



Return of the Natives

watershed.csumb.edu/ron/

A Program of the Watershed Institute, California State University Monterey Bay

RON Highlights

- Watershed Festival April 22
- A “Must Read” Book
- Much Happening in Creeks of Salinas: sculpture—service events
- Weekend Planting at Ft. Ord + Carmel Lagoon
- Community Garden on Soledad Street
- Carr Lake Project
- Educator Workshops

Watershed/Earth Day Festival—April 22---To Honor Student Environmental Service

RON is excited to be hosting this day of sharing and awards with students, teachers and families. Our goal is to acknowledge the hard work that our youth are doing to improve local environments through service projects like water quality monitoring, planting natives and picking up litter. The day will go from 10am to 2pm..

- Student presenters
- Complimentary Lunch
- Creek Walks
- Live Music
- Free Shirts
- Awards

RON to help leaders and teachers prepare for Watershed Festival though a 4 Hour workshop

Saturday, February 18 from 9-1 at the Watershed Institute. Participants will receive a free satellite image map of the

Monterey Bay watersheds, a \$50-\$100 stipend, and lots of RON support. For More information on the Watershed Fair call 582-3687 or Bree_Candiloro@csumb.edu

A Must Read: “Last Child in the Woods-Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder” by Richard Louv

Every person who cares about our children, the environment, and the future of the planet needs to read this book!!! It is worth reading the hardcover version and not waiting for the paperback which will be out in the late spring. This book is an absolute must for all educators who believe that our children deserve more.

Watershed Themes Guide CSUMB Youth Science Programs

Watershed themes have become a major conceptual organizer for many of CSUMB's science oriented

youth outreach programs, such as RON, RISE, and Camp SeaLab. Understanding our role/our niche/our place in our local watersheds leads students, teachers, and the general public into greater understanding of how the world works. The three programs have evolved, over the past six years, to be CSU Monterey Bay's main science education outreach programs, but it wasn't until late November 2005 that staff from the three programs sat down to plan collaboratively around a potential source of grant funding. RON came to the table with 12 years experience in school and community based habitat restoration, RISE (Recruitment in Science Education) brought 6 years of intensive and continuous mentoring of local middle and high school youth around science/math/study skills, and Camp SeaLab brought 5 years of successful day and residential marine based camping and youth leadership experiences. Hopefully our collaborative planning will result in much needed funding for all our programs and more coordinated hands-on in-class, fieldtrip, afterschool, and science camp experiences for local children. We have found that the 'Watersheds to the Sea' themes clearly resonate with all our audiences. After all, exploring and learning about what is near at hand, what directly affects our daily lives, and in our cases what is so beautiful and fragile is of utmost relevance.

Creeks of Salinas: Little Funding but Great Projects

Return of the Native's partnership with the City of Salinas in the Creeks of Salinas is entering our 13th year! Our partnership has taken on many faces depending largely on funding for both RON and for the City. City Staff who have continued to be leaders in preserving the natural features of the Creeks of Salinas include: Dale McCormick, Denise Estrada, Jim Pia, Ann Camel and Ron Cole--they are true park heroes. RON's Urban Streams funding from the CA Department of Water Resources which has funded our restoration work in the Sanborn, Gabilan and Lower Natividad Creeks has ended after four great years and we are squeaking into 2006 funded by a CA Department of Transportation EEM grant to bring more interpretative and community participation projects into the Creeks of Salinas work. This is what is in store for 2006

- Art in the Parks--three new sculptures appearing along Natividad Creek Bikeways
- New interpretive signs to appear
- A 'Creeks of Salinas' video almost finished
- Natividad Creek Stewards bring new volunteers to Parks
- A Creeks of Salinas brochure highlighting Creek trails
- Weed Warriors protect Creeks from invasives
- Great Weekend events planned for Spring 2006

- Watershed -Earth Day Festival to honor student service
- Nature painting combats graffiti

Join Us for Service and Fun along the Natividad

*Sat. Jan 28 Bird Watching along the Creeks-meet at Natividad Creek Park 9:00 am
 *Sat February 25 Planting, Weeding , Mulching—meet at Upper Carr Lake, 10 am
 *Sat March 11 Planting, Weeding, Mulching—meet at Upper Carr Lake, 10 am
 *Sat April 15 Eco Egg Hunt and Frog Celebration. Natividad Creek Park , 10 am
 *Sat. April 22 Watershed/Earth Day Festival. Natividad Creek Park 10am

Park Sculptures Appearing

Local stone artist Charley Abildgaard will soon be unveiling the second of his huge stone sculptures in Natividad Creek Park, the watchful cougar at Cougar Overlook. Charley's first sculpture, "Duet" or the "Trilling Frogs" is located at the side of the Park's Frog Pond Area. In addition, RON's own Bree Candiloro, is just putting the finishing clay touches on a scale model of the Creeks of Salinas—from the Gabilan Mountains to the Monterey Bay. Bree's model will be bronzed, mounted in rock, and placed at the East Laurel Street entry to the Upper Carr Lake Basin on the Natividad Creek. It is hoped that all three sculptures will be in place by April 2006 and that RON and possibly some local art group will sponsor a grand opening for all three this

spring. Readers---we would love to have someone help us coordinate this event.

New Interpretive Signs

Accompanying the giant sculptures, new interpretive signs featuring the artwork of RON restoration coordinator, Sue Shaw and illustrator Emma Burns will be placed in the park. A new, stronger and more vandal proof production medium will be employed, hopefully extending the life of the signage.

Creeks of Salinas Video at long last!!

International videographer and part-time RON staffer, Jordan Plotsky, is back in the area for a couple of months completing a video of the history of and hopes for the Gabilan Watershed, the watershed of the Creeks of Salinas. Footage of RON planting events will be included as will interviews with local teachers and leaders. The premier showing of this exciting documentary will be scheduled this Spring.

Colorful "Creeks of Salinas" Brochure Coming

Local Graphic Artist, Kathy Addington, is creating a brochure for the Creeks of Salinas. Vivid colors will be featured as will a great aerial photo/map showing the creekside trails. We feel that Kathy's use of primary colors will bring a vibrancy and excitement to the map and messages inside. We also feel that the bold colors of the brochure will not only draw

people's attention but will propel people to use, to keep and to share the wonderful interpretive resource.

Painting over graffiti in Natividad Creek Park

A sad repercussion of Salinas' funding crisis has been the rise of graffiti throughout the City and in the parks. Natividad Park Steward, Kary Shender, has become the Huck Finn of the Park enticing volunteers of many ages and artistic abilities to keep the Park free of graffiti. Beautiful paintings of nature and flowers adorn the Park's Freedom Blvd tunnel and formerly graffiti covered rocks are sporting naturalistic and fanciful animal images. Artists have included more than twenty local youth--who throw down their bikes and take up paintbrushes, 50 members of the Salinas Valley Community Church (Pastor Mark Simmons) and CSUMB artist Mark Erickson. Once so lovingly and beautifully painted, Kary is finding that the tunnel walls, rocks and other flat surfaces are less likely to be tagged.

Weed Warriors Guiding Creek Restoration

Natividad Creek Weed Warriors, Abby Gwinn, Zeke Bean, and Puffin Gwinn have been patrolling the Creek corridors looking for particularly invasive weeds that need to be controlled to insure a more natural path to restoration. They were recently trained in the use of a backpack flamer which when directed to new weed seedlings essentially boils

water in the leaf cells causing them to explode and killing them!!! The Weed Warriors have their eye on a nasty outbreak of Italian Thistle near Upper Carr Lake and are waiting for damp and rainy days to use this hot new tool. The Warriors will also be concentrating their efforts battling other thistles, mallow, cocklebur, wild mustard and radish.

A Green Heart for CSUMB?

RON Director and Watershed Institute Co-Director, Laura Lee Lienk is working with the CSUMB Provost Marsha Moroh, University Planners and University Advancement to design a "Green Heart-El Corazon Verde" for the campus. This huge growing and learning core to be located south of the new Library may feature community gardens, RON mother greenhouses, and most importantly a sustainably built welcome center/RON and Farm to School headquarters/outreach center. This is a huge step for CSUMB and we are thrilled to be at its core.

Carr Lake Project Advances --- Your Involvement Needed

Guided by Kurt Hunter, the new Carr Lake Coordinator, the Carr Lake Project is seeing a firm foundation laid in the local community. Kurt can be seen all over the community attending meetings and setting up private conversations. If you want to learn more about this really important RON spin-off program come to one of the following meetings:

*Mon, January 30 7-8:30 pm
Sherwood Hall, North Main
Street, Salinas

*Mon, Feb 27 7-8:30 pm
Alisal School District Office,
East Market St at Towt

*Mon, March 6 7-8:30 pm
Notre Dame HS, Salinas

For more information contact
Kurt_Hunter@csumb.edu or
8331-582-3323

RON Partners with State Parks at Carmel Lagoon

Be one of the first people on
this newly restored area (it is
still closed to regular visitors).
Enjoy live music while
planting and chatting with
friends. Hwy 1 immediately
after Carmel River Bridge.
Sat. January 21 10am-1pm
Sat. March 18 10am-1pm
Sat. March 15 10am-1pm

Community Garden on Soledad Street

CSUMB's Service Learning
Institute has received HUD
funding to be a partner in the
revitalization of Soledad Street
in Salinas. A major aspect of
the work includes
establishment of a community
garden on City owned land at
the corner of Lake and
Soledad Streets. Designed to
bring beauty, CSUMB service
learners, and community
members to this blighted street
the garden will also serve as a
site for job training and life
transition for people who call
Soledad Street home. An
advisory committee is being
formed and a major 'barn-
raising' type event is being
planned for April 2006. Iris
Peppard, the RON outreach
coordinator, and Laura Lee
and are currently guiding this

project along. For more
information contact
Iris_Peppard@csumb.edu
582-3686.

Ft. Ord Plantings Near Vernal Pool

This year's Ft. Ord plantings
are slated to be immediately
adjacent to a beautiful vernal
pool. Come out and help
protect this wonderful treasure
by planting natives and enjoy
live music.

Saturday, February 4
Saturday, February 18

EE Professional Development Schedule for Spring 2006

* Sat. Feb 4. Using
technology to teach about the
environment. CSUMB Bldg
53. 9am-4pm

* Sat. Feb 25 Environmental
Justice and Children's
Literature 9am-4pm

*Sat. March 11 Population
Connections-People and the
Environment 9am-4pm

*Sat. March 18 GLOBE-
Atmosphere and Plant-
Landcover Protocols 9am-4pm

*Sat. April 8 Natural
Disasters-Earthquakes and
Fires 9am-4pm

*Fri-Sat May 5-6
Environmental Ed Certificate
Program Premier Workshop

*Sat May 13 Environmental
Grant Writing for Educators
9am-4pm

*Sat. June 10 Project
Learning Tree 9am-4pm

All Trainings at the
Watershed Institute, Bldg 42
and are free to all who register

3 days prior to training. CEU
Credits available. All
workshops are part of
Environmental Education
Certificate Program. To learn
more about these trainings
contact:

Laura_Lienk@csumb.edu or
582-3689
watershed.csumb.edu/ron

Service/Youth Groups Needed for Creeks of Salinas

RON wants to partner with
local service, church, youth
and community groups in all
our restoration projects. Plan
ahead and bring your groups
to our weekend plantings. We
can even arrange for after-
school planting events.

CSUMB Students Essential for RON work

RON student assistants make
all the RON programs so
special. RON wants to
spotlight the following
students who have been with
us for several semesters: Juan
Perez, Miranda Chatigny,
Brianna Bieschke, Esa
Morrison, Jen Kozumplik,
Patty Sidhom, Zuli Arevalo,
Mariano Lara, Adrian Lopez,
Abby Gwinn, Puffin Gwinn,
Zeke Bean, Claudia Pineda,
Lisa Melendy, and Katherine
Freitas

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