



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
A Project of San Diego EarthWorks



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Funding for Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator Comes to an End

After three and a half years, I am sad to report that funding for my position as the Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator has come to an end. This part-time position has been an amazing opportunity to learn about restoration, develop relationships with creek advocates, and improve my skills in grantwriting, fundraising, event planning, community organizing, and outreach. Hopefully some of the projects I worked on will continue to increase awareness for this special little watershed, including the Rose Creek Community Mural and the ongoing Sense of Wonder Project engaging elementary school students throughout the entire watershed (thanks to [Friends of Rose Canyon](#) and [San Diego Gas & Electric](#)).

I would like to extend my gratitude to the [California Department of Conservation](#) for funding this endeavor, and to [San Diego EarthWorks](#) for serving as my fiscal sponsor and providing the cash match required for the grant. Ann Van Leer, who has served as my supervisor, has been a valuable mentor to me. I have learned so much from her, including how to navigate ever-changing local public policies. I'm so thankful I



Kelly Makley with Mayor Kevin Faulconer at the Rose Creek Community Mural

had the chance to work for and learn from her.

I would also like to thank the many colleagues I have had the pleasure of partnering with on projects over the last few years including Chris Klein and Carolyn Chase (San Diego EarthWorks), Karin Zirk ([Friends of Rose Creek](#)), Debby Knight (Friends of Rose Canyon), Deron Bear ([Marian Bear Memorial Park](#)), Roy Little ([Friends of Mission Bay Marshes](#)), Isabelle Kay ([Kendall-Frost Mission Bay Marsh Reserve](#)), Sally Romoser (consultant to [Campland on the Bay](#)), Julie Fontaine (Trestles Environmental), Mark Carpenter ([KTU&A](#)), and David Hogan ([The Chaparral Lands Conservancy](#)), to name a few. I would also like to thank my co-coordinators Simon Breen and Caitlyn Toropova who came on board to help keep all of my projects afloat since the birth of my second child, Carter, in April 2014. I have learned so much from all of you and I hope we will have opportunities to collaborate again in the future!

Best wishes and happy holidays-



Kelly Makley
Rose Creek Watershed Coordinator 2011-2014

A note from Ann Van Leer:

Please let us know if you are interested in helping carry this vision forward by donating to support the reinstatement of our awesome watershed co-coordinators. We can also use volunteers to help out with project management, outreach and grantwriting. Contact me if you would like to get involved.

Unveiling in 2013.
Photo by RHS Photo.



Lucia Stone from SDG&E presents \$25,000 to Debby Knight, Kelly Makley, her daughter Clare and "Rosie" the bobcat for the Sense of Wonder Project in 2012.

Three-part Film Series Explores the Rose Creek Watershed

Jim Karnik Films recently completed a three-part film series entitled *Exploring the Rose Creek Watershed*. Funded by the [California Department of Conservation](#) and [San Diego EarthWorks](#), these films explore the watershed's creeks, canyons and marshes with local experts dedicated to its protection and highlight how they're all connected. This project supports Recommendation 2.2.7 for environmental education in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#).

The films are posted on our [home page](#) and can also be accessed at the links below. We hope you enjoy them and share them with other nature-lovers!

[Exploring the Rose Creek Watershed: Rose Canyon Open Space Park](#)



Jim Karnik films Debby Knight as she hikes Rose Canyon

[Exploring the Rose Creek Watershed: Marian Bear Natural Park \(San Clemente Creek\)](#)

Open Space Park.

[Exploring the Rose Creek Watershed: Lower Rose Creek](#)

Rose Creek Watershed Invasive Plant Control Project Update

The \$375,000 project to control non-native, invasive plants in the watershed is nearly complete after two years of work. Under the direction of [The Chaparral Lands Conservancy \(TCLC\)](#), habitat restoration professionals controlled 14 acres of pampas grass and other invasive plants and 8.7 acres of invasive Eucalyptus trees and Brazilian Peppertrees. Additionally, [North County Transit District](#) controlled 3.4 acres of pampas grass along the railway corridors in support of the project.

"This was a big job by a great team that resulted in removal of some really nasty invasive plants from a total of over 26 acres in the Rose Creek Watershed", said David Hogan, Director of TCLC.



A special project took place on this slope along the north edge of University City High School (UCHS). Over 1,000 diseased, invasive eucalyptus trees were removed to restore this area of Rose Canyon. UCHS students are studying the site and documenting the return of native plants and wildlife. [Click here](#) for more information on this project.

TCLC obtained all necessary permits and approvals and contracted with a licensed and insured company to carry out the invasive plant control. Workers treated the plants by applying glyphosate-based herbicide (similar to Roundup) which were certified by the US Environmental Protection Agency for use in and around wetlands). Plants were left standing for 2-3 months to allow the herbicide to fully treat the roots and any re-sprouted plants were re-treated when needed. Dead plants located within 100 feet of structures were cut and removed to reduce fire risk and dead trees were removed from the flood control channel in lower Rose Creek.

Native plants and wildlife will soon recolonize the treated areas, resulting in multiple benefits including decreased fire risk, reduced erosion, and improved water quality. TCLC is seeking funding to treat non-native plants in additional areas that were not reached.

This effort was funded by a \$330,000 grant from the [Wildlife Conservation Board](#) and a \$45,000 private donation from [Friends of Rose Canyon](#). Project partners include Trestles Environmental, Mark Carpenter and [KTU&A](#), [RECON Environmental](#), [Habitat West](#), [Land Conservation Brokerage](#), and Friends of Rose Canyon. The Rose Creek Watershed Alliance and TCLC would like to thank all of the public and private landowners who allowed our contractors to access their property to conduct this important work. The project supports Recommendation 2.2.2 for controlling invasive species in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#). [Click here](#) for more information about this project.

Canyon Slopes Need Native Plants, Not Iceplant

Article provided by Rose Creek Watershed Co-Coordinator Caitlyn Toropova

As anyone who has driven along SR-52 between I-5 and I-805 knows, there are some steep canyon slopes in our watershed. You also probably know that many of them are covered in iceplant [in our watershed, mostly Hottentot Fig (*Caprobrotus edulis*)] or manicured with palm trees from far off tropical lands. These slopes were landscaped like this over forty years ago, back when it was thought that iceplant controls erosion, spreads easily, reduces fire risk and requires little water. It turns out that only two out of four of these beliefs are true. Iceplant does spread easily, and it does require less water than some other plants.



Hottentot Fig Iceplant
(*Caprobrotus edulis*)

However, it turns out that iceplant is bad news for creeks and canyons. [University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources](#) reports that iceplant's near impenetrable shallow rooted mats and underlying thatch can become a fire hazard. Additionally, iceplant has such a shallow root system that it does not drain when it is overwatered. This results in a slick mat that can erode the entire top layer of soil and create a landslide down the slope [sources: [Las Palitias Nursery](#) (Escondido), [California Native Plant Society](#), and [Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter](#)]. Iceplant is often watered via antiquated sprinkler systems that spray anything and everything around it, resulting in much higher water use than needed. Fertilizers used on the iceplant can result in negative downstream effects for nearby creeks, and it crowds out native plants which provide critical habitat for local wildlife.



A nasty landslide down a canyon slope covered in non-native iceplant.
Photo from www.cnps.org.

What are we doing about it? Recommendation 2.2.2 in the [Rose Creek Watershed Opportunities Assessment](#) suggests controlling invasive non-native species such as iceplant. In 2012, an outreach effort to the property owners along the canyon slopes was initiated as part of the [Rose Creek Watershed Invasive Plant Control Project](#). At the same time, multiple incentive programs began appearing from the City, County and State as drought conditions worsened. It soon became obvious that converting iceplant-covered slopes to natives would benefit both the watershed and the region by reducing erosion, increasing native habitat, and conserving irrigation.

This effort will require the cooperation and dedication of the property owner or Homeowner Association and funds to remove the iceplant, update the watering system, and plant and mulch the new plants. Ongoing education and involvement of the community is also key. With the help of partners with pre-existing outreach programs such as [Think Blue San Diego](#) and the [California Native Plant Society](#), we are already discussing a partnership with a potential property owner who will review their native plant options as they embark on a landscape retrofit.

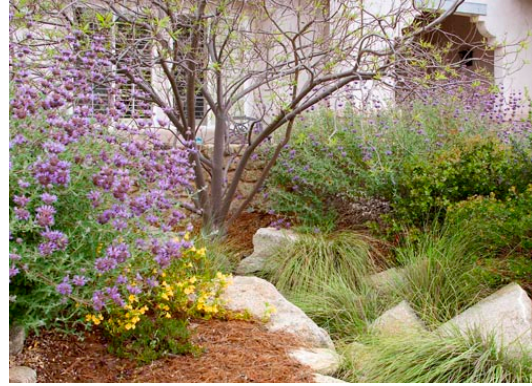
What are our next steps? We envision this effort to begin locally with several "success sites" and then for it to scale up to San Diego County and Southern California. We would expect each site to take at least two years to reach full maturity, at which point we would begin to see many benefits including reduced watering, increased habitat, improved erosion control, and better water quality in

Rose and San Clemente creeks. Contact [Caitlyn Toropova](#) for more information on this effort.

California Native Plant Society's 2015 Garden Native Tour March 28-29, 2015

Can you achieve beauty and environmental bliss in your garden? Yes! The [California Native Plant Society's](#) self-guided tour features 18 spectacular, real-life gardens that demonstrate successful conservation philosophies while nourishing your senses. This year, intoxicating blooms and inspiring designs will be found in middle San Diego, ranging from Poway to Clairemont to Old Town.

Visiting these gardens is a great way to learn about strategies to use in your own yard to help protect the watershed in which you live. Visit the [Garden Native Tour](#) for more information or to volunteer.



One of the 18 gardens featured in the 2015 Garden Native Tour.

Photo by James Soe Nyun.

Mission Bay Marshes in the News



Photo taken from CBS8.com.

The new mural painted on the side of the trailer at the Mission Bay Marshes was recently featured in a news segment on CBS 8. It features Roy Little of [Friends of Mission Bay Marshes](#) and muralist Celeste Byers. Click [here](#) to view the video.

[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
 Rose Canyon Recreation Council
 San Diego Audubon Society
 San Diego Canyonlands
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Partners:

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