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CCKA RELEASES GUIDE TO REDUCE IMPACTS OF HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS ON CALIFORNIA’S WATERWAYS AND BEACHES

January 28, 2020 (Sacramento, CA) – How can we empower those experiencing homelessness to reduce trash from entering California’s waterways? California Coastkeeper Alliance (CCKA) tackles that question in new guidelines released today in [California Coastkeeper Alliance Trash Hot Spots: Homeless Encampment Program](#).

“By engaging individuals experiencing homelessness to clean up their own camps and volunteer alongside the local organizations committed to healthy rivers and waterways, the trash entering local waterways in some areas has declined so much that we’ve seen entire beach cleanups cancelled – due to the lack of trash,” said California Coastkeeper Alliance Executive Director Sean Bothwell. “The impact of local homeless encampment engagement programs is powerful and we look forward to sharing these lessons-learned with agencies throughout the state.”

The guidelines summarize best practices and lessons learned at on-the-ground programs from the Russian to the Santa Ana River, including the Clean River Alliance (financially sponsored by Russian Riverkeeper), Clean Camp Coalition/Inland Empire Waterkeeper, The San Diego River Park Foundation: Trash Free River Program, American River Parkway Debris Removal and Homeless Workforce Training Program, and Downtown Streets Team.

Like many states across the nation, California is experiencing a housing crisis, leaving many individuals vulnerable. Homelessness is not confined to California’s city streets, and many individuals have found refuge near rivers and streams – unfortunately, introducing significant amounts of trash and bacteria into California’s waterways. In 2015, the State Water Resources Control Board adopted its Trash Policy to eradicate the presence of trash in California’s rivers, streams, and beaches caused by the runoff of trash from the state’s cities and streets by 2030.

The State Water Board will now consider addressing this source of trash by enacting a “Trash Hot Spot” program throughout the state, which CCKA hopes to be informed by our overview. These tools ([Report & Best Practices Guide](#)) will also be shared with the Governor’s Homeless Task Force.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA COASTKEEPER ALLIANCE

California Coastkeeper Alliance is a statewide voice for our waters. With the federal administration working against our environmental laws, CCKA defends and expands California’s protective legislation and strengthens the function of our state water board. We represent local Waterkeepers, empower communities towards a #TrashFree2030, and advocate with companies through the Blue Business Council. Together, we fight for swimmable, fishable, and drinkable waters for Californians today – and for future generations. California Coastkeeper Alliance is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization.