



ALAMEDA COUNTY FISH AND WILDLIFE COMISSION – INTERIM REPORT

Restoring Nesting Habitats for the Endangered California Least Tern in Alameda Point

Manuel Alonso, Earth Team - manuel@earthteam.net - December 2020

Summary

With the support of the Alameda County Fish and Wildlife Commission Earth Team worked as planned in 2020 with four Alameda County Title 1 public high school (San Lorenzo High, Arroyo High, Castro Valley High, and Skyline High) to successfully recruit four teams of 14 students each, providing 56 paid internship positions to disadvantaged youth. Interns worked under an Earth Team project-lead staff to learn about continue restoration work of critical nesting habitats of endangered California Least terns on the former Alameda Naval Base. The field work component has been affected by access restriction imposed by US Fish and Wildlife Service to the Alameda Base project sites, so activities have been rescheduled per the project schedule chart in this report. Project funds have been partially spent and sufficient funds have been reserved to complete all re-scheduled field activities as soon as COVID restrictions are lifted at the school district level and USFWS opens up access to their Alameda Base property.

Project Activities

Between July 2020 and March 2021 Earth Team was able to complete virtual project presentations at 4 campuses, recruitment of 56 interns, remote in-class curriculum delivery for intern education and training and all administrative tasks proposed. Initially, even though as COVID started to impact activities in March 2020, we expected that work sites and high schools would be open in some capacity by September 2020 as outlined in proposed reopening plans at the time. However, as Covid-19 continued to spread and worsen, it was clear that school district SIP orders would not be lifted for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.

In anticipation for this change, we spent a significant amount of time and effort throughout June and July modifying recruitment plans, curriculum, communication platforms, and more to be adapted to virtual learning. We still maintained tentative in-person plans so that we would be able to switch between virtual and in-person meeting with agility and speed if possible. However, at this point in the year we have been unable to host in-person meetings due to continued school closures and shelter-in-place orders. Moving forward, we hope to schedule small, physically distant field events throughout the end of March into April and May and publicly accessible land. We hope that these events will allow interns to collect data and learn restoration techniques to prepare them for next year.

COVID Impact on Field Based Project Activities

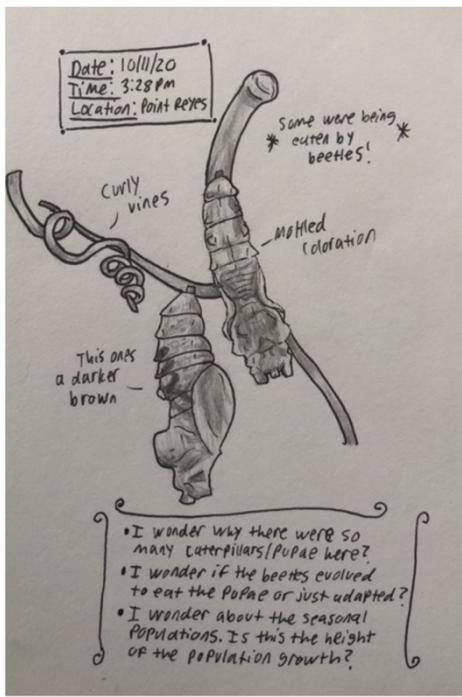
Unfortunately, in-person restoration activities at the Alameda Naval Base will not be possible until the 2021-2022 school year because of volunteer access restrictions to USFWS and VA property. In addition, Least Tern nesting season begins in March and April and the site cannot be disturbed after the colony has arrived. We are in continued contact with Susan Ewing, the lead USFWS wildlife biologist responsible for management of the property, about the situation and timeline. She is enthusiastic about the possibility of scheduling field workdays as early as fall 2021 as Covid cases decline and schools reopen. We plan to continue to assess the situation and begin restoration work at the Alameda Naval Base as soon as it is safe to do so and the property is open to volunteers. Fortunately, because interns have continued to receive weekly training through virtual meetings this year, many of our returning students will begin next year with foundational knowledge and skills regarding endangered species management and habitat restoration.

Since July 2020, our 4 Alameda county teams with 56 interns enrolled have participated in extensive virtual training and workshops. Arroyo High Schools has met 30 times, Castro Valley High has met 31 times , and San Lorenzo and Skyline High have each met 27 times. During these meetings, interns have been introduced to NOAA's migratory bird curriculum through their Winged Ambassador program. Earth Team staff are trained in the implementation of this curriculum as well as the Bolus Analysis activity, and used this material to introduce interns to issues of migratory bird health and habitat loss in preparation for restoration activities. Other virtual-in-class activities included education and training on climate change hazards in Alameda County and environmental risks, challenges in watershed management and restoration, issues related to plastic pollution and marine debris using our litter mapping and removal protocols, environmental career and workplace skills, local and global climate policy and more. Highlights from the year so far include a mock-COP climate negotiation activity, individual neighborhood litter clean-ups, plant and bird identification and nature journaling workshops, guest speakers and more.

Updated Project Schedule (completed activities are marked with)

Project Schedule of Deliverables		July 2020 to June 2021: 12 field workdays			
Restoration Internships at Alameda Naval Base		Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun
TASK 1: Project Planning and Administration					
Planning meetings with project partners		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		x	
Curriculum integration plans/ project schedule		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Project Admin		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	x
Interim and Final Reports			x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		x
TASK 2: Intern Recruitment					
Project presentations at 4 Alameda campuses		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Interviews and final selection of team		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Pre Surveys, Mid Surveys, and Post Surveys		x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			x
TASK 3: Curriculum Implementation					
Introduction to restoration work/ ecology		1 day <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Guest speaker and introduction to endangered species and USFWS policy		1 day <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Guest speaker and introduction to Alameda Naval Base/ tern colonies			1 day		
Guest speaker and introduction to tern nesting sites work				1 day	
Discussion of site history, rules, waiver				1 day	
After school site visit/ tour of nesting habitat			1 day		
TASK 4: Restoration Field Work					
Installation of chick fence at least tern colony				1 day	
Installation of chick shelters at least tern colony				1 day	
Invasive plant removal/ habitat restoration at Least and Caspian tern colonies				2 days	
Nesting habitat restoration field work					2 days
TASK 5: Public Outreach and Education					
Public event 1: Tabling at schools					1 day
Public event 2: Attendance of networking event					1 day
Public event 3: Production and distribution of photos and/or 2 minute video documenting work				2 days	3 days
Task 4: Reporting and Evaluation					x

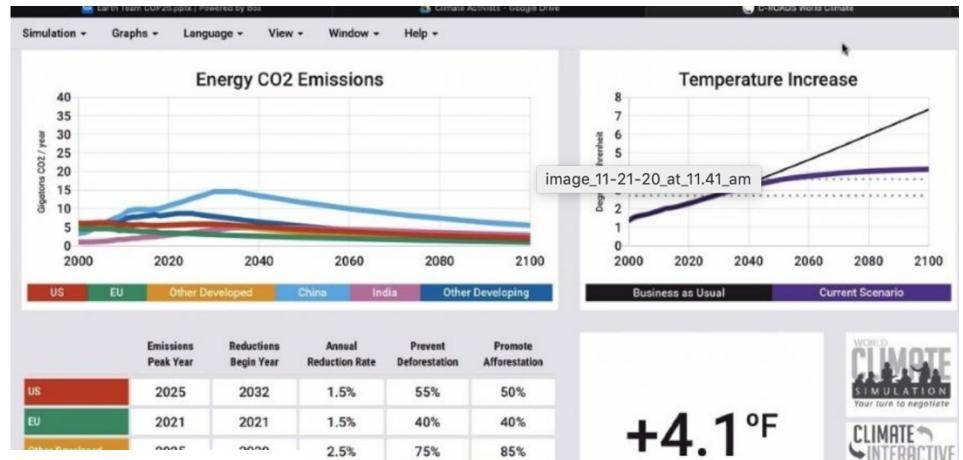
Participant's Perspective



"I learned about how the world is 'dealing' with global warming and how waste affects our earth."

-Keahly, Earth Team Intern

"I enjoyed how everyone in my team is very friendly and nice, they're easy to work with, and this internship has taught me a lot when it comes to climate change and things like that which I think are important." - Chrystal, Earth Team Intern



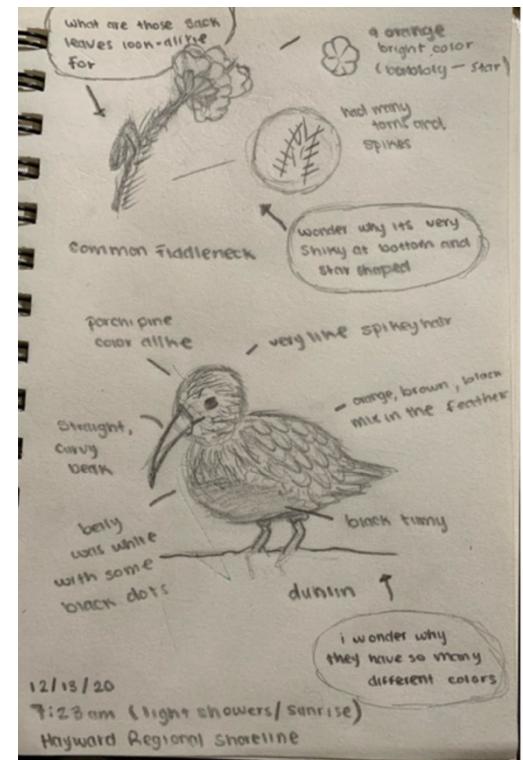
Eduardo Castro

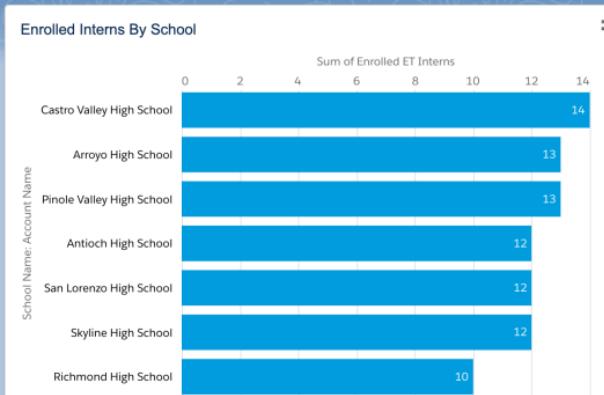
Hi i'm Eduardo but i also go by Eddie. I'm enjoy playing video games, talking to friends, and watching tv. This is my third year in earth and i'm ecstatic to be in the group for final year.



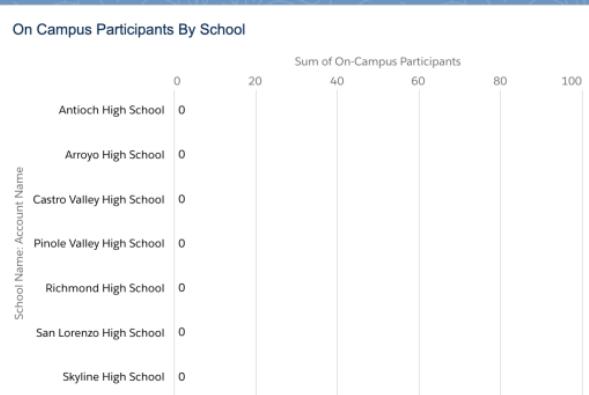
Jessica Lucero

Hi! My name is Jessica Lucero. My love of learning and desire to help care for the environment with an amazing community of teachers and peers led to my joining up with Earth Team. I enjoy the analysis of problems and ideation process of solutions. In my free time, I can be found making stovetop popcorn, listening to classical and video game music, adding new content and features to my personal website, and pondering what solutions I will come up with next. ^u^

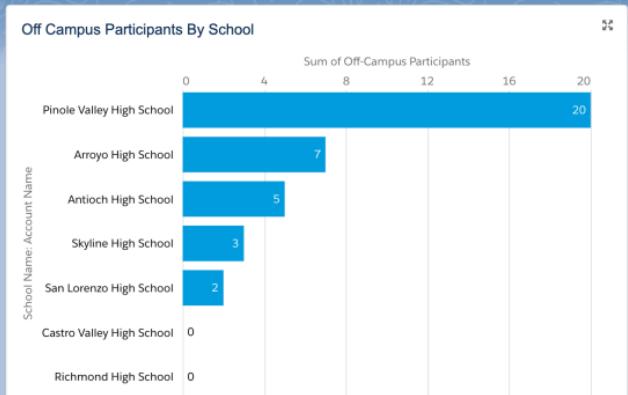




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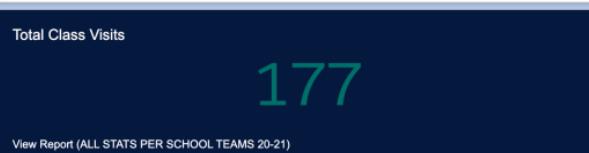
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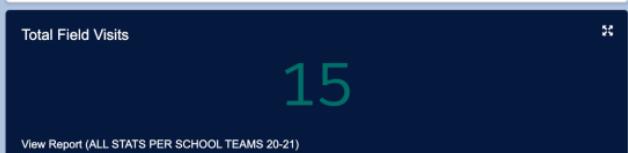
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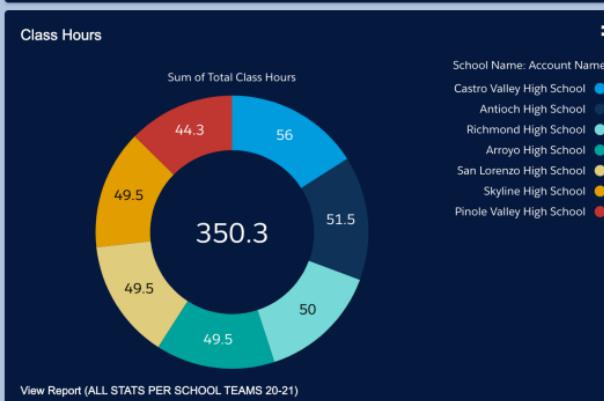
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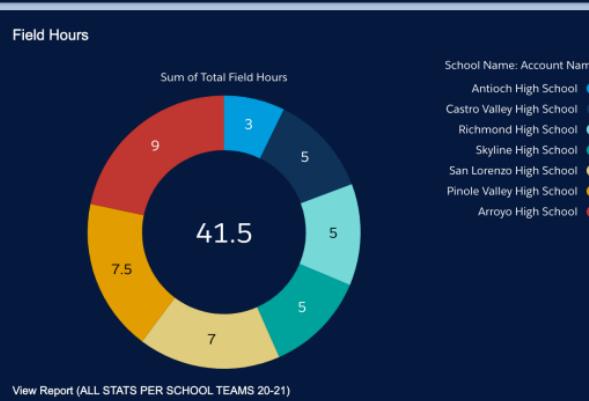
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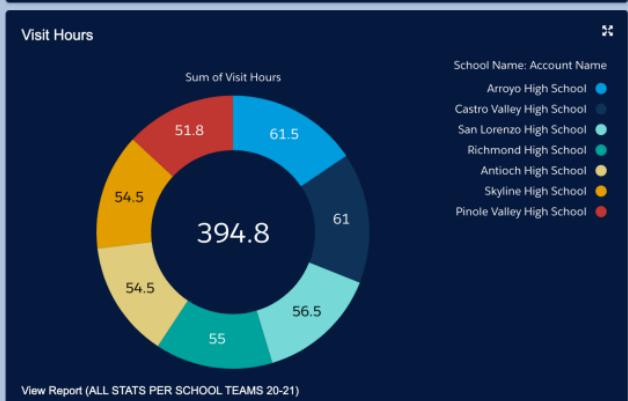
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