

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **River Park Foundation's Holiday Donation Drive Collects 2,000 Face Masks and Pairs of Socks for People Experiencing Homelessness Along River**

*San Diego, CA* – On December 16, The San Diego River Park Foundation organized a socially distant holiday donation drive to collect warm socks and face masks for people experiencing homelessness along the San Diego River. This effort was met by an incredible response by local community members.

Earlier this month, The San Diego River Park Foundation's River Assessment Field Team identified over 100 individuals experiencing homelessness in the riverbed. The homeless face damp, dangerous, and unhealthy living conditions along the River. With the pandemic, the risks are even greater. The River will soon rise with winter rains, and their homes, their current living places in Mission Valley, Santee, and elsewhere along the River, will be underwater.

In an effort to provide small gifts of comfort to individuals living along the San Diego River during this winter season, The San Diego River Park Foundation organized a drive-thru donation drop-off event to collect warm socks and face masks. Dozens of community members rallied together to meet this call to action, resulting in the donation of over 1,000 pairs of warm socks and over 1,000 face masks.

The San Diego River Park Foundation and homeless outreach partner, PATH San Diego, have already begun distributing these items to people experiencing homelessness along the river and will continue to do so over the coming months. These small gifts not only provide a little comfort during the winter season, but can help build the relationships that homeless outreach organization, PATH San Diego, uses to connect people with a path to housing outside of the riverbed.

"We were so thrilled to see our community of supporters rally to so greatly exceed our goal of 200 pairs of socks and 200 masks!" Says Sarah Hutmacher, Chief Associate Director of the San Diego River Park Foundation. "While we continue to look toward solutions to end homelessness in the riverbed, we hope these increase the safety of our neighbors this holiday season."

This event was supported by dozens of donors, REI Co-Op San Diego store employees, and the Mission Valley Planning Group.

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### ***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 the creation of a 52-mile river parkway from the mountains to the ocean. The River Park Foundation is a non-profit community-based organization founded in 2001. Visit [www.sandiegoriver.org](http://www.sandiegoriver.org) for more information.*