



## Productive partnership

Joining of private, public resources helps repair creek

**W**hen it comes to environmental issues, public and private interests rarely completely see eye to eye.

But in the case of a 1-mile stretch of meandering Pleasants Creek, private and public interests have joined together to do much to help restore the creek and protect some of the valley's cultural, historic and environmental assets. It is a fortunate and productive combination of resources.

Ethel Hoskins has been working since 2000 to restore her historic 400-acre walnut and cattle ranch along Pleasants Creek. The stream's eroding banks had threatened some of the historic buildings on the old ranch property, and large bamboo-like reeds called arundo had invaded the stream, causing a deeper channel and increasing the stream's destructive effects on the surrounding banks.

The creek became the first order of business in the restoration effort, aided by funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Solano Resource Conservation District, the ranch owner, and the Natural Resource Conservation District, among others.

After the arundo was cleared from the stream with much effort and sweaty labor, Rick Poore, head of Mount Shasta-based

creek-restoration firm SteamWise, was called to help engineer further restoration of the stream. That was a tall order given that the creek's bed had dropped 20 feet in the past 100 years or longer.

"We're trying to get the stream to heal itself," he said last week on a tour of the work completed in the past year. "I think we'll be able to apply what we've learned up and down Pleasants Creek, if not other places."

The improvement is not perceptible at first glance. But down the creek there are some noticeable changes — strategically placed rocks near the sharp bends in the stream, and

jumbled masses of roots guarding some of the creek's steep banks that have crumbled from erosion.

Time will tell the final tale for this 1-mile stretch of waterway, but the rocks and roots — as well as some hydrological engineering — gradually are helping to redirect, widen and stabilize Pleasants Creek, experts say.

The project, funded through the partnership of private and public sources, could slow sediment pouring into Lake Solano and scientists hope it will spur further improvements along the stream.

That seems like a worthy goal for future partnerships.

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