

## Creek Care for Property Owners & Residents

In an effort to maintain the stream banks in Novato, with the goal of minimizing and/or completely reducing negative environmental effects associated with potential bank repairs, this notice has been sent to inform all creek side property owners of available assistance and what they can do to help. If you have any questions about the information in this letter, please contact the City of Novato Public Works Department at (415)899-8246 at 75 Rowland Way #200. Additional information on creek care can also be found online at [www.mcstoppp.org/permits.htm](http://www.mcstoppp.org/permits.htm) on the document titled "Creek Care."

### **Erosion**

Erosion is the usual cause of bank failures. But not all erosion is bad; undercut banks provide important habitat for salmonid fish. The following four questions should be asked to determine whether the erosion is good or bad:

- Is the erosion threatening a structure, road, utility pole, or other property?
- Is the erosion threatening riparian habitat or a significant tree?
- Is the erosion extremely active? Does it erode rapidly during most rainstorms?
- Does the erosion appear to be caused by a person-made change, such as a road, culvert or yard drainage?

### **Maintenance Tips**

- Never dump leaves, grass clippings, and pruning onto creek banks or onto the creek. Adding them to creek system depletes oxygen in the water and can kill fish and other aquatic life
- Keep leaves and litter out of street gutter so they won't clog storm drains.
- Avoid or minimize use of fertilizers and pesticides as excessive nitrogen and phosphorous that wash into creeks create algal blooms that deplete the oxygen supply in water.
- Consider using attractive alternatives to impervious concrete when installing a new patio or rebuilding a crumbling walkway. Brick, interlocking pavers, flat stones and decking allow rainwater to infiltrate the soil.
- Keep trash out of creek and storm drains. Remove any trash piled up in creek before rainy season.
- Take all hazardous items (paint, solvent, pesticides, etc.) to a household hazardous waste collection program. Novato residents should call (415)892-7344.
- Clean water-based pain brushes in a sink, not in gutter or creek.
- Use less toxic cleaning products in your home. For a free guide, call Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program at (415)499-6528.
- Avoid hosing down paved surfaces like driveways. Use a broom instead and put debris in a trash can.
- Don't let greywater from your washing machine run into a storm drain or creek.
- When washing your vehicle, it is best to use commercial or coin-operated car wash so as not to cause any soapy runoff.

Additional assistance in addressing bank erosion can be obtained by hiring a consultant or contacting the City of Novato Public Works Department at (415)899-8246. If your property is adjacent to Novato Creek, additional guidance is available with the July 2007 report titled "Proposed Bank Stabilization Guidelines for Novato Creek."