



# Media Advisory

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## Photo Opportunity

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 1, 2011

**Contact:**

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Community and Government Affairs  
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**Day of event:**

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## **Students and Volunteers Kick-Off Creek Restoration Project**

*Grant funds planting along Mark West, Porter Creeks to improve water quality, habitat*

**Event:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) will present \$20,000 in grant funding to the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District to enhance habitat along Mark West and Porter Creeks utilizing volunteers from the Friends of the Mark West Watershed and local students from Casa Grande, Carpe Diem, Sonoma Mountain, and Sonoma Valley High Schools and Windsor Oaks Academy, participating in the FARMS Leadership Program.

**When:** Thursday, Feb. 3; **planting begins at 9:30 a.m.; presentation of check at noon-1 p.m.; planting concludes at approximately 2 pm**

**Where:** Cresta Ranch, 3035 Porter Creek Road, Santa Rosa (directions below)

**Who:** Mike McGuire, 4<sup>th</sup> District Supervisor

Kara Heckert, Executive Director, Sotoyome Resource Conservation District

Claire Thorp, Assistant Director, NFWF

Kelli Nevin, Government Relations Representative to Marin and Sonoma Counties, PG&E

Bill Keene, General Manager, Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District

Caryl Hart, Director, Sonoma County Regional Parks

**In attendance throughout the day:** Shirlee Zane, 3<sup>rd</sup> District Supervisor

Jennifer Hainstock, 1<sup>st</sup> District representative

Leandra Swent, Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District

Bill Cresta, owner of Diamond C Ranch

Harriet Buckwalter, Friends of the Mark West Watershed

Mary Kimball, Director for the Center for Land-Based Learning (parent organization of the FARMS Leadership Program)

**Background:** Sotoyome RCD applied for a grant through the Nature Restoration Trust program, funded by Pacific Gas and Electric Company and administered by NFWF, to begin the Cresta Ranch Riparian Enhancement and Education Project—a revegetation project that will improve the health of the stream systems in the Mark West watershed, specifically the floodplain riparian corridor along Mark West and Porter Creeks on Cresta Ranch. The first phase of the project will involve the planting of hundreds of native trees and plants along approximately a one-third mile stretch of creek corridor. The native trees shade the stream channel and provide shelter and a food source for federally-listed salmon and other aquatic organisms. Additionally, a healthy riparian corridor prevents sediment and other pollutants from entering the stream, and native riparian plants attract birds and other wildlife that can act as predators to pests that eat crops.

The District purchased the 340-acre Cresta Ranch property in 2007 to protect critical habitat for endangered steelhead and Coho salmon, provide a continuous wildlife corridor with other contiguous protected lands, protect the scenic views along Porter Creek Road, and provide public recreational and educational opportunities. The District plans to transfer the property with three adjoining properties to create a future 1,146-acre regional park.

**Visuals:** Students, volunteers, and local elected officials planting along creek corridor; Supervisor McGuire, and Sotoyome RCD and District representatives accepting grant check from PG&E, NFWF

**Directions:**

**From Santa Rosa:** Highway 101 North. Take exit 494 for River Road toward Guerneville/Calistoga. Turn Right at Mark West Springs Road.

**From Healdsburg:** Highway 101 South. Take exit 494 toward Calistoga. Turn left at Mark West Springs/River Road. Continue on Mark West Springs Road. At the Mark West Lodge, Mark West Springs Road will turn into Porter Creek Road. Continue on Porter Creek Road for 1 mile. Pass an open field on the right and turn right at 3035 Porter Creek Road. Go down the driveway to the parking area.

**From Calistoga:** Take Foothill Blvd/Highway 128 northward. Turn left at Petrified Forest Road. Turn right at Porter Creek Road. Continue on Porter Creek Road and .6 mile past Safari West turn left at 3035 Porter Creek Road.

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Conservation District  
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