



Jacoby Creek Land Trust

PO Box 33 • Bayside, CA 95524

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Repairing A Riparian

Grades: K-12 **Subjects:** Science, Environmental Studies

Group Size: 1+ **Duration:** 25-45 min.

Setting: Outside along the riparian area of the Jacoby Creek, in the rainy season

Key Words: native plant propagation, salmon lifecycle and habitat, riparian restoration, native species and wildlife habitat, and ecology

Goals/Objectives: To learn about the interconnectedness of ecosystems, the impact of human activity on riparian habitats, and how we can work to repair and restore riparian areas by planting native vegetation.

Background: This activity will review what a riparian area is and how restoring the riparian will enhance the ecosystem and habitats for many plants and animals. Human activity, like logging and farming, can affect habitats along waterways, so it is important for us to learn the best management practices and how we can restore riparian areas. One of the ways we can help is to plant native vegetation and trees along the Jacoby Creek.

All of the species within a riparian habitat are interconnected and interdependent. Diverse plant and animal species live within healthy riparian areas. Plants along a waterway help to stabilize the banks, reduce silt and sediment in the water, and provide shade, which improves the creek habitat for many animals. For example, fish, including salmon, need clean, cool, and flowing water to stay healthy. Many other animals depend on fish and amphibians to survive, like birds, bears, and humans. Trees provide shade and habitat for birds, and when they or their branches fall into the creek, they provide habitat for many creek dwellers. Leaves that fall into the creek provide food for many organisms, which is why it is important to plant both native deciduous and evergreen trees along waterways. Riparian plants also improve soil conditions by filtering out sediment, nutrients, and pollutants before they reach the creek.

Materials & Prep: Plants, shovels, hoes, and gloves. Other tools, seeds, and/or soil may also be needed. Consult the Jacoby Creek Land Trust before planning your planting, as we know when, where, and which plants to plant. (*It is best to plant trees between January and March.)



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Activity: Gather your group, plants, and tools, and head out to where you will be planting. If there are grasses or other ground cover where you would like to plant, use a hoe to remove these plants and their roots from the surface. Dig a hole wide and deep enough to hold your plant and its roots. When digging, take care to pile loose dirt separate from the removed surface plants so it's available to refill back into hole with the plant. Remove your plant from its container and open up the roots a little so they know they can grow when you plant it in the ground. Put plant in the hole you dug making sure that it is just deep and wide enough to hold it. Replace some of the soil you previously dug out and gently pack it around your plant so that it stands up on its own. If necessary, put up barriers around the plant to protect it from animals that may want to eat it. Stand back and admire your work! Be sure to come back to visit your plant and watch it grow!