



Friends of Sausal Creek

PROMOTING WATERSHED AWARENESS

## **RAINBOW TROUT CONSERVATION IN THE SAUSAL CREEK WATERSHED DECEMBER 15, 2018**

In the spring of 2018, Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) was awarded a grant for \$8,610 from the Alameda County Fish and Game Commission to address threats to the local rainbow trout populations. Community members are often surprised to learn that native rainbow trout live in Oakland's Sausal Creek. Educating our community about the fish and leading volunteers in habitat improvement projects have been central to the mission of FOSC for the past 22 years.

This funding allows FOSC to develop a rainbow trout conservation and management plan for the Sausal Creek watershed to guide future efforts. Even with staff transitions in 2018, FOSC has been steadfastly working on this plan, leading a series of restoration workdays to engage the community in conservation and stewardship, and scheduling a spring series of educational community trout walks to further involve and inform the public on rainbow trout.



*Photo: A trout swims in Sausal Creek*

Volunteers are a key component to FOSC trout conservation efforts. Many of them come from the local community, including neighbors, high school students volunteering with service organizations, and local school children participating in environmental education and hands-on restoration field trips. This project educates student and adult volunteers on watershed stewardship while enhancing critical habitat areas.

### **Activities from June – December, 2018**



*Photo: Students pull invasive plants in Dimond Canyon*

- Public Nursery Workdays were led by FOSC to propagate locally collected seeds and cuttings for re-planting into selected restoration sites.
- Volunteers and student groups worked to pull invasive plants, primarily cape ivy which is toxic to aquatic organisms, out of targeted areas. Tree plantings and riparian plant staking will begin soon in these cleared restoration areas. The introduction of native plants and trees will help reduce erosion and sedimentation in the creek and will therefore improve water quality and increase habitat values both at planting sites and in downstream waters.

- FOSC is close to completing a first draft of the rainbow trout conservation and management plan, which will be used to guide future efforts for restoration and conservation of the rainbow trout habitat and populations.
- In the summer of 2018, the FOSC trout team conducted a tour with City of Oakland Watershed and Stormwater Management staff and discussed future plans, including protection of spawning pools and efforts to complete fish genetics work in 2019. Several additional “trout walks” are being planned for the general public for the spring of 2019. They will be invited to come out and learn about the native trout populations.



*Photo: FOSC and City of Oakland trout meeting*

With the installation of the 24” x 36” interpretive panel on the creek’s rainbow trout at the El Centro trailhead, FOSC has seen the public gain awareness and passion for the trout. Trail users take greater care in keeping dogs on lease to protect the rainbow trout inhabitants and their environment.

We are grateful to the Alameda Fish and Game Commission for supporting our ongoing efforts to help save native rainbow trout populations through restoration and public education programs and advocacy. We are excited to continue restoration efforts, especially in Dimond Canyon, and to be working towards habitat improvements that will help sustain high quality spawning, rearing, and over-summer pool habitat for wild rainbow trout in Sausal Creek. Thank you for your support.



*Photo: Kids view rainbow trout in a large pool at Dimond Park*