

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **Approaching storm once again threatens the lives of hundreds of unsheltered San Diego Riverbed residents**

*San Diego, CA* – The National Weather Service is predicting the San Diego River to rise more than 7 feet this Thursday putting lives in danger. This is very similar to last Monday's deadly winter storm which appears to have swept two people away by the rapidly rising water level.

The recent We All Count documented nearly 283 people living in the riverbed and associated areas. In the fall census conducted by the San Diego River Park Foundation, 375 people were counted in an expanded area.

When it rains and rivers and creeks rise, people living in these areas are likely to lose everything. This includes medications, identification cards, food, shelter, clothing and any personal items. As the recent storm tragically showed, they are also at-risk of being injured or even dying. This will be true for future storms as well.

**The San Diego River Park Foundation is asking for community donations and volunteers to help respond to this tragedy. A fundraising page has been set up to raise the \$20,000 needed.**

Currently, there is no system in place to alert people living in the San Diego Riverbed when there are floodwaters from storms likely. When the river rises enough, it spreads out quickly inundating places where encampments are found. Until there is a system in place by public agencies, The San Diego River Park Foundation will work to organize volunteers to warn people living in the riverbed of approaching rising floodwaters utilizing the information it already collects. Teams can hand out care packages with personal safety and hygiene items, warm socks, and packaged food while providing information about available services.

The River Park Foundation collects census data yearlong on the locations of people living in the riverbed and shares this information with public agencies and social service providers. This data collection system will be utilized to expand outreach efforts to where it is most needed.

Support this effort at: <https://www.sandiegoriver.org/news.html> or call 619-297-7380

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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 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 that is dedicated to working toward the vision where everyone has a river-connection.

Visit [www.sandiegoriver.org](http://www.sandiegoriver.org) for more information.