

# GRADUATE THESIS DEFENSE AND LECTURE SERIES

## Environmental Studies Department

### Toxin Bioaccumulation in the Coyote Creek Watershed, San Jose, California

**When: Tuesday, October 11, 2005, 4:30pm to 6:00pm**

**Where: BBC103 (smart room)**

Presenting: **Elisa Wilfong**, SJSU Environmental Studies, Graduate Student



Elisa Wilfong



Coyote Creek Storm Drain

#### **About Elisa Wilfong:**

Elisa was born and raised in Hayward, CA, and attended Cal State University Hayward (Now Cal State East Bay), earning a B.S. in Biology. She started SJSU in spring of 2003 and has worked as an environmental scientist for 3.5 years. She is now employed as a watershed management planning specialist for the Contra Costa Clean Water Program. Elisa is a lover of the outdoors, an environmentalist, a trainer of horses, and a professional artist.

#### **Abstract:**

Non-point source pollution of urban waterways is a problem of epidemic proportions across the United States. The Coyote Creek Watershed in San Jose, CA is one of the many watersheds in the San Francisco Bay Area with unknown characterization for toxicity and is being used for fishing and recreation by the local community. A six-mile stretch of creek was studied during this thesis for PCB, mercury, and pesticide bio-accumulated toxins for three seasons. This thesis attempted to link specific toxicity sources from three storm-water pipes. Results indicate unsafe waters having toxin bio-accumulated levels exceeding maximum contamination limits for federal drinking water standards. The results of this study did not link water quality impairment to specific drains but the study was responsible for starting the necessary watershed monitoring program to indicate toxin levels in the creek water, and to recommend further sampling of Coyote Creek's water quality for human use.