



News from the Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator

A Project of San Diego EarthWorks

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Thanks for your interest in the Rose Creek Watershed. Please read on to learn about the projects taking place to improve our watershed's beautiful environmental and recreational attributes.

Kelly Makley
Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator
www.rosecreekwatershed.org
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Rose Creek Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge Design Near Completion

Article contributed by Ann Van Leer on behalf of the San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

The [San Diego County Bicycle Coalition](#) (SDCBC) received a grant from the [California State Coastal Conservancy](#) to design a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over Rose Creek at the confluence where Rose and San Clemente Creeks meet. Drivers know this area as the intersection of I-5 and SR-52. This connection was one of the recommendations of the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#) 2.5.5: Creating Safe and Legal Railroad Crossings. The bridge complements improvements to the Rose Creek Bikeway as discussed in the article below.



Bicyclists on the Rose Canyon Bicycle Path.

There are no legal or safe railroad crossings in the watershed. Pedestrians and cyclists currently cross the tracks and creek at the confluence but it is extremely dangerous. The construction of the Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project will eliminate this key crossing which connects San Clemente and Rose canyons to the Rose Canyon Bicycle Path, making a bridge connection here even more critical.

The SDCBC hired an engineering design firm to create a bridge that could fit into this location without affecting the Mid-Coast Corridor Transit Project or the highways. The bridge design is nearly complete. The SDCBC is currently seeking

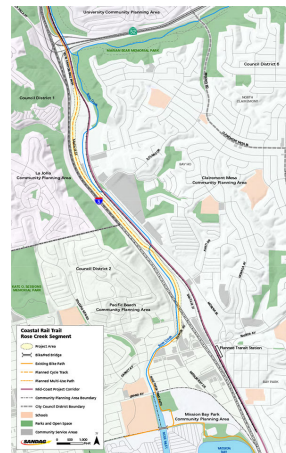
funding to construct the bridge.

Rose Creek Bikeway Project Update

Article contributed by Chris Carterette, SANDAG Project Manager

The plans and engineering to construct the [Rose Creek Bikeway](#) are about one-third complete. The Rose Creek Bikeway is being designed by the [San Diego Association of Governments](#) as a shared use path for people riding bikes and people walking along Rose Creek in its southern reach, and two-way protected bike lanes along the west side of Santa Fe Street in its northern reach. Enhancements to bicycle paths were suggested in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#) in Recommendation 2.5.3: Creating Regional Recreational Connections.

At the same time as plans are being drawn, the environmental studies are being finished and the draft environmental document is being prepared for the public review and comment period, which is anticipated to be in spring of 2015. An open house showcasing the design is planned around that time to coincide with the beginning of the environmental document public review and comment period.



Map of the Rose Creek Bikeway.
Click to enlarge.

The next steps after completing the environmental process and design will be to collect bids for constructing the project and, finally, to begin building the project. It is anticipated that construction will begin in 2016. Please direct any questions to [Chris Carterette](#), Project Manager.

San Diego Audubon Society Awarded \$485,000 for Mission Bay Wetlands Feasibility Study

A version of this article by Rebecca Schwartz appeared in [Volume 66](#) of *Sketches*, the San Diego Audubon Society newsletter.



Snowy egrets at the Kendall Frost Marsh Reserve, part of the Mission Bay Wetlands.
Photo by Roy Little.

The [San Diego Audubon Society](#) (SDAS) has received the largest grant in the chapter's history this past May. The [California State Coastal Conservancy](#) awarded SDAS \$460,000-with an additional \$25,000 from the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service](#). The funds will be used to conduct the [Mission Bay Wetlands Restoration Feasibility Study](#).

This feasibility study is the first step in a long-term initiative to protect, restore, and ensure resilience of the bay's most impacted estuaries. The initiative will produce significant benefits for people and wildlife alike. It will protect the marsh's endangered species and their habitat, and will provide the public with more access to this majestic ecosystem by expanding opportunities for recreation, education, and research. The project will also increase coastline stabilization and water quality control. Enhancement of the Mission Bay Wetlands was suggested in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#) in Recommendation 2.2.1: Enhancing the Connection to Mission Bay.

The study will take two to three years to complete, and will require the collaboration of consultants, community leaders, and stakeholders. SDAS will also host public workshops to ensure that this is a bottom-up, grassroots-supported effort. By the end, SDAS will provide three "alternative" versions of the restoration project that will be subject to environmental and public review before moving on to the next steps, which will ultimately culminate in restoration.

Amid threats from rapidly encroaching development and destructive climate change impacts, this study comes at a critical juncture. The marsh is currently in a severely constrained state, but this project seeks to reverse the tide. As SDAS Conservation Program Manager Rebecca Schwartz points out, "[T]his is an exciting time to be involved in conservation in San Diego and with San Diego Audubon. Our entire team...is looking forward to leading this major conservation effort in protection of San Diego's birds, other wildlife, and their habitats."

Project partners include [Friends of Mission Bay Marshes](#), [Friends of Rose Creek](#), [UCSD Natural Reserve System](#), [City of San Diego](#), [City of San Diego - Park & Recreation](#), and the [Rose Creek Watershed Alliance](#). Click [here](#) if you have any questions about this project or would like to get involved.

Friends of Rose Canyon Completes Another Successful Year of the Sense of Wonder Project

Article contributed by Debby Knight, President of Friends of Rose Canyon

[Friends of Rose Canyon](#)'s Sense of Wonder Project is named after a quote from pioneering environmentalist Rachel Carson: "If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder... he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in".

With funding from [San Diego Gas & Electric's Environmental Champions Grant](#), we are proud to report that 1,229 K-12 students, along with 295 teachers, parents and grandparents came on our Nature Explorations this past year. Students were divided into groups of 4-5 kids, each group with a nature guide. They are reminded that they are all explorers, and that kids often discover things the guides miss. The kids, teachers and parents all learn a lot about the natural world, and we all have fun. Projects like this are suggested in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#) in Recommendation 2.2.7: Recommendations for Environmental Education.



Students from Doyle Elementary wonder what is in the water, and find water striders, tadpoles, tree frogs, and crayfish. They have even seen a California kingsnake (beautiful and non-venomous).



Curie Elementary students find an old Bushtit nest. These amazing nests are like a long sock. They hang from a branch, with the babies in the bottom so the adult birds can leave their chicks safe while they go hunt for food.

New Marsh Mural in Mission Bay

Article contributed by Simon Breen, Interim Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator



Friends of Mission Bay Marshes Volunteer Roy Little and Muralist Celeste Byers.

A beautiful new mural has been created on the research trailer at the [Kendall Frost Mission Bay Marsh Reserve](#). The painting is the handiwork of muralist Celeste Byers and the vision of long-time [Friends of Mission Bay Marshes](#) volunteer, Roy Little.

The mural depicts plants and wildlife native to the marsh, and portraits of some of the marsh's notable supporters - including Roy. The trailer is owned by [UC San](#)

[Diego's Natural Reserve System](#). For quite some time, Roy had been hearing requests to aesthetically beautify the trailer. He also saw this as an opportunity to get the public's attention and garner interest in this important ecosystem. "We all wanted to make the trailer look more attractive and I wanted something that would make passers-by stop, look, and ask, as an initial step in getting educated and involved in the marsh."

If Celeste is any indication, the mural is already accomplishing Roy's hopes. After completing it she said, "I feel really grateful for participating in the project because I didn't know the marsh existed beforehand. I didn't even know much about what services marshes provide - that they are nurseries for fish and birds, and are home to so many creatures...I got to know it better and learned a lot."

Come see the mural for yourself and hopefully you, too, will be inspired!

Same Bird, New Name: Light-footed Clapper Rail Misidentified, Renamed

Article contributed by Simon Breen, Interim Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator

Would a clapper rail by any other name still tweet as sweet? Well...yes, it would. As it turns out, the San Diego salt marsh bird formerly known as the light-footed clapper rail (*Rallus obsoletus levipes*) is not a clapper rail at all. When Occidental College zoologist James Maley examined the DNA of "big rails," (birds traditionally classified as clapper rails and king rails), he found that California clapper rails are not actually clapper rails. Instead, they are their own, totally distinct species.

As a result, the [American Ornithologists' Union](#) recently announced that California clapper rails, including San Diego's own light-footed clapper rail subspecies, have been reclassified as Ridgway's rail. The "new" species is named after Robert Ridgway, a founding member of the American Ornithologists' Union, and the first to identify the species for science in the late 1800s. Despite the new common name, Ridgway's rail's scientific name will remain unchanged.



The newly named Ridgway's rail
at Kendall Frost Marsh.
Photo by Roy Little.

How does this affect the bird's conservation? The name may have changed but the endangered status hasn't. Birder checklists, informational brochures, books, and signs will need to be updated, and the name change may cause some initial confusion. The population is still precipitously plummeting due to habitat loss and degradation as a result of agricultural, industrial, and residential development, pollution, and predation by invasive species. You can help save the Ridgway's rails by joining us in protecting San Diego marshes and their watersheds.

Friends of Rose Creek Celebrates its 10 Year Anniversary

[Friends of Rose Creek](#), the community group dedicated to preserving and enhancing Lower Rose Creek in Pacific Beach, is celebrating its 10 Year Anniversary! Their Anniversary Party and Bird Watching Bingo Tournament will take place on

Saturday, December 6th at the Rose Creek Cottage from 9 AM - Noon. All Rose Creek fans are invited! The new short film on Rose Creek will be shown, along with information about the group's many accomplishments and new projects underway. Drinks and pastries will be served. Click [here](#) for more information and to RSVP. We hope to see you there!



The Rose Creek Bicycle Path
in Pacific Beach.

When in Drought, Visit our Website!

After three dry winters and record-breaking heat in 2014, California's water supply situation is becoming more serious every day. Mandatory water conserving measures are in place throughout the region in response to worsening drought conditions and the need to save storage reserves for 2015.

Mandatory [restrictions](#) are effective November 1, 2014 within the Rose Creek Watershed (City of San Diego). Visit the newly updated [Community Links](#) section of our website for a list of water conservation resources to help you find strategies, tools and rebates to conserve water at your home or business. Conserving water is critical to preserving our drinking water supply, and also protects our watershed by reducing urban runoff that pollutes our creeks, marshes and beaches.

Become a Facebook Fan of the Rose Creek Watershed

Please become a fan today to receive watershed news, updates, and nature photography by Roy Little.

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Rose Creek Watershed Alliance Convener: [San Diego EarthWorks](#)

San Diego EarthWorks convened the Rose Creek Watershed Alliance in 2004 as an informal organization of stakeholders to help plan the future of the 23,000-acre Rose Creek Watershed. They developed a planning document to encourage watershed improvements called [The Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#). The Assessment includes recommendations to improve the watershed's biological, cultural and recreational attributes and was accepted by the San Diego City Council in 2008.

Members:

Clairemont Mesa Planning Group
[Clairemont Town Council](#)
[Friends of Mission Bay Marshes](#)
[Friends of Rose Canyon](#)
[Friends of Rose Creek](#)
Friends of Stevenson Canyon
Marian Bear Natural Park Committee
[Mission Bay Park Committee](#)

Nobel Recreation Council
Pacific Beach Business Improvement District
Pacific Beach Planning Group
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San Diego Audubon Society
San Diego Canyonlands
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Partners:

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