



Trailblazer

A Newsletter Published by the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail

Summer 2003

TRAIL UPDATE Mountain View & Cupertino

Grand Opening of Reach 4, Segment 1

Last October hundreds of trail enthusiasts christened the grand opening of Reach 4, Segment 1 from Landels School on Dana Street to the new trail terminus at Yuba Drive near El Camino Real. This short but dramatic stretch includes cantilevers, stunning views down into the creek, and a crossing over Highway 237 paralleling Highway 85.



This approximately half-mile extension provides pedestrians and cyclists a safe and aesthetically pleasing alternative to the dangerous navigation of El Camino Real as a route across Highway 237, one of the major arteries dividing the Mountain View community. Reach 4, segment 1, as well as the other existing reaches, links open space along the creek, offers an alternative transportation route to numerous destinations, expands recreational opportunities and enhances the natural environment of the creek corridor. Over 2,000 native trees and shrubs were planted to enhance habitat and provide wildlife cover and foraging along the trail.

Reach 4, Segment 2 Update

Reach 4, Segment 2 will extend the trail from Yuba Drive to Mountain View High School, near the border of Los Altos. Plans and the Draft Environmental Impact Report for this section are currently under revision. Watch for their final release, probably later this summer.

Trail Status in Cupertino

In late Fall 2002, the Cupertino City Council approved the Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study for the trail extension from Rancho San Antonio County Park to Stevens Creek Boulevard. The entire study including maps can be found on the city's website at www.cupertino.org.

Many Cupertino residents participated in Cupertino's "visioning" process for reaches of the trail at Linda Vista Park, McClellan Ranch and Blackberry Farm. The "visioning" public process used a list of broad City Council goals as design guidelines and asked Cupertino residents what they'd like to see in the Corridor. Over 100 designs have been submitted by residents, schools and community groups and will be reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission this summer. Email Cupertino Parks and Recreation Department if you have questions regarding this project (parks@cupertino.org).

Good News: the County will begin trail construction on the former Diocese property at



Former Mayor Sally Lieber cuts the ribbon at the dedication of Reach 4, Segment 1. Photos of the new trail segment.

Rancho San Antonio (as identified in the Stevens Creek Trail Feasibility Study—Study Area/Reach A) later this year. County staff anticipate completion of the project in Spring 2004 with the opening and trail dedication following soon after. For more details on trail progress please call the Friends office at 408-255-5780 or email us at friends@stevenscreektrail.org.





Alan Ross receives award from Mountain View City Council Member Matt Neely.

Volunteer of the Year Award—Alan Ross

In November, more than 250 members of the community attended the “Celebration of Leaders” event hosted by the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce. Friends of Stevens Creek Trail board members and supporters were in attendance to honor a special Friends’ volunteer, Alan Ross, one of nine very dedicated community volunteers recognized that evening.

An avid hiker and outdoor enthusiast, Alan joined the Friends’ organization almost ten years ago when he saw the group was looking for active volunteers. He wanted to become more involved in the community and became a volunteer with the Friends at their very first creek cleanup event in 1993. Since then, Alan has been actively involved in trail and habitat restoration projects including planting native trees and shrubs, trailhead work, and continuing cleanups. Alan has also volunteered at seven Trailblazer Races. An extremely dedicated trail advocate, Alan attends public meetings in support of the trail and volunteers in the Friends’ booth at local Art & Wine Festivals. Alan’s volunteer efforts are selfless and sincere. He is always willing to “pitch-in” and tackle whatever task needs to be done, even if it means going knee-deep in mud to remove debris from the creek!

Alan, you are indeed a “trailblazer!” and we feel honored to have you as part of our team.



An Interview with Stella the Steelhead

The following is an excerpt from a recent interview with a steelhead trout we met along the Stevens Creek Trail.

Q: Do you mind if we bother you with a few questions?

A: Well, I’m a little busy with these 2,000 tiny eggs; protecting them from flying predators and keeping them shielded from the sun. But things look pretty calm now, so I guess I could give you a couple of minutes.

Q: Great! How did you pick this spot for your spawning bed?

A: First, it’s a calm, shallow, sheltered section of the creek. But I also needed a spot where I could make a deep nest in the gravel. Some steelhead create beds as deep as a foot, but I’ve done my best to clear just a few inches.

Q: How long will it be until your babies will leave the nest?

A: It’ll be several weeks until they hatch and then they’ll develop into inch-long fish. They’ll feed on insects in the creek until they grow to about three inches long, and then they will start their migration to the ocean.

Q: So, how was this year’s journey for you?

A: The December rains were great in getting us all started up the creek, but with the low flow during the following months, I don’t

think I ever would have made it this far without the new fish ladder. The spawning is much nicer up here.

Q: Other than that, how are things going?

A: Life’s been pretty good for me. Some of my friends have had problems with trash in the creek. It blows down from the freeways and creates a real hazard, especially for the smaller fish. We do appreciate the creek cleanups in the spring. Also, we could really use your help in keeping dogs and people out of the creek bed, particularly during spawning season.

Q: That said, what is your opinion of the Stevens Creek Trail?

A: Since the trail has been developed, the creek has much less debris and garbage—it’s much better now. But we are still concerned about the protection of healthy trees lining the future reaches of the trail, and appreciate the support of people who have asked the City to protect our riparian canopy.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: Soon I’ll be heading back to the bay where I’ll spend the summer and fall. Then as winter approaches, I’ll return to the mouth of the Creek and wait for the right opportunity to make my move upstream. But right now I have to get back to my eggs.

Q: Thanks!



Fish Ladder Completed!

Last October, just before the rainstorms drenched the creek, The Santa Clara Valley Water District completed its four-month fish ladder project at the Central Avenue trailhead in Mountain View. The old stream gauge concrete drop structure, which posed a large physical barrier to migrating steelhead, was replaced

with a set of weirs designed with a series of fish-friendly smaller jumps and resting pools. The Central Avenue Bridge provided a prime viewing spot for the construction project. The surrounding area has already been replanted with native trees and shrubs.



Help us recycle this newsletter. Please pass it on to a friend!

Thanks to Microsoft and all who made the Trailblazer Race 2002 a success—we couldn’t have done it without you!

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Trailblazer Race 2002 Volunteers and Booth Participants too numerous to mention individually—Thank You!



Volunteers battle the weather during creek clean-up.

California Trail Day/Creek Clean-Up

On April 12, 2003 thirty-four hardy souls braved the elements during a Creek Clean-Up event. Participants picked up trash from Stevens Creek and pulled weeds along the trail corridor. Volunteers from Friends of Stevens Creek Trail and Synopsys "Green Team" joined with Mountain View's Shoreline staff to pick up trash and pull weeds in and along the Creek Corridor. Despite some April showers, volunteers filled 18 over-sized bags with trash from the creek, while the weeding crew filled six over-sized bags. Volunteers had great fun and felt good about taking care of the Creek. Thanks to Tony & Alba's and Synopsys for their support with lunch and refreshments.

10th Anniversary Appreciation Picnic Lunch

The Friends of Stevens Creek Trail is first and foremost a volunteer-driven organization. So it is with great pride and satisfaction that on May 3, 2003, the Friends of Stevens Creek Trail celebrated ten years of trail advocacy and community support. To acknowledge the many "Friends" of our organization, we hosted a 10th Anniversary Appreciation Picnic Lunch at Whisman Park adjacent to the trail. This is also the trail location of the Friends first work day ten years ago and which now, thanks to the volunteers that day, boasts healthy and mature trees!

The Friends were honored to have so many community supporters, volunteers, and dignitaries attend the lunch. Guest speakers included Environmental Planner Jana Sokale, Trail Consultant and retired Shoreline Manager Glen Lyles, and Friends of Stevens Creek Trail Founder Rhonda Scherber.

State Assemblywoman Sally Lieber and County Supervisor Liz Kniss both paid tribute to the Friends and we appreciate their support.

Thanks to every one who has supported the Friends over the past ten years: individuals, private foundations, Silicon Valley



Assemblywoman Sally Lieber presents Aaron Grossman and Susie Brain of the Friends a plaque of appreciation.

corporations, businesses, and service clubs and last but not least, the enthusiastic support of our volunteers! With the continued support of our donors, volunteers, and the community-at-large we will fulfill our mission and realize our dream of a trail and wildlife corridor from the bay to the ocean!



The 2003 Trailblazer Race Sunday, September 28—Save the Date!

We are proud to announce that both the 10K and 5K courses are now officially certified by USA Track & Field, and Microsoft will once again be the Presenting Sponsor. We look forward to another fun and exciting Trailblazer! Come for the 10 or 5K Races, the 5K Trail Walk, or the Children's Races.

For more general information contact Susie Brain at exec-dir@stevenscreektrail.org or by phone: 408-255-5780. Racers and walkers may register now at www.stevenscreektrail.org. Interested in volunteering? Contact Jan Frankum at: Jan_Frankum@stevenscreektrail.org



Trail Advocates and Volunteers Stay in Touch!

Many people have asked for email notification of upcoming trail advocacy issues, community meetings, and volunteer opportunities. If you have not been receiving any of these lately, we may not have your current email. Please send us your current email to Susie at: friends@stevenscreektrail.org



The Friends Need You

The Friends is seeking candidates for our Board of Directors, particularly Cupertino residents to help grow community support and involvement in the Stevens Creek Trail and Wildlife Corridor. For more information or questions call 408-255-5780 or 650-903-6067.

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Newsletter Design & Production: Christine Mendible, Page Creations—408-249-7275

Articles and Photos: Susie Brain, Donna Dillard, Jan & Tom Frankum, Aaron Grossman, Ray Meyer III, Steve Olson

**Friends of Stevens Creek Trail
22221 McClellan Road
Cupertino, CA 95014**

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**Online Registration:
www.stevenscreektrail.org**

**Trailblazer Race 2003
Sunday, September 28th**



Mark your calendar for a day of fun for the entire family!