

February 11, 2012 | Posted by [Special to The Enterprise](#)

## Habitat restoration project wins national partnership award



Kurt Vaughn, an employee of Audubon California, and Janet Loduca, chief of staff at PG&E, lead a habitat-restoration work party Wednesday at PG&E's property along Pleasant Creek in Yolo County. Courtesy photo

PG&E employees spent Wednesday at a workday at the utility's property along Pleasant Creek in Yolo County to celebrate an award jointly shared by Audubon California's Landowner Stewardship Program and the Center for Land-Based Learning.

The Community Partner of the Year award was announced in November by the Wildlife Habitat Council at its 23rd

annual symposium in Baltimore. The award recognizes work to restore riparian (riverbank-dwelling), oak woodland and grassland habitat around an important tributary to Putah Creek, called the East Fork Dry Creek.

The restoration is designed to stabilize the banks of East Fork Dry Creek to prevent erosion, improving the habitat for the area wildlife and plant species.

"This award is the result of a very rewarding process led by both our partner organizations," said Peter Beesley, senior environmental specialist with PG&E. "Working with two incredible organizations to create a positive impact to both the environment and future generations has been rewarding and proves what we can all do together."

PG&E employees joined representatives from Audubon and the Center for Land-Based Learning on Wednesday in working to turn the site into a productive habitat planting native plants and monitoring owl boxes.

The site also serves as an outdoor classroom for local middle and high school students as part of a hands-on environmental educational program run by the Center for Land-Based Learning.

“Our goal is to use education to make a change for the better,” Mary Kimball, executive director of the Center for Land-Based Learning, said in a news release. “This award and the work we have all done together shows how strong partnerships can make a difference for generations to come.”

In addition to restoring the vegetation on the site, Audubon California hopes to increase habitat available to various species found on the area, including more than 100 types of birds.

“We are very pleased for the recognition of this 10-year relationship during which we’ve brought students to a multitude of sites like this,” Valerie Calegari, director of Audubon California’s Landowner Stewardship Program, “teaching them the practical skills of planting, irrigating, and cultivating habitat, as well as nurturing an appreciation of the wildlife it supports.”

Each year, the Wildlife Habitat Council opens the floor to nominations for the prestigious Community Partner of the Year. The award goes to one organization or individual in recognition of a significant contribution and lasting impact on a corporate site’s wildlife habitat enhancement program through hands-on environmental awareness and enhancement activities.

Companies nominate local partners who help plan, implement and sustain their site’s programs, which in itself is an honor.



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