



Amy Campbell
Projects

Our Community

Meet Jarrad Fisher- Oakland

Title: Senior Conservation Project Manager, [San Mateo RCD](#)

Please start out with telling us a little bit about yourself.

My name is Jarrad Fisher and I work for the [San Mateo Resource Conservation District](#). I currently live in Oakland, right near Lake Merritt. When not working, I'm a huge fan of backpacking, rock climbing outdoors, hanging out with my wife Katie and friends and eating good food.



Where's your favorite place to go backpacking? Oh.

that's a hard question. I would have to say my favorite backpacking spot is probably Desolation Wilderness. In September I'm doing the whole Tahoe Rim trail with a friend. We're going to be hiking for 9 or 10 days and it's going to be a really nice break to unplug from computers for a little while.

How did you stumble upon the awesome career path that you're on right now?

In my past life I was a photographer and filmmaker. I owned a film business with a friend of mine, and we traveled around the country making adventure documentary films. At some point we both had the realization that we didn't like doing our passion for work so we decided to try and go figure out another career path. My friend went into telecoms, and I decided to stick with the same thing and get into journalism. I applied to San Francisco State for my undergraduate degree and while there my friend Austin told me about Geospatial Information Systems (GIS). After doing only a night's worth of research, I decided to switch my major on a whim and went into the geography department. While working on my degree, I saw an article about a Resource Conservation District looking for people to help pull brussels sprouts to figure out if biochar was working. I thought that sounded interesting, went to volunteer and never left. That's where I am now. I went back to school and got my masters in GIS and learned a little bit more about watershed science. I just love the work; it's really a great community of people and I feel fortunate.



In thinking back over your career path so far, who was the first person who really inspired you? There's been a couple of people. My supervisor, [Joe Issel](#), has been extremely helpful. I was fortunate enough to start at this RCD when there were only four or five people. I didn't really know very much about the natural resource conservation world and I got to learn from him. [Kellyx Nelson](#) has taught me a lot as well. I feel fortunate that I got the opportunity to start off with this small group of people because when you come into a larger organization sometimes you just need to hit the ground running. With this small group I had the opportunity to learn over time and figure things out. They trusted me a lot through the process. In fact, I'm constantly learning from everybody in our RCD. That's the great thing about the community- as soon as you think you know something there's always something else to learn. There are so many

different facets to what we do it's pretty incredible.

How do you define success for yourself? That is a tough one. I think for me, success is definitely tied to happiness. I feel I am the most successful when I'm not necessarily making a lot of money or getting a lot of stuff done but when I'm happy at the end of the day with what I've accomplished.

Sometimes it's really hard to do, especially in the climate we're in now, but I feel like I'm successful when at the end of the day, I have a smile on my face.

Tell us about the typical day in the life of Jared Fisher. I generally get up fairly early, around 6:30/7:00. I'm a big runner and run four or five days a week with my dog Auto. Auto is a hound dog but he's really funny.

Afterward I take a little break, hang out with my wife for a little bit and then we both jump into work. These days, given COVID I'm pretty much on the computer all day. I've only been out in the field three times since COVID started. It's actually been kind of nice considering the quantity of construction projects I was managing last year. The COVID situation has given me an opportunity to write grant reports and get things buttoned up.

After work, I love to cook. My wife and I have a pretty small place so it's always a challenge because the kitchen so small, but we make it work. We'll generally make food and go for a walk along Lake Merritt. Sometimes we watch a good movie. I wish I could say I was reading books but haven't been doing that lately. Every once in a while, I'll play video games.

What do you think has been the most important skill that you have developed over your career so far? That's a hard

question. I don't know how to put this in a sentence or a word, but I guess I've

developed the ability to know where to look, or who to talk to if I don't know something.

As I work through these complex projects I don't know everything but I do know who to go to for answers.

I've learned to leverage relationships that I've built with people instead of doing a project myself. That was something I had to work on.

I'm generally a really shy person so it was hard for me to initially trust in myself enough to ask questions and to not feel shy about not knowing the answers or sounding stupid.



What do you think your greatest challenge has been along the way?

Grant writing. Grant writing is pretty difficult, and it takes a lot of time and skills. I have mild dyslexia so sometimes paragraphs somehow end up in the wrong order. Also, after a certain point, my eyes to start crossing and I can't possibly read what I've written anymore. Yes, I think grants have been the most challenging, but I've gotten better at them; there's always room to learn

What do you, what are you wanting to learn most from a community of your peers?

I would love to learn more instream flow dedications and how to work with agencies to learn how to measure and track these flows and how to dedicate the water instream and get that water

to flow to the ocean. I'd like to learn how to work with all the people within a system to ensure that the water I'm trying to get the ocean makes it past the next diversion. I also want to learn more about how to quantify the amount of water that can be bypassed past downstream water right holders.

Make sure to tune into November 3's webinar on CA Water Code Section 1707- instream flow transfers and the petition process.

In the meantime, what experience do you have with transferring and protecting water instream for fish and wildlife? What challenges have you encountered? Share with us below.

Mt Shasta, CA · Posted Today, September 17



Amy Campbell

Host ·
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I am a Project Director for The Nature Conservancy's (TNC) California Water Program and am host of this amazing community of environmental water practitioners.



Mary Ann King 1w



Mary Ann King 1 W

Water Policy

Jarrad, whenever it's safe to meet in person again, we should rendezvous. Our TU office is in Emeryville.
