

Sabrecat Creek Riparian Habitat Restoration Project

Alameda County Conservation
Partnership

October 21, 2010



Who we are

- Resource Conservation District (RCD) Local Special District of the County
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Federal Agency under the Farm Bill
- RCD and NRCS operates cooperatively as the Alameda County Conservation Partnership

What is NRCS, RCD?

- Non Regulatory
- Locally Led
- Neutral
- Technically Sound
- Science Based
- Incentives Based



Alameda County Resource Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service Project Experience

- Mission Creek Eucalyptus Removal Project
- Arroyo de la Laguna Streambank Restoration Project
- San Lorenzo Creek Watershed Sediment Reduction and Habitat Enhancement Project
 - Palomares, Eden Canyon and Cull Canyon Creek Restoration Projects
- Sunol AgPark Streamside Hedgrow Project
- William Cann Park Creekside Native Plant Trail
- And many more



BART Sabercat Creek Project Background



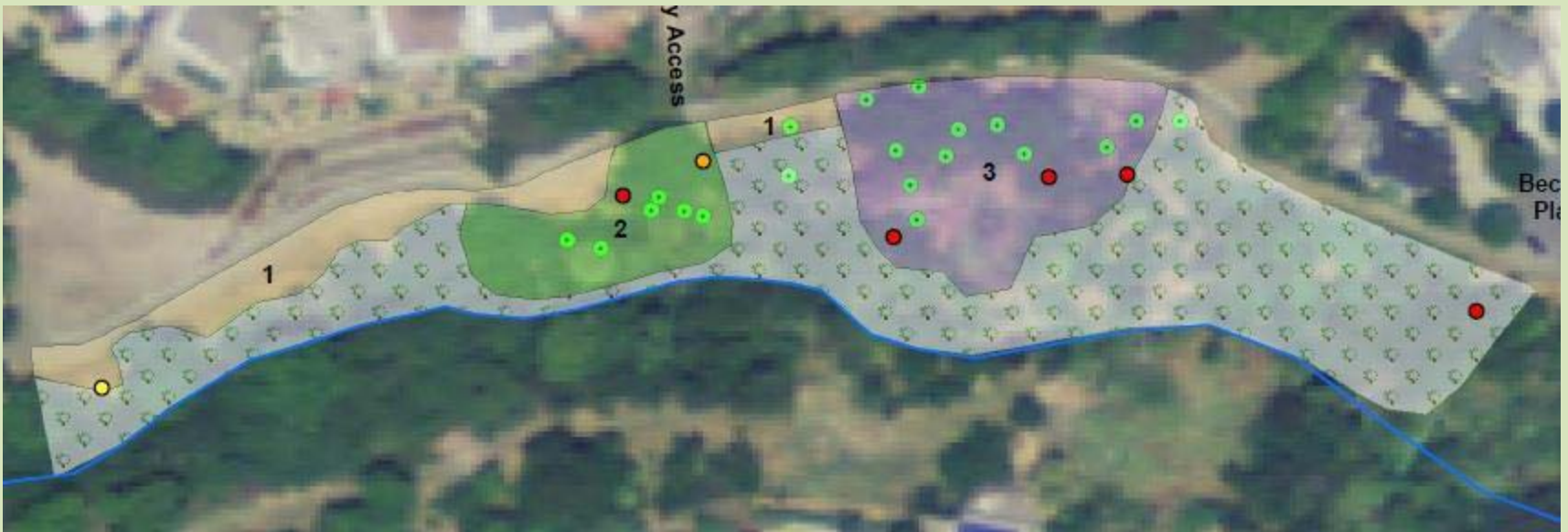
- Habitat restoration to offset temporal loss of riparian habitat and values for the Warm Springs Extension Project
- Improve 2 acres of riparian habitat along Sabercat Creek

Project Plan and Goals

Improve habitat diversity in a 2 acre riparian zone along Sabercat Creek through:

Removal and control of selected non-native plants and removal of dead and diseased elm trees and saplings

Enhancement of native riparian species diversity through establishment of native shrubs and other native vegetation



Site Plan

Priority Weed Removal

- Pampas Grass Removal
- English Ivy clearing
- Diseased elm tree and sapling removal
- Isolated patches of invasive Himalayan blackberry
- Begin weed removal in late November, early December



Site Plan Continued

Native Tree and Shrub Establishment

- A total 425 native plants installed in Zones 1-3
- 110 native plants installed in the interspersed zone



Trees:

- Box elder
- California buckeye
- Coast live oak

Shrubs:

- Coyote bush
- Toyon
- California coffeeberry
- Blue elderberry
- Arroyo willow
- California rose

Smaller understory plants:

- Oceanspray
- Coast live oak
- Common snowberry
- Red flowering current

Why remove these bad weeds?

Benefits of native plants?

Invasive plants

- Competitive advantage with native plants due to lack of natural predators
- Threaten wildlife
 - Rob sunlight, nutrients and water from native plants which wildlife depend on
 - Don't provide adequate food and shelter
- Provide increased wildfire potential
- Invasive plants consume enormous amounts of precious water
- Plants such as English ivy can take over and damage buildings and fences

Native Plants

- Are kept in check by natural balances in the ecosystem
- Provide food and shelter for native wildlife species that have evolved with them
- Drought friendly
- Maintain or improve soil fertility
- Reduce erosion
- Require less fertilizer and pesticides
- Save time and money and reduce the amount of harmful run-off threatening the aquatic resources of our streams, rivers, and estuaries

Importance of Urban Riparian Corridors for Animals

- Provide oasis for year round bird species
- Provide food and resting areas for migrating songbirds
- Provide nesting habitat for songbirds, raptors, and other bird species
- Provide foraging and shelter for deer
- Provide critical water resources for traveling animals
- Last remaining habitat available



Weed Removal Methods

All identified weed patches and trees will be clearly marked by ACRC/D/NRCS staff prior to the contractor working on site. All waste material will be removed from the project site and placed at the Fremont Transfer Station.

English ivy

- Low growing ivy will be removed manually with hand tools
- Underground roots will be dug out to the extent feasible
- Approved herbicide will be painted on the cut stems/roots
- Climbing ivy will be removed by completely severing the vines around the tree base and removing the roots
- Where feasible the hanging vines will be taken down off the trees



Weed Removal Methods

All identified weed patches and trees will be clearly marked by ACRC/D/NRCS staff prior to the contractor working on site. All waste material will be removed from the project site and placed at the Fremont Transfer Station.

Elm trees

- Approximately 70 elm sapling have been identified for removal
- Dead and diseased elm saplings less than 4-inch in diameter will be removed
- Trees will be cut near the ground using hand tools such as a pruner or power tools such as a chain saw
- Approved herbicide will be painted on the cut stems



Weed Removal Methods

All identified weed patches and trees will be clearly marked by ACRC/ NRCS staff prior to the contractor working on site. All waste material will be removed from the project site and placed at the Fremont Transfer Station.

Pampas Grass

- One mature pampas grass will be removed from the site to prevent future spread of the species
- Plant will be removed using hand tools



Pampas grass at Sabrecat site



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Himalayan Blackberry

- Above ground growth is cut and removed
- Where feasible the crown and roots will be dug up using hand tools
- Approved herbicide is painted on cut stems that are not removed manually
- Follow up treatments for herbicide are reapplied in fall



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Plant Installation Methods

All planting locations will be clearly marked/flagged by ACRC/D/NRCS staff prior to planting by either the contractor or volunteers.

- Plant installation will occur during this rainy season, probably January or February
- A 3-foot circumference area of weeds will be removed around each planting hole using hand labor and a weed whacker if necessary
- Willow cutting will be harvested from vigorous growing shrubs within the planting area and installed by the contractor
- Container plants will be installed by either the contractor or volunteers following appropriate native plant techniques
- A product called DriWATER will be used instead of irrigation



Volunteer Opportunities

Participate through our
Hands-On-Conservation
Program

Volunteer to install native
plants, install protective
caging, weed barrier,
and mulching

Ongoing volunteer efforts
to monitor site

4 planting days will be
scheduled for
January/February of
2011



Questions/Comments?

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