

Fish Rescue Program at the Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility

By Rita Dalessio

The Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) has been rescuing young Carmel River steelhead

(*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) from the drying lower Carmel River as part of an annual program to preserve local stocks of the threatened fish since 1989. Beginning at the Highway 1 bridge, district staff follow the retreating river upstream and remove fish from pools before they dry up. The rescued fish are either transported to upstream portions of the Carmel River with proper habitat conditions or to the District's Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility (SHSRF) if river habitat is not available. Fish are reared there until the river flows again in late fall or winter.

The district's mitigation efforts on behalf of the fish began as part of the 1988 Interim Relief Plan to offset the negative impacts of water extraction by California American Water and other pumpers on the Carmel River. Since then, the District's legal responsibility to continue a mitigation program was solidified under the 1990 Water Allocation Environmental Impact Report to comply with CEQA, State Water Resources Control Board Order 95-10, and water rights permits for aquifer storage and recovery.

In 1996, MPWMD constructed the SHSRF in Carmel Valley. This facility features a simulated stream with riffles and pools, designed to provide a wild environment for the fish. It is important to note that this program rears wild fish for release to the sites where they were rescued, or as close by as possible, so that they don't compete with other wild fish. It is not a hatchery, but a naturalized rearing facility.

Overseeing the fish rescue and rearing program is MPWMD senior fisheries biologist Kevan

Urquart, who explains the benefits of the program in this way: "Studies on Chinook salmon show that fish reared in this manner may have a better survival rate to their return as adults than do hatchery fish. We keep them as wild as possible so that they are successful back in their natural environment, while at the same time not altering the genetics of the wild population."

The annual fish rescues occur in late spring or summer depending on river conditions. The river usually dries each summer and into fall because of the combination of reduced rainfall and river inflow in the dry season, hot summer temperatures, and greater community water use.

In 2012, MPWMD staff began fish rescues on June 15 because Carmel River streamflow conditions for fish migration in

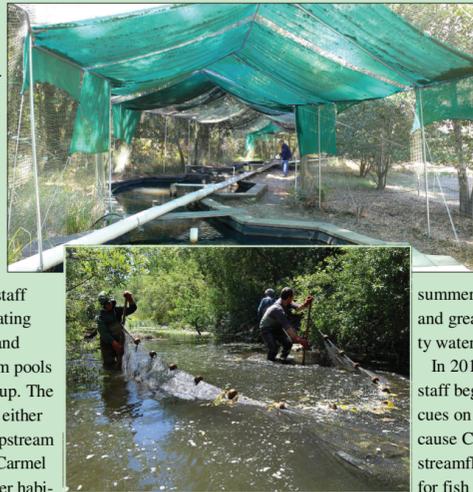
the lower river were inadequate. District crews started at the Highway One bridge, collecting the fish and transporting them to the SHSRF. Upon arrival at the facility, all the fish go through a quarantine process and are treated for disease and parasites, after which they are re-counted and stocked into the rearing channel, where they are fed and monitored for release.

In December, 2012 District staff released the rescued and reared steelhead from SHSRF between the Valley Greens bridge and the Highway 1 bridge. During the rescue season of 2012 staff stocked a total of 7,417 fish into the rearing channel; 6,958 young-of-year and 459 yearlings. Staff successfully released 5,341 fish into the lower Carmel River. Overall survival rate of fish reared at the SHSRF was 72%.

Running the SHSRF to rear rescued fish for five to nine months each year is a more expensive part of the program than the actual fish rescues themselves. The facility has to be staffed and maintained seven days per week by someone with biology/aquaculture training, and uses \$2,500 per month in power to run its pumps and cooling tower.

For more information about the fish rescues and rearing program go to the MPWMD website at: <http://www.mpwmd.net/wrd/fisheries/fishrescues/fishrescueshome.htm>

Rita Dalessio is Conservation Chair for the Ventana Chapter of the Sierra Club



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Where do Carmel Valleyites hang out?

By David Burbidge & Tom Allaire

For over 60 years The Carmel Valley Community Youth Center (CVCYC), at 25 Ford Road in the Village, has operated and main-

tained the Carmel Valley pool, grill, Community Center building, children's playground and outdoor stage. Started in 1950 by a group of residents who wished to develop a place for youth activities, the CVCYC has been operated and supported by the community ever since. Today, the CVCYC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization managed by an all-volunteer board of directors, and funded en-

tirely through annual membership dues and donations. Activities at the Community Center include a senior lunch on the first Monday of every month, the annual Santa Fly-In, classes in martial arts, civic meetings, weddings and memorials, and other events in the hall. CVCYC emphasizes youth education and training by employing numerous young people to work at the pool, in the grill and in the hall.

Every summer hundreds of swimmers use the pool for water safety instruction and recreation. This is now the third generation of children that has learned to swim at the pool. The pool will open this year on May 25, and in-person sign-ups for swim lessons will take place on May 12. The pool can also be reserved for private pool parties.

This summer, CVCYC will also host a morning Farmers' Market every third Saturday and an occasional afternoon Music in the Park concert with a barbeque party night. Swim and Dine Friday-night poolside family dinners start June 7 and continue through the summer.

CVCYC is in discussion with a local group of artists to provide classes in such areas as photography, sculpture, and graphic design. Additionally, youth theater and music organizations have shown some interest in working with the Center to provide opportunities in these areas. Monthly Friday night poker parties are also under discussion.

CVCYC encourages everyone to become annual members and support its efforts in providing a safe, affordable and entertaining place for families. Your support makes a difference. For more information about the CVCYC and its offerings call the office at 659-3983 or visit its Web site at CVCYC.ORG

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To preserve, protect and defend the natural beauty and resources of Carmel Valley
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CALENDAR

May 4: 10am-3:30pm

Quail Motorcycle Gathering
Quail Lodge Clubhouse
Valley Greens Drive
<http://signatureevents.peninsula.com>

May 4-5: 9am-4pm

CV Garden Club Show
May 4, 6-8:30pm Reception
Hidden Valley Theater
CVgardenclub.org

May 9: 7pm

Carmel High Dance Show
May 17: 7pm: Jazz Concert
May 22: 7pm: Spring Concert
CHS Performing Arts
Highway 1 & Ocean Avenue
www.carmelhigh.org/site/default.aspx?PageID=1931

May 24 - June 14

Peter Quilter's
GLORIOUS!
Magic Circle Theatre
8 El Caminito, CV Village
659-7500 or Magiccircletheatre.net

June 8: 11am-5pm

Art & Wine Celebration
Various CV Village locations
info@carmelvalleychamber.com

June 10 - July 8

Hidden Valley
Concert Recital Series
Hidden Valley Theater
(See Page 2 ad for details)

Carmel Valley vs Carmel Valley

By Christine Williams

Carmel Valley in Northern San Diego used to be an exemplar of rural character. But, as biologist and Carmel Views resident George Somero made clear in a CVA-sponsored talk on March 19 at Hacienda Carmel, a "collusion" of city politics and big development has turned that once bucolic byway into the worst kind of urban sprawl--as the photos show.

A report in San Diego Reader described a new project before the San Diego city council as The Astroturfing of Carmel Valley.

How did our Carmel Valley escape becoming like the other Carmel Valley? Did you know that in the 1960s, there was a push to create two more east/west roads running the length of the valley, atop the ridgelines? There were also plans to 4-lane Carmel Valley Road from Mid-Valley to Panetta

Road and to permit a cement batch plant. Humble Oil Company wanted permission to build a facility here. (In 2008, county supervisors even mentioned building a prison in our valley!)

In 1961, the people of Carmel Valley, led by Lou Gardner, created a master plan that became the guiding force for the valley. In the 1980s, District 5's Supervisor, Karin Strasser Kauffman, held dozens of community meetings which led to the adoption by the supervisors, in 1986, of an official Master Plan (CVMP) reaching from Highway 1 to Sleepy Hollow, and from ridgeline to ridgeline. The CVMP was updated in 2010. The work of resi-

dents expressing their views to the county has been crucial and instrumental in protecting the Valley from becoming like the "other Carmel Valley".

Groups like the Big Sur Land Trust, the Monterey Regional Parks District, the Carmel Valley Parks and Recreation District, as well as the Carmel Valley Village Im-

provement Committee can be credited with preserving open spaces, public access and scenery. These groups work hard to raise funds to protect and improve the valley.

The 2010 CVMP says: "All policies, ordinances, and decisions regarding Carmel Valley shall be consistent with the goal of preserving Carmel Valley's rural character...Development shall follow a rural architectural theme with design review." With ordinance adoption coming up in the next few years, it is time once again to gather input from all our residents.

Included in current ordinances are specifics that help define what "rural" means: zoning designations that provide for larger acreage per house, designated "commercial" centers, planting of native vegetation, down-lighting that prohibits off-site glare, signage guidelines that prevent visual clutter, no ridgeline development, even paint colors that blend with the surrounding vegetation, etc. Will those stay in place in the next iteration?

It's up to all of us working together to decide. Our Carmel Valley needs ongoing protection and our vigilance to ensure it.

