

Stocking Flat Floodplain Restoration

Here, floods that surge through the narrow Deer Creek canyon spread out and flow slowly across this floodplain. The slower flow allows for the buildup of sediment. The sediment creates a nutrient-rich habitat that make floodplains one of the most productive river habitats in the world.



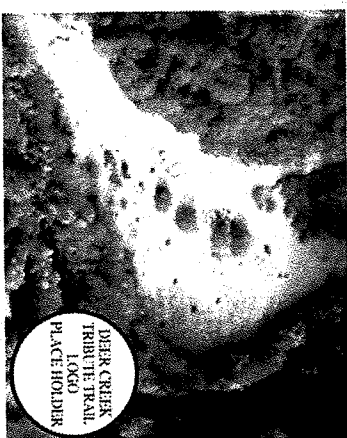
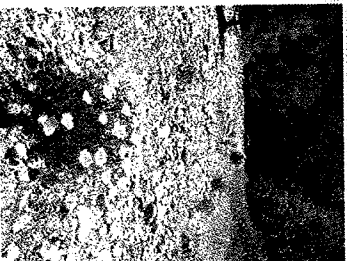
Healthy Meadow

Floodplains reduce flooding by acting as giant sponges - spreading, slowing down, and absorbing flood waters. Fish take refuge, basking in the nutrient rich floodplain waters. Vegetation found in floodplains work to improve water quality, using their roots to filter water and trap sediment. Floodplains also recharge underground aquifers and act to slowly release their absorbed water back into the stream to provide cold clean water late into the dry summer which is vital in California, where there is minimal rainfall during these dry summer months.

In these steep Sierra mountain streams, floodplains provide rare flat ground. The Stocking Flat floodplain you see downstream was once the site of a bustling mining camp. Dikes were likely set up to protect the camp from floods in an attempt to keep the floodwaters in a tight channel, like the canyon upstream. However, Deer Creek eventually reclaimed Stocking Flat and washed away all traces of the mining camp. The steep banks of mine tailings visible on either side of the creek are a reminder of Stocking Flats recent past.

Floodplains are a valuable type of green infrastructure areas that reduce the frequency and intensity of floods by soaking up floodwater and storing it as groundwater. Economists rank functioning floodplains as one of the top 5 most valuable features of the natural world.

American Rivers and its partners have been rehabilitating the Stocking Flat floodplain. A man-made gravel berm was removed that, until recently, cut Deer Creek off from large portions of its floodplain. Vegetation native to regional flood plains has been planted to simulate its habitat. As floodwaters return, the habitat will expand, and the floodplain will once more be a functioning part of the Deer Creek watershed.



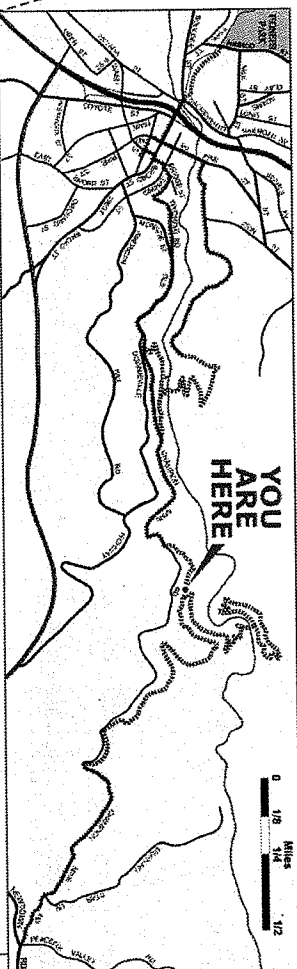
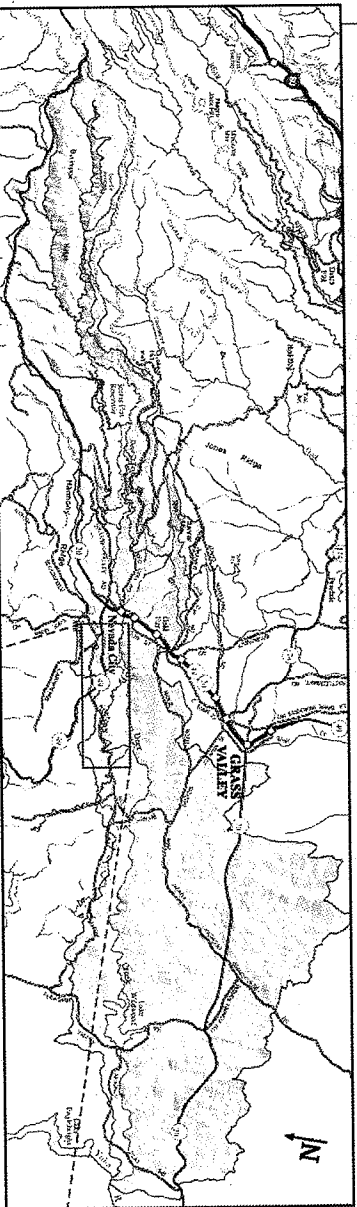
DEER CREEK
TRIBUTE TRAIL
LOGO
PLACEHOLDER

Human Impact on the Deer Creek Watershed

Indigenous Peoples - Under the stewardship of the Nisenan and Maidu people, a vibrant ecosystem was maintained in the Deer Creek watershed. The natural abundance of this area supported some of the highest population densities in California.

Mining - Hardrock mines tunneled deep into the earth in search of gold. After the gold was extracted from the ore, the remaining waste rock was abandoned along the creek, together with heavy metals such as arsenic and lead that were mined along with the gold. The extraction process used dangerous materials such as mercury and cyanide, which continue to contaminate the creek.

Hydraulic mining used water under high pressure, blasting away hillsides to get at the gold. The sediment washed downstream and caused severe flooding, devastating valley towns and agriculture. The practice was outlawed in 1884.



Invasive Species - Settlers brought plants and animals to the Deer Creek watershed from their home countries. Some took hold and became invasive, outcompeting native species and negatively impacting Nevada County's ecology and economy.

Development - Water continues to be diverted from Deer Creek to support a growing human population. New buildings and pavement increase the amount of runoff of water laden with oils, detergents, and other toxic household chemicals. Sewage treatment plants drain treated water into Deer Creek, containing nutrients which contribute to algae blooms.

Restoration - Many groups and individuals are working hard to return the watershed to a healthy state. Invasive species are being replaced with native plants such as arroyo willow and California wild grape. Salmon and steelhead spawning habitat is being improved at the mouth of Deer Creek.



PC Staff Report
Sept 22, 2010

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Cindy Siegfried
DATE: September 22, 2010
RE: Presentation by Friends of Deer Creek –Interpretive Signage on Deer Creek
Tribute Trail

Ms. Kelly Hickman, with Friends of Deer Creek, will be providing a power point presentation on the proposed interpretive signage for the Deer Creek Tribute Trail.

The Planning Commission and City Council approved the trail in 2008, with the project being described below:

The Deer Creek Tribute Trail and Restoration Project is located on both sides of Deer Creek within and downstream of Nevada City in Nevada County. The Project will:

- 1. Create an eight-mile, multi-use trail offering a cultural/ecological greenway along the Deer Creek corridor, on property located within the jurisdictions of the County of Nevada and City of Nevada City. The trail will provide access to public lands, link existing trails and roadways, and will feature recreational amenities and interpretative enhancements showcasing the biological and historical role of Deer Creek.*
- 2. Enhance riverine and floodplain function and create wetland/riparian habitat on a floodplain terrace of Deer Creek that was degraded by historic and recent disturbance.*
- 3. Remove non-native, invasive species on approximately 40 acres along Deer Creek and along the trail, thin small diameter trees from overstocked stands and remove ladder fuels of predominantly non-native invasives to reduce fire risk and improve habitat.*

One of the Mitigation Measures of the project approved by the Commission reads as follows:

6. TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION: Mitigation & Residual Impact: *To offset the potential traffic impacts and to ensure the public health and safety, the following mitigation measure shall be required:*

Mitigation Measure 6a. *Any signage of the project and direction of pedestrian traffic association with the project shall first obtain City approval. Such approval shall be obtained from the City Planning Commission, the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief of Nevada City.*

PRESENTATION TO COMMISSION

The Friends of Deer Creek have been working on the sign program for the trail. While the City does not have any sign standards for trails specifically, the Commission will be reviewing and providing input on the design on the proposed signage.

PC Minutes
Nov 18 2010

NEVADA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 2010

THESE MINUTES ARE PROVIDED IN BRIEF, SUMMARY FORMAT...FOR THE FULL DISCUSSIONS OF THE ITEMS, THE PUBLIC IS URGED TO WATCH THE VIDEO PLACED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE: www.nevadacityca.gov and selecting the "Archive" Link

Chairman Bob Wright opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL Present: Chair Wright, Commissioners Phelps, Sullivan, Parent, Wolters

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 21, 2010 Motion made, Seconded and Carried to approve.

HEARING FROM THE PUBLIC: Comments on items not on the agenda are welcome at this time, limited to three minutes. However, action or discussion by the Commission may not occur at this time. None.

PRESENTATION:

1. **Presentation by Friends of Deer Creek (Kelly Hickman) on proposed interpretive signage for the Deer Creek Tribute Trail**

Ms. Kelly Hickman and Joann Hild with Friends of Deer Creek (FODC) presented information on proposed signage for the trail. The signage includes interpretative signage and way-finding signs throughout the City. Some of the signs will include sidewalk blazes (similar to the current tree symbol), sign affixed to a sign post, and sidewalk tiles. These signs would require City Council approval. Signage will be in and outside the Historical District.

Mr. Bill Haire and Charlie Price were present and Mr. Price provided a sample of an interpretive sign that provides local information such as local history and flora and fauna. The material is durable and used by the Forest Service.

Chair Wright stated a presentation will be given to the Commission at their next meeting about way-finding signage throughout the City and he recommended that both groups meet to concentrate efforts. The Commissioners thanked the group for their informative presentation.

SIGN APPLICATION – Inside Historical District

1. **115 South Pine Street – Marc Orman – Clavey Vineyards – Sign application for one sign for "Clavey Vineyards"**

Mr. Marshall Jeffers was present on behalf of Mr. Orman, and reviewed the sign application. Planner Siegfried noted the size and shape is exactly the same as that approved by the Commission for the "Nevada City Seafood" business. No testimony from the public was received.

MOTION by Parent, Second by Phelps to approve the sign as submitted. Motion 5-0.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW – Outside the Historical District

- 1, **5 Kidder Court – Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum and City of Nevada City, Applicants – Architectural Review application proposing an 832 square foot addition to the building to accommodate area for displays, library area, and storage. The concept was approved by the Commission in 2008.**