

Presentation #1 - Developing Riparian Management Goals through Validation of Assessment Tools

Tuesday, November 17, 2020 – 9:45 a.m.-10:15 a.m. ET

PRESENTERS

- Ross Clark, Central Coast Wetlands Group
- Kevin O'Connor, Central Coast Wetlands Group

ABSTRACT

Riparian areas throughout California are an incredibly rich resource, providing valuable and varied ecosystem services, including diverse habitat functions, climate resiliency, carbon cycling, and water quality benefits. Resource managers in California currently face new opportunities (through protection policies in development and state grant resources for protection and restoration) and new threats to these resources (destruction associated with food safety and regulatory liability concerns by landowners). This project will complete the development of a set of riparian assessment and prioritization tools needed to support the protection of rivers and associated riparian habitats. Major tasks include the validation the Riparian Rapid Assessment Method (RipRAM) tool, development and testing of watershed condition estimation models, development of riparian zone protection and management goals, improvements to access to watershed condition data/information, and tracking progress towards meeting central and southern California riparian protection and enhancement goals.

BIOS



Ross Clark has 20 years of experience drafting and implementing California's Nonpoint Source Control Program both as a university researcher and as state agency staff. He is currently charged with developing regional programs to improve the restoration and management of state wetland resources and implementing programs to reduce nutrient loading to Central Coast surface waters. Ross manages a team of field scientists supporting the development and implementation of the State's wetland monitoring program and the integration of wetland restoration activities into regional and State water quality and land use planning efforts. Since 2008 he has also been tasked with developing the City of Santa Cruz strategic plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and identify key threats from, and appropriate responses to climate change and sea level rise.



Kevin O'Connor is an ecologist specializing in wetland restoration, monitoring and assessment, and is the Project Manager for CCWG. Kevin is involved with wetland and upland restoration in the Moro Cojo Slough, the development of a rapid assessment method (CRAM) for multiple wetland types in California, and participation with the California Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup (CWMW). He also serves as one of the central coast liaisons for the Rapid Assessment (L2) Committee of the CWMW.