

RiverBlitz 2020 Report

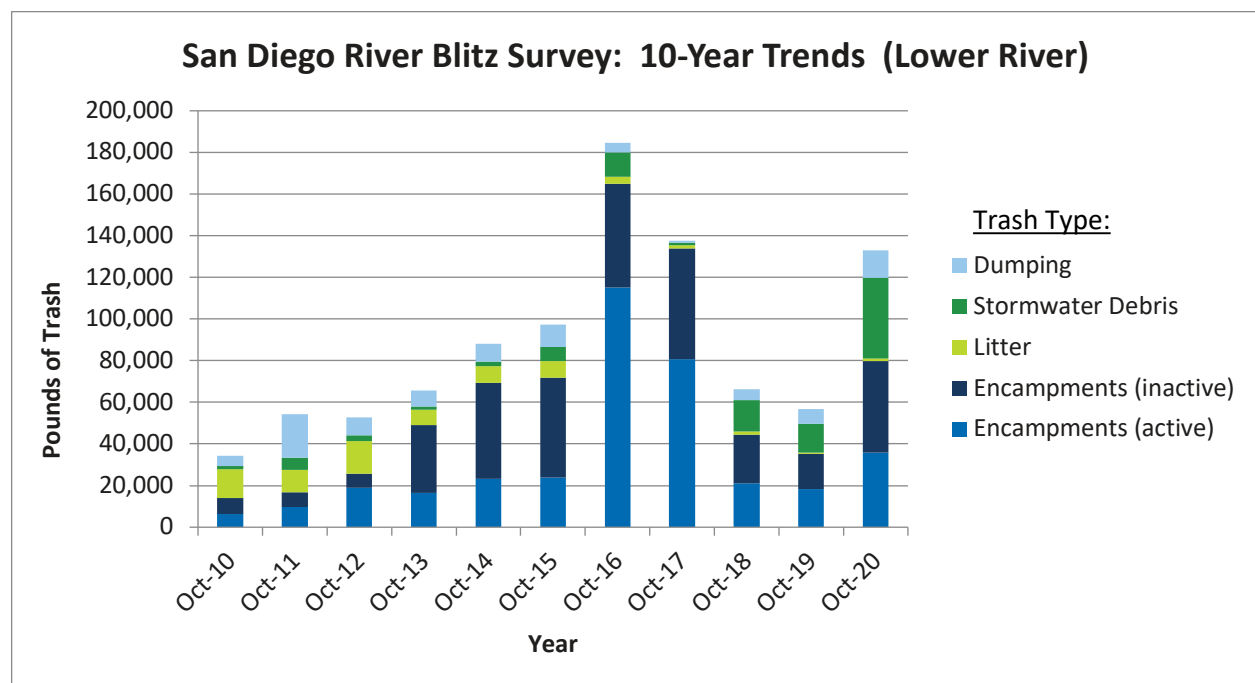
On October 13-24, The San Diego River Park Foundation coordinated volunteers to complete the 13th annual October RiverBlitz, a comprehensive citizen science effort to document and quantify trash along the San Diego River. This survey occurs along approximately 15.5 miles of the lower San Diego River in the cities of San Diego and Santee.

This point in time survey provides valuable trend information about the changing condition of the San Diego River over time. While COVID-19 resulted in increased protocols for safety and team size, trained volunteer leaders and interns joined staff to complete RiverBlitz using standard data collection protocols in 2020.

In addition to the October San Diego RiverBlitz, The San Diego River Park Foundation conducts ongoing assessments at least twice per week year-round to continually monitor and update data, informing clean-up and advocacy efforts through the River Assessment Field Team (RAFT) Program. This data is housed on our data portal: <http://www.immappler.com/sandiegorivertrash/>

RiverBlitz 2020 Quick Stats:

- 34 surveys conducted across 12 days, including 25 within the City of San Diego
- 23 experienced volunteers filled 68 survey shifts, including 18 volunteers filling 37 survey shifts within the City of San Diego
- 456 trash sites documented within the City of San Diego, including 43 which will require special removal
- 78,680 pounds of trash identified in San Diego Riverbed within the City of San Diego (breakdown follows)
- Largest trash source documented (by volume) is trash related to homeless encampments

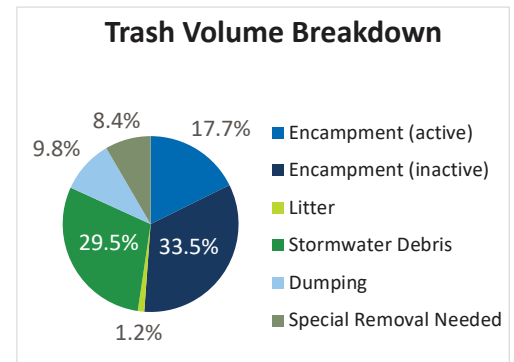


Riverbed Survey Area

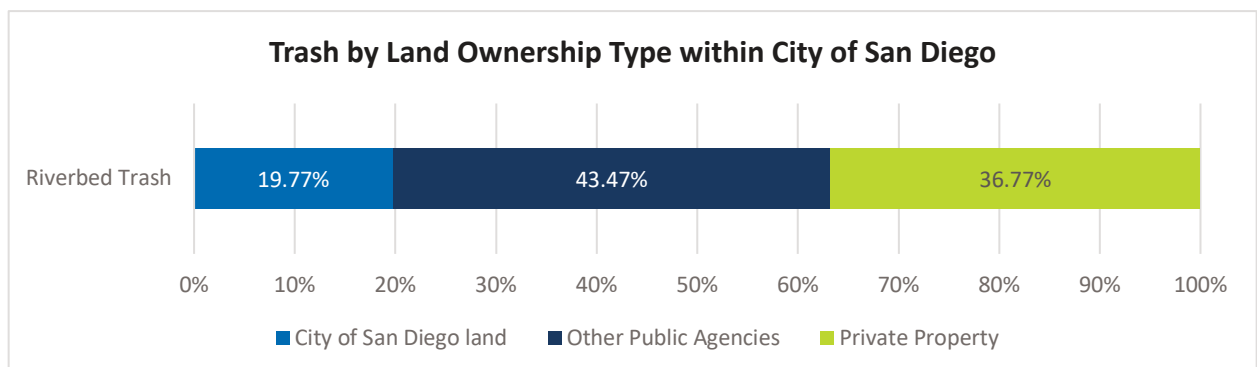


Total Trash in the San Diego Riverbed within City of San Diego by Source

Category	# Bags	# Pounds	# Sites
Encampment Trash	398	13,930	40
Inactive Encampment	752	26,320	153
Stormwater Debris	662	23,170	136
Dumping	220	7,700	72
Litter	27	945	12
Special Removal Needed	189	6,615	43
Sum:	2,248	78,680 pounds of trash	456



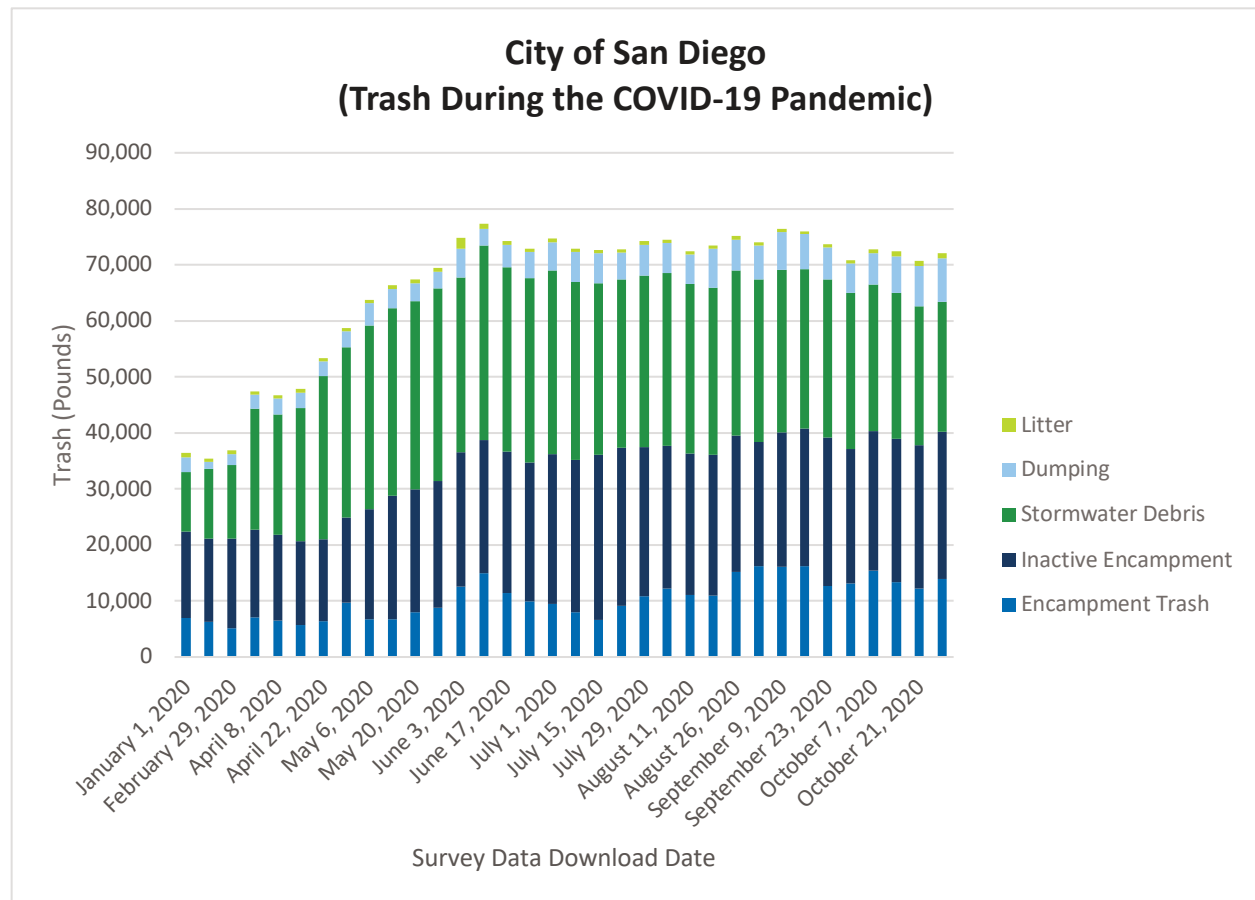
Trash by Land Ownership Type within City of San Diego



COVID-19 Impacts on Riverbed Trash

During the COVID-19 pandemic, riverbed trash management systems were interrupted for various reasons including: enforcement changes due to health recommendations, redirection of enforcement resources to other emergency activities including pandemic and protest response, decrease in private land owner resources and reduced capacity of property managers and owners to maintain and clean property.

In addition, San Diego River Park Foundation volunteer clean-up programs were suspended in mid-March through the beginning of June, during which time, the trash increased significantly.



How Do We Identify the Source of Trash?

Survey teams are trained to categorize trash by source. They reach consensus under guidance of the survey team leader, which is then reviewed by staff. Trash is categorized into one of the following categories.

Category	Description:	Sample Photos
Encampment Trash	Trash associated with an encampment that is active (or appears to be), which may be evaluated by presence of a person experiencing homelessness, or presence of items like folded clothes, tidy bed roll, cooking items or unopened food, or stored belongings	 
Inactive Encampment	Trash associated with an area that appears to be formerly inhabited but abandoned at the time of survey, which may be evaluated by absence of items of value, when items are muddy or buried in leaf litter or clearly abandoned	 
Stormwater Debris	Trash that was carried to current location by water (such as recent stormwater, stormdrains, or other drainage)	 
Dumping	Trash comprised of usually larger items, often item discarded to avoid dumping fees or proper disposal (couches, chairs, shopping carts, bikes)	 
Litter	Trash accumulation usually near high-traffic areas, such as food-related trash and other everyday items over time	 
Special Removal Needed	Trash that might require removal by special tools (digging, winch, crane, etc.) such as tractor tires, large concrete, vehicles, dumpsters, and the like	<p><i>Depending on size and accessibility, some of these may be suitable for removal by River Park Foundation volunteer teams, while others may require removal but landowner or others.</i></p>

City of San Diego Additional Analysis: The following parcels are tracked more closely, because for at least one month in the last three years, their condition has put them on the “Worst Ten Parcels” list.

