



Ecological Concerns Inc.
Restoring the habitats that sustain us

and
Central
Coast
Wilds
Nursery



Popular Articles

28,000 Plants Leave for Napa

Plant of the Quarter

Employee's Favorite Trail

Irrigation Redesign Saves \$60,000

San Jose Native Median Designs

Edith Park Ribbon Cutting

Spring Events

Spring has officially arrived but months of spring-like weather allowed us to get a head start on the spring propagation. We had a very busy winter getting several long term nursery projects delivered to large restoration sites. In addition to 28,000 plants for the Napa River project (article below) we delivered 15,000 maritime chaparral plants to Fort Ord and 55,000 plants to ALBA 3M Ranch Wetland Restoration project. That's a lot of site specific native plants!

It may not be too late for puddle-jumping, but we will need a very wet Spring to make up for the dry winter. California is headed for drought conditions this summer, and from my conversations with water district staff around the Bay area, water use restrictions will soon be imposed.

Water restrictions mean it is time to tear out the old water thirsty lawn and install a native plant landscape or a native lawn alternative. Depending on the water district that you live in you can get for \$1-\$3 rebate for removing your lawn and replacing it with drought tolerant plants. Give us a call and we will work with you to design and install your new native landscape.



Puddle jumping anyone?



New native lawn installation requires water 2x month once established

28,000 Plants Left the Nursery for Napa River

Central Coast Wilds has been involved with the efforts being made to restore the Napa River floodplain. CCW propagated over 28,000 native plants. It took about a year to collect the seeds and cuttings from 17 different collection sites around the Napa River Watershed. Plants started sprouting at the nursery in 2011 and grew strong over the next two years for their future role in restoring the floodplain.



Cindy and Hilary Loading Up



Alison loading *Rubus ursinus* for delivery

For restoration projects CCW takes a number of precautions during the early stages of development to ensure that plants have a successful transition from the nursery into the wild. Cindy Hudson, nursery manager, says, "It is important not to coddle the young ones too much, they have to grow strong to survive." Watering, fertilization, and pruning is carefully timed to ensure the strength of these plants.

The Napa River starts high above Calistoga at Mount St. Helen and winds 55 miles to the San Pablo Bay. Over the past 100 years the river has been significantly altered to accommodate agriculture and population growth. Farmers and rancher built levees to cut off historic floodplains and wetlands to seasonal variances and expand their land production. The narrow river scoured deeper with every passing year. Fish populations dropped dramatically due to the deep river channel.

It was decided that the removal of the levees would provide better habitat to the migrating fish. After the levees were removed, the city of Napa and local farms were burdened with frequent flooding. With all the changing circumstances, vineyard owners and the county came together for a plan of action. State and federal grant money was pooled together and the final restoration project in Napa is planned to restore over 15 miles of river and 135 acres of wetlands. It is estimated to be one of the largest on going projects in California.

Plant of the Month

Hazelnut, Filbert

Corylus cornuta, Betulaceae

Relatives: Red Alder (*Alnus rubra*),

White Alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*)

Francisco Bay

Range: Northwestern California, Cascade Range, Sierra Nevada, Central Coast, San Francisco Bay Area; all the way to British Columbia



Central Coast Wilds recently potted up several *Corylus cornuta* into treepot containers, making available a species that has been out of stock for a few years now.

Collecting *Corylus* seed was an adventure: scouting the perimeters of shallow riparian floodplains tangled with Poison Oak and CA Blackberry and traipsing the steep cliffs at the edge of oak savanna. *Corylus* prefers moist shade, but succeeds, despite its delicate appearance, in a variety of sun exposures and moisture conditions.

Across the Santa Cruz Mountains, catkin adorned *Corylus cornuta* is beginning to open its buds. Grey matrices of dormant branches have begun to glow green at the nodes, where the hairy new leaves soak in their first nourishing waves of sunlight. Beside the *Corylus*, on the shallow banks of the creek, Dogwood sends up its small pointy leaf bunches. In the upper story of foliage, Redwood, Bay Laurel, and Coast Live Oak are all reviving.

In the garden, *Corylus* will grow well in dappled shade, and in sun as long as there is sufficient soil moisture during the summer. It can grow from 6 to 20 feet tall. *Corylus* goes dormant during the winter, sprouting catkins late winter and then breaking bud early in the spring. For the rest of the year, its thin, hairy, serrate leaves illuminate with sunlight in the shady under story, bringing a mysterious beauty to the garden.

Corylus hazelnuts are edible and delicious, and provide good fodder for birds and squirrels as well as people. The twigs can be pruned and used for fiber or paper-making purposes.



CCW Employee's Favorite Trail:



John Carins, Lead Estimator

Berry Falls Loop at Big Basin SP

"because of the remoteness, the elevation change and the distance you cover, you get to see a fair amount of old growth and a variation of ecosystems and microclimates."



Berry Falls Loop

ECI Saves Builder Over \$60,000 with Redesigned Irrigation System

Ecological Concerns Inc was awarded the contract to perform riparian enhancement work at for the new Heritage Estates on San Felipe Road in San Jose. During the project planning phase, ECI identified an opportunity to save the builder, L&D Construction, over \$60,000 on their habitat mitigation costs. The irrigation system in the initial blueprints proved overly complex for the needs of the riparian restoration and ECI succeeded in designing a less expensive and more efficient system.

The original irrigation design specified a high-end weather based controller and permanent irrigation lines for the proposed riparian habitat and native plant buffer areas. John Cairns, lead project estimator, pointed out that "although smart weather-based controllers are now the standard for commercial landscapes that have water intensive needs, they are not the optimal choice for habitat restoration projects when the goal is to have no irrigation water after 3-5 years".



ECI selected a Leit solar controller which allow us to complete the project before the site power grid was in place. We then redesigned the irrigation system to use above ground drip in order to avoid potential root damage to the existing riparian trees and to allow for complete removal of the system once the new plants are established.

We successfully completed the installation of the project in January 2013. Monitoring and maintenance will continue through 2017.



Riparian enhancement area behind heritage Estates

Seasonal To Do List: Spring Landscape Maintenance

Propagation with Cuttings

Find your favorite woody natives and take cuttings.

There are several methods for success with cuttings.

Take the opportunity to do a little research depending on what you are trying to duplicate.

Amend Soil for Spring Bed Preparation

It is always a good idea to add a portion of compost to the mix when you are planting. Compost serves as a natural time released fertilizer. It helps break up clay soils, compaction issues, and helps build nutrients in the ground.



Pinch and Deadhead Flowers

You can multiply your blooms in the spring if you keep up with deadheading your favorite flowering natives. Once you start to see the flower wilting, remove the expiring flower. It will transfer the plants energy away from producing seed towards trying to blooming again. If you want to keep the seeds or let mature seeds take flight, do not do this.

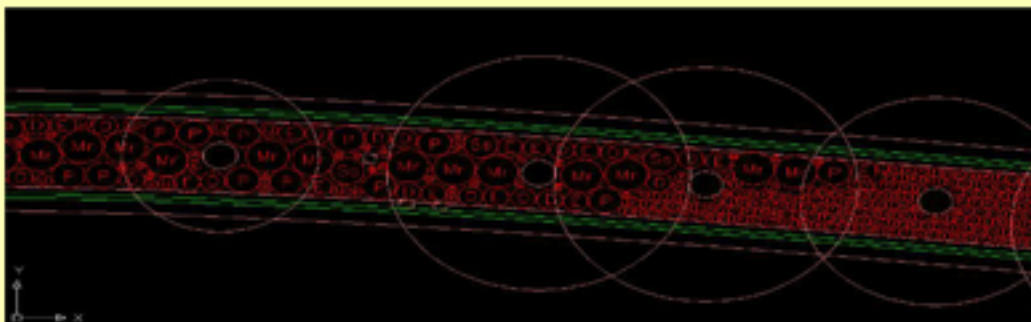


City of San Jose Hires ECI for Design of Street Medians with 100% Natives



Rendering of Meridian Drive planting plan using Google Street View

The City of San Jose has hired ECI's Dakotah Bertsch for the redesign of three of its city's medians to mimic their once native surroundings. The new medians are part of a pilot project that will include a modern design with 100% native plants. The project aims to show that native landscape can reduce the city water and maintenance costs. The project will be installed along Hellyer Ave., San Jose.



Auto CAD Drawings use for Construction

Edith Park Riparian Restoration Celebration and Ribbon Cutting

The Town of Los Altos Hills celebrated the completion of a successful riparian restoration project along Adobe Creek in Edith Park. Ecological Concerns was recognized for our lead role in fund raising, designing, permitting and installing the project. ECI will continue with maintenance and monitoring for several year.



Those who attended the ribbon cutting were the Mayor Gary Waldeck, Council members Courtenay C. Corrigan and John Harpootlian, former Council member Jean Mordo, water district members Patrick Kwok and Brian Schmidt, and ECI's senior project manager Jon Laslett.



Commemorative Adobe Creek Tshirt