



A PARK FOR ALL FOREVER

RESTORATION & CONSERVATION AT MUIR WOODS AND REDWOOD CREEK WATERSHED

ECOLOGICAL MONITORING

The Redwood Creek watershed—which extends from Mount Tamalpais to Muir Beach—is a delicate ecosystem that demands utmost care and vigilance. The National Park Service tracks a number of “vital signs” that measure the overall health of ecological treasures such as Muir Woods. Researchers take the pulse of this ecosystem by monitoring:

- Water quality, through data on temperature, pH, sediment, nutrients, bacteria
- Populations of a number of bat species
- Number of spawning adult salmon and number of “redds” (fish nests) in the winter; number of juveniles in the summer
- Nests of spotted owls during breeding season, and number of fledglings

REDWOOD CREEK NATIVE PLANT NURSERY

In 2007, the Conservancy-managed nursery organized more than 400 volunteers—logging over 3,600 hours of service—for seed-gathering, planting, and transplanting. In addition to growing native species for Muir Woods projects, the nursery has already helped cultivate and nurture 15,000 plants currently at the Banducci site. This winter planting season, about 11,000 more plants are ready to go into the ground—and the public is encouraged to participate in the restoration work. A highlight event will be Muir Woods Earth Day, February 2, 2008, which attracts hundreds of community volunteers annually.

THE BANDUCCI PROJECT

Throughout most of the 20th century, the Banducci family grew flowers near Redwood Creek, which runs through Muir Woods and nourishes an ecologically rich and unique watershed. To reduce flooding, the Banduccis installed levees that dramatically altered the water flow and ecology.

The National Park Service purchased the flower farm property in 1986, and in 2003 work began to restore precious habitat for threatened and endangered species like the coho salmon, steelhead trout, and red-legged frog. NPS and Parks Conservancy efforts at the Banducci site aim to restore vital habitat in the lower reaches of Redwood Creek. Highlights of the ongoing work include:

- Removal of levees to restore historic floodplain
- Removal of invasive vegetation and planting of native species
- Installation of log jams to create more natural flow pattern in creek
- Creation of pond as critical habitat for frog

Crews will remove more levee and plant more native plants in the coming months—and volunteers are encouraged during the Muir Woods Centennial Year to contribute to this legacy of conservation.

The Banducci site represents one of the most critical habitat areas in the Golden Gate National Parks. Restoring the ecological processes of lower Redwood Creek is essential to the health of the entire watershed—including Muir Woods.