



Mandala Springs Wellness Retreat Center Enters Partnership with Indigenous Community Members and Community Redevelopment Group to Begin Kelsey Creek Restoration and Stewardship Program

Mandala Springs, formerly Glenbrook Resort, is situated on the Kelsey Creek Watershed in Cobb, CA. The goal of the partnership is to implement a program that will restore the creek (as much as is possible) and its surrounding streambed to a more natural state, with the guidance and expertise of the Big Valley Band of Pomo Indians, the Cobb Area Council Forest Stewardship Committee, the Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance (TERA), Flow West, and others.

The partnership was developed by the Seigler Springs Community Redevelopment Association (SSCRA) a non-profit with close ties to local residents. Mandala has hosted several meetings and one work-day thus far; providing local residents an opportunity to learn the specifics of what constitutes a watershed, how they can get involved, and to share their experiences to date with Kelsey Creek's changeable nature through the years. Mandala Springs Director Raoul Goff noted: "We're honored to work with those who deeply understand that water is life, and who carry traditional knowledge to help solve today's complex challenges."

The meetings at Mandala also included discussions of the objectives of restoration in terms of wildlife habitat, water quality, and the re-introduction of native plant species that were an integral part of everyday life for local Pomo populations. This last part has begun, with native sedge grasses and other native species being mindfully planted along the streambed of Kelsey Creek on February 18. The plants being reintroduced have a long tradition of respectful harvesting for use as basket materials and medicine by the Pomo. There are native plant species in the creek, such as Dogwood, and Willow, that are threatened by the encroachment of aggressive non-native plants, such as Himalayan Blackberry.

Kelsey Creek, and the other two impaired waterways that flow into Clear Lake, play significant roles: as a source of drinking water, food resources, and for Tribal ceremonial activities. By pairing local residents of creek-side properties with indigenous experts to implement nature-based solutions for restoration and conservation, this project combines the expertise and input of these community partners with that of Mandala Springs, as its location is within their project's scope. As one Pomo member said, "Everything we do is about looking seven generations ahead."

Mandala Springs is looking ahead to continued participation and collaboration in land stewardship. The creek restoration project will be impactful for all program participants, as well as for the creek itself. Here is [an article in the local paper](#) about the program.

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