

Mayor Dick Murphy

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WORK BEGINS ON CHOLLAS CREEK RESTORATION

Project Will Help Clean Up Water and Provide Large Parks in Southeastern San Diego

San Diego – Mayor Dick Murphy and three San Diego City Councilmembers today broke ground on a restoration project that will eventually transform the polluted Chollas Creek into a string of parks and healthy wetlands that will cleanse urban runoff before it reaches San Diego Bay.

“This is an effort to bring one of San Diego’s waterways back to life, creating important wetlands and neighborhood parks,” Mayor Murphy said. “We’ll rip out concrete culverts that act as superhighways carrying pollution to the bay. Then we’ll widen the creek and replant natural vegetation which will filter out pollutants before they reach the coast.”

Mayor Murphy, Deputy Mayor Ralph Inzunza, Councilmember Charles Lewis, Councilmember Scott Peters and neighborhood residents attended a community groundbreaking ceremony for Phase I of the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program at South 38th and Alpha streets.

"The community fought a proposed freeway in this corridor for decades," Deputy Mayor Ralph Inzunza said. "That idea was finally abandoned, and now the land can be put to good use. This project will lay the groundwork for further economic development and enhance the character of the surrounding neighborhoods."

The approximately 30-mile-long creek originates in La Mesa and Lemon Grove and runs through the San Diego communities of City Heights, Encanto, Southeastern San Diego and Barrio Logan before emptying into the bay near the Naval Station San Diego.

Phase I of the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program will include several distinct projects. Construction on two projects will begin within weeks and finish in February. The first will improve the creek near Interstate 5, creating a park and open space system that will stretch for approximately half a mile east from the freeway. Also included in the first phase will be a wetlands restoration and outdoor amphitheater project near Euclid Avenue and Market Street.

“The great thing about this project is that we are not only creating better downstream water quality, we are also creating a park where kids can play,” Councilmember Peters said.

“This type of creative strategy will improve quality of life for everyone in San Diego.” Funding for Phase I projects includes \$1.23 million from the California Coastal Conservancy and \$362,000 from the State Urban Streams Restoration Program. Additionally, another \$2.2 million has been received from the State Water Resources Control Board for future projects on Chollas Creek.

"Not only is this an opportunity to enhance and beautify Chollas Creek, it will also prevent unwanted blight in and along the Chollas Creek area," Councilman Lewis said.

More information about the Chollas Creek Restoration Program is available online at: www.sandiego.gov/planning. You can also contact the Planning Department Hotline at (619) 235-5226, e-mail Planning@sandiego.gov or stop by the Planning Department at 202 C Street, 5th Floor.

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