

Return of The Natives

In this edition Special Offerings:

- *Natividad Watershed Hike*
- *A Day with Linda Yamane*
- *RON/AAW Teacher Workshop*
- *Natividad Creek Options*

WIN a FREE Native Plant by completing survey (This is really a bribe!!!)

All RON teachers will receive a free native plant (gallon size) for your school garden by filling out the survey chart accompanying this newsletter. RON is trying to access what is happening in your classrooms to supplement the field and greenhouse experiences which we facilitate. This information, plus any stories or student work will help us as we gear up to write more grants for future funding of RON projects. Please read the instructions on the inside sheet, fill in the chart and get it



back to Laura Lee to receive your free plant.

Please Spread the Word RON Introductory Teacher Training:

September 25-26. Friday 5-9 pm and Saturday 8:30-5:00.

This once yearly teacher workshop will feature: an introduction to watersheds and the very important role that native plants play in their protection, field research studies in Natividad Creek Park, designing school gardens with Landscape Architect, Joni Janecki, and seed collecting and propagation techniques with the Watershed Institute greenhouse crew. This year's workshop will be closely tied to the

Adopt-A-Watershed (AAW) curricular model and many of the AAW units will be on-hand for review and use.

The cost for the two day training is \$55 which includes; dinner Friday, breakfast and lunch Saturday, and the large binder of RON materials. The Friday session will take place at the Watershed Institute, CSUMB, and Saturday will be in Salinas in Natividad Creek Park and in school gardens and greenhouses.

Last date to register is September 22. Advance registration is critical as we will cancel if we have fewer than 12 participants.

Contacting RON

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c/o Watershed Institute,
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The Restoration Season Looking Back to 1997-98 Looking Forward to 1998-99

From the perspective of hindsight, this past planting season may have been RON's best--though as the last plants went into the ground in April many of us were really ready for a break. After all, RON students, teachers, volunteers, and staff had planted over 68,000 native plants on 25 planting days, on 14 Ft. Ord Sites and 3 Salinas City Park sites. Twenty RON schools came out at least once to plant for a total of 2400 student planting days contributed. When coupled with 400 planting days given by the general public the total of individuals working with the RON restoration team comes to almost 2500. From pre-schoolers, to middle and high schoolers, from boy scouts to church groups this means that **each volunteer planted an average of 27.2 native plants**. Millions of thanks to each of you for a great year.

Funding for the RON partnership with the BLM/Ft. Ord came from the National Fish and Wildlife Federation, while funding for RON's work in Natividad Creek and Cesar Chavez Parks came from contracts with the City of Salinas.

As we look forward to the 1998-99 planting season our restoration opportunities will again be focused on the Ft. Ord Public Lands, Natividad Creek Park, and in Toro County Park. Dates for the plantings will be published in mid autumn.

RON Summer '98 a Success

This summer 6 hard-working high school students and recent graduates participated in the annual summer restoration internship. The transplanted and planted thousands of native plants, collected native seeds, and hosted several youth groups for days of work and fun. One of the highlights was their work in the Children's Discovery Garden at NCP. Their final week was culminated in a wonderful formal presentation of their native plant monitoring data in front of a panel of scientists. Participants were: Erik Castro (Salinas High grad), Justin Sterling and Gordon Ross II (Seaside High), Arma Ermita and Alicia Karabetyan (Monterey High), and Christina Avila (Alisal High). Supervising the team were Amanda Quintero, Drew Ready, and Clara Sander all of CSUMB, and Bruce Delgado, Roberto Maceras, and Chuck Haugen of the BLM. Some participants were funded by

the Monterey County Summer Youth Employment Program.

Groups and Schools Asked to Adopt Parts of Children's Discovery Garden in NCP

If your group, family, or school would like to officially adopt small parts of the Children's Discovery Garden, such as "The Sensory Garden", "Ants World", or "Arroyocito", please contact Laura Lee. Your commitment will be for a minimum two hours of independent work each month. We will train you on the care of your section and will provide replacement plants.

Groups or businesses are also being solicited to adopt parts of the garden with the donation of funds for small professionally done marker signs and more native plants.

WANTED: One Classroom to Design Natividad Creek Park Interpretive Trail Guide

RON wants to work with one classroom in the production of a trail booklet highlighting interesting natural spots in the park. This class must commit to visiting the park at least two times to compile data and then sufficient class time to produce a professional guide. It is possible that a CSUMB Service Learning Student will

be assigned to this project. Interested?? Call Laura Lee

**Follow the Watershed:
Hike From Fremont
Peak to Natividad
Creek Park**

Saturday, November 7

Join local adventurer and Hartnell Faculty member, Ed Mercurio on an exciting cross-country hike through our adopted watershed. We will meet at 8:00 am in the main parking lot (by the bathrooms) of Natividad Creek Park and then arrange carpools and shuttles to the top of the watershed at Fremont Peak State Park. Since this will be an exploratory hike over a distance of about 15 miles we can not predict timing so please allow all day for this adventure. Bring a lunch, water, sunscreen. Wear sturdy shoes or hiking boots and your favorite protection against weed seeds. Call 582-3689 to reserve a spot as we want to keep the group smaller than 20 people.

**Linda Yamane to
Present All Day Session
on Oct. 24**

Linda Yamane, local Native American author, educator, and basketmaker will present a session on collecting processing native plants for use in basketry. RON

members have been invited by the California Native Plant Society to participate in this special day in the Ft. Ord Public Lands and at the Watershed Institute of CSUMB. Call Bruce Delgado at 394-8314 to reserve a space.

**Coastal Clean-Up Day
September 19**

Participate as a class, a family, or as an individual to clean and census the trash on our area's beaches. You can go to any area beach, or you can join RON's partner organization, Gateway Centers, at Wharf #1 in Monterey. Meet at 9:00 am. For more information call. 647-4259.

**"River of Words"
Environmental Poetry
and Art Contest**

RON teachers are encouraged to enroll their classes in this annual poetry and art contest on the theme of watersheds. Using observation, listening, reading, discussion, and a variety of tools like research, analysis, and oral history to collect the metaphors and analogies that form poetry and art, "River of Words" encourages students to be creative. The deadline for entries for the contest is February 15. For more information check out their website at <http://www.irn.org> All entrants receive

personalized Watershed Explorer Certificates and winners receive prizes of books, art supplies, and trips to Washington, DC. Teachers Guide materials and books of previous years winning material are available by contacting International Rivers Network, "River of Words Project", P.O. Box 4000-J, Berkeley, CA 94704 (510)-848-1155

**Celebrate Arbor Day
1999**

"Trees are Terrific...for Shelter and Shade!" is the theme for the 1999 Arbor Day poster contest for 5th grade students. Free curriculum kits explaining the theme and rules are available to 5th grade teachers. Contact Kay Antunez, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Box 944246, Sacramento, CA 94244-2460. TEL: 916-653-7958.

**RON Teachers also
LASERS Leaders**

Lynn Hamilton, Dana Mills, and Debbie Delatour to name a few are only a few of the many RON teachers who are incorporating elements of both programs into their curricula. LASERS, Language Acquisition through Science Education in Rural Schools, is a wonderful inquiry based language arts-science program

being implemented in many local schools. Contact Lynn Hamilton at 455-1115 for more details.

North Monterey County High School and RON receive grant

The Coastal Conservancy has awarded RON \$13,000 to work on restoration projects in the Moro Cojo Slough with science teachers and students from North Monterey County High School. The money will be used to support NMCHS teachers as they develop new curriculum, to purchase classroom monitoring supplies, binoculars, and field guides, and to support the RON restoration specialists as they work with the students. Moro Cojo Slough is immediately adjacent to the high school and is a critical wetland area in North Monterey County. RON teachers, Tracy Matfin, Brenda Dotson, Keith Gonzales, Dierdra Roberts, Ryan Holland, and several others are involved in this exciting school site program.

RON Partners with Friends of Monterey County Parks in Toro Park

A handicapped accessible nature trail is being constructed near the Environmental Center (about

one mile from the entrance to the park). RON will be working with several area Girl Scout troops in the design, planning, and planting of native plants along the trail and at two interpretive nodes on the trail. This summer Girl Scouts, RON interns, and staff have been collecting native seeds from Toro and propagating them in our greenhouse area. Once the winter rains begin several Girl Scout planting events will be held. Involvement will be open to all area Girl Scout Troops.

GLOBE Training Planned for Winter

Vice Presidents Al Gore's flagship program, GLOBE, "Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment" will make a Monterey County debut this January when a four (4) day workshop will be presented. at CSUMB. Students in the GLOBE program conduct hands-on experiments that have real scientific significance. Their daily or weekly observations, together with those from other students and scientists from around the world detail an environmental picture of the globe. The training will be at no cost, but 4 release days must be paid for by the district as well as the cost for the monitoring

equipment which ranges from \$400-\$600. If you are interested in being placed on the advanced registration list for this workshop please contact the RON Office.

RON Greenhouse News

The new RON "Greenhouse Mom" is Sharon Updyke. Sharon. Sharon will be coordinating the growing programs at RON's nine school greenhouses including RON's newest at Harden Middle School. This year we hope that 22,000 plants will be propagated by students.

RON Changes

RON's two founders, Peter Moras and Bruce Stewart are both leaving the area this fall. Peter will be defending his doctoral thesis and then going to live for a while in India. Bruce Stewart has taken a position as Director of Family and Community Programs at the Lawrence Hall of Science in Berkeley. He and his family will be moving to the East Bay Area. RON shall surely miss the dedication, creativity, and most of all vision of these two fine people.

Then to add to the overall confusion at RON, RON Director, Laura Lee Lienk will be getting married this fall!