

Anderson Alert

Addressing Homelessness Along the San Diego River

I'm excited to inform you that we are making progress on a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to revitalize the San Diego River Park** and address homelessness along this treasured waterway extending throughout our County.

As you may know, the San Diego River Park runs through multiple jurisdictions including the City of San Diego, the City of Santee, and unincorporated communities such as Lakeside. Plans are currently in place to create a multipurpose River Trail system along the waterway, connecting the oceans of San Diego to the mountains of Julian. Unfortunately, as our homelessness and housing crisis has worsened over the years, the volume of homeless encampments along the river has increased.

Last September, I asked our Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities (HSEC) to explore establishing an MOU between the County and all partner jurisdictions who oversee the San Diego River Park to address homelessness. HSEC recently provided me an update that since September, seven homeless outreach events along the riverbed in Santee and Lakeside were held to offer housing services. They also began work with the partner organizations towards the creation of the new MOU.

Once officially established, the MOU will enhance our collective efforts to more effectively:

- **Reduce homeless encampments** along San Diego River
- **Assist unsheltered people** and connect them with services
- **Mitigate the accumulation of trash, risk of fire, and pollution** of water along the waterway
- **Pursue future projects** to revitalize the river

Furthermore, there will be opportunities to apply for state funding with the MOU in place to further expand outreach, clean-up, social services, and opportunities to house the homeless along the San Diego River. I am hopeful that this MOU is a step in the right direction to get people off the streets while cleaning up one of our region's most important waterways.