



2016 Annual Report

2016 was an incredible year thanks to our amazing donors, volunteers, partners and other supporters. We are pleased to share the impact of your support as we advance our mission to create a better future for our historic San Diego River for people, water and wildlife through action, advocacy, education and volunteerism.

A Message from our CEO



When I reflect on 2016, I am humbled by the growth of the River community. From a few volunteers in 2001, we have grown significantly. Our digital community alone numbers nearly 40,000. Indeed our River now has a voice.

As we celebrate important milestones in 2016, we also look forward toward the next phase of our organization. A significant addition to our organization will be the Discovery Center at Grant Park. It has been many years in development, and we are optimistic that we will break ground in 2017. But to get there, we have much work to do.

We have \$1,100,000 to raise this year to keep the project moving forward. But the dream of annually providing 25,000 kids with much needed nature-based education programs is worth the effort!

Thank you for being part of our community.

Our Board of Directors & Staff

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Discovery Center at Grant Park



Artist rendering of the future Discovery Center at Grant Park

Thank You to our Volunteers

Thank you to the 7,029 annual volunteers who worked with us in 2016 to help create a better future for the San Diego River. We appreciate your hard work and dedication! In particular, congratulations to these leaders and core volunteers for meeting these incredible milestones!

Gold Volunteers

- (Donated 150+ hours)
- Tommy Younghusband
 - Gary Strawn
 - David Loveland
 - John Krzeminski
 - Everett Neuman
 - Joel Kalmonson
 - Daniel Hinesley
 - Barbara Palan
 - Tom Fetzer
 - Donna Zoll
 - AJ Votek

Silver Volunteers

- (Donated 75+ hours)
- Kathleen Sherber
 - Carol Gilbertson
 - Rita Bumbera
 - Judi Ravetti

- John Wasilewski
- Roger Lange
- Ginny Buerger
- Terry Fox
- Dave Fleischman
- Chris Anderson
- Jim Herrington
- Natasha Rodriguez
- Bruce Englebert
- Niles Fairman

Bronze Volunteers

- (Donated 50+ hours)
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 - Margaret Green
 - Judy Brennen
 - Cynthia Irmer
 - Mark Dreiling
 - Norrie Robbins
 - Cassidy Walker

- Daniela Goldsberry
- George Liddle
- Marty Offenhauer
- Emily Pacholski
- Lindy Harshberger

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- Kenny Santos
- Lizzie Allen
- Tess Plant-Thomas
- Kendra Casey
- Taylor Chase
- Savannah Hackett
- Kaitlyn Lund
- Megan Hayes
- Jeremy Robinson
- Brittany Cabeje
- Ryan Price
- Andy Hwang

- Jakob Daoust
- Jason Mos
- Trent Robinson
- Chandler Hood
- Sam Martin
- Benjamin Downing
- Joshua Sinsheimer
- Callie Grant

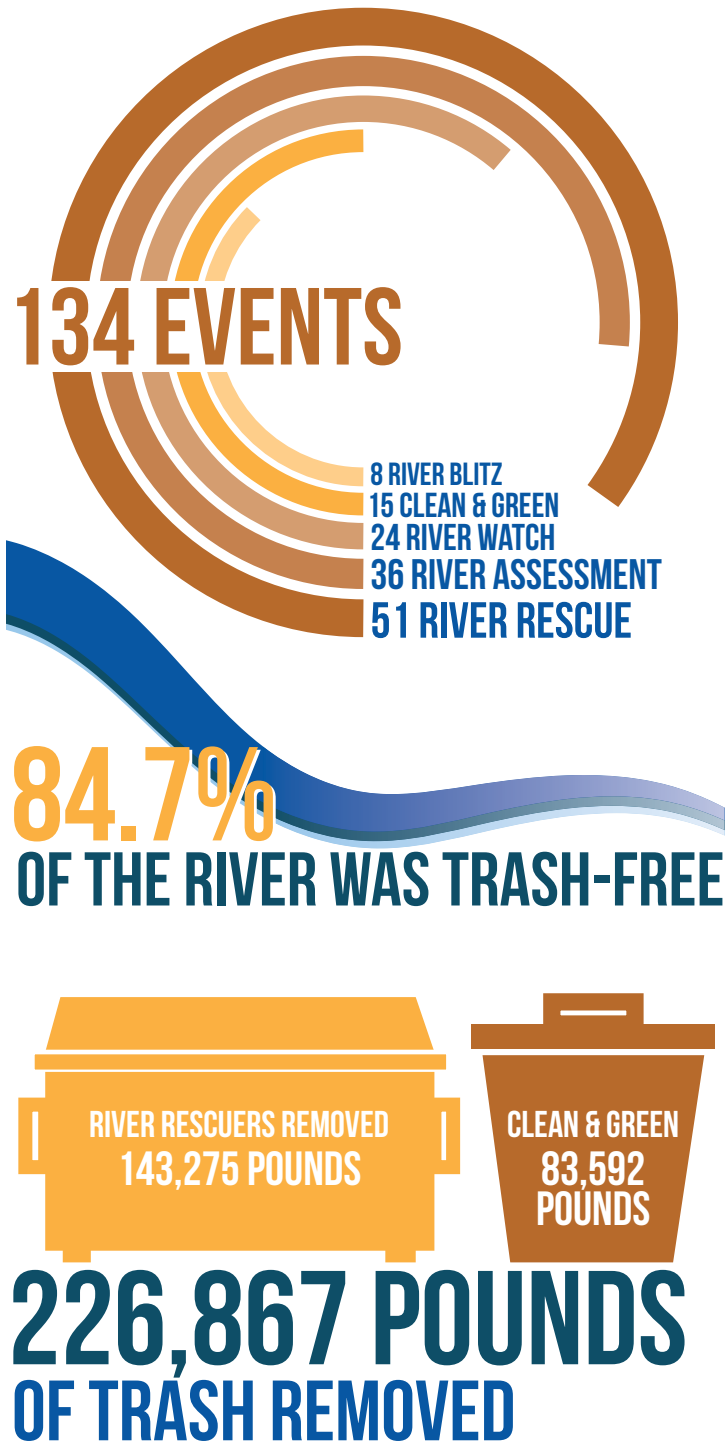
Anniversary Award Winners

- Volunteer of the Year:
Tommy Younghusband
River Guardian: John Kennedy
Legislator of the Year: Lorie Zapf
Founders Award: Michael Beck

This in addition to our volunteer Board of Directors.

Healthy River, Healthy Communities

Monitoring the health of the San Diego River ecosystem is one of our most important focus areas and our longest standing program. This adaptive program incorporates field surveys, water quality monitoring and trash clean-up. Together, these programs build a complete picture of the issues impacting the River and allow us to be flexible and nimble to address issues quickly.



In The Future >>>

In 2016, we removed our 2 millionth pound of trash from the River. This milestone shows both the dedication of our volunteers and the challenges still facing the River. Our recent data shows that on average, 94% of the trash entering the riverbed originates from homeless encampments. In the coming year, we will seek funding to strengthen relationships with landowners and policymakers to address this complex social and environmental issue. To support these efforts, we will strive to improve our data collection with weekly surveys and an improved public web portal.

We continue to see water quality plagued by very low flow and low dissolved oxygen. In 2017, we will begin a proof of concept study funded in part by a Prop 1 grant awarded by the state's San Diego River Conservancy to examine the feasibility of using aerator arrays to increase mixing of water to increase oxygen levels. If this study proves successful, this could provide options for improving water quality in ponded sections of the River in Mission Valley and Santee. Increasing oxygen in the water is important for fish and the ecosystem overall.

Land Acquisition

Thanks to the support of hundreds of donors and numerous partners, this year we were able to complete efforts to conserve the beautiful Temescal Creek Valley.

In 2016, The San Diego River Park Foundation completed 3 land acquisitions totaling 414 acres valued in excess of \$2 million.

The Temescal Creek Valley Initiative started more than 3 years ago as a focused effort of our Save the Source program. To date, The San Diego River Park Foundation has acquired more than 2,200 acres of open space in the upper San Diego River Watershed.



Looking Ahead >>>

The guiding principles of the Save the Source program are to be very strategic in our open space conservation efforts. We focus on properties with scenic, recreational, ecosystem and River values that need to be conserved in the face of being developed. We believe in connecting with the passion and shared interests of the open space community to conserve these lands.

In 2017, we will seek to expand our donor community as we believe that many people in San Diego and elsewhere share our values. We already have three new conservation opportunities before us. We also have been approved to purchase two other properties before they are auctioned off by the County.

In 2016, our smallest donation was less than \$5. We value this donation as much as larger ones. All are needed to seize these opportunities to conserve key, strategic properties. For the County properties, just over \$3,000 is needed to be raised. For the others we will need to raise more.

In 2017, we also need to build our Land Management Fund to care for the more than 2,000 acres of open space we now own.

River Experts

In order to make policy decisions, advocate for habitat conservation, and improve River condition for people and animals, our community needs concrete, actionable data about the San Diego River. The San Diego River Park Foundation is a leader in collecting and sharing data about the state of the San Diego River, its tributaries, and surrounding ecosystems.

In 2016, we worked with dozens of partners and landowners and over 500 volunteers to gather and disseminate information about trash, invasive species, wildlife, homeless encampments and related trash, water quality, archaeological and cultural resources, and more.

15 MONTHLY
WATER QUALITY
MONITORING SITES

4 UPPER TRIBUTARIES
MONITORED

TEMESCAL CREEK
CEDAR CREEK
BOULDER CREEK
CONEJOS CREEK

C OVERALL
TRASH GRADE

D WATER
QUALITY GRADE

C INVASIVE
PLANT GRADE

RIVER
REPORT
CARD

COLLABORATE RESEARCH WITH:
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATER RESEARCH PROJECT

REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO | CITY OF SANTEE | PRIVATE LAND OWNERS

78-MEMBER RIVER COALITION | THE PUBLIC AND MORE

Now What? >>>

The San Diego River drains a large 440 square mile watershed, and a significant amount of the lower watershed is dominated by dense urban development. This land use, coupled with segmented land ownership and management efforts, has resulted in neglect and negative impacts to health.

The River Park Foundation plays an integral role in coordinating holistic, watershed-wide data collection and convening stakeholders to increase management of issues. With a river-long focus, we are able to pursue research projects and monitoring efforts to better understand the health of the River as a connected system. In this way, we advocate for better stewardship and support land managers to improve the River's health and ecological function.

In 2017, we will lend our expertise to address issues of habitat quality and water quality. We are leading grant-funded pilot projects to explore improved mechanical trash capture on Forester Creek and increasing dissolved oxygen in Mission Valley, as well as creating a watershed-wide strategy for invasive plant removal and annual assessments of upper tributaries of the San Diego River.

Learn more, view data, or get involved here
http://sandiegoriver.org/online_info_center.html.

www.sandiegoriver.org
(619) 297-7380

Community Engagement

The San Diego River Park and Trail system is a vision for a better future not just for the River, but for all San Diegans. The River Park is a community gathering place, a respite from the daily rush, and a place for experiencing nature.

In order for the River Park to reflect the needs of our diverse community, our engagement program endeavors to inspire the mind, engage the hands, and touch the heart. We work to grow the community of stewards and advocates to strengthen our collective voice demanding a better future for the River and the creation of the regional River Park.



7,029 VOLUNTEERS
1,169 YOUTH VOLUNTEERS
79 CORE VOLUNTEERS

26,463 TOTAL
HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SERVICE



SUPPORTERS & ADVOCATES

26,210 FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS
482 TWITTER FOLLOWERS
796 INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS
10,476 E-NEWS SUBSCRIBERS
161,604 WEB VISITS
7,374,007 AD IMPRESSIONS
52,564 OUTREACH
804 DONORS

249
EVENTS HOSTED



Moving Forward >>>

In the coming year, the San Diego River Park faces exciting opportunities and unique challenges. In 2017, the River Park Foundation will start work on several major grants involving water quality and restoration in Mission Valley, restoration of the River Mouth and estuary, and community planning for improvements on Forester Creek. Of course, volunteers are also an essential component of our relentless efforts for a trash-free San Diego River and our education program.

Throughout our programs and projects, volunteers are a key partner in their success. In 2017, we anticipate several private and public projects along the River which can shape the implementation of the river-long park and trail system. We have set a goal of increasing our social media community to 50,000 people. With this voice, we can be sure the river and the vision of the San Diego River Park will be part of these plans. The larger our community of social media supporters, e-news subscribers, members, donors, volunteers, and leaders, the louder our voice when we meet with policy-makers and decision-makers.

At our core, we are an organization that started from volunteers and continues to be driven by volunteers, led by our volunteer Board of Directors. In 2017 we anticipate needing to organize more than 25,000 hours of volunteer service to reach our objectives.

www.sandiegoriver.org
(619) 297-7380

Youth Education

In an era when children spend more than 7 hours a day in front of electronic devices many studies show that access to high-quality experiences in nature is essential for developing confidence, curiosity and passion for the outdoors.

In 2016, we are proud to have increased our program offerings to include a 3-day progressive field experience at multiple sites along the River, and engage our first three classrooms in a six week program to raise baby trout in the classroom. In addition to our time-tested River Bugs Are Cool program, these opportunities allowed us to provide free education programs for over 2,000 students in 2016.



What's Next? >>>

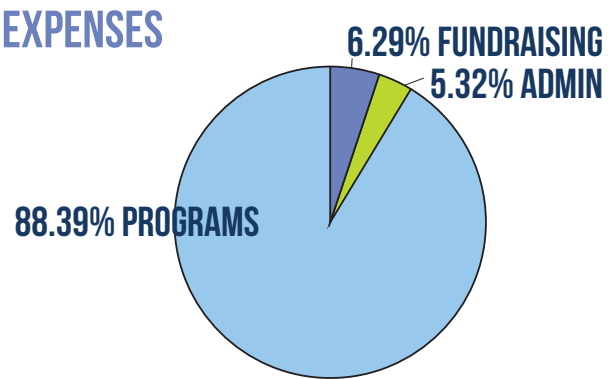
National science standards are finally catching up to what we have always known... field experiences that allow hands-on science foster creative thinking, inquiry, and more robust understanding. In short, our programs strive to inspire awe.

In 2017, in preparation for the opening of the Discovery Center at Grant Park, we have set our sights on growing our program and engaging 2,500 students. This goal will allow us to continue marching toward our vision of serving at least 25,000 of the over 100,000 underserved kids attending schools within 15 minutes of the Discovery Center.

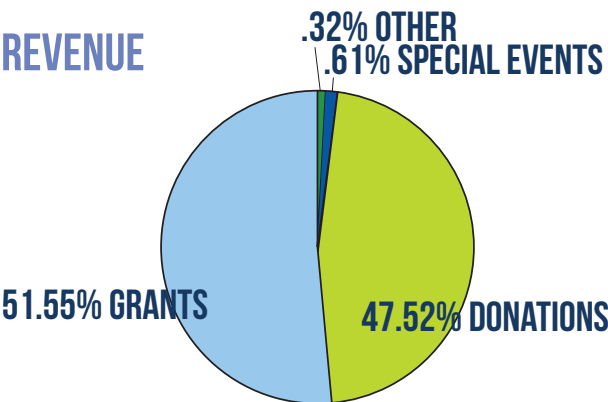
Contact us for more information about getting involved in these programs at coolriver@sandiegoriver.org

Financial Overview

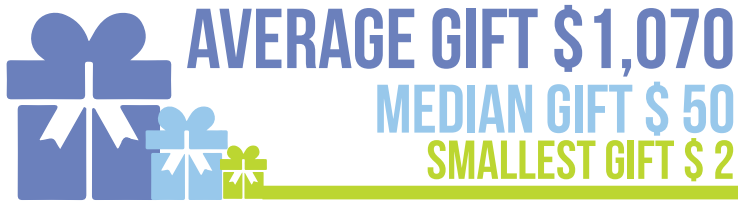
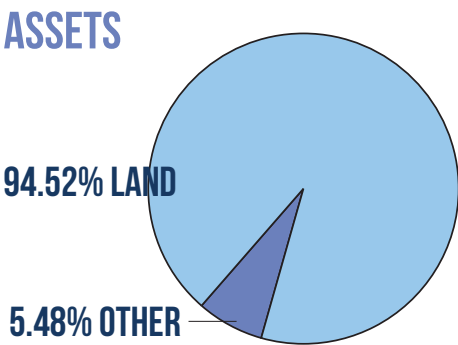
TOTAL EXPENSES \$952,800



TOTAL REVENUE \$1,548,015



TOTAL ASSETS \$19,497,100



Complete financial reports are available by request. Contact us at (619) 297-7380.

Thank You

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We are grateful to the following donors who provided support for our programs and operations.

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In addition, thank you to all of the generous Anniversary Celebration auction donors.

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The San Diego River Park Foundation thanks everyone who have included The San Diego River Park Foundation in their wills and other planned gifts such as IRAs, insurance policies and trusts.

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If you have included the San Diego River Park Foundation in your estate planning, we would love to talk to you. Please contact Rob Hutsel, President and CEO, at (619) 297-7380.

Tribute Gifts

We are grateful to the following donors for giving in honor or memory of someone special.

Simon Andrews	in Honor of Skip Price
Anonymous (multiple)	in Memory of Conrad Brennen
Betty and Steve Ball	in Honor of her sisters, Barbara Mineah and Peggy Cozi
Jerry and Paulette Begin	in Memory of Conrad Brennen
John Boller	in Honor of his 6 granddaughters
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Joseph Corones	in Honor of Emily Durbin
Lauryl Driscoll	in Honor of her grandchildren, Dustin and Demi Driscoll
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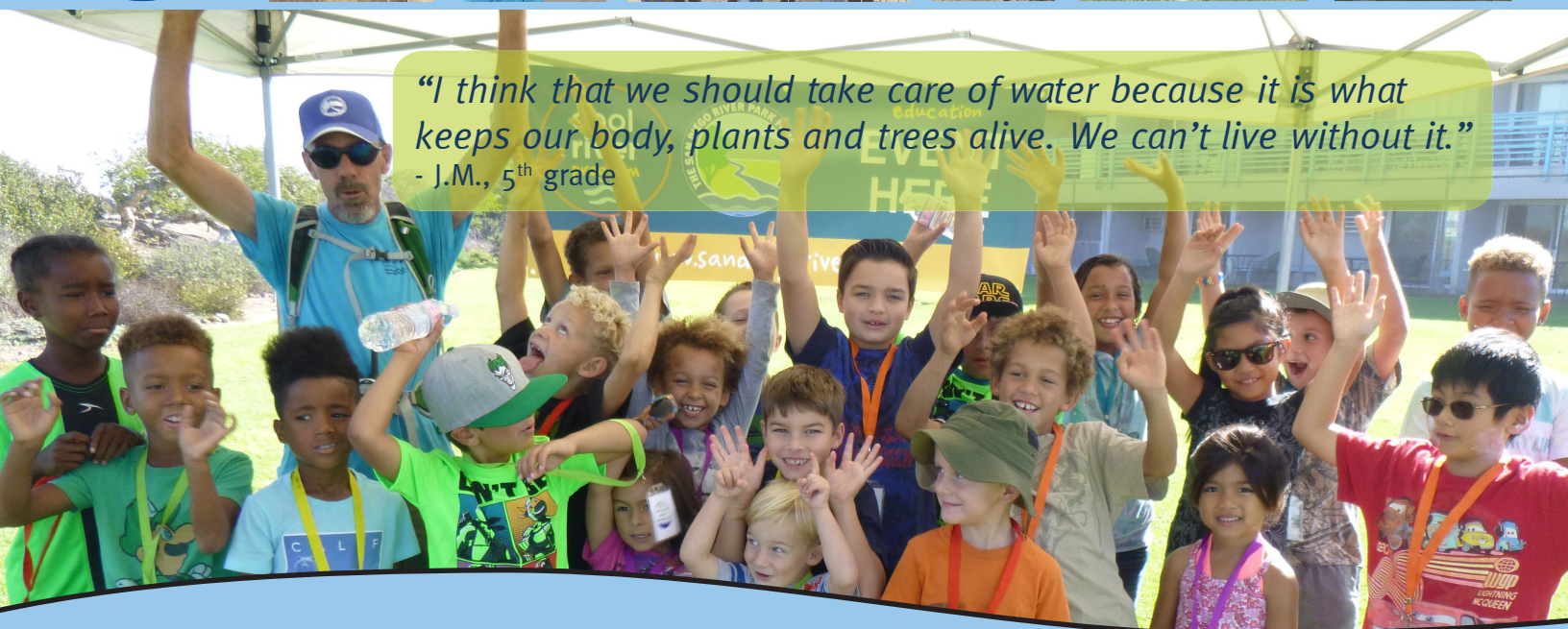
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*"I think that we should take care of water because it is what
keeps our body, plants and trees alive. We can't live without it."
- J.M., 5th grade*



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