



REFUGIO CREEK WATERSHED VISION PLAN

11 MARCH 2009

Public Meeting #2

Meeting Notes / Compiled: 12 MARCH 2009

- MEETING #2:** HERCULES PUBLIC LIBRARY
109 CIVIC DRIVE, RODEO, CALIFORNIA 94547 7:00 PM
- ATTENDING:** ROBERT REBER / CITY OF HERCULES
DREW GOETTING, RICH WALKLING / RESTORATION DESIGN GROUP (RDG)
ROGER LEVENTHAL, FARWEST RESTORATION ENGINEERING
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CITY OF HERCULES
COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- CC/EMAIL:** ROBERT REBER (FOR FILE & DISTRIBUTION THROUGH WEBSITE)
- NOTES:** SECOND COMMUNITY MEETING
- NEXT MEETING:** APRIL 15th 7:00 PM

INFORMATIONAL SESSION

MEETING INTRODUCTION

Drew Goetting, RDG, welcomed everyone to the second meeting. For the benefit of those who had not attended the first meeting, Drew explained what a vision plan is, reviewed the Refugio Creek Watershed vision planning process, and reviewed the ground rules.

CREEKS 101

Roger Leventhal, principal of FarWest Restoration Engineering, presented some basic and some complex lessons on how creeks function. Roger reviewed creek hydrology, geomorphology, ecology, and restoration. He showed photos of many different types of creeks and rivers, from steep cascades to flat, broad, meandering reaches.

Roger's key points for the group were:

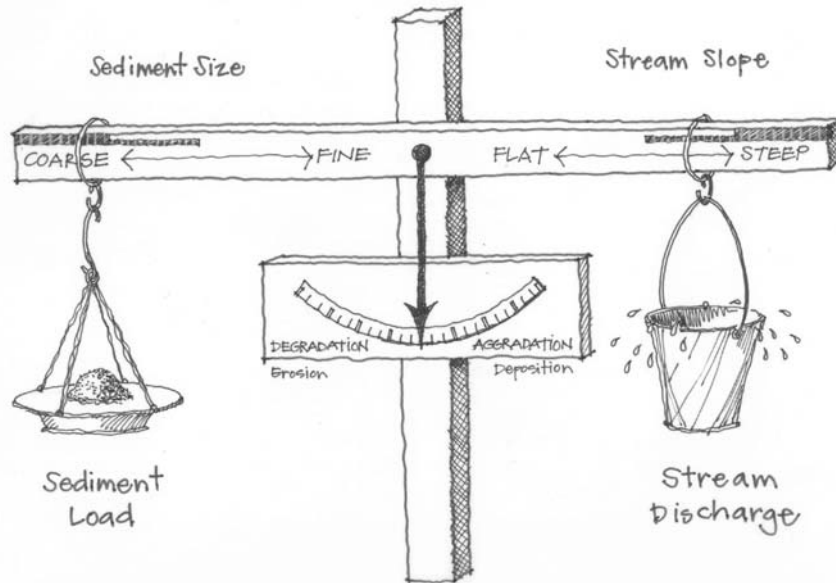
- 1) Creeks are complex and dynamic with a lot of natural features and structures to which plants and animals have adapted;
- 2) Creeks seek a balance between the amount of water and sediment they move and the slope of the creek. For example, if more water is added to a creek, it will adjust its size, shape, and character in response to the increase in water;
- 3) Urbanization affects creeks. When we pave land or direct rain water into storm drains, water that would have otherwise seeped into the ground and moved slowly downhill rushes toward the creek. As a result, more water reaches the creek more quickly in urbanized watersheds. The creek must adjust to this and often erodes or incises (cuts down) in response.

Roger showed the following diagram to help demonstrate the balance that a creek seeks between water and sediment.

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Roger fielded questions on the definition of creeks, rivers, and streams, the connection between creeks and storm drains, and solutions to aggradation.

WORKING SESSION

Drew Goetting led the group in a continuation of the previous meetings discussion of interests and concerns. The resulting list is included below. Additions from the 3/11/09 meeting are in black text. Interests and concerns that were listed previously during the 2/25/09 meeting are in grey text. These results have not been sorted or categorized.

Interests

- Ensure vision plan considers impact of climate change
- Work with Railroads as they adjust to sea level rise
- Simplify presentations given to the vision plan group
- Consider in planning all of the watershed from the ridge to the creek outlet;
- Investigate what City has done in the past and what it would like to do (in terms of creek & watershed management) including below San Pablo Ave.
- Alternatives to storm drains
- Identify sites for mitigation (for threatened and endangered species)
- Like to know more about grant opportunities and other funding
- Capacity for on-site water retention
- Can we irrigate the community garden with creek water?
- Does the Refugio Creek Watershed have wells?
- Provide trash cans along trail
- Like to know what will happen to the north tributary (north of city hall) when the area is developed
- Keeping natural areas natural
- Like to know if lake (at Refugio Valley Park) is a benefit
- Making connections between schools, other groups, sharing ideas and resources
- Like to know more about pond flows

- Pollution and debris pickup not just in creeks but in watershed on Coastal Clean up and other days
- Educating the community (outreach to youth and schools, The Watershed Project, Hercules Community Gardeners, Inter-Ac Group, and Kadets)
- Identify active groups and what they're doing currently (do a better job networking)
- Use BMPs (best management practices) to keep trash/pollutants out of creek
- Maintain public access
- How does one maintain a healthy watershed?
- How do we disseminate information on maintaining a healthy watershed?
- Like to have attractive public walkway along creek
- Provide better access for anglers (and garbage cans)
- Connection trails to the Bay Trail/Ridge Trail
- Website for watershed information both in Hercules and outside of Hercules (include activities, links to other websites, clearinghouse)
- Like to know what a natural healthy creek looks like
- Like to know range of wildlife in watershed
- Provide interpretive elements (maps and pamphlets)
- Where is public land/accessible lands?
- What type of trail do we want?
- How has the watershed changed over time?
- How much of underground culverts could be daylighted?

Concerns

- Would like to know what goes into storm drains?
- Will Refugio Creek be a natural or artificial creek?
- Concern about non-native plants and how to get rid of them
- Would like to better understand how landslides relate to watershed management, their implications, and the ability of creek restoration to address them
- What happens on the land is important – concerns w/pollutants
- Balance between humans and wildlife at Refugio Valley Park lake
- Are ponds near Bayside (Duckpond) functioning? Is it standing water? Mosquito concern? Did DFG want them?
- Should ponds be tidal?
- BMPs need to be maintained so they continue to work
- How do we deal with ponds (regulatory and environmental)?
- Should all of Hercules be responsible for maintenance of the watershed or just local HOAs?
- Flood concerns
- Status of culverts – are they in good condition?
- Landscaping and vegetation in summer months does not look good
- Possible impacts from cattle/goats
- Impact of sea level rise
- Deer population/risk in traffic
- Wild turkeys
- Sedimentation at mouth of creek

Drew led the group in a follow up discussion of guest speakers they would like to hear and topics they would like to know more about. The group voted on various speakers and topics. The following four speakers/topics were most popular:

- Environmental studies/curriculum for students – ideas from elsewhere/The Watershed Project and other environmental education groups
- Expert on urban creeks/trails and landscape architecture who can speak on connection between development and the watershed
- Panel of California Native Plant Society, Audubon, and others to talk about plants and animals
- California Department of Fish and Game/Vector Control to talk about ponds in the lower watershed

These Meeting Notes represent RDG's understanding of meeting events and community member comments. If information included in these notes is incorrect or requires clarification please notify RDG within 30 days and a revised set of Meeting Notes will be distributed.