

Part of the “Creeks in Common” initiative, this document serves as a tool to spark collaborative action by students, faculty, agencies, organizations, and campus partners. Many of the lists were generated by ChatGPT, are incomplete and contain errors, and in no way represent commitments by organizations. Working groups will use this document to jumpstart discussions and will update to reflect new priorities and partnerships. Please comment or get involved! Contact: cei@sonoma.edu.

Crane Creek Trail Project

The Crane Creek Trail Project addresses issues surrounding limited public access to natural areas—including disadvantaged communities—and the lack of safe, non-motorized transportation infrastructure. By connecting people to restored riparian zones and open space, the project promotes health and wellness through equitable access to outdoor recreation, active living, and nature-based community engagement.

The Crane Creek Trail is a proposed companion effort to the Copeland Creek Detention Basin initiative, designed to enhance climate resilience, recreational access, and regional connectivity. The project extends the existing Copeland Creek Trail from central Rohnert Park, through Sonoma State University, and into a newly expanded section of Crane Creek Regional Park. It includes approximately 7,500 linear feet of Class I bikeway, a 90-foot steel pedestrian bridge, two 14-foot clear span wood bridges, drainage improvements, and trail signage. Groundbreaking for the new trail occurred on May 28, 2025, marking a major milestone in the effort to connect urban and natural areas. The only remaining segment required to complete the trail is a short section across the SSU campus.

Importantly, the trail will provide new access to open space and restored riparian areas for disadvantaged communities in Rohnert Park, where opportunities for safe outdoor recreation are limited. The proposed 75-acre park expansion and trail system not only improve regional mobility but also advance equity by connecting underserved neighborhoods to healthy natural environments. Co-planned with the detention basin project, the trail reinforces habitat protection, promotes stewardship of Copeland Creek, and creates a visible, inclusive corridor for community engagement in climate adaptation and watershed sustainability.

Partial List of Existing Efforts in the Watershed

- **City of Rohnert Park:** Acquired 128 acres from University District LLC, retaining 53 acres for infrastructure and dedicating 75 acres to Sonoma County Regional Parks for park expansion and trail construction. The city is leading the design, engineering, and construction of the trail, including a signalized crosswalk at Petaluma Hill Road and

Laurel Drive. [Sonoma Open Space+3Sonoma County Regional Parks+3Sonoma County Regional Parks+3](#)

- **Sonoma County Regional Parks:** Collaborating with the City of Rohnert Park to expand Crane Creek Regional Park and extend the Copeland Creek Trail. They will manage the new parkland and oversee the integration of the trail into the regional park system. [Sonoma County Regional Parks](#)
- **Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District:** Provided a \$360,170 Matching Grant to the City of Rohnert Park to support the trail construction and park expansion efforts.
- **Transportation Development Act (TDA) Article 3:** Allocated \$200,000 to fund the construction of the Copeland Creek Trail, enhancing non-motorized transportation options in the region.
- **Sonoma State University (SSU):** Partnering with the City of Rohnert Park to complete the segment of the Copeland Creek Trail that traverses the university campus, facilitating connectivity between the campus and the regional park. [Sonoma County Regional Parks](#)
- **University District LLC:** The housing developer from whom the City of Rohnert Park acquired the 128-acre property, enabling the park expansion and trail development.

Partial List of Potential Additional Partners

- **Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition** promotes safe and accessible bike infrastructure and could assist with outreach, community input, bike safety education, and trail advocacy.
- **California State Coastal Conservancy** while typically coastal-focused, it funds inland trail connections, especially those that improve equitable access to outdoor spaces and promote non-motorized transportation.
- **California State Parks – Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** provides federal funds for recreational trail development, including pedestrian bridges and multi-use trails.
- **Caltrans – Active Transportation Program (ATP)** funds Class I bike paths and pedestrian infrastructure; may support future expansion or enhancements of the trail corridor.
- **North Bay Regional Transportation Planning Agency (NBRTPA)** could support integration of the trail into larger regional transit and active transportation plans.
- **Daily Acts** local nonprofit focused on sustainability, community resilience, and outdoor engagement—could support community-based stewardship or programming along the trail.
- **LandPaths** offers nature outings and trail-based education—potential partner for youth and family programs, especially with trail interpretation or stewardship.
- **Pepperwood Foundation** could support ecological monitoring or educational programs along the trail, especially in areas with native plantings or habitat restoration.

- **Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR)** may provide input on land stewardship, interpretive signage, and culturally inclusive design elements along the trail corridor.
- **Community Support Network / Sonoma County Department of Health Services** could connect the trail to wellness and mental health initiatives, particularly around nature-based healing, equity in outdoor access, or walkability.
- **SSU Departments (Recreation, GEP, Kinesiology, Education)** faculty and students could use the trail for research, recreation classes, accessibility audits, or K–12 field experiences.
- **Rotary Club / Kiwanis / Lions Clubs** local civic groups may provide small grants, volunteer hours, or trail furnishings like benches, bike racks, or interpretive panels.
- **REI Co-op Foundation** supports inclusive, community-oriented trail infrastructure and access projects.
- **Cotati-Rohnert Park USD** schools may integrate the trail into outdoor education, PE programming, or active transportation efforts for students and families.

Partial List of Potential Academic Engagement *This list provides examples of how various disciplines might engage with the initiative. It is intended to prompt faculty to consider how their own interests and expertise may align.*

College of Science, Technology, and Business

- **Department of Biology:** could monitor ecological impacts of the trail on riparian and upland habitats, track species diversity in adjacent restored areas, and study habitat connectivity across the park–campus–urban interface.
- **Department of Chemistry:** could analyze soil and water quality near the trail, test for pollutants linked to increased human access, and evaluate the effects of green infrastructure on runoff chemistry
- **Department of Computer Science:** could design interactive trail maps or mobile apps for educational tours, develop sensor networks for environmental monitoring, and create data dashboards to track trail use and ecosystem changes.
- **Department of Engineering:** could help design sustainable trail features, evaluate drainage and erosion control systems, and model structural performance of pedestrian bridges under various climate conditions.
- **Department of Geology:** could study the trail’s interaction with soils and slope stability, assess geomorphological impacts of construction, and identify areas prone to erosion or flooding.
- **Department of Kinesiology:** could research physical activity levels among trail users, evaluate public health impacts of new recreation infrastructure, and study how the trail supports walking and biking behavior change.

- **Department of Mathematics and Statistics:** could analyze use patterns through trail counters or surveys, model trail-related environmental data, and support data-driven decision-making for maintenance or education planning.
- **Department of Nursing:** could assess community health improvements linked to trail access, develop wellness programming for underserved populations, and support health equity outreach related to active living
- **Department of Physics and Astronomy:** could model solar exposure and temperature microclimates along the trail, help evaluate structural materials for bridges and signage, and support sustainability features such as solar lighting.
- **Department of Business Administration:** could evaluate economic benefits of trail-induced tourism or recreation, study business models for park amenities, and promote public–private partnerships that enhance trail programming.
- **Wine Business Institute:** could explore how improved recreation and green infrastructure affect regional branding and agrotourism, especially in connecting wine country identity to climate resilience and land stewardship.

College of Education, Counseling, and Ethnic Studies

- **Department of Counseling:** could explore the mental health benefits of nature-based exercise, develop therapeutic programming along the trail, and support environmental justice healing practices through inclusive engagement.
- **Department of Early Childhood Studies:** could organize nature-based family learning walks, evaluate child development outcomes from access to outdoor environments, and support early environmental literacy through trail activities.
- **Department of Education:** could integrate the trail into outdoor classroom experiences, design cross-grade-level environmental learning modules, and coordinate teacher professional development around place-based education.
- **Department of American Multicultural Studies:** could explore barriers to trail access in communities of color, study culturally meaningful uses of outdoor space, and guide inclusive community engagement for trail events and signage.
- **Department of Chicano and Latino Studies:** could support bilingual outreach to Latino neighborhoods, collect stories of cultural connections to the land, and lead participatory design processes for inclusive trail use and signage.
- **Department of Native American Studies:** could ensure that trail development respects and interprets Indigenous landscapes, incorporate TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) into interpretive content, and support tribal engagement in long-term trail stewardship.

- **Hutchins School of Liberal Studies:** could lead interdisciplinary field seminars along the trail, coordinate integrative learning projects that blend art, ecology, and community service, and foster student-led initiatives in wellness and sustainability.

College of Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts

- **Department of Anthropology:** could study community relationships to public space, document cultural perceptions of the trail, and investigate social impacts of green infrastructure on neighborhood cohesion.
- **Department of Art and Art History:** could develop public art installations, interpretive murals, and visual storytelling materials for trail users that reflect the ecological and cultural history of the region.
- **Department of Communication and Media Studies:** could produce awareness campaigns about trail safety, equity, and environmental education; support student journalism on local impacts; and analyze public narratives around active transportation.
- **Department of English:** could organize public readings or writing walks on the trail, develop creative nonfiction and poetry projects inspired by place, and lead trail-based storytelling initiatives.
- **Department of History:** could research land use and transportation history in the Rohnert Park area, document oral histories tied to the trail corridor, and develop interpretive signage based on historical themes.
- **Department of Music:** could compose and perform site-based musical works, host pop-up concerts or soundwalks along the trail, and engage the public through soundscape ecology projects.
- **Department of Philosophy:** could examine ethical dimensions of equitable trail access, lead public dialogues on urban-nature relationships, and contribute to the philosophical framing of place-based climate resilience.
- **Department of Political Science:** could assess the policy process behind trail planning, analyze how infrastructure funding affects regional equity, and support student engagement in civic planning forums.
- **Department of Psychology:** could research stress reduction and mood enhancement from trail use, investigate barriers to outdoor recreation among different populations, and evaluate behavior change related to trail access.
- **Department of Sociology:** could evaluate community responses to trail development, study social inclusion in outdoor recreation, and research the role of trails in environmental and health equity.
- **Department of Theatre Arts and Dance:** could create site-specific performances along the trail corridor, use movement to express ecological relationships, and host community-engaged arts programming focused on nature and movement.

- **Department of Women's and Gender Studies:** could explore how gender, class, and caregiving roles shape trail use patterns, advocate for inclusive design in public space, and lead projects on environmental justice and intersectionality.

Partial List of Potential Funding Sources

- **California Active Transportation Program (ATP)** major state-level funding source for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. Highly competitive but well-aligned with the project's scope and goals.
- **California State Parks – Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** federal funding administered by the state for both motorized and non-motorized trail projects. Includes planning, development, and maintenance.
- **Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program** funds planning activities related to trails and active transportation networks, including Class I bikeways.
- **California Natural Resources Agency – Urban Greening Grant Program** supports multi-benefit projects that reduce greenhouse gases, including trails that provide active transportation and urban canopy improvements.
- **California Wildlife Conservation Board – Public Access Program** provides funding for trails and infrastructure that improve public access to open space while protecting habitat.
- **Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)** could be applicable if the trail enhances access to protected lands (e.g., Crane Creek Regional Park) and meets eligibility.
- **Transportation Development Act (TDA) – Article 3 (local)** already tapped for \$200,000; more funding may be available for non-motorized transportation projects at the city or county level.
- **Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District** already awarded a \$360,170 matching grant; may consider additional support or help leverage state/federal funds.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) – One Bay Area Grant (OBAG)** supports complete streets, bike/ped projects, and regional transportation equity—especially if the trail enhances connectivity and climate resilience.
- **Sonoma County Parks Foundation** supports regional park projects, including land acquisition, trail improvements, and signage.
- **REI Co-op Foundation** funds trail development and maintenance, especially when projects enhance equitable outdoor access and community health.
- **PeopleForBikes Community Grant Program** provides funding for bike infrastructure and trail amenities such as bridges, bike parking, and wayfinding.

- **Kaiser Permanente / Healthcare Foundations** interested in projects that promote physical activity, community wellness, and access to nature—particularly in underserved areas.
- **Strong Foundation for Environmental Values** local foundation with a focus on environmental education and access to nature.
- **California Wellness Foundation** may fund components tied to public health, equity, and nature-based recreation in communities that face access barriers.
- **Rotary Club / Kiwanis Club / Community Foundations** can provide smaller amounts of funding or sponsorships for specific trail features like kiosks, benches, interpretive signage, or shade structures.