



FRIENDS OF
THE SANTA CLARA RIVER



The Friends of the Santa Clara River

River Restoration Language Workshop - Education and Training / Grant Award \$25,000

Abstract

Water Topics - Bilingual Workshop in Spanish and English.

A series of workshops with the dual goals of language learning and a focus on water related terms related to work in Landscape, Restoration and Agriculture. Participants will learn specific vocabulary and context from these areas and in relation to Ventura County. These workshops will be offered first to people working in related jobs such as landscaping, farming and wildlife habitat restoration but can also be open to the community at large, depending on group size. The aim would be to have a mix of English and Spanish as participants' first language so that group can help each other learn in practice conversations and the subject matter and words can be learned simultaneously.

Attendees and Demographics

The group was a mixed representation of people from low to middle-income areas in Santa Paula, Oxnard, and Ventura. Some of the crew members that had signed up that were not able to attend, live in economically disadvantaged in Santa Paula and Fillmore. The program will still benefit in as much as they will have copies of the resource guidebook and support materials such as the notebooks and pens. And if the program is able to continue or support the evolution of similar then it will continue to benefit the community members in the low-income areas represented on the Disadvantaged Community Tool. We had budgeted for 15 places and filled 12. We had tribal representation from the Parra family who taught Chumash language and traditional Chumash land stewardship.

User Needs Supported Categories (Generated from TAPPS)

These communities also shared the need to **increase greenspace and recreational opportunities** as summarized in the “Ventura County Needs Assessment Report January 2023”

“Stakeholder Connects & Disconnects: Institutions and community responses from high stress DACs connected in their responses related to **greenspaces**. Institutions see these as viable ways to link the need for recreational spaces, especially in DACs, with their goals of meeting non-point pollution. One community suggestion is to increase **frequency of “Water Talks” events**.

Table 1 below refers to “within (i.e., DAC stress levels 5 and 6), high frequency terms associated with community strengths **included recreational areas and greenspaces**, clean beaches, the weather, social service programs, and local businesses.” This workshop directly related to 9 Concerns on this graph : Greenspace, Tree Canopy, Walkable Areas, Bike Lanes, Air Quality, Education, Economic/Jobs, Flood Control and Community Engagement.

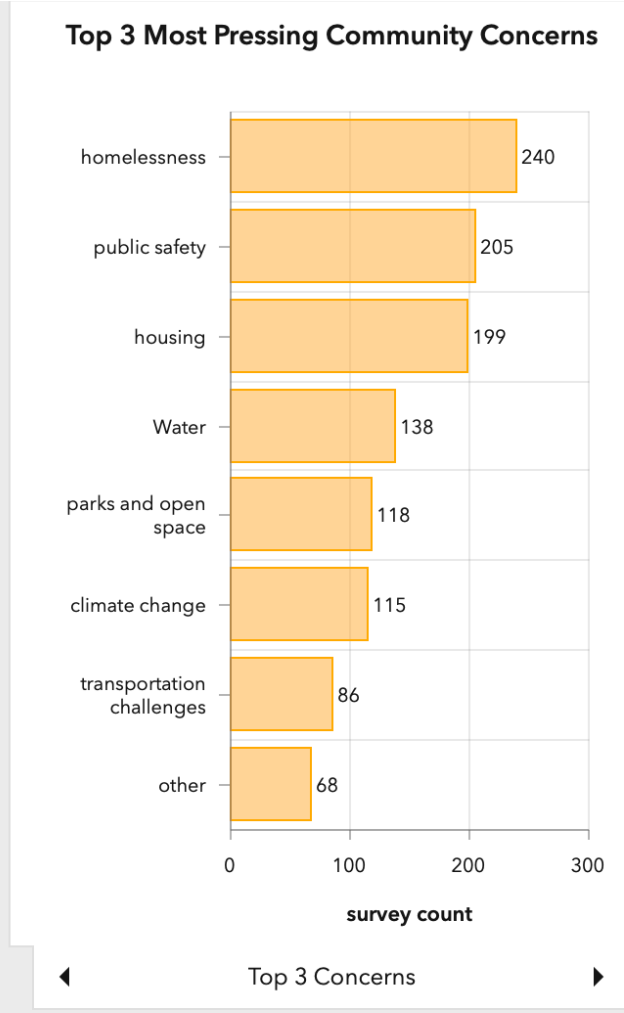


Table 1

Table 2 refers to the “Supported Categories from the Technical Assistance Proposed Project Evaluation Dashboard (**TAPPED**) Analysis of high stress DAC community survey respondents. It refers to Community Survey Question, 5 : “What are the three things your community needs the most”. This workshop directly related to three of the most pressing concerns on this graph; Water, Public Space and Climate Change. There may have been other responses in ‘Other’ which may have related also.

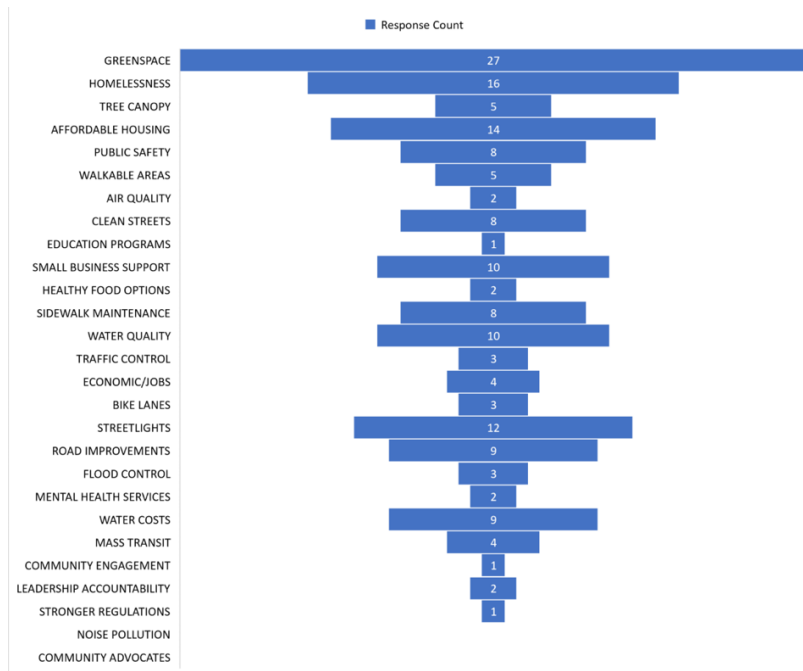


Table 2

Program description and post program report

This program is designed for people who work on Santa Clara River restoration work as field technicians, and for anyone interested in riparian restoration. It came from an idea from technicians, working in the field, that we could have a day to talk about our work and learn words and phrases in English and Spanish. There are often crew members who speak either language but only a few who speak both. This workshop and guide were made for field techs who are interested in speaking both languages and learning more about our work, or others interested in the work. The goal is to provide a resource and dictionary for the basic words and terms of field tech work in English and Spanish. It was designed to fit with the WaterTalks Program which is designed to engage under-served communities in the use, protection, and management of local water resources.

Understanding the amounts of water wasted by Arundo and Tamarisk, helps Field Technicians to appreciate their own hard work, not just on restoring native habitat but also on protecting water as a natural resource and factor in climate health. It also helps them to educate others, such as the public or family about the work and they affect these factors. Bilingual ability helps for general site safety, navigation, and teamwork.

The Resource Guidebook has information on :

- Santa Clara River and Watershed Ecology and Geography
- Native Plants and Animals
- Chumash Ethnobotany

- Best Management and Safety Practices, Permit explanations and Quantity Conversions
- Natural Resource Protection Topics
- Non-native plant species and associated problems.
- Bilingual Dictionary Pages
- Resources List

This was the first try at something that could be done again and developed. The goal was to try to create an immersion workshop, and this guidebook was created to support that and be kept as an ongoing resource. We learnt a lot from the experience which was the only way to clearly see what we could include and what could be adjusted to give more benefit to employees or students.

Prior to starting the work plan on content we wanted to establish the topic interests from restoration techs and landscapers. We did an initial survey in the field with crew members from two contractor firms, one with crew members with Spanish as a first language and the other with majority English although some at each company were bilingual. The answers below were from the Spanish speaking crew but they reflected those of the English speakers also.

The survey questions:

Would you be interested to learn words in English and Spanish ? **“Yes”**

Would you be interested to learn more about tamarisk and Arundo removal? **“Yes”**

What are some things you would be interested to know more about? **“Native plants, conservation language, names of plants and animals.”**

Are you interested in learning Chumash words for local plants and places? **“Yes, because it is very interesting.”**

Do you think it would be helpful for crews of mixed Spanish and English speakers to have more familiarity with each language? **“Yes, that way we could all learn together; Yes, because we could learn new things; Yes, because it would help me understand more about the work.”**

Would you be interested in sharing your knowledge and experience working in the river? **“Yes, because I’m also interested to learn more from my colleagues.”**

Would you like your own field tech guide ? If so, what would be in it? **“Yes, and whatever areas I can learn in.”**

Location

Fillmore City Hall and Sespe Cienega Interpretive Trail at the Fillmore Fish Hatchery

Workshop Activity Program

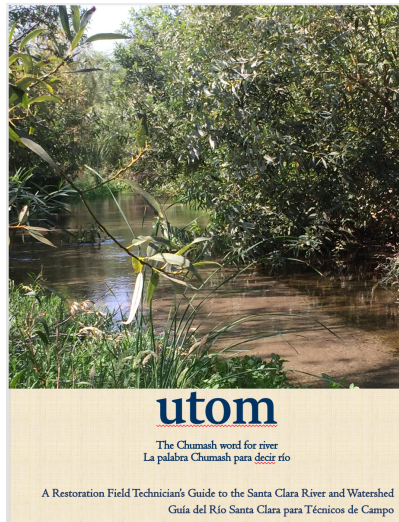
8-hour Day of Group Discussion, Activities and Presenters

Presenters

- Hear from other people working in aspects that field tech work intersects with and be connected to other aspects of restoration or around the river.

Workshop Materials

- The workshop resource and guidebook
- 3 x 4ft Santa Clara River Watershed Topo Map
- 4 x 5ft Info Graphic Banners
- Notebooks and Pens
- Bird and Tree ID Drawings
- Translation headsets



Workshop Guidebook and Resource

Workshop Schedule

- 9 – 9.45am - Meet and Intros and Set up the Day
- 9.45 am – 10.15 am - Workshop Activity : Using the SCR Guidebook, Personal Field Phrasebook
- 10.15 – 10.45 Present the things you have talked about in the breakout groups, back to the whole group.
- 11am – 12.15 pm - Marianne Parra - Chumash Perspective, Cultural history including language and stewardship and Q & A.
- 12.30 pm – Meet at Fillmore Fish Hatchery for Lunch Break. / Meet at Fillmore Fish Hatchery for Lunch Break
- Afternoon Session
- 1pm-4pm
- 1 pm-1.30 pm - Kat Selm, The Nature Conservancy - Stewardship and agriculture integration and Q&A session with Kat

- 1.35 – 2.05 pm Mike Glenn The United States Fish and Wildlife Service – Wildlife in the Santa Clara River Watershed
- 2.15 – 2.30 pm – 15-minute break
- 2.30 – 3.15pm Chumash language from Alikoi Parra
- 3.15 – 4pm Language Activities such as creating a pocket size translation dictionary
- 4pm – End of the Day!



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Photos 1 – 3 show the morning session in Fillmore City Hall. Photos 4 and 5 are at the Sespe Cienega Interpretive Trail.



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4 Diana Rodriguez Program Spanish Language Coordinator



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This was the first try at something that could be done again and developed. The goal was to try to create an immersion workshop and this guidebook was made to support that. Each topic could be covered in more detail and there could be more workshops for example 2 hours instead of a whole day. The topics that we would like to expand on in more detail would be native flora and fauna id; nonnative invasive weeds; and tools and methods.

Understanding the amounts of water wasted by Arundo and Tamarisk, helps Field Tech's to appreciate their own hard work, not just on restoring native habitat but also on protecting water as a natural resource and factor in climate health. It also helps them to educate others, such as the public or family about the work and they affect these factors.

Bilingual Ability helps for Safety Meetings and general site safety and navigation.

Workshop Presenter and Feedback

Marianne and Alikio Parra – Chumash Representatives

In the morning, Marianne, and her daughter Alikoi shared about Chumash culture past and present, Chumash stewardship of the land and issues important to them. In the afternoon, Alikoi talked more on stewardship and taught Chumash language.

“We had a really great time together and out on the land. I think this is a great experience for field techs. Being on the land is so important to see and understand things in real time. I appreciate everyone's time and efforts that went into this day.” Marianne Parra



Alikoi Parra teaching Chumash language and historical land stewardship

Michael Glenn - Biologist and Educator United States Fish and Wildlife Service

“ I really appreciated the opportunity to share what I do at USFWS with the field techs and other presenters. I enjoyed the great questions and enthusiasm. I was previously a field tech for an environmental consulting firm, and I benefited greatly from the opportunities I had to hear what our conservation partners and agencies did.”



Mike Glenn teaching about USFWS work and wildlife permitting.

Kat Selm – Stewardship Associate The Nature Conservancy

“ I planned to share The Nature Conservancy’s history of conservation, restoration, and public access in and along the Santa Clara River, including why/when/how we own and manage agricultural properties as a compatible land use to floodplain protection. I was able to touch on all these points. Several attendees had a broad knowledge base, but for many I think they gained a deeper understanding of conservation work on the river. I very much enjoyed participating in this program and I think it is beneficial for technicians to hear from career professionals, network, and learn more about their field.”



Kat Selm teaching about The Nature Conservancy's SCR land acquisition program

Lessons Learned and Improvements

- Translation apps are helpful but not completely reliable. We did use some to be able to input content but then reviewed and edited which was process that can take a long time due to the complexity of some of the topics. Professional translation is very expensive, and we wanted the team to gain experience in this task which we did.
- Participation was more challenging than we expected. It is not the program that does not interest people, but it was very hard to interest some of the landscaping company managers in the idea right now. There are ways to explore that but also it may work better as a voluntary event and not via employer time which frees up the how the timing has to be structured e.g. Workshops could be 2 hours and not 8.
- Continuing to keep up to date data for example from the County, Farm Bureau and United Water Conservation District
- Create a smaller guide and maybe more than one. For example, we intended to create a coated trifold of plant and identification but had trouble finding the printer resource for that and time for graphics was also an issue. We also intended a backpack size book of the guide but had the same trouble as with the plant and bird guides.
- Because we were trying to have an immersion structure, we tried to cover a lot in one workshop and one resource guide. We could expand on each topic in a bigger book or separate ones. And have one topic per workshop.
- Go to colleges to make it easier for students.

Participant Feedback

“People in the Latino community who live in the area have communicated with me their interest in preserving the river and its importance. Most people don't know how they can be a part of helping take care of the river or what exactly is done when we work there. The program opened the door for people who have an interest in learning a new language and provided them with a

resource they can refer back to. I believe the program is worth pursuing with more involvement with the local community and schools in the area. In the future, as an addition to the information provided regarding restoration it would be beneficial to add common phrases staff can use to communicate with each other while out in the field. Communication about the work is critical but learning how to communicate with each other throughout the day can boost enjoyment throughout the workday. The workshop was executed in an enjoyable and engaging way that made learning about language fun. Having representatives from environmental companies was a bonus, allowing us to learn more about the importance of restoration and the community.”

Marisol Sandoval

“Lots of the topics I have learned about a lot in school but don’t have much experience in besides casual conversations with others. I know there was a full plan for Spanish speaking community members to attend, so it was a bummer they could not make it. It would have made the Spanish English section much more practical. I definitely feel like the program benefited me as a field tech. Sometimes we start working on projects with little context of the place, so it’s good to get a deeper understanding of the historical uses of the land and who all the stakeholders are.

Yes, it is worth pursuing. This was just the first iteration, and I learned a lot, so with improvements it could be a long-standing resource for people involved with the river in all sorts of ways.”

Ethan Jakob



Marisol Sandoval



Ethan Jakob

More that could be done from here.

- Continuing workshops with other presenters such as people who work in Agriculture. It can also involve resources from the WaterTalks and continue that effort of that outreach.
- Second Edition of the book improved from what was learnt in the workshop and more field guides as mentioned in the paragraph of improvements above.

- Each topic could be covered in more detail in more than one workshop: for example 2 hours instead of a whole day. The topics that we would like to expand on in more detail would be native flora and fauna id; nonnative invasive weeds; and tools and methods.
- Continued outreach to interested consulting collaborators such as the Western Foundation for Vertebrate Zoology, the Parra Family.
- Use the outreach materials and content for other outreach facilitation such as volunteer days, college presentations and school trips.
- Professional development and opportunity were one of the main goals of the workshop. We have connected with other organizations providing the similar and already established programs such as Theodore Payne who are sponsored to provide these trainings for free.

Conclusion

We had very positive feedback from participants and fellow professionals who heard the program report at the April 5th WCVC Meeting. A few of these organizations said they had been working on similar goals that were pertinent to their own work, for example at CalTrout. Teachers at colleges expressed interest in workshops if we could come to campus. There is a lot of interest in employment in environmental sectors and definitely nature-based solutions such as restoration. Being able to continue a program like this or like it would be worthwhile. It was a beneficial use of the Water Talks funding and helped establish a foundation for the evolution of this work that can benefit climate and natural resource problems as well as providing a potential growth in this specific employment sector. Both Diana Rodriguez and became experienced in the challenges and solutions and this program gave us a lot of benefit for our own professional development and growth.



Some of the attendees and participants.



Workshop Certificate