

# CHEER up your Creek!

COASTAL HABITAT EDUCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION  
(CHEER)

NEWSLETTER OF THE PAJARO RIVER WATERSHED 11-04-2017



**Morgan Hill Substation**

## David vs Goliath

A line in the sand was drawn October 2016 by CHEER Founding President Herman Garcia at the intersection of Watsonville Rd. and Redwood Retreat Rd. This area is also the confluence of "Little Arthur" creek and Uvas Creek. "Lil Art" is the top producer of Steelhead Trout in the Pajaro River Watershed. The Uvas Creek sub-basin

provides the drinking water for Gilroy and is the major migration route for Steelhead once they enter south county from the Pajaro River. There are 9 tributaries to Uvas Creek which provide precious spawning gravel. PG&E proposes to build a substation at this location which prompted the attack and challenge by Garcia at a public forum at Fortino Winery in front of 200 rural residents. "This is the most sensitive area in the watershed, what are you thinking?" demanded Garcia to thunderous applause from an overflowing crowd.....cont'd page 7

## **OUR MISSION**

**Coastal Habitat Education and Environmental Restoration, also known as CHEER, is a registered 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization with a fresh take on environmental programming. It's mission is to restore coastal ecosystems but to do so in a way that safeguards resource based local economies. CHEER recognizes that varied interests are represented in local economies. It believes that assessing and reconciling these interests so that each group profits by cooperation in restoration efforts, is the key to more effective environmental programming.**

## **OUR OBJECTIVES**

- 1) Clean watersheds that once teemed with wild Steelhead Trout but where Steelhead Trout are now listed endangered or threatened due to environmental impacts.**
- 2) Restore Steelhead populations to renewed watersheds.**
- 3) Involve the community in each step of the process to improve chances of attaining and preserving project results.**
- 4) Find ways for people to profit by cooperation and collaboration with CHEER objectives.**
- 5) Provide for CHEER's financial sustainability.**

### **BOARD MEMBERS**

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# GAVILAN COLLEGE YOUTH STEWARDSHIP



Winter flooding of 2016 closes Thousand Trails Park in Morgan Hill. Located on Uvas Rd one mile downstream of Uvas Dam on Uvas Creek at the base of the Santa Cruz mountains. The severe winter caught everyone by surprise with CHEER's Gilroy rain gauge topping out at 39 inches of rain for the winter and Summit Rd. above Los Gatos measuring 105 inches.

Thousand Trails suffered major damage resulting in park evacuation and closure. The park's main bridge was completely blown out and would have to be replaced before the park can be reopened. The park owns approx. 1/2 mile of stream channel. Post flooding left the channel littered with flood debris. The plan was to assist park management with creek cleanup.

Every year Gavilan college Environmental students team up with CHEER volunteers to restore local creeks in need of cleanup. Park Officials provided a greatly appreciated lunch for tired and hungry volunteers.



## Go Rams!!!

# IMAGINE....

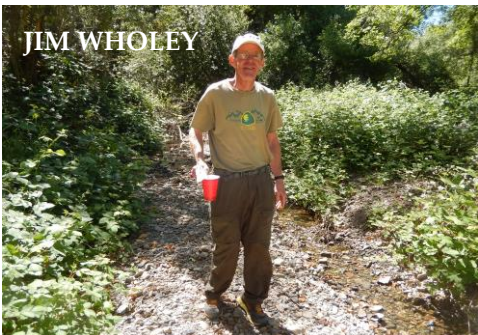


the condition of our watershed, if it were not for the dedication, sacrifice, and hard work of CHEER volunteers, agency partners, NGO's, and supporters. With too many of you to name, The Pajaro River watershed communities are sincerely grateful for your efforts!

From every piece of garbage to every fish rescued CHEER couldn't be more proud of the work you volunteers have done. You have RECLAIMED habitat, RESTORED our fisheries, and are on the road to RECOVERY!



LET'S KEEP UP THE FIGHT! ONE FISH AT A TIME, NO FISH LEFT



# CARS VANISH!!!

## EROSION



Uvas Creek rose to it's highest level since the 1980's. With flows topping over the banks in some area's causing major damage to Santa Clara and San Benito counties. Historically, land owners would anchor automobile bodies (minus engines/trans) to river banks for erosion protection. Such a location still existed until the recent flood blew out the anchors and caused massive bank failure!

The location is on Uvas Creek south of Gilroy on Old Bolsa Rd. approx. 8 cars were placed to secure the bank nearly 60 years ago. With the anchor failure 4-5 cars have **DISAPPEARED** being washed down stream. As is customary **CHEER** will eventually discover the car bodies and remove them. As a reminder, **CHEER** removed 6 autos abandoned in the Pajaro River last year and 5 boats the year before.

## CABLED CARS



## STOLEN AUTOS



This year a stolen pick-up and motorcycle were abandoned and set on fire in Uvas Creek. Removal has taken place. David Willoughby of Willoughby Farms reported a second stolen vehicle hidden in The Pajaro River on Dave's Farmland. Unfortunate for the auto thief he had what seem's like a heart attack at said location and passed on.



# Chemical Dump!!!

## Uvas Creek 2017

Four years ago this discharge was reported to the California Regional Water Quality Control Board and the chemical dump continues. Agencies have failed our watershed, and taxpayers must take a second look at any proposed tax increases and question whether the benefits of those revenues will ever improve our quality of life. Never assume that paying taxes is going to provide the necessary benefits to local, regional, state and national needs. We must demand accountability. Pay your taxes and follow the money. The negligent irresponsible behavior must.....



**END NOW!!!**

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### David vs Goliath....Cont'd

"You don't know what you are stepping into" he said after listing endangered and threatened species from Bald Eagles to Steelhead. And then citing a past case of a local wealthy resident who killed a dozen Steelhead and ending up broke and in Federal Prison, he had this to say to PG&E. "You can't beat me, I will destroy you if you ever consider putting a shovel in the ground, you mess with our protected resources you are going to fight the U.S. Attorney General's Office". CHEER soon



after the forum created a legal defense fund and hired Attorney Bruce Tichinin to defend our natural resources. With a successful defense, a resolution was provided to Santa Clara county supervisors. PG&E has stepped back, but we must remain vigilant and prepared to battle this threat if it re-emerges.

**Metcalf Substation**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!**



# Searching for a new home!

It's been 2 1/2 years since our rollout of the World Famous CHEER Coastal Watershed's Garbage Museum. The museum has traveled to preschools, elementary, middle, high schools, colleges (universities) and special events (such as Earth Days). Throughout the S.F. southbay, and Monterey Bay communities, the Museum Education Team has delivered its environmental education and awareness message to more than 40,000 visitors touring the exhibit. The museum was made possible by Steve Guerriero who suggested designing and building a custom made trailer for the exhibit. Under Steve's Supervision Jorge Ruiz fabricated the trailer! The Guerriero Family has now sold the fabrication shop and property, so it is time to search for a new location to park the trailer!!!



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## THANK YOU TO ALL!

### FABRICATORS

STEVE GUERRIERO

JORGE RUIZ

### SPONSORS

RECOLOGY SOUTH VALLEY

MONSOON MFG.

GREEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION

SOUTH BAY METALS

HOGUE BROS. COLLISION CENTER

LOWE'S

FINISHMASTER PAINT

GILROY TIRE & BRAKE

JOHNSON LUMBER/ACE HARDWARE

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO *INEZ GUERRIERO* WHO ALLOWED CHEER TO PARK THE TRAILER ON HER PROPERTY FOR 2 1/2 YEARS!!