

# SAUSAL CREEK / TRAIL

## Priority Conservation Area APPLICATION

Sausal Creek is the only Conservation Lands Network Priority Stream entirely within the City of Oakland's borders. Consisting of tributaries Shepherd Creek and Palo Seco Creek that unite just below Route 13, Sausal flows next to Piedmont's border and parallels Fruitvale Avenue. On its way to the Bay it courses through and alongside regional parks, recreational paths, important natural habitat, critical linkage land, priority restoration sites and undeveloped parcels. It supports a native trout population and provides habitat for listed plant species. It is one of two Oakland PCAs recommended for Natural Landscape, Regional Recreation, and Urban Greening designation.

As a Natural Landscape, it benefits **Terrestrial Ecosystems, Water Supply & Water Quality** and **Aquatic Ecosystems**. Co-benefits include Climate & Resilience and Compact Growth.

Sausal Creek has two major tributaries that form a Priority Stream, as determined by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Conservation Lands Network. Near the creek lie undeveloped parcels, assessed by the City of Oakland to have less than \$10,000 in improvements and which would provide an opportunity to preserve creek functions. Priority Acquisition Creek Parcels that the City of Oakland has identified for watershed preservation can also be found adjacent to Sausal Creek. It courses through several Priority Creek Restoration Sites, which Oakland identified with Measure DD for restoration. All these water features benefit Aquatic Ecosystems by protecting targeted streams, they benefit Terrestrial Ecosystems by protecting critical riparian corridors and the diversity of animals using them, and they benefit Water Supply & Water Quality by supporting watershed health and protecting downstream water uses. They provide co-benefits of Climate & Resilience and Recreation.

Sausal Creek flows through many Bay Area Protected Areas assessed by the Bay Area Open Space Council (BAOSC), private land and parks with conservation easements. Most of these areas are also Resource Conservation Areas, land zoned as open space on the City of Oakland zoning maps. The creek also runs through parkland managed by East Bay Regional Park District. These overlapping and complementary area types demonstrate how the PCA benefits Terrestrial Ecosystems by protecting unique habitat and botanical areas of high priority, and co-benefits Compact Growth and Climate & Resilience.

The Sausal Creek / Trail PCA also benefits Terrestrial Ecosystems by protecting Essential and Fragmented Habitat, determined by BAOSC's Conservation Land Network, and through its inclusion of Bay Area Critical Linkage land, as demonstrated by mapping from Science and Collaboration for Connected Wildlands. A tributary of Sausal Creek also cuts through a swath of Serpentine Soil, which provides critical habitat for the *Clarkia franciscana*/presidio population (Source: US Geological Survey).

Sausal Creek / Trail also has features that benefit **Recreation** and should be designated Regional Recreation.

The proposed PCA benefits Recreation in several ways. It includes East Bay Regional Park District trails maintained by EBRP. Along the creek are proposed and existing Class 1 Bikeways, as determined by the City of Oakland. Co-benefits include Wildlife Habitat, Water Supply & Water Quality, and Climate & Resilience.

The aforementioned **Recreation** benefits also contribute to the Sausal Creek / Trail's designation as an Urban Greening PCA. As a Priority Stream with Priority Creek Restoration Sites, the creek benefits **Community Health** by increasing urban tree cover in a location anticipated to experience urban heat island effect and **Climate & Resilience** by increasing acreage with carbon storage potential.