



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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City of San Diego Crews Making Progress on Stormwater Channel Improvements in Flood-Damaged Neighborhoods

MAYOR GLORIA HAS INCLUDED MORE THAN \$8 MILLION IN FUNDING IN CURRENT BUDGET TO MAINTAIN CHANNELS CLEARED FOLLOWING THE JANUARY FLOODS

SAN DIEGO— Removing non-native vegetation, trash and other debris, City of San Diego maintenance crews are working to clear out stormwater channels in Southcrest and other neighborhoods that were severely impacted by flooding from the historic Jan. 22 storm. The City's Stormwater Department cleared four channel sections over the past several weeks and is focused on additional maintenance work on channels and storm drains in the area in preparation for the next rainy season.

Following the emergency declaration issued in response to the January rain event, the City conducted emergency maintenance on about 18 miles of channels citywide, including 12 miles in the Chollas Creek watershed, resulting in the removal of more than 9,800 tons of debris.

The City was only able to conduct work of this magnitude due to the emergency declaration following the historic storm. Since July 1, 2024, an additional 421 tons of debris and vegetation that have accumulated since the emergency maintenance was performed have also been removed.

It typically takes up to two years to secure environmental permits and approvals from various agencies for most channel-maintenance work, as well as a specific commitment to mitigate wetland impacts at off-site locations. This process and requirements are outlined in the City's [Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan](#), which was approved in 2020.

Mayor Todd Gloria has included more than \$8 million in funding in the Stormwater Department budget this fiscal year to continue maintaining those 18 miles of channels ahead of the upcoming rainy season.

Additionally, in order to help streamline storm channel maintenance, the City of San Diego sponsored Assembly Bill (AB) 3227 which would expedite routine channel maintenance by eliminating administrative delays imposed by the California Environmental Quality Act. AB 3227, sponsored by the City of San Diego

and carried by Assemblymember David Alvarez, passed the State Legislature earlier this month. The bill is awaiting Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature.

The City faces a \$1.6 billion shortfall in funding needed to upgrade and modernize aging stormwater infrastructure citywide over the next five years. The vast infrastructure network – including channels, underground pipes, pump stations and more -- is mainly hidden from public view, but is critical to the City's safety and flood resilience.

“City Stormwater employees work tirelessly in all weather conditions to manage flood risk, improve water quality and keep our streets clean,” Stormwater Director Todd Snyder said. “Despite the effort of our dedicated team, we continue to face massive challenges to maintain and improve the City’s stormwater drainage system.”

In September 2022, the City received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for a federal loan that allows for up to a \$733 million investment in stormwater infrastructure projects over five years. About a third, or \$235 million, will fund design and/construction of 24 projects that will strengthen flood-resiliency in and around Chollas Creek. Those projects include channel upgrades, storm drain replacements, stream restoration, trash capture devices and green infrastructure. Two major projects in the area include:

- Beta Street Drainage Upgrades – This \$56 million project will implement several upgrades to the drainage system in this area. Construction is expected to begin in Fall 2026 and take two years to complete.
- Jamacha Drainage Channel Upgrades – This \$70 million project in the Skyline-Paradise Hills area will upsize the existing storm drain system that flows into the Jamacha Channel to reduce the 100-year flood risk. Construction schedule has yet to be determined.

Both projects are currently undergoing design and planning.

Learn more about the City's infrastructure and channel maintenance efforts on the Think Blue Stormwater Infrastructure [webpage](#).

Residents can report illegal dumping and trash near creeks or stormwater infrastructure on the [GetItDone](#) app, call 619-235-1000 or email swppp@sanidiego.gov to report any instances of illegal dumping.



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