



2024 Reporting

For the Regional Wastewater Facility

Reports Enclosed:

- Alviso Bufferlands FY 23/24: San Jose – Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility, January-June 2024
- Alviso Burrowing Owl Project: San Jose – Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility July 2024-January 2025

Prepared For:





Alviso Bufferlands FY 23/24

San Jose - Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility

January - June 2024

Grassroots Ecology was on site at the San Jose - Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility four times this spring. One day was a site visit with project partners (2/14/24), two Grassroots Ecology staff maintenance days (4/22/24 and 6/3/24), one volunteer event (5/8/24).

Weeds are abundant in the planting areas this spring. Maintenance tasks included:

- Bucket watering all young/small plants in the habitat islands and seed plots
- Hand pulling weeds around native plantings with a focus on vetch, prickly lettuce, yellow starthistle rosettes, and non-native annual grasses
- Weed whipping annual grasses around the perimeter of the planting areas
- Deadheading native plantings to encourage spring growth
- Vetch was entirely covering much of the planting areas closest to the big mulch piles. We were able to pull lots of it before it set seeds but we can expect more next year.
- Approximately 1-acre was maintained

Native plantings are doing well, noteworthy species include:

- Hairy gumplant is blooming and has self seeded with many young plants starting to grow
- California fuschia is naturally recruiting from planted individuals, with an abundance of seedlings present this spring
- Common yarrow and California rose have both expanded and are looking healthy this spring
- Sticky monkey flower is healthy and blooming
- Seeded narrowleaf milkweed is emerging for the year

Upcoming Tasks

- Grassroots Ecology summer interns will conduct a bioblitz in July
- Purple Pipe will visit the site in July, August, and September to overhead water the habitat islands and fill the tanks
- Develop planting plan for upcoming planting season with 150 plants to infill. We need to make the native planting even more dense to help combat the new invasive species onsite.

Field Photos



Claire weed whips the perimeter of the planting area



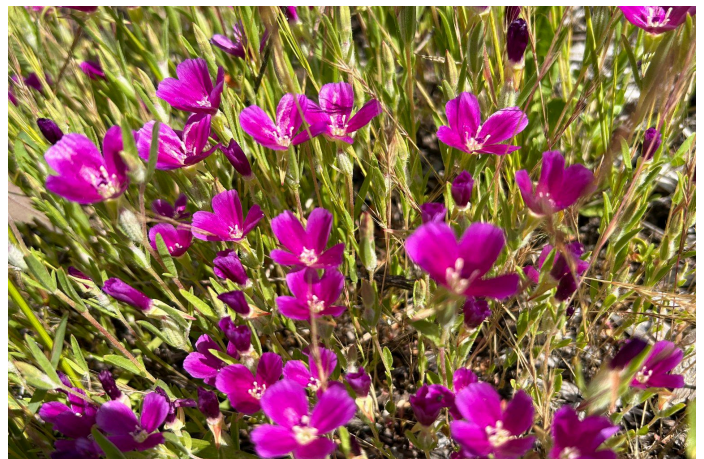
The planting area with mowed buffer



Planted natives grow and bloom including hairy gumplant and heast ceanothus



Staff and volunteers rejoice after a morning of weeding



Field Log

Date	Tasks	Notes
2/14/2024	Site visit with project funders KW, CG, AVF onsite for meeting	
4/22/2024	A weed explosion at the site! - Vetch is blanketing the planting area, we have never seen this at the site before; we removed as much as possible time permitting - Weed whipped the edges of the habitat islands removed spiny lettuce seedlings - this is a new challenge at the site - Grasses and YST seedlings removed from areas where possible	- Killdeer nesting in mulch on the edge of the site - saw eggs! Marked off area - Owls seen in the structures
5/8/2024	Community workday: weeding - 10 people were registered and only two showed up - Removed weeds in the habitat islands, focusing on vetch, spiny lettuce and grasses - Uncovered the milkweed planting areas, covered in vetch, many small milkweed seedlings underneath - Deadheaded some asters and other plants onsite - Weed whipped the perimeter of the habitat islands and areas within the islands where feasible - Took site photos for upcoming work proposals	- Possible yellowjacket nest in a cone onsite - yikes! - Black widows in the tool tarp - yikes! - water tanks 1/4 - 1/2 full, not too nasty looking yet - gumplant blooming and many seedlings coming up - Ca Fuschia self seeded - many seedlings coming up - yarrow looking happy - roses putting out new growth - sticky monkey flower blooming
6/3/2024	Staff workday - Bucket water all young/small plants - Weed whip perimeter - Target weeding of prickly lettuce, yellow starthistle, vetch and other invasives from within the habitat islands	- 2 out of 3 water tanks are empty. One tank was near the suspected yellow jacket nest so it is still pretty full



Alviso Burrowing Owl Project

San Jose - Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility

July 2024 - January 2025

Grassroots Ecology was on site at the San Jose - Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility 10 times from July 2024 to January 2025. There were seven volunteer events with a total of 74 volunteers contributing 217 volunteer hours to the site. Additionally, Purple Pipe filled the water tanks and watered the planting area three times.

Maintenance tasks:

- Bucket watering all young/small plants in the habitat islands and seed plots
- Hand pulling weeds in and around habitat islands with a focus on stinkwort, prickly lettuce, and yellow starthistle
- Manually removing stinkwort from sides of road before it could seed and spread
- Weed whipping around the perimeter of the planting areas
- Deadheading native plantings to encourage spring growth
- Mulching around plants and along the edges of the habitat islands
- Vetch is starting to pop up in the habitat islands this winter; we started removal early before it can take over.

Bioblitz findings:

- Summer Naturalist Interns conducted a bioblitz on 7/10/2024 to assess insect species in the habitat islands. Interns spent an hour observing and documenting insects and other invertebrates, then logged their findings on iNaturalist. This is the third year of this project.
- In total, 77 observations were made during the bioblitz. 31 distinct species were observed and identified.
- Interns found 7 different species of butterfly and moths, including the Grey hairstreak and Acmon blue. Their presence is great news - caterpillars are potential protein-rich food for burrowing owl chicks.

Day on the Bay community event tabling:

- In September, Grassroots Ecology participated in Day on the Bay at the Alviso Marina County Park. This special event, hosted by Santa Clara County Parks, was an opportunity for small businesses and public agencies to share information, services, and resources with the local community.
- Project staff provided an information table where visitors could learn more about the organization, how they can get involved, and which native baylands plants they could find at the park.

The 24/25 Planting Season began in December and wrapped up in January:

- A plant species list was created and 150 plants were grown in the native plant nursery for installation at the site.
- Noteworthy species include:
 - CA fuschia, pacific aster, and marsh goldenrod bloomed into the fall, providing nectar for pollinators
 - Rhizomatous species are continuing to spread and outcompete weeds
 - Gumplant, coyote mint, CA sagebrush, CA fuschia, and CA poppy are self seeding, some quite densely
 - One new plant was planted this year - saltgrass - we hope that this native species can hold up against the encroaching bermuda grass, especially on the edges of the panting area

Field Photos



Stinkwort removal in the late summer



Many bags of stinkwort removed from the site



Bio-blitz with the summer interns



Observing insect diversity at the site





Yarrow showing early January growth



Planting with volunteers from a local thermal energy-storage startup.



Volunteers happy to receive the new stickers



The new "Baylands Steward" sticker that Alviso volunteers receive.



Field Log

Date	Tasks	Notes
7/9/2024	Purple pipe onsite	
7/10/2024	Summer Intern workday - Water all habitat islands - Insect bioblitz for species richness study	The interns removed a massive amount of giant weeds onsite. It was awesome.
8/12/2024	Community volunteer workday - Bucket water all small plants in Habitat Islands - all tanks empty - Plant basin maintenance on all small plants - Weed mgmt within the planting area: spiny lettuce, YST, stinkwort - Stinkwort MGMT on roadway around planting area - Seed collection and spreading of Grindelia	
9/13/2024	Purple pipe onsite	
9/27/2024	Community volunteer workday - Bucket water all small plants in Habitat Islands - tanks 1/2 full - Stinkwort mgmt on road, a few individuals in the planting area. BIG patch down road next to palm trees, removed about half. Most plants starting to flower, 4 bags 1/2 full left next to tank	- Fuschia, buckwheat, aster, and goldenrod flowering - A little bit of milkweed, but most of the seedlings in the seed plots did not mature
10/21/2024	Community volunteer workday - Bucket water all small plants in habitat islands	- tanks empty
11/14/2024	-Purple Pipe onsite to fill tanks and spray	
11/20/2024	Community volunteer workday - Deadhead and mulch rings - Developed planting plans for the 150 plants	The site is prepped for the winter planting season.
12/13/2024	Community volunteer workday - Planted 75 plants	- CA rose, pacific aster, marsh gumplant, and marsh baccharis
1/10/2025	Community volunteer workday - Planted remaining 75 plants completing the planting for the year	Lots of volunteers got all the plants in the ground and did some extra mulching and weeding.