

## In Honor Of Earth Day 2022 On April 22, The City Of Cloverdale Is Highlighting How The City Is Doing Its Part To Invest In Our Planet!

The City of Cloverdale is situated within a larger geographic area referred to as the Russian River Watershed. The Russian River Watershed encompasses an area of nearly 1,500 square miles of forests, agricultural lands and urban lands in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties. The mainstem of the Russian River flows 110 miles from its headwaters near Redwood Valley and Potter Valley along the eastern edge of Cloverdale before heading out to the Pacific Ocean near Jenner. The watershed is home to approximately 360,000 people, 238 streams and creeks, and 63 species of fish.

The Russian River Watershed Association (RRWA) is a coalition of ten cities including the City of Cloverdale, Sonoma and Mendocino counties and a host of special districts in the Russian River watershed that have come together to coordinate regional programs for clean water, habitat restoration, and watershed enhancement. RRWA was formed in 2003 to create opportunities for our member agencies to expand their stewardship role in the watershed. The City of Cloverdale appoints a Councilmember to sit on the Board of Directors of RRWA. This year and last, Councilmember Cruz represented the City on the RRWA Board.

Annually, the RRWA Board of Directors approves a workplan that includes both public outreach and collaborative outreach, the intent of which is to draw attention to programs that support the health of the water shed and provide public information to address impacts to water quality.

### Public Outreach & Response:

- The RRWA is partnering with Sonoma Water's Water Education Program for the annual high school video contest for Water Awareness Month, in which participating students have the chance to win cash prizes. In recent years a local Cloverdale high school student won a prize for their video. This year's theme is, "Water, there's never enough to waste!" First, second, and third place videos are selected by a panel of professionals in the water and media fields. Cash prizes are split between the student(s) who create the winning videos and the high school they attend. The winning videos are used as educational outreach materials throughout the watershed. The first prize is \$1,500 and the in-person awards ceremony & student showcase is scheduled for May 26 at 6:00 pm at the Advanced Energy Center.

- RRWA continues to see success with a new program in collaboration with the Cloverdale Chamber of Commerce involving the placement of restaurant placements at participating Cloverdale restaurants. Restaurant Placemats is a way to reach out to children about the watershed, river wildlife species, and limiting storm drain pollution. Council-member Cruz was instrumental in getting us connected with Cloverdale's Chamber of Commerce and several new restaurants in Cloverdale. Placemats are in **MoE's Eagles Nest Deli, Papa's Pizza, Tian Yuen, 101 ThaiWay, Flavia's, Zini's Diner, and the Cloverdale Public Library**. We're excited to announce that we've received a new bilingual version that we'll start distributing soon.

- RRWA facilitated the watershed wide sign program "Ours to Protect" featuring the egret that we see along bridges throughout the watershed. Cloverdale has these signs at Porterfield Creek and Cloverdale Creek. It's important for people to know that storm drains are directly connected to our local waterways. All pollutants on roadways, sidewalks, parking lots, and other surfaces that drain to storm drains end up in our local creeks where they can harm aquatic species and negatively impact water quality.

### Environmental Articles:

- RRWA publishes an environmental article each month as authored by staff from our member agencies which can be found on our blog <https://www.rrwatershed.org/blog/>.

Recent articles include "A thirsty burglar or a dripping faucet? Either way you may be losing precious resources," "Dog Doo Dilemma," and, "Make a Move to Native and Drought Tolerant Plantings." We send these articles to a host of local publications and sometimes they get published in one of the local papers.

The April article will be, "Carbon Gardening: A Dirt Simple Solution to Climate Change." The Carbon Gardening initiative is about educating and promoting gardening on an urban residential scale to help sequester carbon. This article will include 8 easy steps on how to grow a carbon garden, including minimizing soil disturbance, covering soil with living plants and mulch, planting a diverse assortment of regionally appropriate and native plants, watering properly, and avoiding synthetic chemicals/fertilizers. The article will be available on the RRWA blog in a few weeks.

### Collaborative Outreach:

- The RRWA manages a regional contract for Our Water Our World (OWOW) to coordinate and implement pesticide-related education and outreach at nurseries. The OWOW is a joint effort by water pollution prevention agencies, participating retail stores, and pesticide distributors and manufacturers — working together to reduce the risks associated with pesticide use. Our Water Our World will host a webinar on Wednesday April 13 from 5 to 6 pm. The Topic will be "Drought Proof Gardening: Create a water-efficient garden that will look beautiful through the dryer months." Learn techniques and strategies for water-wise gardening that will help keep your garden healthy and pest-free. The webinar/workshop is ideal for any level of gardener and is free. Information on the upcoming webinar will be added to the RRWA website.
- Safe Medicine Disposal – The Cloverdale Police Dept. hosts the Safe Medicine Disposal bin at the Police Station lobby. It's important to water quality that all medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter, including pet medications, be properly disposed of so they stay out of our landfills and sewer systems. The DEA is having their 22nd National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on April 30. Your outdated medicines can be safely disposed of at Cloverdale's PD. The last DEA Take Back event on October 23, 2021 generated 41,970 lbs. of unwanted medications from California alone, and Cloverdale PD was a participant.
- The RRWA hosts a series of webinars and training focused on watershed health. This year the Russian River Friendly Landscaping is heavily focused on the Carbon Gardening initiative. The work includes 8 short videos which we hope will be available for viewing and sharing in the coming months as well as upcoming environmentally friendly events and workshops around the watershed during the year.
- The RRWA publishes the Russian River-Friendly Landscape Guidelines, a publication and a program of landscaping practices, which provide landscape professionals the tools to protect our watershed lands and waterways through an integrated approach to environmentally friendly landscaping. The City of Cloverdale is committed to protecting the health of the Russian River watershed. Our partnership with RRWA enables the city to bring critical programs and activities that help improve water quality, for clean water, and watershed enhancement. Please keep an eye out for more information about various programs offered by RRWA throughout the year and help keep our precious watershed healthy!

