

URBAN CORPS OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY

REPORT: SAN DIEGO UNIFIED PORT DISTRICT

Chollas Creek Restoration-PORT (SSRT)

Third Report May 30, 2009

Date June 2nd, 2009

Submitted by Sam Lopez Director of Environmental Services UCO

The Urban Corps of San Diego County, in collaboration with the Groundwork San Diego Chollas Creek and the Sierra Club is in the first initial stage of the “**Chollas Creek Student Stream Restoration Team**”(SSRT) and has involved local students and residents in environmental education as well as the **San Diego Canyon Lands “Friends of Chollas Creek”** community group. .

Funding sources for project: San Diego Unified Port District \$82,640.00

Urban Corps of San Diego County:

As of November 2008, the Urban Corps of San Diego County (UCO) has removed a total of 765-cubic yards of Non-native vegetation, i.e. Arundo, Caster Bean, Tamarisk, Salt Cedar and other invasive plants as well as debris i.e. styrofoam, shopping carts, and 1-mattresses, and removed **3100 sq feet of graffiti**. UCO also assisted the Cesar Chavez SSRT, Cesar Chavez Club, the City of San Diego Urban Forestry Department plant 50 1-gallon-native coastal live oaks.

UCO focused on the sections of Chollas Creek known as the Main Branch-specifically on sections of National Avenue to the East and Harbor Drive to the West. Sections of Chollas Creek Main Branch also included the intersection of the South Branch, located West of Interstate 5-and 15. The intersection of these two branches of the creek is a major point of urban debris accumulation, and if not cleared and maintained on a regular basis, flows into San Diego Bay during storm events.

Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek Student Stream Restoration Team:

Groundwork San Diego - Chollas Creek (GWSDCC) has continued to support the efforts of our Chollas Creek stewards. We just completed our final round of watershed education activities with the nearly 400 students from Cesar Chavez and Emerson-Bandini Elementary Schools. The **Student Stream Restoration Team** (SSRT) have enjoyed their 2nd round of three in-class and three field trip experiences at the 38th & Alpha Street Park. GWSDCC, in partnership with the San Diego Urban Corps and our SSRT have successfully created a native species open space that supports a wetland habitat that has attracted a variety of wildlife. Students have identified several bird species, including: Blue Herons, Snowy Egrets, Ducks, Coots, Red Winged Blackbirds and a Peregrine Falcon.

They also understand the connection between a healthy watershed, native food sources, and the increasing number and variety of animals.

GWSDCC's relationship with the community and particularly with the schools in this neighborhood has been greatly enhanced through our partnership with the Urban Corps. Urban Corps members have been working along side of our 4th & 5th grade students. The students enjoy the mentorship and help with planting that the Corps provides and the Corps members appreciate opportunity to "give back" to their neighborhoods.

GWSDCC was able to partner with another organization and leveraged funding to provide the SSRT project to the after-school programs at these same schools.

The partnership between Urban Corps and GWSDCC has strengthened the community awareness of the importance of environmental health. On April 25th we participated in the Creek to Bay Cleanup. We gathered at South crest Park and Recreation Center and removed trash and debris along the Creek to the tidal waters west of 38th & Alpha Street Park. We also implemented our strategic trash strategy grant that we received from the Unified Port District called "Come Dump on Us." The community filled two 40 yard roll off dumpsters with debris that probably would have ended up in Chollas Creek. We had over 100 volunteers on that Saturday morning which included NAASCO and their environmental services team.

San Diego Canyon lands: "Friends of Chollas Creek" Community Involvement

On March 29, 2009 San Diego Canyon lands Inc. and Urban Corps established an MOU to fulfill the community-organizing and local stewardship obligations of the subject Port District grant. One goal is to develop a local "Friends Group" of on-going volunteers to provide stewardship of Chollas Creek from National Avenue in Logan Heights to San Diego Bay. Through tabling events, extensive door to door outreach and a cleanup event held on April 25th, 2009, San Diego Canyon lands has established a new friends group called "Friends of Chollas Creek – 33rd and National Avenue". The tabling events include public outreach at the Heritage Day Festival February 28, and the Balboa Park Earth-Fair Celebration, April 19, 2009 where we distributed flyers for the up-coming April 25, Creek to Bay cleanup. (Note: Door to door residential outreach 2900 – 3200 block Newton Ave. and surrounding streets; residential between 3000 and 3300 Logan Ave. north to Ocean View Blvd.; Select Main Street businesses and select National Ave. businesses (2900 to 3500 block).

The new Friends Group now has forty two members including teen agers that enthusiastically helped at the April 25th cleanup event. Two of these youth earned community service credit for their hours of work.

One resident that lives immediately adjacent to the creek at 33rd St. and National Ave., Javier Hernandez, has a view of the creek from his home. He has taken on a leadership roll to organize his community to participate in the new friends group. He also watches over the creek reporting any illegal dumping when it occurs. In April, he reported illegal dumping of old pallets and debris by a nearby business to the City's code enforcement department and the eighth district council representative.

The highly successful April 25th Creek to Bay Cleanup event was conducted in collaboration with I Love a Clean San Diego. Group leader Javier Hernandez served as site captain and helped with organizing the event. Other volunteers and the project manager helped with door to door

flyer delivery and bi-lingual one-on-one conversations with residents promoting the cleanup event and the establishment of the new friends group. A forty cubic yard dumpster was donated by Allied Waste and was filled with trash and green waste. Hazardous waste that we removed included about 2 gallons of motor oil (left at the creek in open containers), electronic equipment, and 2 tires. We had 23 adults and 6 youth participants at this highly successful event. Of these volunteers, 19 were local residents including 13 from the Urban Corps youth program. We combined for a total of 121 volunteer hours at this event.

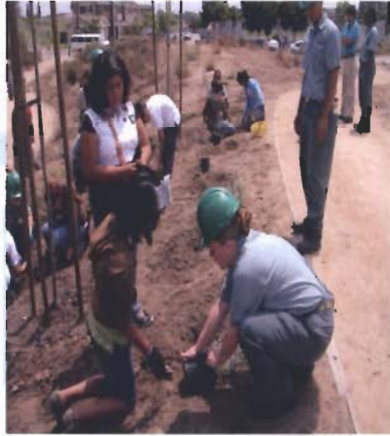
Summary of Volunteer hours during the Reporting Period

Description of Volunteer Activity	Number Vols.	Hours Served	Total Vol. Hours
Door to Door Outreach,	3	7	21
Tabling at Earth-Fair	2	6	12
Tabling at Heritage Day Festival	1	5	5
Creek To Bay Cleanup Apr. 25	14	4	56
Creek To Bay, Urban Corps Vols.	13	5	65
Creek To Bay Coordination	1	4	4
Creek To Bay Photos and Organize	1	8	8
TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS			171

Pictures:



San Diego Canyon Lands Inc "Friends of Chollas Creek" Community Service Event.



Chollas Creek Student Stream restoration Team "SSRT" Cesar Chavez Elementary School.



Urban Corps of San Diego Planting Native Plants with Cesar Chavez Elementary SSRT as well the removal of debris, graffiti and non-native vegetation.



Urban Corps of San Diego County removing invasive vegetation, litter & debris and providing community service with Canyon Lands Inc.