

WATERSHED PROTECTION

Three Bridges Oak Preserve

lies in the Atascadero Creek Watershed. This 20 square mile area receives more rainfall than most of Atascadero, and recharges our wells with clean water even during periods of severe drought. This watershed drains into the Salinas River, flowing north into the Monterey Bay.



Healthy watersheds can absorb even intense rainfall and then release the water slowly, extending the period of runoff and protecting the soil from erosion. To protect our watershed, ALPS has left the natural vegetation undisturbed. Trails are well located and maintained. It is hoped that good watershed management practices will be recognized by those who enjoy this preserve.



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In a healthy watershed such as this, grasslands and chaparral filter up to 2 inches of rain per hour, oak woodlands up to 5 inches. Plants use some of the water, but a substantial amount is absorbed and released gradually into the creek preventing erosion.

The lower elevations of the watershed have been extensively developed. Roads, parking lots, roofs, sidewalks and excavations create impermeable surfaces leading to rapid runoff. Flooding, erosion and the loss of water to recharge our underground aquifers often results.

Current building codes incorporate low impact design elements such as water retention basins and native landscaping design to assist infiltration and reduce downstream flooding.



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