

Fall Work Days Enhance and Protect Clear Creek



Students and resource professionals gathered at Fuji Park on November 6 to study the creek and improve the streamside (riparian) buffer.



A beautiful new red maple will help shade the creek and filter storm water before it runs into the creek.

Silver State Charter School and Carson Middle School students gain knowledge about runoff and best management practices.



Jim Alexander works to clean up a pile of shingles that were illegally dumped near Climbing Rock. Other volunteers helped with the shingles and with projects at Fuji Park.



Over a hundred students, resource professionals, and community volunteers descended on Fuji Park November 6 and 7 for Clear Creek Watershed Council's annual work days.

On Friday, November 6, students from Carson Middle School and Silver State Charter School rotated through five stations taught by resource professionals and high school students. They learned about water quality, why we care about the insects that live in the stream, why the stream needs to be protected from stormwater and urban runoff, why birds need Clear Creek during their migration, and how a vegetated streamside buffer protects the creek.

Phyllis Atkinson, eighth-grade science teacher at Carson Middle School, and Lynn Stephenson, science instructor at Silver State Charter School offered their students the opportunity to come out to Fuji Park and learn about the stream. High school students worked

with the resource professionals to learn about their stations so they could teach the eighth-graders, who were given journals at the beginning of the day that they used to make notes and reinforce what they were learning.

On Saturday, members of the Clear Creek Watershed Council came together at Fuji Park to continue the students efforts. Debris was removed from the stream channel and a break was cut through a make-shift berm so that the stream can access its floodplain during high water without causing damage. One of the younger, stronger volunteers took on the task of removing an old barbecue grill that had been built next to the stream. Other participants removed noxious weeds and planted seeds for desirable grasses and plants.

A resident of the upper watershed took a crew up to

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Climbing Rock and removed a large pile of old wood shingles that had been illegally dumped. That task alone took the three men over 4 hours, four truck loads and the use of heavy equipment. If anyone has any information about this illegal dumping or any other in the Clear Creek area, please contact Margie Evans at 720-0162.



At the end of the second day every dumpster in the park was full, two beautiful trees were planted in the creek buffer and a group of Carson City students better understood watershed functions and needs. The Clear Creek Watershed Council's work days were a success!

Fourth Annual Carson River Snapshot Day

On October 17 seven Carson High School biology students and 3 dedicated community members gathered behind the new horse barn at the Fuji Park fairgrounds. The group collected water quality samples, searched for noxious weeds and anything else out of place, and took physical measurements of the creek at the same place it has been sampled for the previous three years.

Members of the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group recruit volunteers each year in September. If you would like to join next year's group, be on the lookout in the summer edition of this newsletter for more information.



2009 Snapshot Day participants at Clear Creek.

Fishing Pond Nears Completion



The new fishing pier will be a popular spot for anglers.

A tour of the urban fishing pond in early December revealed much progress since construction began in October. Wetland plants were placed along the pond fringe, the pond is nearly filled with water and a path around the pond has been constructed. If all goes well and conditions allow, the pond may be open to the public in June.

In our last newsletter we highlighted some of the best management practices that are being utilized in the construction and we recognized some of the project funders. However, we failed to mention the biggest funders and it is with great appreciation that we proudly recognize the Carson Water Subconservancy District, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, Nevada State Parks Recreational Trails Program, Nevada Department of Wildlife, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, and many public and private donations.

We also gratefully acknowledge C. K. Baily for his extraordinary fundraising efforts, Western Nevada Resource Conservation and Development, the Carson City Board of Supervisors, and the Carson City Parks and Recreation Department. Without all of the above and many more this project would still be on the drawing board instead of nearly ready for us to enjoy.



Native emergent plants will help the pond's water quality..

Carson River Film Festival

Thursday, January 28, 2010
6:30—8:30 pm
Carson City Sheriff's Building
911 E. Musser St.

The public is invited to attend a free film festival to view student multimedia projects that explore how Carson River riparian areas benefit the community and need to be protected by the public. The festival will be held on January 28 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Carson City Sheriff's Office, 911 E. Musser St. Refreshments will be served, and a feature film about stream restoration will also be shown.

The video and slide-show projects are contestants in the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group's "Keep Streamsides Greener, Keep Water Cleaner" contest, which will award a cash prize of \$500 in each of four categories.

The contest was open to students in the ninth through 12th grades of Carson and Douglas high schools and Carson Valley and Pau-Wa-Lu middle schools. The entries had to be one to three minutes long, and were required to address this theme: *How Carson River riparian areas benefit you and your community, and how to get people involved in riparian area preservation.* Entries were judged on creativity, effectiveness, quality of execution and compliance with contest rules and specifications.

The contest working group includes the Carson River Coalition's Education Working Group, the Carson Water Subconservancy District, the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and River Wranglers. Prizes will be awarded to the best individual video, team video, individual animated slide show and team animated slide show. Also, each winning entry's sponsoring teacher will earn \$100.

Dr. Susan Donaldson, a water quality expert with Cooperative Extension and a contest organizer, said the contest gives students an appreciation of how riparian areas provide important wildlife habitat and help keep the river clean by filtering runoff.

"Healthy, diverse riparian areas store water and help reduce floods, filter water and keep it cool and provide a place for recreation," said Donaldson, who takes field trips to the river with certain classes. "They add to our quality of life."



Fresh Veggies Anyone?

Have you ever been on a hayride? Have you ever had the pleasure of eating carrots, tomatoes and melons that were harvested only seconds earlier? Have you ever been up close to microbes working feverishly? Well, if you answered no to any of these questions, you weren't on the Full Circle Compost and Hungry Mother Organics tour in September. Craig Witt and Mark O'Farrell hosted the Clear Creek Watershed Council so that we could see what they do and how they respect the creek and the earth in their work.

They collect material for composting from a variety of sources, including Whole Foods Market in Reno and Trader Joe's. They turn the organic waste they collect into nutrient-rich compost that we can use in our gardens. Beyond all that, they turn some of their compost into organic garden beds that are in greenhouses and large garden patches at the prison farm. On those garden beds they grow carrots, lettuce, tomatoes, melons (watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew), herbs, flowers, and much more. These products are supplied to some area restaurants and are available during the summer at the local Farmers Market. For more information refer to fullcirclecompost.com and www.hungrymotherorganics.com.

Many thanks to Craig and Mark for their time and expertise. The fruit and veggie samples at the end of the tour were also greatly appreciated!

Watershed meetings are at 6:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month. The general Council meets on alternate months from the Leadership Group. Call Margie at 720-0162 for more information.

Upcoming Events

- **Monday, January 18, Carson Valley Trails Assn. Annual Meeting and Social. Genoa Town Hall, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** — Hear the latest news about the Genoa Foothill Trail System and other CVTA projects.
- **Thursday, January 28, Carson River Film Festival. Carson City Sheriff's Building, 6:30 to 8:30.** — Come enjoy the creativity of local students and get a new perspective on watershed issues. This is our Council's watershed meeting for the month, so lets turn out!
- **Tuesday, February 9, Clear Creek Leadership Group** — Call Margie at 720-0162 for details.
- **February 19-21, Eagles & Agriculture** — Visit www.visitcarsonvalley.org or call 775-782-8207.
- **Tuesday, March 9, 6:00 p.m. Watershed Council Meeting — Carson City and Douglas County Stormwater Reports.** Carson City Fire Station, 777 S. Stewart Street. Call Margie at 720-0162 for details.



If you have comments or an idea for a topic, please send to:
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