

The San Diego River: Encampments



Rob Hutsel
President and CEO



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Over the years, we have organized volunteers to remove more than 2 million pounds of trash from in and along the River.

In October 2017 we got some terrible news.

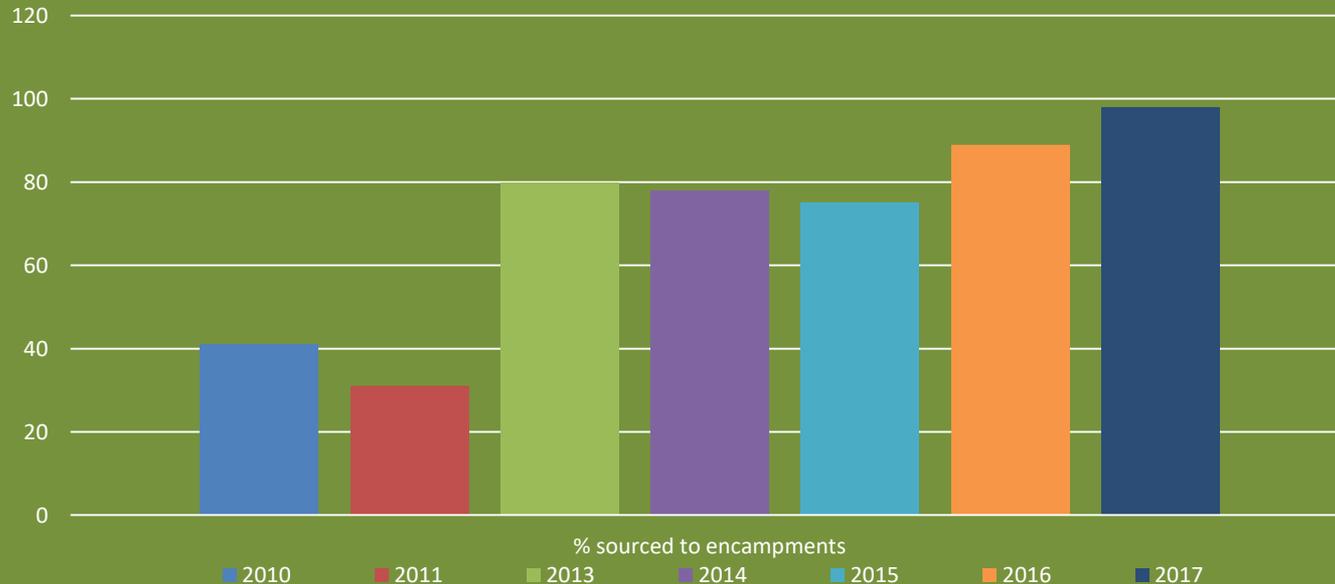


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2017 Annual Survey Results

- 84% increase in number of encampments along the River in one year.
- Nearly 100% of trash now sourced to encampments



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Problem:

Cleanup efforts weren't keeping up with the estimated nearly one million pounds of trash annually deposited in the riverbed by encampments along the River



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Hepatitis A Outbreak

- 20 deaths
- 401 Hospitalizations
- Significant percentage homeless



Media Focus on the River

- “Tijuana Sewage is not Fueling the Hep A Outbreak, but the San Diego River might be”
 - » 9/22/17
 - » Voice of San Diego



Heightened Media Attention

- “Many worry trash will pile up around the San Diego River after a local non-profit stops cleanups...”
 - 10/10/2017, NBC San Diego
- “Water board records show studies tying health danger to homeless camps went unaddressed for years”
 - 10/09/2017, Union Tribune



STRATEGY

- Increase data collection
- Advocate for resources and collaborate
- Increase cleanups
- Willing to be a visible leader on a largely social issue



Data Collection – Citizen Science



Regular Focused Surveys:

2-3 per week

Annual Point in Time Count

Annual River Blitz

Protocol-Based and Reliable

Problem Areas Surveyed Every 2 Weeks or Better

Public Data Portal

San Diego River Park Foundation

Map List Chart

SHOW SITE INFORMATION

Map Satellite

Menu

TECOCATE CANYON NATURAL PARK

JUDSON ST CONDOS

MISSION CITY

Qualcomm Stadium

IKEA San Diego Furniture

MISSION VALLEY

MORENA

Riverwalk Golf Club

MISSION VALLEY WEST

UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

NORMAL HEIGHTS

MISSION PACIFIC

Volunteer1.JPG finished downloading.

Open Open folder View downloads

10:59 AM 11/2/2016

www.immappler.com/sandiegorivertrash

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San Diego River Trash Cleanup 2018

Powered by Mappler technology

Log in | Mappler.net

Map | List | Chart

SHOW SITE INFORMATION

- Site No Longer Present - July 2018 to present (47)
- Inactive Encampment (119)
- Encampment Trash (73)
- Stormwater Debris (88)
- Litter (45)
- Dumping (73)
- Special Removal Needed (13)
- Access Issues or Not Surveyed (3)

Layers

- KML
- Site No Longer Present - Jan to Sept 2018
- Watershed Boundary
- Parcels
- MajorStreams

Map | Satellite

Map data ©2018 Google Imagery ©2018 DigitalGlobe, Sanborn, U.S. Geological Survey, USDA Farm Service Agency 20 m Terms of Use

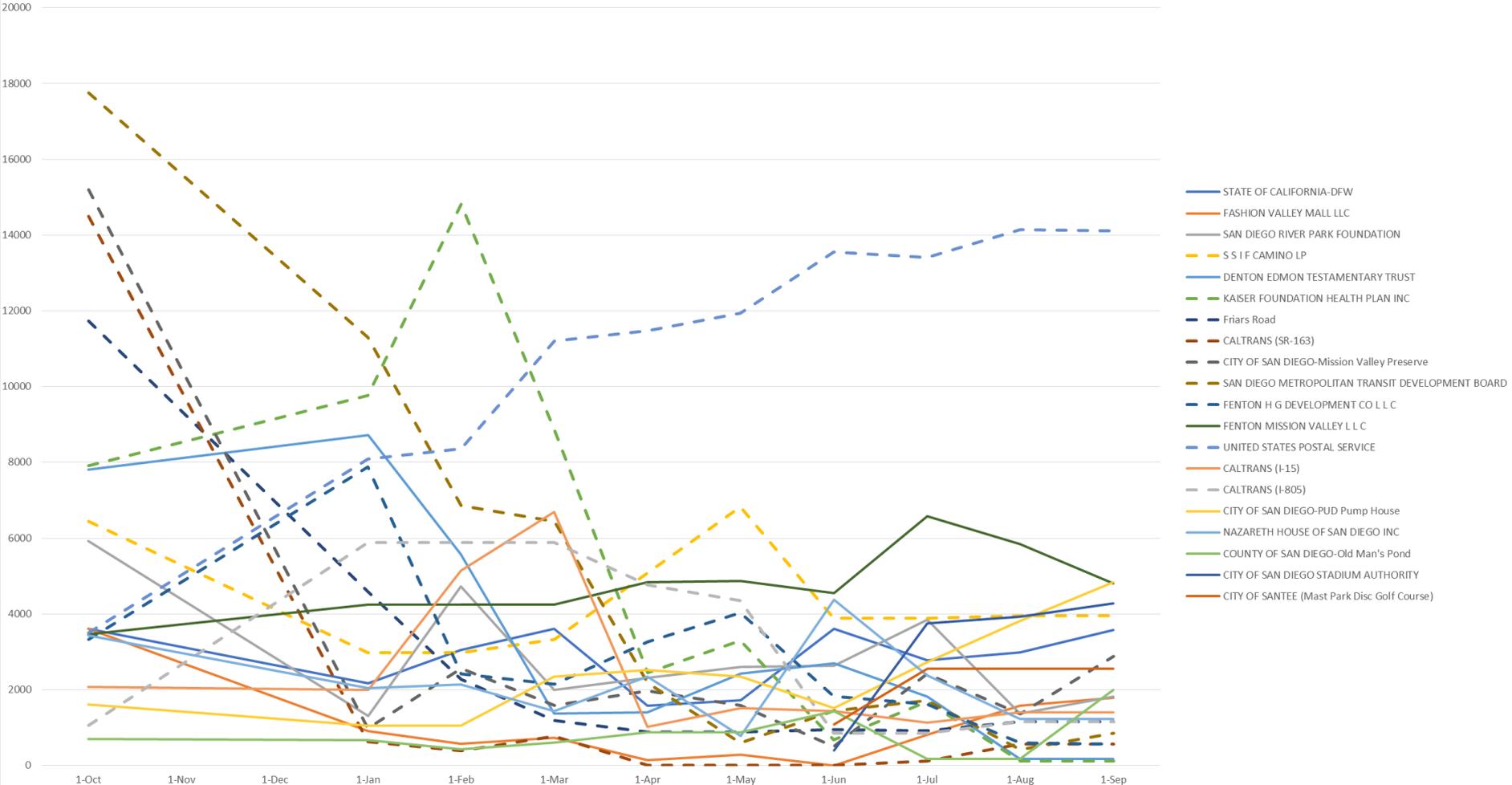
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DATA used to coordinate cleanups and provided for research

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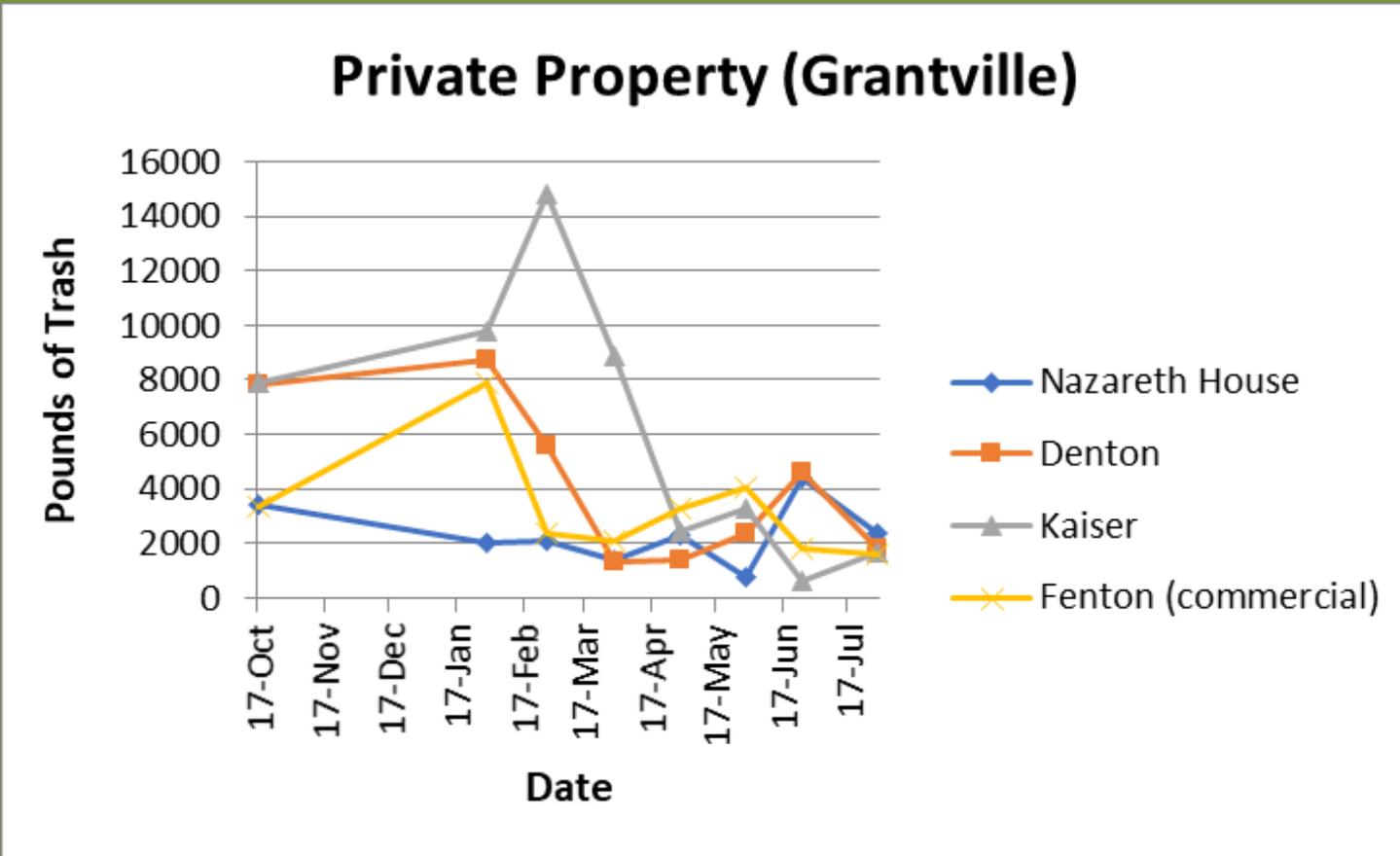
San Diego River Parcels with the Most Recorded Trash



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What Success Looks Like



Key Points

- Value of Elected Officials
 - Public Prioritization including media attention
 - Convening of stakeholders
 - Agency Budgets & Prioritization
- New partnerships: “blue” & social service
- It requires ongoing level of effort
- Regulatory action
 - Changes cost benefit of no / limited action
 - Public relations role
 - Need to follow through
- Nonprofit Leadership and Role

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Our Amazing Volunteers
2.5 million lbs. removed since we
began keeping records.

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On track for 300,000 lbs+ removed in 2018
2 – 3 cleanups per week
Staff dedicated to collaboration

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Going Forward...

1. We need to better understand the risks of latrine sites in an alluvial floodplain w/ year-round surface groundwater
2. Private property owners cannot address encampments by themselves
3. Ongoing coordination of key stakeholders is vital
4. Encampments continue to generate trash, and therefore, a sustained program is needed
5. Financial Support of Nonprofit Coordination Efforts Can Be Highly Effective
6. People centric, compassion and yet demand results

