

**REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
SAN DIEGO REGION**

**EXECUTIVE OFFICER SUMMARY REPORT
November 13, 2024**

ITEM 8

SUBJECT

Update on Population Surveys of Unhoused Individuals, Associated Water Quality Impacts and Management Efforts along the San Diego River. (*Jimmy Smith*)

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Informational item only; no recommendation.

KEY ISSUE

This item will provide the San Diego Water Board with updated census information on unhoused individuals, data on trash, research on water quality impacts, and insights into management efforts related to encampments.

PRACTICAL VISION

Chapter 1 of the 2021 Practical Vision: Strategize for Healthy Waters, is about focusing on important water bodies and uses. The San Diego River is one of the largest rivers in the region and empties into the Pacific Ocean at popular recreational beaches. Chapter 8 of the Practical Vision, Provide Effective Community Engagement and Communication is focused on implementing the core values of leadership, communication, and transparency. This item provides an excellent opportunity for the Board and the public to learn about the latest water quality related challenges presented by unhoused populations living adjacent to an important water body in the region.

DISCUSSION

After a brief introduction from Board staff, various non-profit, academic and government representatives will present information on efforts to assist unhoused individuals and improve environmental conditions in encampments. Sarah Hutmacher, Chief Operating Officer of the San Diego River Foundation, will provide the latest counts and historical trends of encampments and trash and discuss how the data is used to inform decisions. She will also share implementation progress of a \$17M Encampment Resolution Fund grant aimed at relocating persons from the San Diego River into permanent housing. Dr. Hillary McMillan, from San Diego State University, will share research findings on trash loading to the San Diego River. Franklin Coopersmith, Deputy Director in the Environmental Services Department of the City of San Diego will discuss efforts at trash removal. Shawn Rizzutto, Division Chief for Maintenance from the California Department of Transportation District 11, will cover policies and efforts aimed at the humane removal of encampments for safety and environmental reasons. All participants will also share lessons learned and the successes and challenges of collaborating on this troublesome issue.

LEGAL CONCERNS

None

PUBLIC NOTICE

The agenda notice for today's meeting was posted on the San Diego Water Board's website and sent to subscribers to the email list for Board meetings. This satisfies the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act requirements to publish the meeting notice and agenda.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

None.