

# Carmel River NEWS

From the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy (CRWC)

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**For more news and watershed updates please check out the Conservancy's website!**

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## Carmel River Watershed Tours

Available for this fall! If interested contact [Lorin Letendre](#).

**Stay Connected**

## Carmel River Rerouted into New Channel

### Carmel River Rerouted into San Clemente Creek

In mid-November 2014 the San Clemente Dam Removal Project moved into an entirely new phase with the diversion of the main stem of the Carmel River into the San Clemente Creek channel that had been widened and deepened in advance. This "breakthrough" event attracted the attention of the Science Editor of the San Francisco Chronicle, Peter Fimrite, who devoted four hours of his time to a tour of the dam site and the new river channel. He featured our project on the front page of the November 15th edition of the newspaper. If the dam is taken down by an explosion rather than piecemeal, he promised to return and cover that exciting event.



This project is a rare partnership between public and private agencies, with Cal-Am customers paying for \$49 million of the \$84 million total cost and the State Coastal Conservancy and several other environmental organizations covering the difference.

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## Drug Disposal Program Launched!

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The Carmel River Watershed Conservancy (CRWC) has spurred the establishment of two new public locations for used pharmaceutical disposal: one at the Carmel-by-the-Sea police department and the other at the Pebble Beach Community Services District (PBCSD) fire station lobby.

The Carmel program, which received its funding from California American Water, launched on July 1 of last year and is collecting 40-56 pounds per month. Open from 8 am - 5 pm seven days per week, the program accepts over-the-counter and prescription medications. It does not accept controlled substances. "This program not only helps to protect the environment, by protecting our water supply for future generations, it can also deter the usage of prescription drugs by unintended parties - including young people facing peer pressure and new ways to 'get high,'" said Sergeant Luke Powell in a recent press release.

The PBCSD program, launched on November 17 of last year, is open from 10 am to 4 pm Monday through Thursday and has accepted 35 pounds per month of both medicines and sharps on average. Like the Carmel program, over-the-counter and prescription medications are accepted while controlled substances are not accepted.

The CRWC board has also expressed interest in approaching the cities of Seaside, Marina and Monterey, to establish more pharmaceutical take-back programs. The California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) advocates for establishing drop-off programs at retailer locations (pharmacies) when possible as take-back rates are highest at these locations. For consumers, pharmacies seem to be the logical, convenient and least risky choice.

New Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) regulations allow pharmacies to accept controlled substances in their secured drop boxes, however, the regulations have not yet established which party is liable for those substances. Additionally, the regulations spell out specific rules for who is allowed to transport prescription drugs to pharmacies beyond their legal owners. Other transporters must have authorization from the prescription's legal owner.

Outside the Peninsula, other cities and counties in California are setting the precedent for consistent drug disposal programming and secure funding. Alameda County passed a 2012 drug disposal ordinance that requires drug manufacturers to pay for and establish a certain number of take-back programs in the county. PhRMA unsuccessfully fought the ordinance in the Ninth U.S Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, arguing that the ordinance illegally shifts local costs to out-of-state producers and interferes with local commerce. The case has now gone to the U.S. Supreme Court and is awaiting a verdict. San Francisco

County is interested in passing a similar law, while the City of San Francisco already has a local ordinance requiring retailer take-back programs. The California legislature is also considering a statewide bill, SB 1014, requiring drug manufacturer funded and managed take-back programs.

Other local pharmaceutical drop sites include the Central Avenue Pharmacy in Pacific Grove, Ordway Pharmacy in Monterey, CSUMB Health Center, Monterey Regional Waste Management Project, and Carmel Drug Store.

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## Conservancy Launches CV Signage Program

### Sign Installed at Valley Greens Bridge

Employing grant funds from American Water and the Community Foundation for Monterey County, the Conservancy began installing signs at Carmel River and creek bridge crossings to caution visitors to help protect the threatened species in the Carmel River watershed. This Garzas Creek sign was our first, to be followed by 19 more signs over river and creek crossings. CRWC Director Andy Magnasco and his volunteer helpers are installing these signs over a several week period. The signage program will be expanded soon to include "You Are Entering the Carmel River Watershed" signs at the road entrances to the watershed. CRWC will be meeting with the Carmel Valley Land Use Advisory Committee to share its plans for future signage.

