



### Do I live beside a creek?

Creeks can be perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral, meaning that even though water may not flow year round or even seasonally in the creek bed, it is still a valuable natural resource that needs to be protected.

### What benefits do I get from my creek?

Your local creeks do more than provide habitat for a diverse array of flora and fauna. Healthy creeks also:

- prevent flooding
- help recharge groundwater
- provide sediment to local beaches
- can filter harmful pollutants to improve water quality
- and provide for recreational activities and aesthetic enjoyment

### It all starts with you!

Although your part of the creek may seem small, the cumulative impacts of all the creekside homes in our community are significant. Every change you can make to improve conditions on your property makes a difference in ensuring we have healthy creeks for present and future generations.



### Help monitor water quality in your creek!

Santa Barbara Channelkeeper's Stream Team Program measures the water quality of local creeks every month. To learn more or to volunteer, visit [www.stream-team.org](http://www.stream-team.org) or contact us at [ben@sbck.org](mailto:ben@sbck.org) or (805)-563-3377.

#### Channelkeeper regularly monitors:

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| • Atascadero Creek | • Los Carneros Creek  |
| • Glen Annie Creek | • Maria Ygnacio Creek |
| • Goleta Slough    | • San Jose Creek      |
| • Las Vegas Creek  | • San Pedro Creek     |

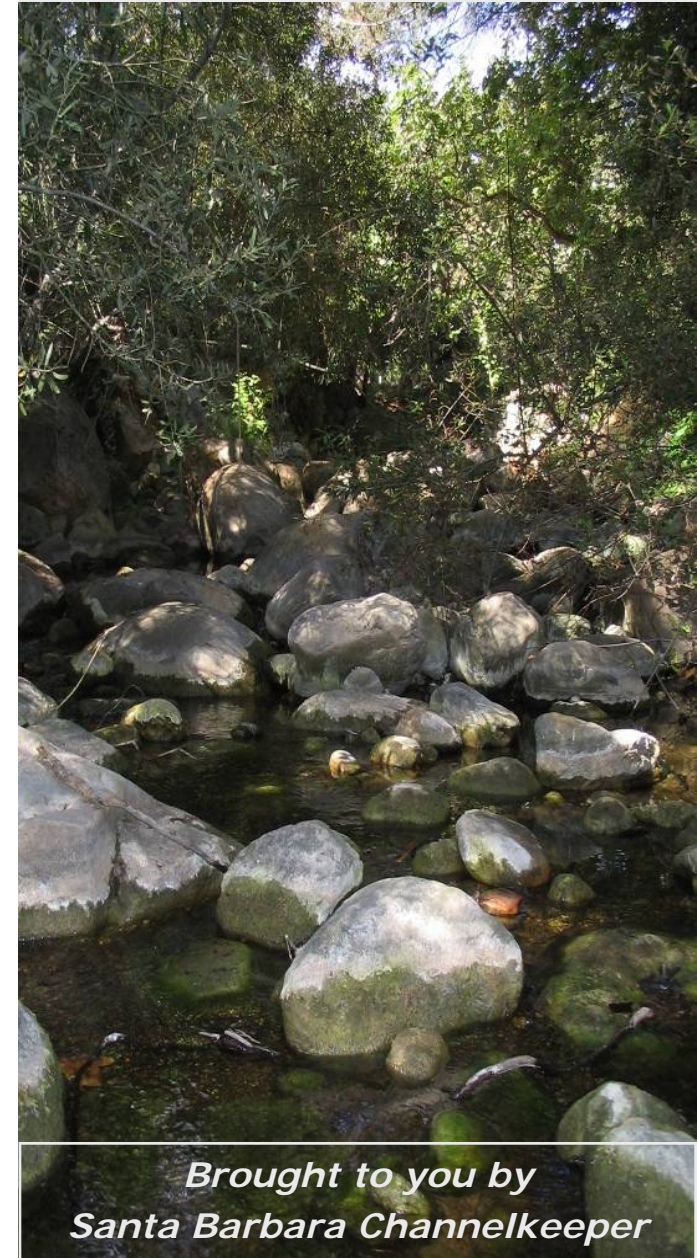
Look in the *Goleta Valley Voice* for our monthly Creek Report Card!



714 Bond Avenue  
Santa Barbara, CA  
93103  
(805) 563-3377  
[info@sbck.org](mailto:info@sbck.org)  
[www.sbck.org](http://www.sbck.org)  
[www.stream-team.org](http://www.stream-team.org)

# *Creekside Living:*

How to live responsibly as a creekside neighbor



*Brought to you by  
Santa Barbara Channelkeeper*

*The majority of Santa Barbara County's creek-side property is privately owned, so comprehensive watershed protection can only be accomplished if we work together as a community.*



**As a neighbor to the creek, what can I do to help?**

### Homeowners

- **Eliminate green waste and trash**

It is imperative that homeowners prevent litter from entering local creeks. Litter includes conventional trash like soda cans and grocery carts as well as "green waste" - grass and yard clippings. These biodegradable products can overload a creek's natural system by raising bacteria levels and depleting oxygen, which can be fatal to aquatic life.

- **Driveway Maintenance**

Do not hose down your driveway or sidewalks. Not only does this waste valuable water, but it carries harmful pollutants into our storm drains and creeks. Instead, sweep or use a leaf blower and place dirt in the trash.

- **Car Washing**

If you wash your car at home, don't wash it on your driveway or in the street. Washing your car on impervious surfaces like concrete or asphalt carries harmful detergents and oil to the storm drains and creeks. Even biodegradable soaps can be harmful to creek ecosystems. Instead, use your lawn or other surface that allows the water to infiltrate into the soil, or go to a professional car wash.



### Gardeners

Runoff containing fertilizers can cause harmful algae blooms in creeks. It is likely that drainage pipes or hosing carries runoff from your yard directly to the creek.



- **Pesticides and Fertilizers**

Minimize the use of pesticides and fertilizers in your garden. Instead, use either compost or organic soil amendments for garden replenishment. Recycled wood chippings are a great alternative to pesticides and help increase soil moisture.

- **Conserve Water**

Do not over-water your garden or lawn. Use drought-resistant plants and high efficiency irrigation systems when possible.

- **Provide a buffer zone**

By planting native riparian plants along the border of your creek, you will help slow runoff and also create a natural filtering system that cleanses water before it enters the creek. Native plants help stabilize creek banks with their extensive root systems, provide food and habitat for local fauna, and don't require extensive fertilizing.

### Pet Owners

- **Horses and Cattle**

Manure can be a bonus or a burden. When used properly, manure can be used as fertilizer, however it must not enter creek systems. Runoff contaminated with animal waste



carries harmful pathogens and excessive nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) that threaten the health of both aquatic species and humans. Dispose of manure appropriately, ensure that rain or other water does not come into contact with manure, and keep animal pens as far from the creek as possible.

- **Household pets**

Although your pets may be small, it is still important to prevent their waste from entering local creeks by properly picking it up and disposing of it in the trash. Also, avoid letting pets run on barren creek banks or within creek beds.

