

Fernandez Ranch Riparian Areas Restoration Project

In order to ensure a lasting quality of life for future generations, the Muir Heritage Land Trust (MHLT) has permanently preserved over 2500 acres of natural area in Contra Costa County, one of the fastest growing regions of California. Included in this area is the 702-acre Fernandez Ranch, adjacent to Hercules' southern border;

In 2005 MHLT acquired the Fernandez Ranch, an open space providing habitat for a variety of native wildlife. Since that time, MHLT has worked on the various aspects of restoration mainly focusing on the creek areas. The goal of the "Fernandez Ranch Riparian Areas Restoration Project" is to restore three riparian areas that are currently plagued with erosion & sloping, degradation (caused by cattle crossing) and bank instability issues.



Restoration of the first area is needed to repair instability associated with channel incision along Rodeo Creek. The creek experienced a significant slumping event during the winter storm season of 2005-2006. Soil bioengineering and revegetation techniques will be used to reduce erosion, improve water quality and habitat, and provide resource preservation.

The second restoration area is along a degraded section of Fern Creek. Work includes expansion of the exclusion fencing to include the existing footbridge and its immediate creek sections, restoration of the riparian corridor, and potentially the establishment of a more appropriate cattle crossing.

The third area will involve restoration of an over-steepened erodible slope on Rodeo Creek using soil bioengineering methods. The goal is to stabilize this section of the creek and reduce erosion.