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Effort to Conserve Temescal Creek reaches Milestone

Recent acquisition continues success of open space conservation program in San Diego River Headwaters

San Diego County, CA –

Several years ago The San Diego River Park Foundation set out to conserve one of the few remaining free-flowing tributaries to the San Diego River. “Once we saw Temescal Creek Valley, we knew it had to be conserved as open space for future generations to enjoy as well as the wildlife that depend upon it,” stated Rob Hutsel, President and CEO of The San Diego River Park Foundation.

The San Diego River Park Foundation with support from The Conservation Fund, United States Forest Service, County of San Diego, The State of California’s San Diego River Conservancy, Heller Foundation of San Diego and The San Diego Foundation has now completed two acquisitions totaling 374 acres to conserve this valley.

In January 2016, the 299 acre Eagle Peak Ranch was successfully purchased. On June 29th, acquisition of a key 75 acre property known as the “Gateway” was completed.

More than \$1,700,000 was raised through a combination of grants, donations and bridge financing to acquire these 374 acres. This property is now part of the Eagle Peak Conservation Area, a 1,090 acre area near Julian that has been acquired by The River Park Foundation that includes recreation and education opportunities, wildlife habitats, views of the Upper San Diego River Gorge and more.

The organization now owns and manages over 2000 acres of open space in the upper reaches of the San Diego River, including landmarks such as portions of El Cajon Mountain. This area is considered one of the most biologically diverse areas in the entire Country.

Hundreds of people joined in on this effort which was led by The San Diego River Park Foundation. “Our smallest donation was \$5 and it is just as important as larger ones,” said Rob Hutsel. “It was really neat to see so many people and organizations come together on this project from individuals to national organizations such as The Conservation Fund.”

The Conservation Fund provided key bridge financing to help complete the first acquisition. According to Scott Ferguson, Director of Southern California Programs for The Conservation Fund, “Saving the places that matter the most creates results that last forever. By preserving Temescal Creek Valley now, we have protected a free-flowing creek, an essential wildlife corridor, and a beautiful open space for both people and wildlife.”

Other financial partners of this transaction included The Hervey Family Fund at The San Diego Foundation, The Opening the Outdoors program at The San Diego Foundation, The Conservation Catalyst Fund at the San Diego Foundation, San Diego Mountain Biking Association, Preserve Wild Santee, the Szekely Family Foundation, and Mesa Rim Climbing and Fitness.

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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 historic San Diego River and for the creation of a 52 mile river parkway from the mountains to the ocean. In 2016, The River Park Foundation is celebrating its 15th Anniversary. Visit www.sandiegoriver.org for more information.