Dear Friends,

Thank you for being a part of this inspiring community of watershed stewards — of volunteers, students, teachers, partners and leaders. We are so grateful. Over the years, you have played a key role in building The Watershed Project into a trusted local powerhouse for environmental education, urban greening, climate resiliency, and shoreline stewardship for the San Francisco Bay Watershed.

This year, as with many years in the past, we mobilized more than 3,000 watershed stewardship volunteers to clean, weed, replant, and restore creeks, shorelines, and other green spaces here in our communities. We’re particularly proud of completing three large green infrastructure projects — opening up nature that had been hidden away — including:

• The bioswale at the Booker T. Anderson parking lot.
• A new plaza with seating and a large rain garden, transforming an old, polluted channel underneath BART at Carlson Boulevard.
• Our first green schoolyard in Oakland at Melrose Academy, where we removed asphalt from the playground and replaced it with a rain garden and a habitat garden with shading for the students to play during recess, and appreciate the flow of rain as it flows through a more natural pathway into the Bay.

Along with these physical improvements, we’re proud of the impact that The Watershed Project programs are having on young minds and lives through our Student Worker Green Collar Corps, for example, where we have retained four young adults for two to three years, giving them the chance to hold a 20-hours a week part-time job in the environmental sector while completing their college educations. We also had a team of high school interns from the West Contra Costa Unified School District that were employed during the summer months shadowing the Green Collar Corps Team while they cared for green infrastructure and helped canvas neighbors for the Rheem Creek flooding survey project. This is on top of the 1,424 K-12 students who took part in our environmental education programs and explored in their outdoor classrooms through 27 field trips.

As we embark on this new decade, we invite you to re-energize with us! It’s a great feeling to roll up your sleeves in nature together with friends for a coastal clean-up, making a difference in your own backyard. Come help plant a tree, tend to a rain garden, or clean your shoreline! Check our website for details on upcoming Second Saturday or Tree Plantings workdays. Have fun as we work together to green our own neighborhoods!

In partnership,

Juliana Gonzalez
Executive Director

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The Watershed Project Annual Report 2019
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 2018-2019, 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.

Highlight: Explore Your Watershed

Explore Your Watershed is an exciting year-long watershed exploration program, geared for 4th and 5th graders. Students explore ecosystem connections, water quality, and species diversity through nature hikes, science journaling, games, and macro-invertebrate study. Explore Your Watershed is our only elementary-age program in which students participate in more than one field trip (one to a creek location, and one to a shoreline location), with the intention of providing students with multiple meaningful experiences in nature.

This year was our second year of running this program, and we enjoyed the opportunity to refine the lessons and field trip experiences based on the results from the pilot year. We were very excited that the two teachers who participated last year returned to the program, and we were able to work with two teachers at Verde Elementary School for the first time. For some of these students from Verde, our field trips in January and March were their first for the school year, and our program provided them with a unique opportunity to participate in two nature-based field trips.

We enjoyed seeing students venture out of their comfort zone by jumping feet-first into the creek, venturing outside in the rain, and scooping up crabs at the shoreline. Results from our evaluations showed that after the program, students were better able to match local plants and animals with their habitat, and more likely to recognize that people and ecosystems depend on each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students served</th>
<th>1,425</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field trips</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools served</td>
<td>12</td>
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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-Tree neighborhood campaign in North Richmond.

Highlight: Bioswale in Action

California had a wet winter, and the rains provided a chance for us to see how The Watershed Project’s newly constructed bioswales handle storm water. TWP monitoring teams watched the weather and ventured out to observe and document from the moment the rains began. Our best site for monitoring is the Booker T Anderson Community Center, where water from the parking lot is intercepted by a large bioswale before draining into Baxter Creek. The plants and soil act as a natural filter that cleans the runoff from the pavement. This project was completed in September 2018 and it is gratifying to watch it in action so soon after construction.

Curb cuts allow water to flow from the parking lot into the swale. Once the water has filtered down through the swale, this cleaner water collects in an outlet pipe underneath the swale and then discharges to Baxter Creek. Our observational monitoring protocol documents whether water is entering the swale as predicted, whether trash or debris are collecting in the swale, whether sediment is accumulating at the discharge point, and tries to calculate the “hold time” of the swale (the time it takes for water to filter through).

On February 8, 2019 rains were favorable and we collected samples from both the water entering the swale and the filtered water exiting through the drain to the creek. We used a dustpan to collect sheet flow entering the swale through the curb cuts, taking multiple samples over time and mixing them to create one composite sample. This ensures we get a good representation of all the pollutants that are flushed down the watershed during a storm. We also took a composite sample from the swale outflow. The samples were sent to a lab to be tested for heavy metals, diesel, and motor oil, which were known to be present in storm water in the area. We were happy to learn that the swale was reducing these pollutants by at least 50% in all cases.
Wild Shorelines

Have you ever wondered what’s under the water of San Francisco Bay? More than you might imagine, but not as much as there once was. Our Wild Shorelines program aims to help people appreciate the rich potential for healthy underwater habitats in the Bay and along its shoreline.

Including the community in oyster habitat restoration is very important to us. Each year we work with volunteers of all ages who learn to monitor the reef for oysters as well as other invertebrates and algae.

45 New volunteers trained to monitor oysters
135 Volunteer hours
30,000 Oysters living in 100 oyster reef balls

Highlight: Shoreline Surveys

“This 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

This year we worked with Makayla Counselman, a grad student at the University of San Francisco, to survey oysters along the shoreline at Point Pinole. Once we have the data compiled, we can compare the density of oysters growing on the shoreline to those growing on the reef balls, and see if the oysters are using their new habitat to its fullest!

We have also kept in touch with the projects headed by the State Coastal Conservancy over the last year, and intend to continue our partnership to do education and outreach regarding these new shoreline restoration projects.
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
Green Careers Summer Interns

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.

Maha Ghafoor

Working for The Watershed Project this summer has been a very great experience. I’ve had so much fun and learned so much. Being a part of the trash assessments was a very interesting experience, I got to go into a creek which was scary but educational. Along with that, canvassing around the Rollingwood neighborhood was a new experience, I got to hear many residents stories on the flooding.

Joey Ow

Working with The Watershed Project has allowed me to acquire many new skills such as preparing for certain events, trash assessments, canvassing, and various other fun interventions. I really enjoyed this short amount of time here at this nonprofit organization and I hope to carry on my experiences to my future career paths and lifestyle.

10 High school and college interns
4 GCC youth employed for year
7,231 Volunteer hours
1,420 GCC hours
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.

To tackle watershed challenges, strength comes with collaboration. The Watershed Project offers a variety of services to act as a catalyst for change, boost the capacity of grassroots groups, and foster networks of stakeholders, all with the mission to nurture a more resilient Bay Area.

**54** North Richmond residents in focus group

**200** Community members provided input

**8** Community workshop and outreach events

**4** Areas of need assessed

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This year, The Watershed Project conducted a water needs assessment in North Richmond, to gain insight as to which types of water-related improvements are of greatest priority to the community. This needs assessment is part of a regionally coordinated effort to identify and implement water-related improvements, prioritizing communities most in need of improvements and with the fewest resources to implement them. Our assessment evaluated four areas of need:

1. sea level rise and storm water
2. habitat protection and access to recreation
3. water supply
4. waste water and recycled water

We recruited 54 North Richmond residents to participate in a focus group, and gained input from an additional ~200 residents at the North Richmond Earth Day Celebration. The 54 focus group participants were interviewed individually to assess their level of concern about each of the four areas and describe their personal experiences with water in North Richmond. Then, they participated in an educational workshop in which they learned about North Richmond’s existing water-related infrastructure, anticipated future challenges, and potential solutions. After the workshop, we assessed whether participants’ levels of concern had changed as a result of the workshop, whether they had learned new information during the workshop, and asked what types of water-related improvements they’d like to see in North Richmond.

Through this process, we learned that access to clean, safe drinking water is a high priority for residents, and residents are not confident in the safety of their tap water. Residents left the educational workshop feeling less concerned about their source water but more concerned about potential contamination in building pipes. Residents also expressed concern about North Richmond’s vulnerability to sea level rise, a concept that many were unfamiliar with before the workshop. The types of water-related improvements residents want to see in their community include improvements to drinking water, green infrastructure or parks, solutions to sea level rise and flooding, an improved sewer system, more water conservation measures, and additional uses for recycled water.

Many residents expressed gratitude that there is interest in investing in water-related improvements in North Richmond, and that the positive energy from residents and community partners at the workshops felt hopeful and refreshing. Over the next year, we will continue these efforts by identifying possible projects in response to these community needs and hosting additional community workshops in which residents prioritize and provide feedback on the projects.
Financial Report
July 2018 - June 2019

Rainmakers
Leslie Siegel
Lori O’Brien
Greg Wentworth
Eric Hyman
Janet Johnson
Briggs Nishet
Ralph Warner
Diane Ichiyasu
Teresa Ferrini
Nancy Hamill
Leslie Siegel
Patty Liao
Franklin Zimring
Thomas & Maggie Owens

Donors
Manuel Alonso
David Laplana
John Steere
Kate Ferroggiaro
Dorothy Yarris
Swellen Einarsen
Sheryl Drinkwater
Daniel Schickede
Jennifer Douk
Elizabeth Weis
Elaine Jackson
Kathleen Engelberg
Cecile Sandone
Rebecca Robinson
Anne E. Brenner
Holly Reed
Darlene Ceremello
Cecile Sandone
Elizabeth Brusati
Frances Dupont
Maureen Lathiff
Holly Reed
Courtney Clarkson
Sharon Gibbons
Sara Witt
Martha Berthelot
Peter Mangerella
Elizabeth Sojourner
Gary Scott
Bruce H Wolf
Elizabeth Hartka
Elizabeth Hartka
Karen Cleek
Jeanine Strickland
Sharon Gibbons
John Steere
Claire Hansaker
Jeanine Strickland
Christopher Allison
Marc Sigyama

James Cunradi
Eve Nelson
Martin and Mary Strain and Dolan
Sheila Fish

Schools
Albany Unified School District
Athensian School
Bentley School
Coliseum College Prep Academy
Corona College
Doran Elementary
George Washington High School
Kennedy High School
Leadership Public Schools: Richmond
Making Waves Academy
Melrose Leadership Academy
Mission High School
Montalvin Manor Elementary School
Nystrom Elementary School
Oakland Unified School District
Ocean View Elementary
Ohlone Elementary School
Olinda Elementary School
Richmond High School
San Francisco Unified School District

University of California Berkeley
West Contra Costa Unified School District
Verde Elementary School
Vista High School

Foundations & Government
Campbell Foundation, City of Albany, City of Richmond, City of San Pablo, California Coastal Commission, California Coastal Conservancy, Contra Costa County, East Bay Municipal Utilities District, National Fish & Wildlife, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Resilient by Design, Richmond Community Foundation, Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment, The San Francisco Foundation, San Pablo Community Foundation, American Rivers, CalReleaf, Cal EPA, Environmental Justice Coalition for Water, Contra Costa Fish and Wildlife, City of Richmond - ECLA, The Energy Coalition, Contra Costa Fish and Wildlife, Community Housing Development - Corporation of North Richmond, SFEP/ABAG: Bay Area Challenge, Community Housing Development - Corporation of North Richmond

Business
Balance Hydrologics
California Canoe & Kayak
EPIC
Farallon Fish
Hog Island Oyster Company
Kaiser Permanente
Mechanics Bank
Recurrent Energy
Wareham Development
Waterbar
Woodhouse Fish Co.

Community Partners

Revenue: $772,717

Expenses: $824,310

Donors
Manuel Alonso
David Laplana
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Kate Ferroggiaro
Dorothy Yarris
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Sheryl Drinkwater
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