

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **THE SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK FOUNDATION KICKS OFF ITS ANNUAL SOCK DRIVE**

*A RECENT SURVEY SHOWS AN ALARMING INCREASE IN THE  
NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN THE RIVERBED*

**San Diego, CA** (November 22, 2022) - Getting into the spirit of giving back, The San Diego River Park Foundation is gearing up for its Annual Sock Drive Saturday, December 4th from 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM in the River Park Foundation's Headquarters Parking Lot. This year's goal is to collect two (or more) pairs of socks, 808 pairs total, and a personal care package for each of the 404 people experiencing homelessness in the riverbed.

A recent survey by The San Diego River Park Foundation's Field Assessment team showed an alarming increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in the riverbed. A total of 404 people were found living in the area surveyed. With winter rainfall, the river rises, and people living in the riverbed can be particularly vulnerable to flooding as their camps are submerged underwater.

Unfortunately, many of these individuals are initially unwilling to accept housing and other services from public agencies or are awaiting placement as resources become available. Providing socks and care packages can be a foundational tool for building relationships with this vulnerable population. Building trust can be a critical stepping stone to helping our unhoused neighbors accept additional services from our homeless outreach partners.

Since 2013, the San Diego River Park Foundation has been using its robust knowledge of the riverbed and survey data to leverage homeless outreach efforts by other organizations and agencies to bring resources to the vulnerable population in the riverbed. While progress has been made, like many areas of the City and County, the number of people forced to live unsheltered in the riverbed has increased by 14% since this spring.

*"We hope that by providing warm socks and essential care packages, we can start people on the path to accepting assistance and getting out of areas that will soon be flooded"* - Sarah Hutmacher, Chief Associate Director of The San Diego River Park Foundation.

The San Diego River Park Foundation is also looking for local businesses, groups, or clubs interested in volunteering to help fill the care packages at our Care Packaging Making Extravaganza on December 16th. Please contact [info@sandiegoriver.org](mailto:info@sandiegoriver.org) to sign your group up.

Mark your calendars - and drop off your socks (and personal care items) on Sunday, December 4th! Special company or business drop-offs may be coordinated with staff prior to the event.

Following the Sock Drive, SDRPF and homeless outreach partner, PATH San Diego, will begin distributing the socks and care packages to those experiencing homelessness in the riverbed.

### **ANNUAL SOCK DRIVE!**

**Date:** Sunday, December 4, 2022

**Time:** 3:00 - 5:00 PM

**Location:** San Diego River Park Foundation Headquarters  
4891 Pacific Highway, Suite 110 San Diego, CA 92110

#### **Donated Items Needed:**

Warm Socks (new OR gently used and washed), toothbrushes, toothpaste, hats, rain ponchos, wet wipes, granola, and protein bars.

*\*To drop off socks or care items prior to 12/4, please e-mail [info@sandiegoriver.org](mailto:info@sandiegoriver.org)*

Cash donations are also accepted and can be mailed to or dropped off at our headquarters.

A complete list of care package items and other details can be found at:

[https://www.sandiegoriver.org/sock\\_drive.html](https://www.sandiegoriver.org/sock_drive.html)

### **About The San Diego River Park Foundation**

The San Diego River Park Foundation's mission is to engage people to work toward a better future for the historic San Diego River and create a 52-mile river parkway from the mountains to the ocean. The San Diego River Park Foundation is a non-profit community-based organization founded in 2001 which believes the San Diego River has incredible potential as a cultural, ecological, and recreational treasure for our region.

**To learn more, visit:** <https://sandiegoriver.org/>

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