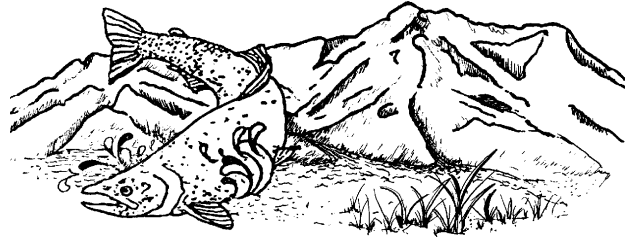


Mill Valley StreamKeepers Watershed News



Issue 23

Mill Valley StreamKeepers protecting and restoring our watershed

Winter 2024-2025

Mill Valley StreamKeepers

P.O. Box 2531
Mill Valley, CA 94942
415 388-4649
www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org

~ A 501C3 organization ~

Visit our website [.www.MillValleyStreamKeepers.org](http://www.MillValleyStreamKeepers.org)
To Keep Up To Date
And
To Learn a Bit of Our History

Join us in restoration work,
Discussing issues at City Hall,
At Community Forums

Give our number (7085) at Mill
Valley Market! The Market will
generously give us a donation.

Or mail us a check!

MVSK is a partner with the
Trees Foundation
www.treesfoundation.org

Board Meetings: usually
5 pm open to the public
2nd Monday of Jan., Mar.,
May, July, Sept., Nov.
450 Sycamore Ave.,
Mill Valley, CA
SASM Community Room
You are welcome!

**Look for our Banner over
Blithedale Avenue:
We Love Fish!
Valentine's Week, 2025**

Looking downstream from Old Mill bridge



Magnificent, graceful, long fish-Chinook Salmon, made their way up streams to our excitement

Activities of MVSK in 2024

Long Range

>Removing and replacing a bridge/culvert which creates a major barrier to fish migration and salmonid spawning in Old Mill Park remains an ongoing goal and concern. Although a request for a federal grant to accomplish this was refused in 2023, we will continue to search for a solution.

~

Habitat Restoration and Conservation

- >French Broom pulling and removal at Mill Valley Golf Course.
- >Removal of non natives and replacement with Buckeye trees, currants, and rushes in Old Mill Park.
- >StreamKeepers prepared the site and provided the native plants for restoration by North Bridge Academy students on the bank of the Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio, between the Outdoor Art Club and Mill Valley Market.
- >StreamKeepers gave our support to a restoration project of the native garden and Monarch Butterfly habitat at the Mill Valley Lumber Yard. The Monarch Butterfly population is dwindling and needs our help.
- >Volunteers including youngsters did a restoration at Old Mill & Cascade Dam

~

Education and Outreach

- >Mike Mooney, a MVSK board member has updated our website to be very informative and helpful. It has a map of the Mill Valley watershed with the names and locations of our major creeks, information about the salmon life cycle, information on native plants, copies of past newsletters, and information on upcoming restoration projects and how to volunteer. Mike also started a blog to show projects, wildlife and fish sightings and photos. Check it out at Mill Valley StreamKeepers.org.
- >MVSK provided scholarships to K-2 underserved children to attend Marin Green Play Camp. They learned about nature and to enjoy being in it, and how to respect and care for it.

~

Civic Outreach

- >We manned a table at Marin Earth Day to discuss our work with the public.
- >We responded to calls from the public about building on creek banks.

Who Cares? We All Do!

As seen by a number of entranced walkers, multiple salmon mulled around in Old Mill Creek near the historic mill in this past December. It's likely that they were Chinook salmon; people were seeing fish over two feet long. Other big fish, some Steelhead salmonids, were spotted in Homestead's creek, above city hall and out at the golf course! All are protected by the Endangered Species Act because they are threatened or endangered by extinction. Please never disturb or try to catch these or other salmon!

We reached out to fish experts like the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife about how best to protect individual fish. The consensus is to let nature decide their fate.

An obstacle prevents the salmonids from moving further upstream where they want to go, even possibly beyond Three Wells! The barrier is a concrete structure at the upstream side of the culvert under the bridge. Also the lip of the culvert keeps the fish from moving up unless there is a lot of rain and thus water in the creek. Climate change will probably exacerbate the problem

Salmonids appear by the Old Mill park/ Cascade Avenue bridge regularly. Coho have not been seen here for 30 years. There are Steelhead salmon present now in the creek. Steelhead have white lips but usually show up from Jan to March to spawn. Chinook have black lips and splotchy spots.

These salmonids are anadromous, meaning they start their life cycle in fresh water and then live in the ocean for a while before returning to their home creek to spawn.

Laura Chariton of watermarin.org, says that the Chinook are not generally or historically in this watershed. They are showing up in our creeks because they are lost hatchery fish. It is a good sign that these fish have shown up here. It means we're getting a good amount of winter rains which helps them to swim upstream. It also means that the creek is in decent although not great shape. Chariton adds that Mill Valley creeks lack complex deep pools, refugia created by woody debris, and oxygenating riffles for spawning. Our creeks are often channelized so that big storms generally wash away young fry and eggs.

As of Dec 15, 2024, the salmon were no longer in the pool near the bridge at Old Mill Park.

How to return fish numbers to early Miwok days?

The City of Mill Valley, with MVSJK and Hugh Kuhn of M.V, applied in '23 for a federal grant to remove the barriers. We plan to reapply soon hoping that the granting program will continue.

Let's all keep the water flowing into the creeks clean, and maintain a habitat rich with native structure, plants and animals.

Below: view upstream of culvert, barrier at Old Mill Park



Remediate Outdated and Damaged Components of Old Mill Creek Culvert to Restore Salmon Passage

A Proposal Submitted Pursuant to the National Culvert Removal Replacement

Thank You!

Grants, Donations, and Time to MVSJK since December 1, 2023

*=board member, associates

Anonymous

Rea Ashley

* Betsy & Dan Bikle

Jeff Boehm

Russell & Marguerite Burbank

*Laura Chariton

Matt & Susan Connelly

Larry & Peggy Davis

Mary Finnican

Pam Polite & Dennis Fisco

*Barbara Ford

*Ann & Skip Fricker

Len Gensburg

Maureen Groper

Kris Malone & Edward P. Grossman

Julie Hanft

Larry & Rebekah Helzel

Karen Kaye Jernstedt

*Hugh Kuhn

Victoria Beckner & Russell Lemle

Kathy Lowrey

*Jan & Matt Mathews

*Mike and Elizabeth Mooney

*Mayumi & Aki Omi

Colette & Jim Parrinello

Paul Matsuda & Sarah Perry

Sandra Ross

Bernadette Rowan

Barbara & Jay Salzman

Douglas & Michelle Sanders

Jane V. Singer

Anne Solem

Sue Steele

Ethan Grossman & Susanne Tilp

Laird C. Townsend

Victoria Vogel

*In Memoriam: Joyce Britt; Bill Kier

Please Support

Mill Valley StreamKeepers

MVSJK is a 100% volunteer non-profit organization working to protect and restore our watersheds. Your help is very welcome as a volunteer and/or donor. Please return this form or donate online www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org

Please include your address label if you have one.

I am enclosing a check made out to Mill Valley StreamKeepers in the amount of

\$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ Other \$ _____

I want to Volunteer with MVSJK _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____