

# Sulphur Creek Nature Center 2025



# **Alameda County Fish & Game Report for**

## **Sulphur Creek 2025**

In the summer of 2025, Sulphur Creek Nature Center was honored to receive a \$5,000 grant from the Alameda Fish and Game Commission. This funding provided critical support for our animal care operations and significantly strengthened our ability to meet the daily needs of both our resident ambassador animals and select wildlife patients in rehabilitation. We are sincerely grateful for this grant and for the Commission's continued commitment to wildlife conservation and environmental education within Alameda County.

The grant played an essential role in supporting one of the most fundamental aspects of animal welfare: access to consistent, high-quality, species-appropriate nutrition. Rising food costs present an ongoing challenge for wildlife care facilities, and this funding ensured that our standards of care remained uncompromised. Reliable access to appropriate food resources allowed our staff to focus fully on animal health, training, enrichment, and educational programming.

Sulphur Creek Nature Center cares for a diverse group of resident animals who are permanently non-releasable due to injuries or medical conditions that prevent their return to the wild. These animals serve as ambassadors for local wildlife and play a central role in our education and outreach efforts. Through free public visitation and structured educational programs, they help foster awareness, understanding, and stewardship of native species among visitors of all ages.

Grant funds were used primarily to purchase a variety of food items tailored to the dietary needs of our resident animals, including chicks, mice, quail, rats, rabbits, and insects. Providing a diverse diet is critical not only for physical health, but also for behavioral enrichment and training. This variety supports natural feeding behaviors, reduces stress, and contributes to the overall wellbeing of the animals in our care.

In addition to supporting resident animal care, a portion of the purchased food was used to support patients in our wildlife rehabilitation hospital. During this year, Sulphur Creek Nature Center experienced an increase in admissions of bats and insectivorous juvenile birds, both of which require specialized diets and frequent feeding. The availability of additional insect prey, including mealworms, was particularly impactful and enhanced our ability to respond effectively to increased seasonal demand.

We were also able to allocate a portion of the grant funds toward upgrading the washing machine in our Animal Hospital, an improvement that has had a direct and meaningful impact on daily operations. Maintaining clean, sanitized laundry is a critical component of wildlife care, biosecurity, and disease prevention. Bedding, towels, enrichment materials, and medical linens must be washed frequently to prevent cross-contamination between patients and to ensure a safe, hygienic environment for both animals and staff.

Prior to this upgrade, our aging washing machine required frequent maintenance and limited our capacity to keep pace with the volume of laundry generated by the hospital, particularly during periods of high intake. The new machine has significantly improved efficiency and reliability, allowing staff and volunteers to respond more effectively to daily care needs. This upgrade supports faster turnaround times for clean bedding and medical supplies, reduces operational delays, and helps ensure that all

animals receive care in a clean and properly sanitized environment. The improved washing capacity has been especially important during peak seasons, when the number of patients—such as bats and juvenile birds—can increase rapidly and generate a higher demand for clean linens. This investment directly supports animal health, staff efficiency, and compliance with best practices for wildlife rehabilitation facilities.

Overall, the Alameda Fish and Game Commission's support strengthened our operational capacity and reinforced our role as a trusted wildlife care and education provider for Alameda County. The funding enabled us to maintain high standards of animal care while expanding opportunities for public education and engagement.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Alameda Fish and Game Commission for its continued support and partnership. Your investment has had a meaningful and lasting impact on the animals we serve and the community members who learn from them each year. To learn more about Sulphur Creek Nature Center and how to get involved, please visit [www.haywardrec.org/sulphurcreek](http://www.haywardrec.org/sulphurcreek).



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