



Conservation of the Russian River

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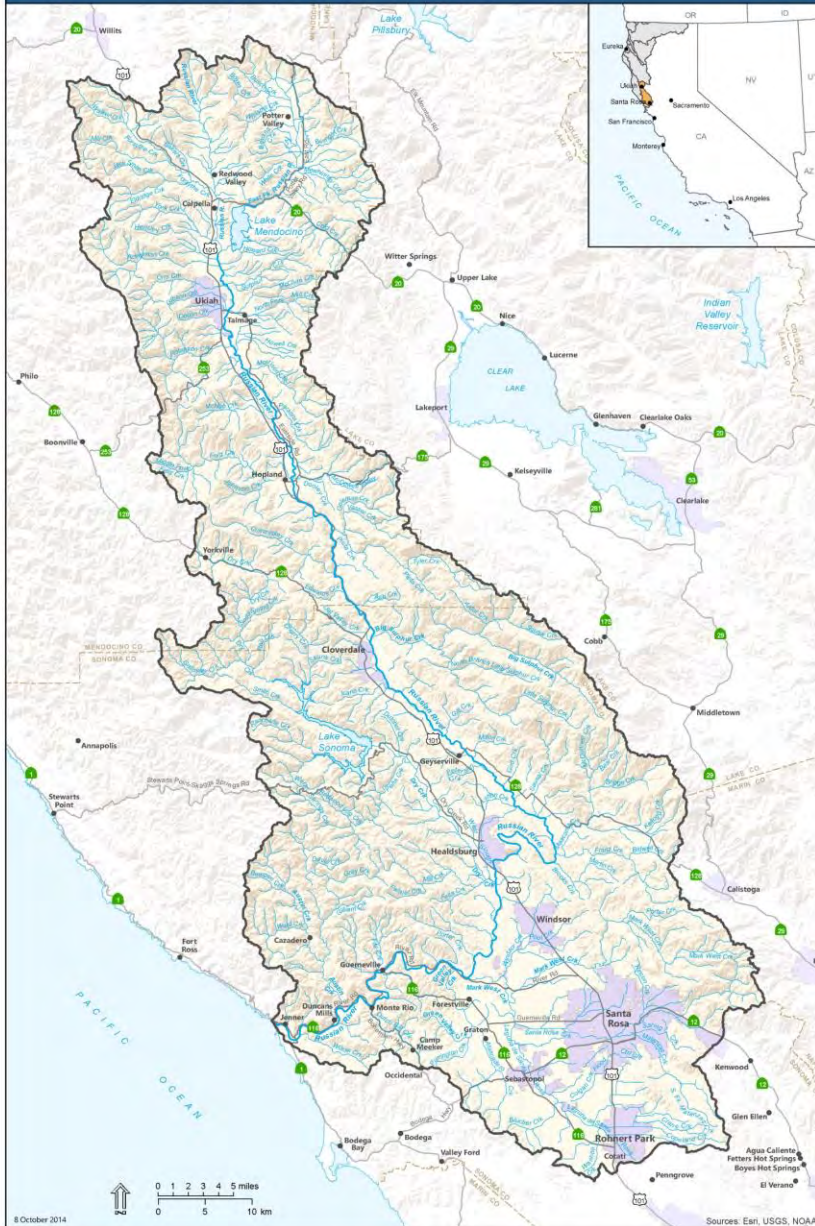
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The Importance of the Russian River

- * Provides **habitat** for plants and animals, including endangered species.
- * Historically provided food and materials for **Native Americans**
- * **Drinking water** for over 600,000 residents of Sonoma & Marin Counties
- * Provides **recreation** opportunities for swimming, boating, tubing, fishing, bird-watching, and relaxing.



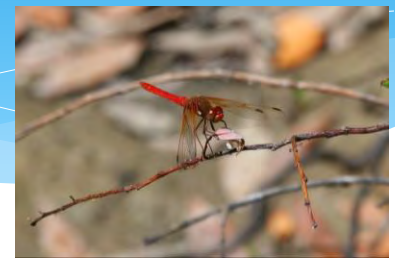
Russian River Watershed



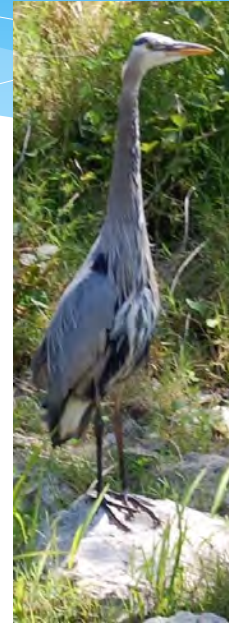
- * The Russian River Watershed:
- * Is 110 miles long, from Mendocino County to where it goes into the Pacific Ocean.
- * The area of our watershed is about 1,500 square miles.
- * All of the rainfall in our watershed flows downhill into drains, ditches, creeks, and the Russian River, eventually into the ocean at Jenner.



A Diversity of Rich Habitats: Headwaters, Creeks and Tributaries to the Russian River



A Diversity of Rich Habitats: The Russian River



Fish of the Russian River Watershed



Coho Smolt



Chinook Smolt



Steelhead Smolt



California Roach



Threespine Stickleback



Coho Salmon



Chinook Salmon



Steelhead Trout



Hitch



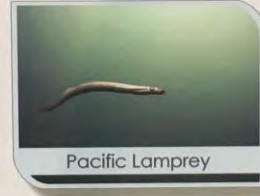
Hardhead



Sacramento Sucker



Sacramento Pikeminnow



Pacific Lamprey



Sacramento Blackfish



Russian River Tule Perch



Bluegill



Green Sunfish



Black Crappie



Smallmouth bass

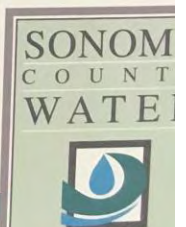


White Catfish

native fish

introduced

www.sonomacountywater.org



Native people: Pomo and Wappo

- ★ The Southern Pomo called this river Ashokawna, meaning “Water to the East”. They had plentiful fish, waterfowl, and deer to hunt. They gathered acorns, bulbs, and seeds. They were experts at using native plants for canoes, homes and basketry. These people were great stewards of the land, taking only what they needed.

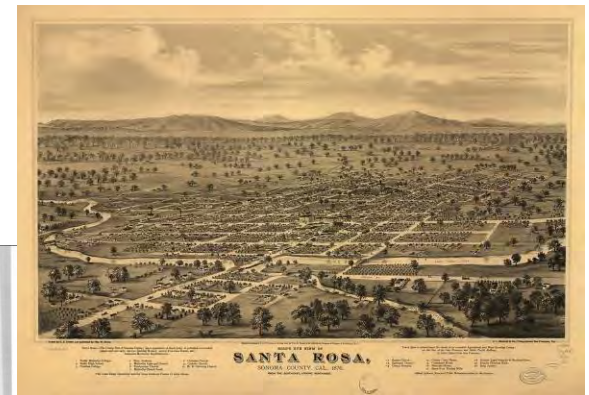
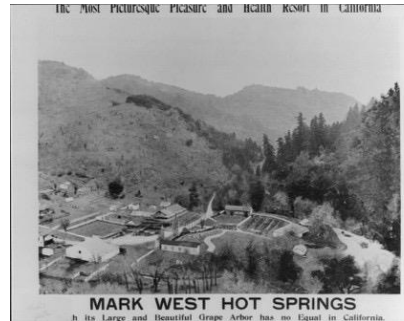


Early European settlement

The Russian American Company built Fort Ross on the coast near the mouth of the river in 1812. This is how the Russian River got its name. The colony served as a fur-hunting and agricultural hub for its northern settlements. By 1841, the otters had all been hunted and the fort was sold to John Sutter. It's now a State Park.



The Spanish settled in Santa Rosa in the 1830's. Harmon Heald envisioned a grand plan for the village that would be his namesake. In 1857, he constructed a store and post office, sold lots downtown, and plotted a town complete with a Spanish-style Plaza. Healdsburg was officially incorporated 10 years later.



The River Goes Through Changes

Agriculture, Logging and Fishing started to take its toll on the river.

**MATURE
RIPARIAN
FOREST**

**MIDDLE
AGE
RIPARIAN
FOREST**

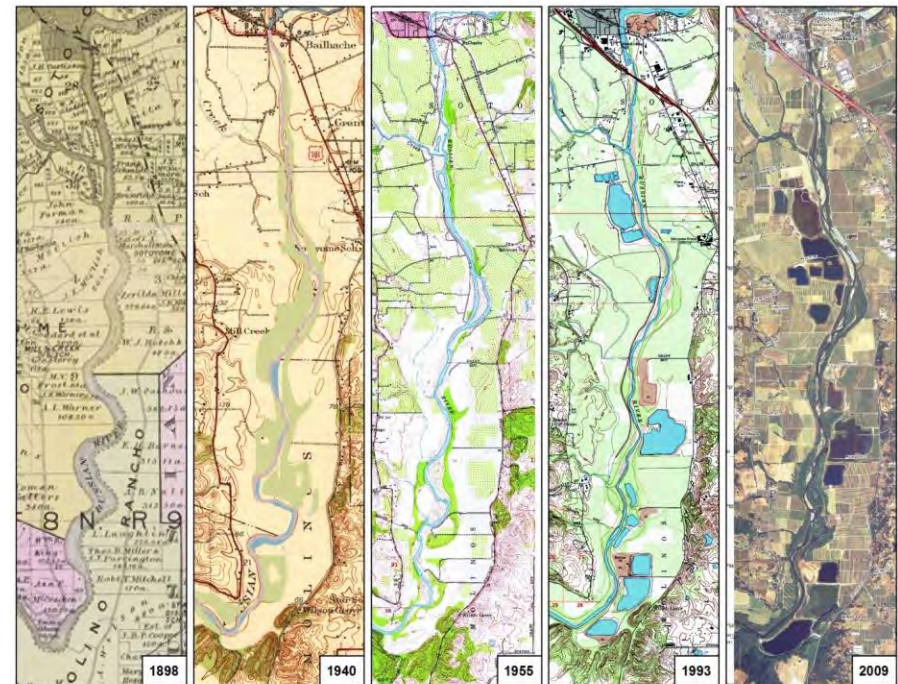
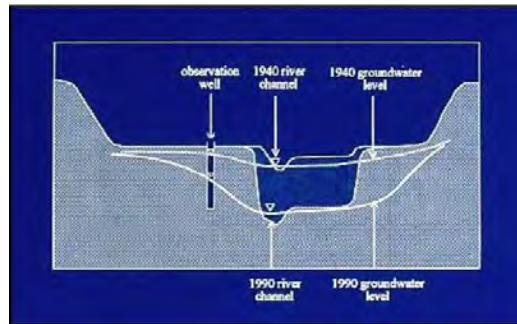
**PIONEER
SPECIES**

**BANKFULL
CHANNEL**



Gravel Mining on the Russian River

Gravel mining has drastically changed the river, confining it to a narrow, deep trench. In 1993, concerned local citizens created Friends of the Russian River to raise awareness of the destructive mining. We are now called Russian Riverkeeper, and have put a stop to massive gravel mining operations in the middle reach of the river. The deep pits are now full of polluted water and should be restored back to floodplain.



What is Russian Riverkeeper?

Our Mission:

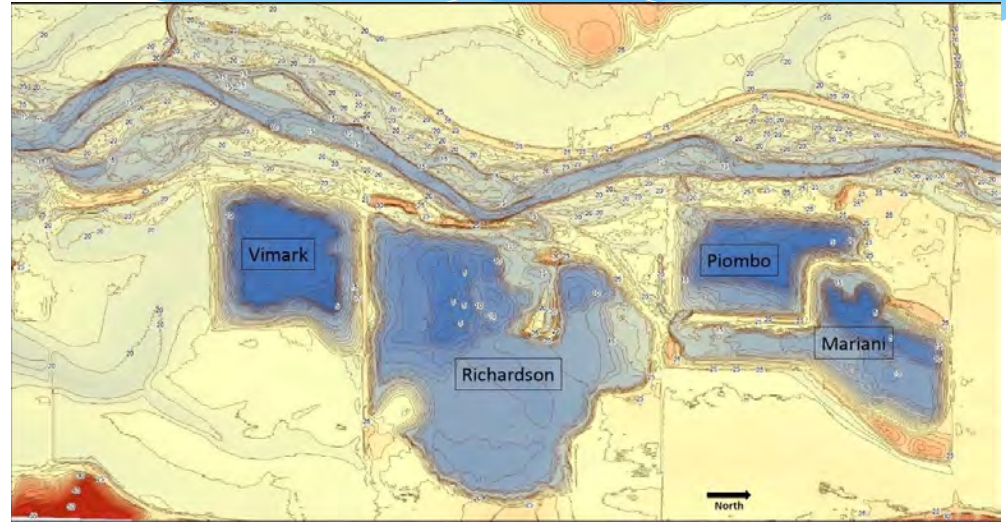
*Russian Riverkeeper
protects and restores our
watershed environment for
the benefit of current and
future generations. **Our
Vision:** The Russian
River is our region's most
vital natural resource. Our
vision is for a Russian
River that is healthy,*



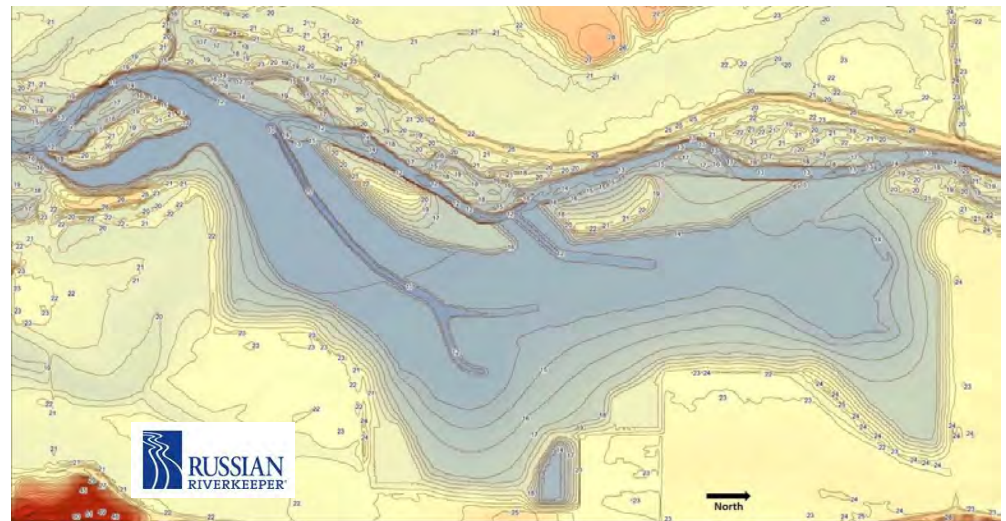
ADVOCACY
RESTORATION
ENGAGEMENT
RIVER CLEANUPS



Hanson Floodplain Restoration Project



Our goal with this project is to re-grade the old Hanson gravel pit ponds back into a functional floodplain habitat that will help the baby salmon find more food.



Invasive Plant Restoration

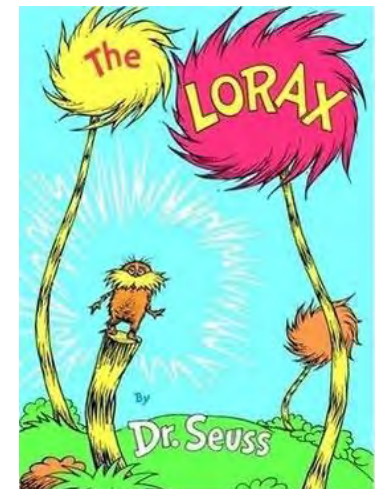
- * *Arundo donax*, Giant Reed, was imported from Asia and has taken over large areas of our river banks. This plant is extremely flammable, uses 5 million gallons of water per acre per year, and displaces native riparian plants.



Advocacy for the Russian River



- * We fight for clean water that is Drinkable, Fishable, Swimmable.
- * Our Big Goal is to ensure adequate flows and water quality to sustain the river ecosystem and improve water supply reliability in the face of climate change.
- * We look out for pollution, agricultural runoff, over-use of water, and we speak for the river to protect nature.
- * Our team reviews regulatory permits that involve stormwater pollution, new developments, water flow levels, etc.
- * Our legal team will go to court to uphold environmental protections that affect the Russian River.



Education and Outreach

Classroom visits, field trips, volunteer work days, tabling at events, guided river paddles, and guest speaker nights are ways to share our mission: To inspire the community to protect the Russian River forever.



Trash Cleanups – Our “Clean Team”

Our Clean Team removes about 250,000 pounds of trash a year, or more from the Russian River channel. The unhoused population leave behind abandoned camps, and this rubbish would get swept downstream during high river flows, into the ocean. The Clean Team and volunteers pick it up and get it to the dump. The “Clean Camp” program gives active campers empty trash bags and they fill them up for weekly pickup.



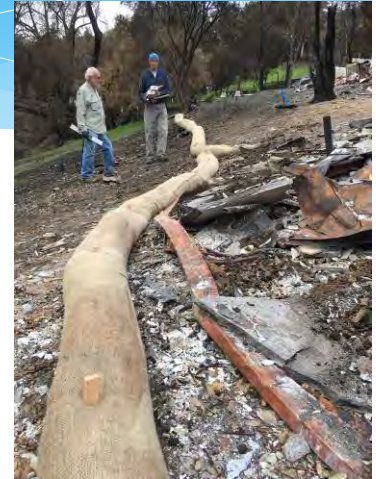
Russian River Watershed Cleanup

Part of California Coastal Cleanup Day, always on the 3rd Saturday in September



Protecting our Watershed After Fires

After the devastating Tubbs, Kincade, Walbridge and Glass Fires, Russian Riverkeeper staff & volunteers worked hard to contain harmful materials from entering the watershed during rains.



What can you do to protect your watershed where you live?

Volunteer:

Go to our website, www.russianriverkeeper.org navigate to “Get Involved”, then “Volunteer” to see upcoming volunteer events. *There are 10 spots reserved for April 22 Earth Day Cleanup at Sunset to Steelhead beaches. If you are a group interested in creating your own volunteer event, contact Ariel@russianriverkeeper.org Occasional Arundo removal volunteer work days: contact Birkin@russianriverkeeper.org

Donate: <https://russianriverkeeper.org/donate/>

Also: Always CONSERVE WATER, Protect Wildlife, Plant a native plant garden, Cleaning up your property, your street gutters and drains before big rains, or Weeding invasive plants can be so helpful! Support local events that benefit the River, go for a swim or paddle to show your love of the river! Bag up some trash that you find.





www.russianriverkeeper.org