

Fisher Creek Riparian Habitat Restoration Project – Phase II

Organization: Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

Project Period: July 2022 – December 2028

Amount: \$247,360

Location: Fisher Creek, Santa Clara County

Project Description

The Fisher Creek Riparian Habitat Restoration Project – Phase II proposes to restore riparian habitat along the Fisher Creek riparian corridor. This area provides nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat for numerous bird species, including special-status species such as the Yellow Warbler and White-tailed Kite. It is also an important component of the wildlife movement pathway within and through Coyote Valley, a critical landscape linkage, connecting patches of habitat between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range, linking over one million acres of core wildlife habitat. The Authority, in partnership with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), Point Blue Conservation Science (Pt. Blue), and Go Native, has already begun this restoration work and this project (Phase II) will build upon that success and expand the restoration to two additional locations along the bank. The same project team would begin by removal of invasive plants and site preparation, followed by planting of 800 plants over two years, followed by maintenance and monitoring. If COVID-19 conditions allow, they will utilize school groups as part of the restoration through Pt. Blue's Students and Teachers Restoring A Watershed (STRAW) program. The STRAW program engages K-12 students, community members, and Conservation Corps members in climate-smart restoration. By engaging with youth, volunteers, and the Corps, this project will connect communities to the lands around them, and provides additional benefits such as carbon sequestration, water quality improvement, and wildlife habitat enhancement and connectivity. They are leveraging the work of Phase I such as irrigation installation, plant palette, weed control, browse protection, and project team expertise.

Project Progress

During 2024 Point Blue commenced planting implementation as well as maintenance and monitoring within the prepared planting plots (6,500 square feet). Point Blue provided education and training preparation for 224 students on-campus, and these pre-restoration lessons set the context for the importance of community involvement in habitat restoration. Point Blue facilitated student planting day field trips from April through July 2024. Maintenance work coincided with planting work and irrigation drip

line was laid out as plants went in the ground. From June through October 2024, weekly site visits included watering plants, checking drip line for leaks, and weeding around new plantings and around planting plots. In September 2024, plant survival and photo monitoring commenced.



Phase II planting area.