildlife Corridor

### A2W Salt Pond and Trail Extension

The Stevens Creek empties into the San Francisco Bay at what is referred to as Salt Pond A2W. This designation was provided by Cargill Salt, the commercial producer of salt products from a network of evaporation ponds that ring the southern edge of the Bay. They produced salt here for decades until 2003, when the federal government purchased 15,100 acres of land around the Bay with the intention of rehabilitating them to their natural state as marshland. Following this pivotal event, federal, state, and local government and environmental agencies have taken on that task.

The A2W pond restoration project is just one of many rehabilitation efforts in a multi-decade plan to reestablish these natural marshes. Read more about the overall effort at [southbayrestoration.org](https://southbayrestoration.org). This particular segment of the project gets special attention from us because it will result in a nearly 1 mile addition of trail connecting to the current north end of the Stevens Creek Trail.

Work toward this extension began in June 2025 and continued through the remainder of the year. A large section of the Bay Trail in Shoreline Park adjacent to the Stevens Creek Trail closed for essential



improvements to ensure that the trails will remain open when pond levees are breached allowing the waters of the Bay to reclaim their native shoreline. The original Bay Trail segment has now reopened fully and the new segment should soon be ready for use. The Friends are already coordinating with Mountain View Parks staff, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and California State Coastal Conservancy to dedicate the new trail segment.

*Photo of bridge construction over the Stevens Creek, by Magali Gauthier courtesy of the Mountain View Voice*

### Fish Passage Project

The original mission of the Friends was advocacy for the Trail, the creek and the wildlife corridor. Nearly a decade ago, we ventured beyond advocacy to take on an active role in identifying and removing

barriers to fish passage. First we sponsored the study of all the barriers to fish passage along the Creek, and in 2020 began an ambitious project to remove one of those barriers, located in the Deep Cliff Golf Course in Cupertino. We were the first non-profit in the Bay Area to directly manage such an effort. The construction phase was completed in October 2022.

Last year, we planted native saplings to revegetate parts of the creek bank disturbed by the construction work. This year, a group of volunteers scoured the banks to remove many invasive species that choke out the native plants.

Each year we go back to the site to determine if the project is continuing to work as intended. Members of the Friends and a group of intrepid volunteers conducted the third survey this October. They waded into the creek (sometimes up to their hips!), taking detailed measurements of the depth and size of the deep pools created to protect immature steelhead trout. Our report, sent to the appropriate agencies, confirmed again that the project is working well.



## **Creek and Corridor Restoration Work**

In 2025, Friends of Stevens Creek Trail organized three trail restoration projects in the Sleeper Garden area. This long-neglected area is now blossoming into a significant area on the trail. In January, 2026, the national Monarch Watch organization designated the site as a Monarch Waystation.

In January 2025, the first planting, coordinated with Scout Troop 80 and the City of Mountain View, installed additional native plants in the Sleeper Gardens area. In February, a second planting was done by Fremont Union High School District (FUHSD) students, again coordinated by the City of Mountain View and the Friends. Finally in January, 2026, as part of an Eagle Scout project, Troop 80 came out to install signage about the plantings the City had made during the year. We anticipate additional planting Saturdays in 2026 to further enhance this area.

In October, Friends paired with The Canopy organization to trim and repair the oak and madrone trees that are growing along the trail south of El Camino Real. The trees were installed five to ten years ago and seem to be prospering in an area with very hard soil to grow in.

In November, the Octagon service team at Monta Vista High School in Cupertino contacted the Friends about volunteering. Together we organized a team that removed invasive Cape Ivy vines from along the creek south of McClellan Road. This area is near one of the Deep Cliff Golf Course tees. So we also removed over 50 wayward golf balls.

Valley Water has designated the Friends as an Adopt-a-Creek partner for several years. Our assigned segment is Stevens Creek Trail from Crittenden Road north to the Bay. We held multiple simple cleanups along this segment throughout the year.

These and other cleanup and restoration projects serve many purposes. They provide the obvious community benefit of a cleaner, more appealing creek and trail. For corporations, these outings provide a chance for team building in the spirit of public service. And for high schoolers and Scout participants, these can be inspiring activities that lead to a lifetime of environmental and civic participation.

We can always use more volunteers to help keep the trail and creek corridor clean, as well as planting and restoring vegetation along the creek. Monitor the upcoming events on our website, and consider pitching in.

## Events & Engagement

### Stevens Creek Watershed Summit

For most of our existence, the Friends has been primarily an education and advocacy organization. In taking on the Fish Passage Barrier removal project, we had to coordinate with nearly a dozen local, regional, state and federal agencies to get their permission. In the end, it took us two years to plan and gain approvals, yet just two weeks to execute. Through this process we discovered how most of these agencies do not always have the latest awareness of upcoming projects and priorities of other agencies, which slows down and complicates any project requiring coordination and approval across them.

From this insight was born our most ambitious effort yet; to bring key stakeholders from all these agencies, related non-profits, area residents, and elected officials together in the form of the Stevens Creek Watershed Summit. We have two objectives for this event:

1. Create a common understanding of the watershed, including the biology, ecology, flora and fauna, and the status of all planned projects affecting the watershed.
2. Provide an opportunity for staff in all these agencies to meet and directly discuss common challenges and goals, and ideally find opportunities to work together more effectively.

We began planning this event two years ago and have been astounded at the enthusiasm and support we have received from many agencies, key staff, and elected officials. This event will have occurred by the time you read this newsletter, so look for an email update from us on how it went!

### Trailblazer Race

The 31st Trailblazer Race, held on Sunday, September 28th, was one to remember. It was an inspiring moment watching the 5k runners near the finish line when an 11 year old girl was leading the pack and finished first overall.

This family-friendly event drew 602 participants ranging from as young as 1 year old to 85 years. The award for the farthest traveled goes to a participant from Mumbai!





Again, it is with the strong support of dedicated volunteers that this milestone event happens. Nearly 100 volunteers supported the race along with our Board of Directors.

### **Trail Cleanups**

The Friends of Stevens Creek hosted or coordinated 8 trail cleanup events involving over 175 people through the course of 2025. The events included trash pickup and/or weed eradication, primarily on the trail stretches in Mountain View. They are good outdoor activities to promote community spirit as well as maintain the trail worthiness.

The Friends of Stevens Creek Trail organizes both public and private trail cleanups of the trail and creek bed. For many years, the Friends has coordinated with the City of Mountain View and Valley Water for two annual public creek cleanups. These are synchronized with Rails to Trails' Celebrate Trails Day initiative in April, and California Coastal Cleanup Day in September. In 2026, these cleanups will be on April 25th and September 19th, respectively, so mark your calendars.

### **Participation in Community Events**

In addition to these milestone events this year, the Friends maintained our annual appearances in multiple festivals and events. We participated in Sunnyvale's Earth Day festival in April and the reinstated Art & Wine festival in June. We were also at our 'usual' spot in the Mountain View Art & Wine festival in September, providing ample bike parking for the weekend. We have established a recurring presence at the Silicon Valley Youth Triathlon, and also partnered with the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition to support their annual Bike to the Future event and Bike to Wherever Week. Through these tabling events throughout the South Bay the Friends is able to promote use of the Stevens Creek Trail, registration for the Trailblazer Race, and community involvement. We anticipate at least the same participation level in 2026 and welcome invitations to similar events.

## **Financial Performance**

We are grateful to organizational sponsors and individual donors who support us year over year. Our annual budgeted income of just under \$110,000 consists of 20% corporate sponsorship, 20% Trailblazer Race revenue, and the remaining 60% from individuals and households. Sponsorship income has declined, consistent with economic conditions in the Bay Area, over the past 2-3 years. Yet we are fortunate that our individual contributors have made up the difference, so our operating income remains steady year over year.

In 2025, we added a \$30,000 expense line item in our budget for the Stevens Creek Watershed Summit. An event of this magnitude required us to seek professional consulting services to plan and organize, and we will incur non-recurring costs to host this event for over 100 attendees. To date we have been able to solicit approximately \$17,500 in restricted donations to offset this expense, but will bear the rest against our own operating income. There is no doubt in our minds that it is a worthwhile investment, yet we will continue to seek additional financial support in 2026 to recover this expense.



Our Trailblazer Race expenses have also increased over the past two years due to a decline in the amount of 'in kind' service donations provided by our Sponsors. For the first time in many years, we raised the registration fee by \$5 to offset these expenses, but remain overjoyed at the over 600 participants who came out to support us in 2025.

## Priorities for 2026

### Trail Development

We will continue to bring community support to the Mountain View and Sunnyvale City Councils to ensure that the extension of the trail from Dale / Heatherstone to Fremont continues as quickly as possible.

We will follow the City of Mountain View's plans to reinforce the erosion along the trail at Whisman and Sleeper Parks following the rain and washout of the creek in early 2023.

### Wildlife Corridor

We will continue to maintain our current fish passage improvement along the creek and seek other opportunities to improve the wildlife habitat.

The City of Mountain View is exploring possibilities for the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail to be the designee for nearly the entire trail segment under the Adopt-a-Trail program. We welcome this opportunity to be designated stewards of over 6 miles of the Stevens Creek Trail.

### Events

Executing the Stevens Creek Watershed Summit will be a key accomplishment in 2026 to set the stage for our continued work for future generations.

The 32nd Trailblazer Race will be held on September 27, 2026. We are seeking to expand our offerings for community businesses to participate in the festival area.

We will conduct public and private trail cleanups, weed removal, and vegetation planting events. We expect 10+ activities during the year.

We will continue to seek partnerships with bike / walk advocacy teams that connect the Stevens Creek Trail to the network of safe alternative commute methods around the South Bay.

### Board

We seek to expand our Board of Directors to better balance our workload and have an even greater impact in our community.

## How You Can Help

Do these projects matter to you, or do you have something you want added to our list? If so, get involved! We are a community organization and our work is done primarily by community-conscious citizens like you. Reach out to us through any of the means listed below.

### Donate

We welcome contributions by check, credit card or through [PayPal](#) and [Venmo](#) (accessible by the QR codes provided). We accept stock transfer donations and you can transfer required disbursements from retirement accounts to avoid income tax implications. For additional information, please send an email to [exec-dir@stevenscreektrail.org](mailto:exec-dir@stevenscreektrail.org).



Our sincere thanks to our donors! Many of them went the extra mile to secure matching contributions from their employers. Our FEIN is 77-0334262 for tax-deductible contributions.



We do not share donor personal information, and are proud to hold a Platinum rating with [Candid](#).

### Volunteer

Those who are passionate about the trails or the wildlife corridors and would like to volunteer please contact us at [volunteer@stevenscreektrail.org](mailto:volunteer@stevenscreektrail.org). Corporate / Company teams are also welcome.



### Sponsor

Sponsorships have been an integral part of the fundraising efforts at Friends of Stevens Creek Trail. There's more information on sponsorship at [our website](#) including a [prospectus](#) of opportunities.

### Social Media

Please visit and subscribe to our social media pages for more information about the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail and interesting content for trail enthusiasts of all types:

 [facebook.com/stevenscreektrail](https://facebook.com/stevenscreektrail)

 [twitter.com/fosct](https://twitter.com/fosct)

 [instagram.com/fosct/](https://instagram.com/fosct/)

 [linkedin.com/company/4540943](https://linkedin.com/company/4540943)

 [youtube.com/channel/UCMOOFR3Eh1042F8UqnAAhaQ](https://youtube.com/channel/UCMOOFR3Eh1042F8UqnAAhaQ)

We encourage your feedback on social media. If you have content suggestions or information you would like us to share, please email [comms@stevenscreektrail.org](mailto:comms@stevenscreektrail.org).



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