



PROJECT UPDATE
TENNESSEE HOLLOW
Revitalizing the Watershed

AUGUST 2007 • PRESIDIO OF SAN FRANCISCO

VISION

Imagine discovering the very beginnings of a creek—watching water seep from the ground, and tracing the watercourse as it travels downhill to the Bay and Pacific Ocean.

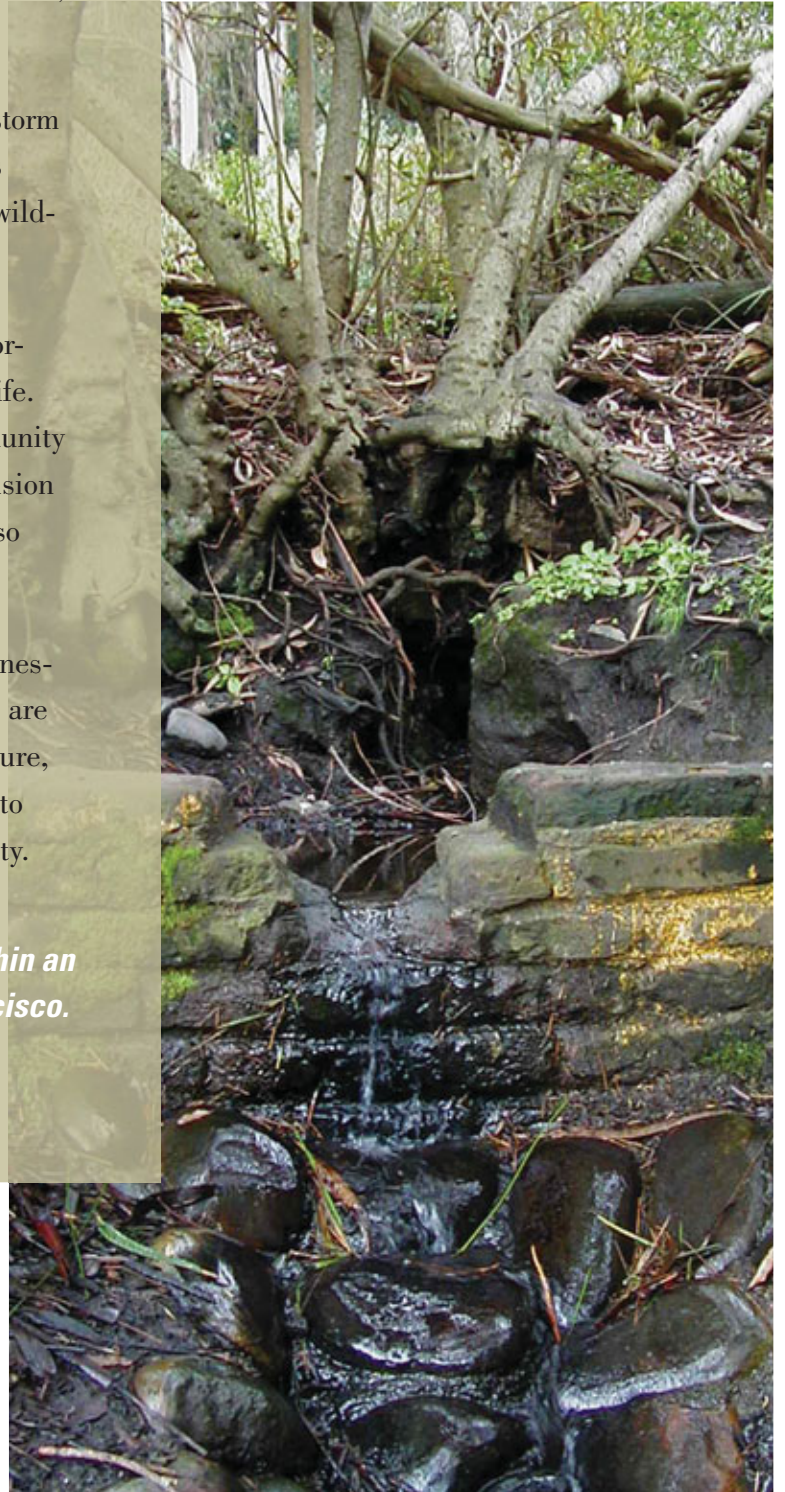
Along the way, legacies of the past—an old brick bridge, historic dams, an adobe site occupied two centuries ago by colonial families—tell the story of this water, this land, and the many lives that have shaped it.

Though mainly hidden today beneath roadways and storm drains, the flow of the creek persists. The small areas where it surfaces support some of the most valuable wildlife habitat in San Francisco.

The watershed is framed by historic Presidio neighborhoods and serves as a home to both people and wildlife. Its forests, trails and playgrounds welcome the community and provide respite from the urban landscape. Our vision is to revitalize, interpret, and care for the watershed so that future generations can also enjoy it.

Restored with the help of community volunteers, Tennessee Hollow is envisioned as a vibrant place where all are welcome. A place where children can experience nature, learn about history, or simply play outdoors. A place to find solitude or explore the beginnings of our great city.

Now imagine being able to experience all of this within an afternoon hike a few miles from downtown San Francisco. Imagine the Tennessee Hollow Watershed.

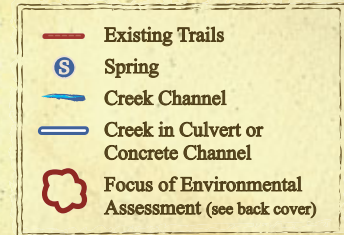
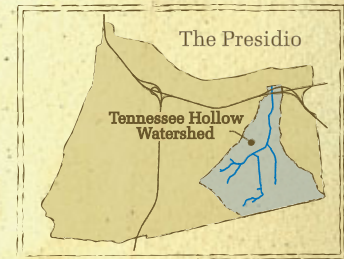


Tennessee Hollow Watershed 2007

BACKGROUND

Tennessee Hollow is the Presidio's largest watershed. Its springs played an important role in the history of the area, and today support highly valuable wildlife habitat.

Every major Presidio planning effort has identified Tennessee Hollow as important in the park's future. Work has already begun in the watershed. Rare grasslands are being restored, majestic forests are being rehabilitated, trails are being built, and an area of the creek has already been brought back to life. Please join us as we continue with the transformation of this unique San Francisco landscape.



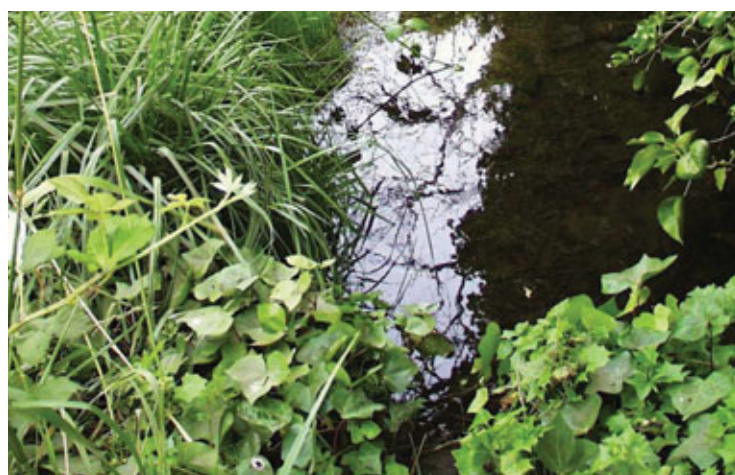
EASTERN TRIBUTARY

restoring riparian habitat

There are three creek branches or ‘tributaries’ in the Tennessee Hollow Watershed. Each flows through a north-south facing valley before merging into one watercourse and continuing on to Crissy Field Marsh and the Bay. The easternmost branch, referred to as the Eastern Tributary, has the most water and also contains the longest stretch of creek and riparian habitat in the watershed today. (See map at left.)

This small segment of remnant creek is teeming with wildlife. Upstream, however, it is a different story. The Army made many changes to the creek channel, filling in large areas and directing the creek into underground storm drains.

The Presidio Trust now hopes to bring this area of the creek back to life by relocating Morton Field, daylighting the now buried creek, and creating a new creek-side trail for the public to enjoy.



A White-crowned sparrow and a view into the remnant creek.



In this visual simulation taken from Morton Street, looking northeast towards the existing playing field and parking lot, you can see how the area may change following creek restoration.

WHAT IS RIPARIAN HABITAT?

It is the habitat found along rivers, creeks and streams. It provides shelter for plants and animals that couldn't survive elsewhere, and helps improve water quality. Riparian habitat is one of the most threatened habitat types in California.

EL POLÍN

exploring nature & history

El Polín is the only named spring at the Presidio, and has a rich past spanning Native American, Spanish-colonial, Mexican and United States history. Today, the spring supports both resident and migratory birds, and the surrounding area is enjoyed by nearby residents, park visitors, and school groups.

In 2003, archaeologists from Stanford University made a significant discovery just north of the spring, uncovering the foundations of an adobe structure; the first known colonial residence in San Francisco outside of El Presidio. This site is believed to have been occupied nearly two hundred years ago by two locally prominent families—the Briones and the Miramontes.

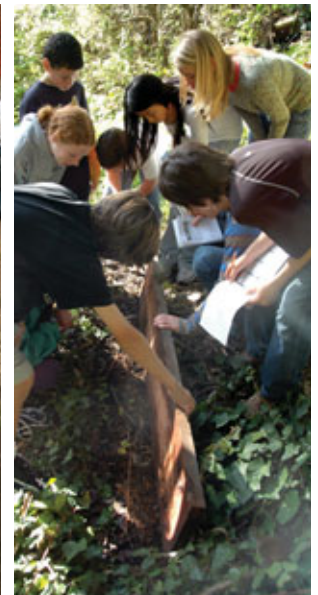
The Presidio Trust plans to preserve the special character of this area, while making several landscape changes. The southern end of the roadway which circles in front of the spring will be converted to a boardwalk and trail. Interpretative gardens and other facilities will explain the history of the site, and the ecology of the watershed. The habitat surrounding the springs and loop will be restored. Proposed improvements to the picnic area and a public restroom will make visitors more welcome and comfortable.



The view of El Polín Loop from above.



Archaeologists explore the foundations of a 200-yr old adobe house.



Kids explore nature at work.

HISTORIAN J.N. BOWMAN DISCUSSING JUANA BRIONES

"She secured her own lands and managed them herself.... She had the native Spanish hospitality and dignity, which endeared her to her people to the end of the Mexican regime and secured for her an abiding place in the memories of the American pioneers. No other Spanish or Mexican woman in California is known to have reached her position and maintained it through life as did this widow." The Historical Society of Southern California Quarterly, September 1957

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

The Presidio Trust is seeking public comments on an EA which analyzes the environmental effects of the proposed changes at El Polín, the Eastern Tributary, and other park enhancements in the upper watershed. If you would like to receive a copy of the EA, please call (415) 561-4183. Comments are due by October 9, 2007 and can be submitted:

By Mail: Presidio Trust
ATTN: Tennessee Hollow Project
P.O. Box 29052
34 Graham Street
San Francisco, CA 94129-0052

By Fax: (415) 561-2790

By E-mail: thproject@presidiotrust.gov

If you prefer to provide your comments in person, please join us on October 2, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the Presidio Officers' Club (50 Moraga Avenue) for a public meeting on the EA document.

TOURS

The Trust will host a series of guided hiking tours and a hands-on volunteer day in September. For more information, visit our website <http://www.presidio.gov/trust/projects/tenn/> or call (415) 561-5414. The National Park Service also provides monthly docent-led tours of Tennessee Hollow, call (415) 561-4323 for a schedule.

PLAYING FIELDS

Thank you to all who participated in our recent public planning effort focused on creating a vision for Presidio playing fields. The public input we received was instrumental in our effort to balance resource conservation and community use, and helped inform this next phase of watershed revitalization. For more information, see: <http://www.presidio.gov/trust/projects/fields.htm>.



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