



*Connect.  
Create.  
Conserve.*



## **The Nature Conservation Movement cannot be silent on racism.**

**By Rob Hutsel, Chief Executive Officer | June 2, 2020**

Black Lives Matter. We at the San Diego River Park Foundation are deeply disturbed by historical and recent racial violence against Black Americans. Racism and injustice are just simply wrong.

The deaths of George Floyd and too many others is not a political issue. It is a human rights issue. We add our voice to those advocating for change.

I love being outdoors. I have never experienced a time where because of my skin color, I couldn't be outdoors. Nature is for everyone. When Black and other communities of color can experience scrutiny, dehumanization and violence just by being outside, it means the nature conservation movement needs to do more. When everyone can't enjoy the benefits of nature connections, we need to do more. We stand up and acknowledge that we have a role in doing more.

At the San Diego River Park Foundation, we aim to create a San Diego where people and nature thrive. Acts of racism and violence toward people of color threaten this goal, harm our communities, and put vulnerable lives at risk.

Many will ask why a nature conservation organization is weighing in. Does it really impact our mission? My answer is: yes, it does. And yes, we must speak out. When injustice reigns— whether it is unequal access to nature, unfair and inequitable laws, or police brutality—we must all do our part to push for change.

---

## **ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO RIVER PARK FOUNDATION**

Since 2001, the San Diego River Park Foundation has conserved and cared for the San Diego River and its ecosystem while connecting people to this amazing natural and cultural resource so that it thrives into the future.

**[sandiegoriver.org](http://sandiegoriver.org)**