Connect.
Create.
Conserve.

Volunteering and the San Diego River Park Experience
What is a volunteer?

• An individual who performs hours of service for a public agency [or organization] for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered.

• Fair Labor Standards Act
OUR ORIGINS

In 2000 – 34 million gallon sewer spill entered the San Diego River.
It's not working!!!

How could we be part of the solution?
Healthy River, Healthy Communities

Creating the SD River Park system
Save the Source
Urban River

Our Mission

• To engage people in creating a better future for the San Diego River and improving our quality of life
Volunteer Management

One-time volunteers → Ongoing volunteers

Volunteer Systems

• Ad Hoc
• Outside Recruitment/Internal Management
• Centralized Model
• Decentralized Model
Why People Volunteer

- 86% Feeling compassion for people in need
- 72% Have an interest in the type of work
- 70% It makes you feel good
- 70% It gives you a new perspective
- 67% It is important and helps a community
- 63% The importance of the activity for those in need

• Bohse and Associates (1998)
Who Volunteers?

- 44 in 100 Americans volunteer
- 63% of volunteers, volunteer on a regular basis (monthly or better)
- 2001 Independent Sector Study
Lessons Learned

• Structured and Well Run
• Meaningful
• Milestone Driven
• Celebrate Your Volunteers
HRHC System

- River Blitz: semi-annual surveys
- Clean & Green – Community Clean-ups
- River Rescue – small, targeted clean-ups
- RiverWatch – Monitoring monitoring
River Clean-Ups

- 1.6 millions lbs. of trash removed
- 3000+ volunteers annually
- Goal = Trash-Free River

River Rescuers

Success!

• Take Pride in America Award
• Keep America Beautiful Awards
• 1000s of people engaged
• Working toward a cleaner river and River Park system
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