

# The Community VOICE

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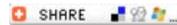
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## Critters team up with Conservation Corps



Conservation Corps North Bay offers a winning combination: Transforming the lives of young people through education, training and inspiration, while working to conserve and restore natural resources.

Started in 1982 by a father, out for a walk with his two sons in Marin, who noticed the trails needed maintenance, CCNB (then Marin Conservation Corps) has grown to a huge organization that has trained thousands of young people, maintained hundreds of miles of trails and diverted thousands of pounds of trash from the landfill for recycling.

CCNB expanded into Sonoma County and opened an extensive new facility in Cotati with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony in September 2010. The facility includes classrooms, where young people gain valuable skills in everything from resume writing, career guidance, interview and job-seeking skills, to civic engagement and leadership. It includes workshops for repairing and maintaining tools used in habitat restoration and trail construction projects, and where recycling containers are assembled to be used in parks and at events. And it contains a recycling area where recyclable items are brought to be processed and bundled for the next stage in the recycling process.

Outdoors, CCNB crews perform creek and trail maintenance, ecosystem monitoring, fire-fuel reduction, habitat restoration and recycling. CCNB's environmental programs provide a service for land management agencies, homeowners' associations and nonprofit organizations. CCNB collaborates with organizations such as the Sonoma County Water Agency, Sonoma County Agricultural Open Space and Preservation District, Sonoma County Regional Parks and the Sonoma Ecology Center, to provide training and mentorship opportunities to young people. This summer CCNB also expanded its summer youth program, Project ReGeneration, to Sonoma County with 20 sixth to ninth graders participating in this program's unique combination of environmental service, education, and outdoor recreation.

At a much smaller scale, Cotati Creek Critters has been involved in habitat restoration along the Laguna de Santa Rosa in Cotati and a small section of Rohnert Park since 1998, involving thousands of volunteers of all ages from pre-school through retired seniors, students, and a wide range of community groups. CCC also runs a community education program, the Inside/Outside Nature Education series, featuring local experts, to develop a sense of environmental stewardship in the local community. On January 24, at the request of Cotati Creek Critters and as part of CCC's Inside/Outside series, CCNB will host an evening which will include a tour of its impressive facility. CEO Marilee Eckert, Sonoma Program Director Gary Miltimore, Development Director Laura Giacomini and REAP (Recycling & AmeriCorps Program) Manager Will Becker will explain CCNB's mission and programs.

The evening is open to all, and whether you are a young person or a parent looking for educational and training opportunities, someone who works with young people, an environmental organization, a potential volunteer, or just a local resident who would like to learn more about what's going on in the neighborhood, you are welcome to participate. The event is 7 p.m., Jan. 24 at CCNB's office at 365 Blodgett St., Cotati. For information see [www.CotatiCreekCritters.info](http://www.CotatiCreekCritters.info) or contact: [jenny@creeks.cotati.info](mailto:jenny@creeks.cotati.info) or 707 792 4422.

*The Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit public benefit corporation, sponsors Cotati Creek Critters.*

**What:** Creek Stewardship Day

**When:** Saturday, Jan. 8, 9 a.m. to noon

**Where:** Cotati City well lot No. 2 on Lakewood Ave. Parking at Ladybug Park, Liman Way, Rohnert Park.

**Details:** Help take care of native plants alongside the Laguna de Santa Rosa in Cotati. Exact tasks will depend on the weather and conditions on the group but may include planting native under-story plants, and/or taking care of existing plants: weeding, pruning, clearing storm debris. Dress for work and weather with old clothes, boots or sturdy shoes. Proper raingear is essential. Gloves and tools will be provided. Bring your own drinking water bottle and cup for hot beverages. For Creek Stewardship Day guidelines, directions, & maps see [www.CotatiCreekCritters.info](http://www.CotatiCreekCritters.info) or contact: [jenny@creeks.cotati.info](mailto:jenny@creeks.cotati.info) or 707 792 4422.

**What:** Inside/Outside Nature Education Series: Meet Conservation Corps North Bay

**When:** Monday, Jan. 24, 7 p.m.

**Where:** CCNB, 365 Blodgett St., Cotati.

**Details:** A tour of CCNB's extensive new Cotati facility and a presentation on their work of educating and training young people in natural resource management, including habitat restoration, trail construction and recycling. For information, see [www.CotatiCreekCritters.info](http://www.CotatiCreekCritters.info) or contact [jenny@creeks.cotati.info](mailto:jenny@creeks.cotati.info) or 707 792 4422.

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