Dear Friends,

Thank you for helping to make 2017-2018 an exciting year for The Watershed Project! This past year, we are proud to have reached more Bay Area students than ever before. The curiosity and engagement of the over 1,600 students, including over 1,000 who came on field trips to explore natural spaces, makes me confident in the future of the Bay ecosystems.

In just one year, our programming has mobilized over 3,000 volunteers to join together with their neighborhoods, families, co-workers to make our Bay Area watersheds cleaner, healthier, and stronger. Through large events such as Coastal Cleanup Day and Earth Day to smaller crews hauling on boots to monitor urban creek water quality and oyster populations, our dedicated volunteers show me the power we have when we come together with a common purpose. Our mission of inspiring a watershed movement to understand, appreciate and protect our local watersheds is being carried out every day by our volunteers.

If you have not come down to the Richmond Greenway in a while, please do! We recently completed our 13th “bead on the necklace” on the Greenway, with low impact design (LID) projects including rain urban green space together. This spring was particularly vibrant after the rains, and our Second Saturday volunteers experienced the explosion of growth - both of the invasive and natives! - during the spring and into the warm summer months.

In our constant effort to make our communities more resilient to climate change, this year we undertook several community planning efforts to make sure our cities are greener and that integrated water management is considered as we plan for new roads, waterfront zoning, install new green infrastructure and expand the urban canopy.

While this year had challenges, many small moments, from a child’s curiosity examining a bug, to the impact of dedicated volunteers to the resiliency of the natural world, bring me optimism about the future. As this year comes to a close, I eagerly look forward to the next.

Become a Watershed Project Rain Maker or join us for any of our multiple stewardship activities.

In Partnership,

Juliana Gonzalez
Executive Director
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Watershed Education

The education team’s goal is to develop the next generation of watershed stewards. We strive to connect local kids and communities to watersheds, nature and stewardship opportunities. Our programs are aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and take into account current best practices in science and environmental education and we are committed to providing quality STEM experiences for all students. In 2017-2018, we focused our education theory of change, creating new programs and exploring ways to bring more students on field trips. Through actual hands-on engagement in local parks and on-going projects, we believe that students can be inspired to become leaders in watershed stewardship.

“Our 3rd and 4th graders were given a breathtaking opportunity that so many of them have not afforded themselves. Even though Redwood Regional Park is in the backyard of our Oakland students, for many it was their first time to explore its beauty and enjoy some fresh air! One particular activity our students enjoyed was taking tree branches and leaves on the ground and creating personalized homes for animals. Thank you, Kids in Creeks, for making our learning experiential and hands-on!”

- Mark Montero, 3rd grade teacher, Aspire ERES Academy

1,625 students served
1,055 students on field trips
19 schools served
8 Bay Area field trip sites
60% free and reduced lunch students
“Bye Bye Basura was highly engaging and pertinent to our students. Connecting their daily lives and activities with their environmental impacts led to further discussions of human impacts on the world. The hands on introductory lesson provided a great base and following it up with a field trip within their community really brought their learning full circle. Many students cite the field trip as their favorite experience of the school year. The staff at The Watershed Project made the entire process simple and streamlined for the teachers which was SO appreciated. We can’t wait to present these amazing resources to our students year after year.”  
- Kelsi Kane, 5th grade teacher, Benito Juarez Elementary School

Healthy Watersheds

Our Healthy Watersheds program focuses on preventing pollution from entering the watershed through marine debris education, trash cleanups, and inspiring behavioral change. We help kids and adults understand that their ordinary, everyday decisions can improve the health of our watersheds, the San Francisco Bay and the entire Pacific Ocean. Through volunteer and student driven programs, we educate and empower residents to be more mindful of their impacts on water quality by involving them directly in cleanups. This year, we continued the work of community empowerment through the successful Adopt-a-Block neighborhood beautification campaign in North Richmond. We also began a new collaboration between a network of organizations region-wide to expand creek monitoring and develop citizen science programs.

- 2,432 lbs trash removed from creeks/shorelines
- 5,730 lbs of trash removed from streets
- 493 service hours provided to the community by block ambassadors
- 27 sites sampled for Creek Monitoring Program
Wild Shorelines

The Wild Shorelines Program engaged 80 volunteers to monitor the reef balls and surrounding shoreline at Point Pinole during the 2017-2018 year, including several biology classes from Contra Costa College. We found barnacles making a big comeback after the low-salinity wipe-out that the shoreline experienced over the 2016-2017 winter, but oysters have not been so quick to return. We have found a handful of new oysters, and oysters seem to be making a slow comeback in other parts of the bay, so we have our fingers crossed to discover more oysters this next year.

“The Wild Oysters program helps students see themselves as scientists, protecting a place of great value and beauty to their community. They come away from the experience with a new sense of stewardship that they can make a difference in the protection of an important ecosystem.”
- Jason Scott, Middle School Science Teacher, Bentley School

80+
volunteers monitoring oysters

150
volunteer citizen science hours

≈
1,000
square feet of oyster substrate

100
community built oyster reef balls
“Thank you for an amazing school work day on Saturday. Your team was incredibly organized and knowledgeable, and did a fantastic job of productively and safely leading the work day! It was one of the most well organized (and most complicated scopes) for a work day I’ve experienced. We’re so impressed with your team!!”

-Trudy Garber, Trust for Public Land

**Greening Urban Watersheds**

Our Greening Urban Watersheds program restores natural function to the urban landscape by building green infrastructure with volunteers of all ages. We help communities plan and implement strategies such as bioswales, rain gardens and low-impact design projects that protect local watersheds from the pollution generated by modern life. These collaborative efforts help ensure the free flow of local creeks, reduce urban runoff, promote the spread of native plants and improve the natural beauty and biodiversity of our urban watersheds.

- **841** program volunteers
- **5** participating schools
- **118** service learning students
- **1,496** volunteer hours
"Being a Wild Oysters Intern was an invaluable experience for me that facilitated growth in my personal and professional development. This opportunity has empowered me to make a bigger impact on protecting our ecosystems and helped me further my career aspirations."

- Adam Weaver, Wild Oysters Intern

“Educational and satisfying for those who want to make a change for the greener.”

- Elliott Maroto, WCCUSD Summer Intern

Green Careers

Our Green Careers program builds the next generation of watershed stewards by providing local youth with experience and professional development in the environmental field. Through our Green Collar Corps and Internship programs, we give students and young professionals hands-on work experience and training in the fields of non-profits management and operations, environmental education, marketing and communications, program management and restoration.

- 10 high school and college interns
- 4 GCC youth employed for year
- 7231 volunteer hours
- 1,420 GCC hours
“For me it’s very important to have more trees. The more trees we have the cleaner the air will be. It would also be great for the community if people could go for a walk along the trails to relax and find tranquility.”
- Regina Cuevas, North Richmond resident and member of the Home Team Community Advisory Board

“If you want to talk about climate justice you also need to talk about housing, and tenant rights, and you have talk about all these other issues at hand.”
- Tania Pulido, Community Housing Development Corporation North Richmond

Community Planning

By empowering community partners to do watershed stewardship in their neighborhoods, we expand our geographical scope and reach a more diverse group of people. This year The Watershed Project facilitated a community-based visioning and planning process in North Richmond as part of the nationwide Resilient by Design challenge. A community advisory board, affectionately known as the North Richmond Home Team CAB was comprised of landscape architects, North Richmond residents, community-based non-profits, and government agencies.

- 21 members of the community advisory board
- 5 community meetings with Resilient by Design
- 100 active participants
- 3 regional planning exercises
Financial Report
July 2017 - June 2018

Rainmakers
Aaron Willemss
Briggs Nisbet
Eric Hyman
Greg Wentworth
Janet Johnson
John Schaaf
Linda Abe
Lori O'Brien
Louise Pellerin

Donors

Expenses: $671,310

Revenue: $690,091


Foundations & Government
Campbell Foundation, City of Albany, City of Richmond, City of San Pablo, Clif Bar Family Foundation, California Coastal Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, Contra Costa County, East Bay Community Foundation, East Bay Municipal Utilities District, J. Vance Haines Fund of Tides Foundation, National Fish & Wildlife National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Resilient by Design, Richmond Community Foundation, Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, San Francisco Foundation, San Pablo Community Foundation, Trust for Public Land.

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