

Healthy Creeks...

Landowners are the most important stewards of San Luis Obispo County creeks and streams. Whether your creek flows continuously or just during storms, it is important to protect it year round.

Through proper creek care, landowners can increase property values, prevent erosion problems, reduce flooding, protect water quality, and enhance fish and wildlife populations.

Higher Property Values

Property values adjacent to creeks increase in areas with healthy streams due to:

- Stable and aesthetically pleasing stream banks;
- Reduced flooding;
- Recreational values; and
- Enhanced fish and wildlife habitat

Enhanced Fish & Wildlife Habitat

A healthy creek has:

- Stable, vegetated banks;
- Healthy trees and shrubs;
- Natural streamside debris;
- Minimal erosion;
- Cool and clear water;
- Pools, fast running water, clean gravel; and
- Robust wildlife populations

Additional Resources

- Removing Hazardous Waste call 1-800-cleanup, and enter the ZIP Code
- Pollution Reporting Hotline (805) 781-5544
- California Department of Fish & Game www.dfg.ca.gov/1600
- California Native Plant Society www.cnps.org
- Regional Water Quality Control Board www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast
- Central Coast Salmon Enhancement www.centralcoastsalmon.com



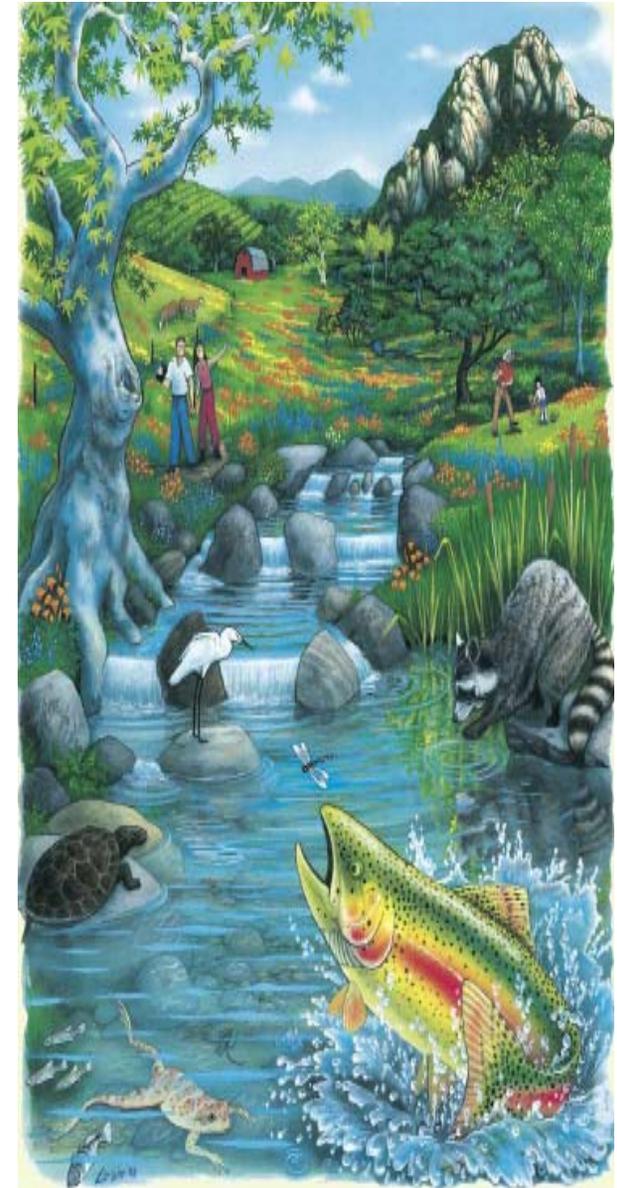
Sammy the Steelhead Trout



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San Luis Obispo County Creek Care Guide



***Healthy Creeks -
You Can Make A Difference!***



Tips for Landowners

Lawn and Garden Care

- Redirect sprinklers to avoid overwatering paved surfaces such as sidewalks and driveways.
- Reduce use of pesticides and fertilizers. Compost.

Car Washing

- Wash vehicles or equipment on your lawn, or take your car to a commercial car wash. Even biodegradable soaps are toxic to fish.
- Drain water from pools & spas into sanitary sewer systems.
- Sweep driveway and sidewalks. Don't hose.

Septic Systems

- Check your septic system every other year and don't dump solvents, phosphate detergents, or hazardous materials.

Pet Waste Management

- Pick up after your pet
- Put kitty litter in the trash; do not flush.

**Never dump anything
down a storm drain!**

How YOU Can Care for YOUR Creeks

Protecting the Riparian Corridor in Urban and Rural Settings

- Healthy stream banks reduce flood damage, filter contaminants, reduce erosion, and shade aquatic habitats.
- Adhere to setback and buffer requirements.
- Never use tires or concrete rubble to repair erosion. These may contain toxic materials or be washed away. Take steps to avoid impacting streamside areas during construction.

Keep Your Stream Channel Healthy

- Avoid removing natural woody debris, unless it poses a hazard.
- Avoid diverting, damming, or taking water directly from streams. Practice water conservation; use water wisely.
- Never dump trash, lawn clippings, gasoline, motor oil, antifreeze, battery acid, detergents, or wastewater from carpet & upholstery cleaning near streams or storm drains.
- Remember – storm drains connect directly to streams and the ocean!

Reduce Fertilizer & Pesticide Use

- Follow instructions carefully; avoid use prior to rain events.
- Consider using compost; wood chips and mulch to reduce weeds and retain moisture.

Streambank Vegetation Helps Control Erosion

- It may be appropriate to remove invasive plant species (e.g. arundo, cape ivy, ice plant) and replace with native vegetation such as willow, cottonwood, and sycamore.
- Before removing or planting vegetation along streambanks, seek expert advice (see Additional Resources section on back panel).
- Contact your local Department of Fish & Game (DFG) before doing any vegetation clearing or soil removal.
- Large scale clearing of creek vegetation may harm some streams and may be illegal.
- Minimize activities during rainy season; take steps to reduce erosion while working.
- Contribute your time and energy to volunteer restoration projects in your local area.