



For Immediate Release

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East Bay Trout Gain Access to the Bay for the First Time in 100 Years

Thursday 1/8 10:00 AM Event at Wildcat Creek in North Richmond
[Meet at Verde Elementary School, 1006 Giaramita St., Richmond, adjacent to the creek.
Take Hwy 880 to San Pablo Dam Rd. Exit.]

Oakland, CA - January 6, 1998 – This Thursday morning, members of the East Bay Conservation Corps (EBCC) and the grassroots group Citizens to Restore Urban Creeks will remove the last obstacles to migrating steelhead trout in Wildcat Creek, enabling the landlocked fish to move in and out of the bay for the first time in a century. Representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (who built a 200-foot fishway through a concrete flood control channel for the fish to migrate through) will be on hand, along with members of the Citizens to Restore Urban Waters project.

Pete Alexander, fisheries specialist for the East Bay Regional Park District, believes the achievement represents a major hope for the steelhead, which were recently given endangered species status by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “The trout have been on the increase in Wildcat Canyon because of the high rainfall in recent years. They’ve been migrating downstream. Now they’ll be able to spawn as anadromous (fresh and salt water) fish. So we are both helping a threatened species while reestablishing a habit that had been lost.”

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“Citizens to Restore Urban Waters has worked over the past two years to restore 1 1/2 miles of Wildcat Creek,” says Ann Riley, executive director of the Waterway’s Restoration Institute, which envisioned and coordinated the effort. “It has been a true partnership between local volunteers, the East Bay Conservation Corps, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the Contra Costa Public Works Department.”

On Thursday at 10AM, members of the EBCC will use fire hoses to unclog the fishway and remove grates that have prevented the fish from moving downstream. The fishway has been clogged up with debris, stuck in grates that were originally installed to hold back sediment from the lower channel and to provide for the critical flow of water.

The East Bay Conservation Corps (EBCC) founded in 1983, was one of the first in an emerging national movement of urban community service organizations for youth. The Corps promotes youth development through community service and service-learning and is a catalyst for social change. By actively engaging young people in their education while addressing environmental and social issues, EBCC enhances the participants’ academic, leadership, and life skills, self-esteem, civic responsibility, and environmental awareness. *EBCC’s K-5 Charter School will open in the Fall of 1999. We’re currently in the process of looking for a site for the school; raising money to develop certain unique parts of the curriculum; forging partnerships with arts, business, and cultural groups; and defining the “universal ethics” that the school will be based on.*

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Directions to Thursday Event: Take 880 North to San Pablo Dam Road/Richmond Exit. Go Left (west) on San Pablo Dam Road to San Pablo Avenue. Turn Left at Church Street; pass San Pablo Civic Center; go right onto Market Street. Take Market Street over the railroad tracks into North Richmond. Turn Right on Giaramita Street, which dead ends at Verde School. On-site contact: Betsy Reeves of the EBCC.