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**NOAA AWARDS \$100,000 TO SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK
WATERSHED COUNCIL**

The San Francisquito Creek Watershed Council, a project of Action For a Sustainable Earth (Acterra), has received a \$100,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for habitat conservation. The project is funded by the Community-based Restoration Program within the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries). NOAA is an agency of the Commerce Department.

Community members will join the San Francisquito Creek Watershed Council in a hands-on project to help recover the San Francisquito creek steelhead population. By removing major barriers to upstream and downstream migration, the project will improve fish passage and help steelhead reach their spawning grounds. Fish passage improvements will be paired with education and stewardship opportunities for local watershed residents. The San Francisquito Creek Watershed includes the cities of Palo Alto and Menlo Park, Calif. Also, the creek is one of only a handful of streams in the San Francisco Bay Area that still supports a viable native population of threatened steelhead trout.

“NOAA and the Bush Administration are constantly supporting efforts to partner with local groups to improve the condition of our environment,” said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “This grant, coupled with community action, helps us work toward necessary habitat restoration in this impaired watershed.”

The project involves the removal of a concrete grade control structure measuring 10 feet wide by 35 feet long. “For one hundred years we built infrastructure without thinking about fish needing to get up and down the creek. Now we're going back and reversing 100 years of degradation,” said Phil Chang, coordinator and project director of the San Francisquito Creek Watershed Council.

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The Community-based Restoration Program (CRP), a financial and technical assistance program within the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, promotes strong partnerships at the national, regional and local level to fund grassroots, community-based activities. The NOAA-funded projects provide strong on-the-ground habitat restoration components that offer educational and social benefits for people and their communities in addition to long-term ecological benefits for fishery resources. More information about the CRP can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration>.

Each year, NOAA awards approximately \$900 million in grants to members of the academic, scientific and business communities to assist the agency in fulfilling its mission to study the Earth's natural systems in order to predict environmental change, manage ocean resources, protect life and property, and provide decision makers with reliable scientific information. NOAA goals and programs reflect a commitment to these basic responsibilities of science and service to the nation for the past 33 years.

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.