

OAKLAND WILDLAND STEWARDS

WHO WE ARE

The Oakland Wildland Stewards is a coalition of groups stewarding open spaces and wooded parks within the city of Oakland. Each member group conducts volunteer workdays to preserve, protect and restore the native habitat and ecology in its project area.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to advocate for the urban forests and open spaces of Oakland with one voice; to share our experience and knowledge with each other; and to work cooperatively with the city to improve land management and fuel management practices.

Beaconsfield Canyon

Beaconsfield Canyon is a 5.5-acre open space located at the corner of Beaconsfield Place and Keswick Ct., off Chelton Drive in Montclair. The volunteer group, Friends of Beaconsfield Canyon, was started by neighbors in 2007 to reduce fire hazard and restore habitat. It was later allied with Friends of Sausal Creek. Volunteers hold regular monthly workdays every last Saturday to remove nonnative, invasive plants and to plant natives. Students from Joaquin Miller Elementary School make regular field trips to the canyon to learn about local ecology and habitat restoration. Beaconsfield was also the model site for a timed clearing program by the Oakland Fire Dept., establishing a protocol for cutting certain flammable invasive plants before they seed.

Website: www.sausalcreek.org

Butters Canyon

Butters Canyon is a half-mile stretch of wild, woody land along Butters Drive, just off Joaquin Miller Road. This serene oasis of native trees houses hundreds of species of wildlife and plants and represents a green riparian and wildlife corridor at the headwaters of Peralta Creek. To preserve this unique treasure, a non-profit corporation was formed in June 2001, now known as Butters Canyon Conservancy (BCC). Since inception of the land trust, a total of eleven creekside lots have been preserved. BCC has done some habitat restoration and uses volunteer workdays to remove invasives: broom, Cape ivy, and Algerian ivy.

Website: www.bcconservancy.org

Dimond Canyon Park

Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) works with environmental groups, neighbors, and students to improve multiple sites within the canyon, especially Monterey Redwoods trailhead, Bridgeview trailhead, Bridgeview oak understory, El Centro trailhead, and Benevides trailhead. Activities include everything from clearing invasives and planting natives to doing erosion control, rebuilding trails, and managing storm drain runoff. A major effort was made in 2001 to restore the creek, with FOSC's part being to plant 20,000 natives. Projects that were started near trailheads (a pollinator garden and a streetside garden) have expanded into the park, adding to plantings of local, native species. On Earth Day and Creek-to-Bay Day, FOSC attracts as many as 250 volunteers to Dimond Park, with specialized crews removing vegetation and cleaning trash from the creek.

Website: www.sausalcreek.org

Dimond Park

Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) maintains a Native Plant Demonstration Garden in Dimond Park (since 1996) and also works to clear invasives and plant natives along the riparian corridor. As in Dimond Canyon Park, we have “sub-adopters” for some of the area.

Website: www.sausalcreek.org

Garber Park

Garber Park is a 13-acre woodland park located in Claremont Canyon. The Garber Park Stewards was formed in October, 2009, when a small group of neighbors, alarmed by the high fuel load in the park, volunteered through the Adopt-a-Park/Creek Program to maintain and restore its natural beauty. We have been educating ourselves and the community, through workshops, in everything from planting natives to collecting native seeds and controlling erosion. We hold twice-a-month volunteer workdays to remove invasive weeds, plant natives, and maintain/upgrade the trails. We now have 7 restoration sites and have almost eradicated blackberry and broom that blanketed the steep slopes.

Website: garberparkstewards.org

Joaquin Miller Park

Friends of Sausal Creek (FOSC) and Friends of Joaquin Miller Park (FOJMP) have jointly adopted numerous sites throughout this 500-acre park (Fern Ravine, Big Trees, Palos Colorados trailhead, and Joaquin Miller Road at Skyline). Over the past 10 years, we have been coordinating volunteers from the surrounding community and local schools, holding workdays to remove broom, blackberry, star thistle, ivy, and other invasives; fence off/block areas where overuse has killed the redwood understory; and plant natives (many from the FOSC nursery). A number of the sites harbor rare native plants (e.g., pallid manzanitas, Tiburon buckwheat), and annual grasses and competing shrubs are removed to enhance the habitats.

Website: www.fojmp.org

King Estate Open Space

Once the master plan for the Glenn W. Daniel/King Estate Open Space Park was approved by the Oakland City Council in 1998, the Oak Knoll Neighborhood Improvement Association (OKNIA) Park Committee began a volunteer program of eradicating non-native species. The eastern slopes behind the middle school were choked with French broom. Over the course of 5 years, the broom was brought under control, and a wonderful grove of oaks made accessible to hikers enjoying trails hewn from the hillsides with the help of Volunteers for Outdoor California (VOCAL). The eradication program continues within the 80-acre park, focusing on broom, salsify, Himalayan blackberry, and cardoon.

Knowland Park

Friends of Knowland Park and the East Bay chapter of the California Native Plant Society are active stewards of Knowland Park. We survey the park's animals, plants, lichens, and fungi, and document wildlife through critter cameras and services of wildlife biologists. We have removed enormous quantities of French broom from the rare maritime chaparral and native grasslands in the western highlands. We host weed and trash removal, participate in the annual sudden oak death blitz, and coordinate with the Oakland Fire Department to create a sound goat grazing plan. To enhance the public's use of the park, we have created a nature trail guide and map, and we offer nature tours.

Website: www.saveknowland.org

Leona Heights Park

Marjorie Saunders Park

Marjorie Saunders Park is well known in the Montclair Village community as the "Painted Rock." Locals have painted greetings there for special occasions and used it as a canvas for art since the 1950s. The rock-lined waterfall, pools, and benches began as a WPA project. Part of the Sausal Creek watershed, the park is in the City Adopt-a-Spot/Creek/Drain programs and has been cared for by the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association for over 40 years. It was a formally landscaped park in the early days, but in the 1980s, a volunteer effort began to remove overgrown ivy in the waterfall area. In 2008, we commissioned a mostly native planting plan, which has been our focus since then, along with removing invasives and keeping up with litter and graffiti removal.

Website: www.piedmontpines.org

Montclair RR Trail

Montclair Railroad Trail is a one-mile paved trail that runs through densely populated neighborhoods between the Montclair Village business district and Shepherd Canyon. The Friends of Montclair RR Trail formally adopted the trail in 2010 through the City's Adopt-a-Spot program. Our goals are to maintain, restore and enhance the trail—with fire safety a priority. Work parties are held every month to remove non-natives and to heavily mulch areas to suppress weedy growth. Two large areas, formerly inundated with noxious weeds, have been successfully restored with plants native to Shepherd Canyon. Our group also produced a plant brochure for better fire-safe landscape choices in the neighborhood.

Website: www.montclairrrtrail.org

North Oakland Regional Sports Center

The Oakland Landscape Committee (OLC) is a community-based greening organization that helps with maintaining several Oakland park facilities, including the North Oakland Regional Sports Center. Focus there is landscaping and maintenance of the entry garden known as the Frank Ogawa Firescape Garden, along with the Temescal Creek channel and meadow area, and associated open spaces. A special focus of the OLC in the last few years has been on adding pollinator plants, native plants, grasses, and wildflowers to the public gardens and park sites that it works on. The OLC is also concerned with creek restoration and maintenance, tree planting and care, vegetation management projects to reduce fire risks, and mentoring and involving youth and other volunteers in greening projects.

Website: www.oaklandlandscapecommittee.org

Shepherd Canyon Park

The Shepherd Canyon Homeowner's Assn. (SCHA) has been a strong voice for fire safety since the 1991 Oakland Hills fire, advocating both for fire districts and for good vegetation management practice. In 2003, in an effort to encourage a more systematic approach, it commissioned a vegetation management survey and plan for the 34 acres of city-owned open space, which documents existing vegetation and lays out specific objectives for a lower fuel load and native landscape. SCHA has worked on various initiatives to bring resident attention to private parcel clearance and defensive space and on coordinating dumpster days for private parcel clearance. SCHA has also organized thousands of hours of volunteer efforts to remove invasive plants and plant more fire-safe natives.

Oakland Wildland Stewards Parks	
Park	Acres
Beaconsfield Canyon	5
Butters Canyon	4
Dimond Canyon Park	69
Dimond Park	14
Firestorm Memorial Garden	1
Garber Park	14
Joaquin Miller Park	442
King Estate Open Space	80
Knowland Park	400
Marjorie Saunders Park	4
Montclair RR Trail	28
North Oakland Sports Center	54
Shepherd Canyon Park	42
Total	1156