

CREEK WEEK 2020 SUMMARY



Creek Week 2020 was shaping up to be another success story. 2,000 Creek Week brochures and bookmarks were mailed in February. The mailing, plus increased outreach, resulted in over 1,000 volunteers having registered a month before the clean-up date. Then in mid-March the reality of the pandemic hit.

The 30th annual Creek Week events were all canceled due to COVID-19. We contacted KVIE-6, CapRadio and the Sacramento Bee to change our advertising message. Every volunteer who had registered in advance received a personal email explaining the cancellation. An e-newsletter was sent to our 2,500+ contact list. Our Creek Week website and Facebook Page were updated.

2020 Art Development Going back a little further in time to the fall of 2019, like past years, Effie Yeaw Nature Center brought their *Nature In Your Classroom* program to one of the schools in the San Juan Unified School District. The fourth-grade students at Northridge Elementary School received a hands-on science lesson on animal adaptations from an Effie Yeaw Nature Center docent. The interactive nature-focused program allowed the 60 students to explore skulls, furs, or other biofacts, and meet one of the resident animal-ambassadors-- the live owl which was, of course, a big hit. This presentation was followed up with art lessons on pen and ink drawings. The students then produced beautiful animal drawings that were used to create the Creek Week 2020 art.

Adaptation By early fall 2020, people were getting used to mask-wearing, social distancing and hand-washing as things seemed to be in a pretty good holding pattern while we waited for a vaccine. The Creek Week committee organized eight clean-ups in October and also suggested that people do their own "Random Acts of Clean-Up" (RAC) in their neighborhood or an open space area. Protocols were developed for COVID-19 and for air quality (remember the wildfires?). We developed a report form for people who chose to do RAC. A little over 100 people participated in these clean-ups. Three tons of garbage were removed from floodplains, banks and dry creek beds. Thanks to the volunteers, participating park districts Fulton-El Camino R&PD and Arcade Creek R&PD, and to County Department of Waste Management and Recycling who went above and beyond under trying circumstances try out this new concept.

Looking forward to Creek Week 2021 Although the Creek Week committee has decided there will be no spring 2021 Creek Week event due to the ongoing uncertainty over vaccination delivery, we will continue Random Acts of Clean-Up and explore how we might be able to support other organized clean-ups into the fall. Please stay tuned for upcoming adaptations that will allow us to continue to support volunteer stewardship of our urban waterways. Website <https://creekweek.net/> and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/CreekWeek.Sac>

Thank you to sponsors, committee members and all the other volunteers who helped us navigate this very challenging time. We welcome your energy and participation!