

LDA 190-001 (1 Unit) Fall 2011

Landscape Architecture Proseminar Series

Instructor: Eric Larsen

CRN 68992

230 Wellman, Fridays 12:10 -1:00

Putah Creek: Lifeblood of the region

Putah Creek-one of the two largest and most important creeks in our watershed-provides water to Solano County. Yet, like many of our natural resources, the resources - the water, gravel, and soils - are over utilized. The water has been dammed and diverted. The natural dynamics of the channel have been restrained, and, in some places, entirely halted. The riparian forests and vegetation have been severely altered, and the wildlife that once depended on those forests has been decimated. At the same time that there is continued pressure to harvest the natural resources, a warning-light has gone off to almost all concerned: if we don't protect, conserve, and restore these resources, they may cease to exist.

What are the resources of Putah Creek? Which ones are critical? Why are they critical? How do the physical processes of the flowing water, land inundation, and river channel dynamics interact with the ecological processes, the vegetation, and the wildlife? What are the fundamental (essential) processes that sustain the critical resources? What can be done to protect, conserve, and restore the vital processes and the resources that depend on them? What is currently being done to address this situation? How effective is this?

Weekly presentations will address these pressing issues in river management and restoration. The work represented will be highly interdisciplinary, and invites collaboration with investigators from many fields. The speakers come from the fields of pure research, management, planning, hydrology, ecology, and fine art.

Grading: P/NP