

# WATERSHED NEWS



Issue 13

Mill Valley StreamKeepers protecting and restoring our watershed

Winter 2012

Mill Valley StreamKeepers  
P.O. Box 2531  
Mill Valley, CA 94942  
415 388-4187  
[www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org](http://www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org)

MVSK is a partner with the  
Trees Foundation  
[www.treesfoundation.org](http://www.treesfoundation.org)

Meetings:  
10:00 am  
2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday each Month  
450 Sycamore Avenue  
Mill Valley, CA

Look for our Banner:  
**We Love Fish!**  
Valentine's Week, 2013

April 22, 2013  
43rd Earth Day  
Our MVSK Work Party:  
On Saturday April 20 in  
the morning at the park  
just downstream from the  
Marin Theater Company,  
we will lead a work party  
for those of you who like  
to care for the earth. Be a  
part of Mill Valley's Earth  
Day Beautification.  
**Come join us!**

## Online Donations

When you visit our website  
you can now make tax  
deductible donations online  
and securely at:  
[www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org](http://www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org)

This donation site is sponsored  
by the Trees Foundation.

## MVSK at Work During 2012

*This article is a preview of a longer article by Joyce Britt which will appear on our website, [millvalleystreamkeepers.org](http://millvalleystreamkeepers.org). Please look for it there.*

There is no debate that the Mill Valley StreamKeepers, wants a future based on sound environmental law, conserving our core land's ecosystem values and adapting to climate changes. MVSK has taken part in the community's effort to reach consensus on a number of issues for the future this year. 1. MV General Plan 2040 2. Miller Ave. Plan, 3. Wildland-Urban interface fire code restrictions, & 4. FEMA floodplain map. Virtually all revolve around the fact that in this city, nature restricts how we live, either in the floodplain or in the hills. And global warming affects everything.

This year MVSK had a focus on four local planning decisions in our floodplain.  
**15 La Goma**

The LaGoma site has had a long and complex history which finally resulted in a partial environmental study with city council approval based on conditions of mitigation. We find that now the construction process is raising questions about proper monitoring of the mitigation measures. We have concerns about public safety as well as the effect on Steelhead Trout, a threatened species of fish.

### **30 Laurelwood (now 40 Laurelwood)**

This site renewed our concerns about city code ordinance 18, Floodplain Management and its interpretation by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission. Critical to the issue of development in the floodplain was public review of the engineering reports evaluating whether and to the extent, new construction would increase water surface elevations during flooding.

### **New Ordinance**

In October, the City Council formally repealed Title 18 and enacted a new Floodplain ordinance which replaces the existing comprehensive law with a model code of minimum standards, which are not subject to public review and replaces the DPW engineers with a member of the Planning Dept. as Floodplain Administrator. We felt this was premature considering imminent FEMA redrawing of the floodplain and a formal designation of a floodway which sets higher standards for development. Furthermore, FEMA does not project increased flooding likely to take place with climate change. Finally, the public has not seen the second Stetson report with recommendations for a watershed wide responsibility for flooding reduction.

### **The County**

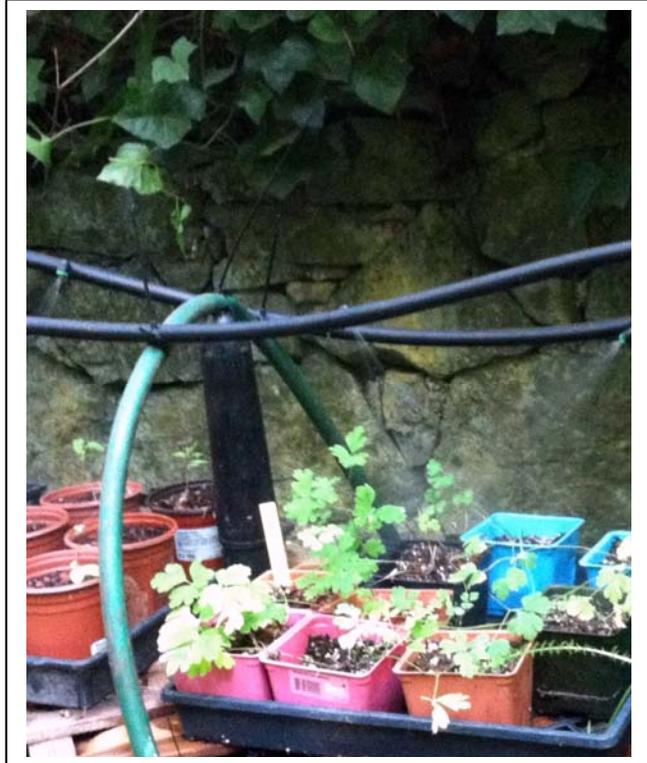
Lastly, we must comment on the new sidewalk constructed on Evergreen Avenue, a safe-routes-to-school project funded by a federal grant. This part of Mill Valley's watershed is in Homestead Valley and under county jurisdiction. Many local residents questioned the wisdom of paving over areas adjacent to Reed Creek, thereby exacerbating flooding, reducing filtration of runoff, as well as narrowing the street. These questions by the public were not adequately addressed or mitigated.

### **Conclusion**

It is up to an informed citizenry to preserve and protect our watershed. It doesn't matter whether you live in the floodplain, or in the hills. All of our area is at risk from one thing or the other. This is our duty as citizens and stewards of the land. City staff can only do so much, and our input is needed. Our intimate knowledge of the past, active study of proposed changes, and encouragement of public discussion must be part of two other processes: monitoring compliance and working in the context of the future, both gradual changes and extreme events. The community needs to take responsibility. - Betsy Bikle

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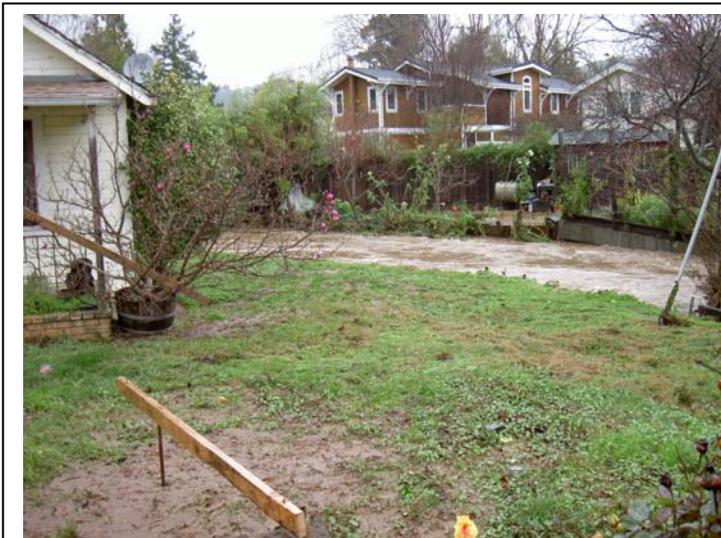
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**MVSK seeks volunteers for its Board of Directors.**

*The MVSK Nominating Committee is initiating its search for new Board members for the term beginning March 2013. Serving on the Board is an exceptional opportunity for MVSK friends to bring their expertise, interest, labor and other resources to collaborate on the many environmental issues which MVSK covers on a regular basis, as well as to participate in fun and informative special events throughout the year. Interested?*

**Contact Joyce Britt at 415-388-4187 or [www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org](http://www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org)**



*Upper Photo: MVSK funded native plant nursery established by Julie Hanft and Greenwood School students at the Old Redwood Lodge.*

*Bottom Photo: Arroyo Corte Madera del Presidio breaching at La Goma St. A riparian buffer and native plants are more effective than levees & walls. Climate Change will adversely affect flooding.*

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**Mill Valley StreamKeepers**

MVSK is a 100% volunteer non-profit organization working to protect and restore our watersheds. Your help is urgently needed as a volunteer and/or donor. Please return this form or donate online [www.millvalleystreamkeepers.org](http://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 \$\_\_\_\_\_

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