



Pajaro Dunes

Friends of Pajaro Dunes vision is to provide stewardship for the “last mile” of Watsonville Slough by preserving native habitat and wildlife, collaborating with the neighboring community and educating all who visit.

An Annual Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2010

Preparation for the Restoration Work Days

A master planting map was developed by John Pritchard, ecologist and restoration specialist for the Watsonville Wetlands Watch. Colored flags indicated where each native plant was to be located.



Native Plants

The native plants which included American Dune Grass, Mock Heather, California Poppy and others were grown from seeds gathered at Pajaro Dunes and propagated in the WERC’s greenhouse at Pajaro Valley High School.



Community Volunteers Restore the Habitat

John Pritchard demonstrates the steps for ensuring a successful planting of native species along the “last mile” of the slough.



Restoring the Last Mile

Our first guiding principle has been stewardship for the “last mile” of the Watsonville Slough. We coined the phrase “last mile” to emphasize the importance of this literal mile of Watsonville Slough system that includes the North lagoon and extends to the confluence of the Pajaro River and Monterey Bay.

This fall, the Last Mile Restoration Project took giant steps with the final removal of invasive ice plant along the western banks of the slough.



Two restoration work days were held where homeowners, community volunteers and local high school students replanted the areas with native species.

Please visit the newly restored habitat along the last mile. This project was completely funded by state and federal funding and was a joint effort coordinated by the Watsonville Wetlands Watch and Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz. Look for the blue “Watershed Enhancement Project” sign along Rio Boca Road.





Collaborate with the neighboring community

In 2010, we identified three non-profit organizations which share our guiding principles and continue to preserve the coastal habitat and farmland that surrounds our community. Each organization received a \$1,000 cash award from Friends of Pajaro Dunes to continue their work.

The **Land Trust of Santa Cruz** protects both working lands, like farms and timberland, and natural lands with high conservation value. The Land Trust has begun restoration activities this year on its 440 acre acquisition of wetlands and upland habitat in the heart of the Watsonville Sloughs system. Their website is <http://www.landtrustsantacruz.org/>

Save Our Shores is a marine conservation organization in Santa Cruz whose mission is caring for the marine environment through ocean awareness, advocacy and citizen action. This organization continues to support local activities like the annual Coastal Cleanup throughout Santa Cruz county. Their website is <http://www.saveourshores.org/>

The **Watsonville Wetlands Watch** is dedicated to the protection, restoration and appreciation of the wetlands of Pajaro Valley. In particular, the Watch has worked closely with the Pajaro Dunes community on the Last Mile Restoration Project providing project management and obtaining government funding for this project. Their website is <http://www.watsonvillewetlandswatch.org>

The **Wetlands Education Resource Center** (WERC www.fitzwerc.org) at Pajaro Valley High School is an incredible classroom which was established to “inspire research, education, and conservation of the wetlands and watersheds of the Pajaro Valley.” We continue to provide technology purchases and support for this amazing resource available to the entire Pajaro Valley community. This year, we purchased four classroom laptop computers, a video projector for classroom and community presentations, technology consulting and remote computer access for the support staff. Our contribution was over \$4,000.



Pajaro Dunes native plant greenhouse

In the upcoming year, we plan to focus on the construction of the Pajaro Dunes Native Plant Greenhouse. We are planning to build this greenhouse on the Pajaro Dunes South property to propagate native plants for installation along the “last mile” including both north and south communities. We will also offer extra capacity to our community friends like the Watch, Resource Conservation District and State Parks.

Your name here

To achieve this goal, we are offering to name our new greenhouse in honor of a donor who contributes \$10,000. This tax-deductible donation will allow us to build the greenhouse we need to meet both current and future native plant needs.

Thank you

We wish to thank our friends at Pajaro Dunes for all of their assistance and support in making this good work possible. We could not have done this work without GREAT friends like you!

If you are interested in working on a project or joining our board, please contact us by sending an email to info@friendsofpajarodunes.org.

Friends of Pajaro Dunes is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation. **Please complete the contribution form for your tax-deductible contribution.**

Educate all who visit

Finally, we are continuing our work in education and outreach. Thanks to the efforts of FoPD board members Jim Ducey and Brigid Barron, we completed a total “remodel” of the Friends of Pajaro Dunes website. Please visit our new website at <http://friendsofpajarodunes.org> We will continue to update and maintain the Shorebirds Nature Center and south gatehouse Nature Gallery.