

Mr. Bruce Wolfe
Executive Officer
SF Bay RWQCB
1515 Clay Street, Suite 1400
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Wilder Project; No R2-2009-0017

Dear Mr. Wolfe,

I am writing on behalf of the request for funding by the Friends of the Orinda Creek. I am the AP Environmental Science teacher at Miramonte High School in Orinda. We are very fortunate to have the creek run through our school site. It provides an excellent example of the riparian habitat and an important part of our curriculum.

The first field study students complete is a carbon sequestration study of the riparian habitat. Students learn to identify riparian trees, and to also study impacts of the school and community on the riparian ecosystem. Students are always amazed at the amount of trash that accumulates over the summer in the creek area. We spend part of the week picking up the trash.

Students learn about both ocean and freshwaters systems. We study our estuary and how it has changed over the years. Understanding the relation between how we live and the impact on our creeks is an important lesson. This week we are collecting water samples for our limnology study of the creek. Students were amazed at the amount of water that was rushing down Moraga Creek today following the rains. (see picture)

I am also teaching students how to identify bay laurel that is infected with the fungus that causes SOD (sudden oak death). Students have been studying the number of bay laurel in the creek and how many have evidence of disease. I am doing this work in conjunction with a research at UCB who is monitoring the spread of SOD in Northern California. Working in the creek, on a rainy day like today, is an educational opportunity to teach about how this fungus is spread from the bay laurel to the oaks. I surveyed the same creek just 4 weeks ago and the increase in infection is troubling.

Our creek needs help. We have areas that are covered with invasive ivy. This would be a wonderful opportunity to have students engaged in creek restoration and replanting. We also have some areas with poison oak. We need help in getting it removed.

I have had students in the past that have been responsible for painting all the storm drains with a reminder that they drain to the bay. I have many students who are involved in conservation projects around the community. The greatest conservation project is right outside my classroom. Let's help make this conservation part of the AP Environmental classroom experience. We need your help.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Denny
Miramonte High School

Barbara J. Denny
May 28, 2010