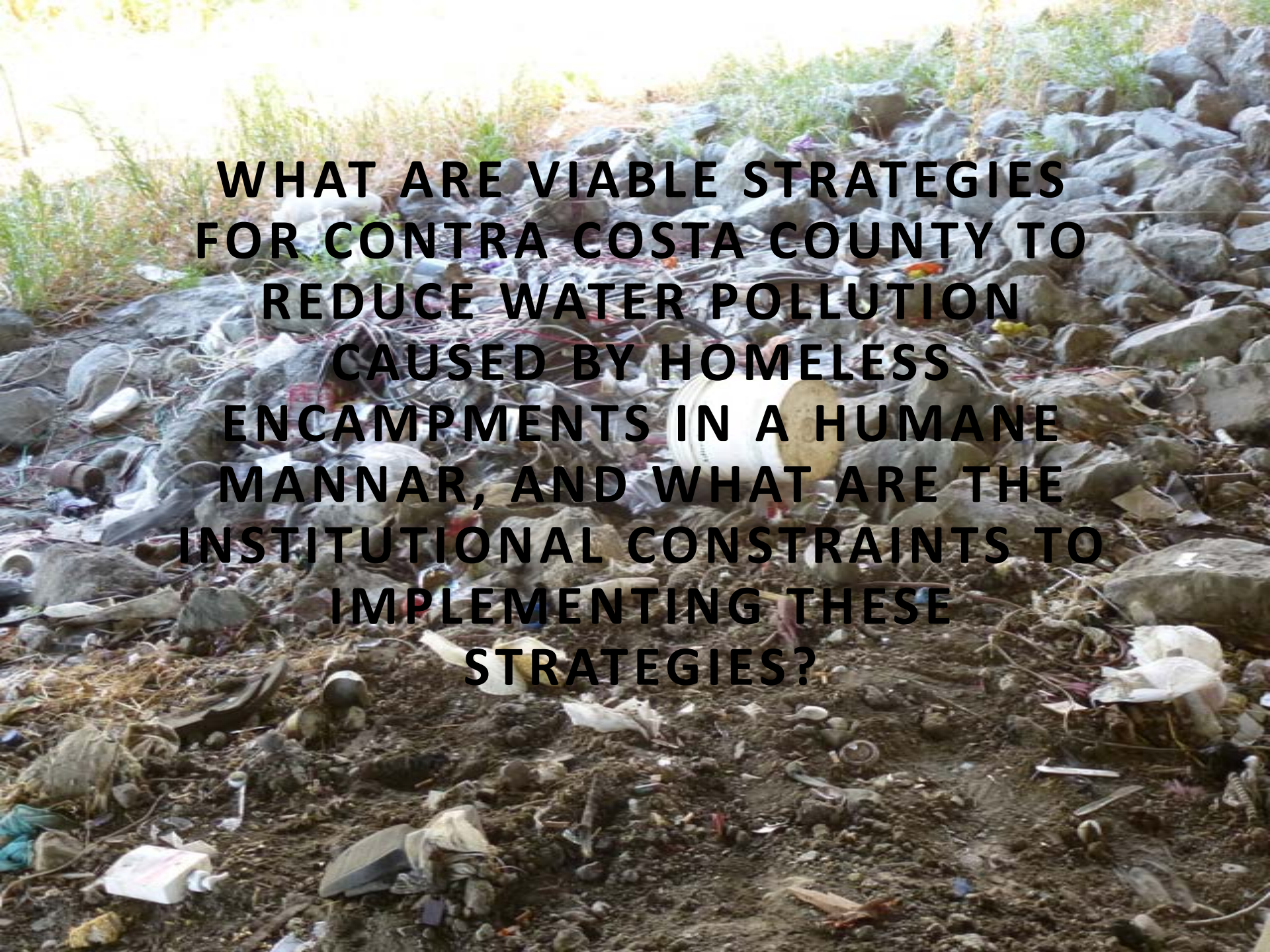


A photograph of a rocky, littered hillside. The ground is covered with dark, jagged rocks and a large amount of trash, including plastic bags, a white bucket, and various small pieces of debris. The background shows some green vegetation and a bright, overexposed sky.

ADDRESSING HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS & WATER POLLUTION

**in
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**



**WHAT ARE VIABLE STRATEGIES
FOR CONTRA COSTA COUNTY TO
REDUCE WATER POLLUTION
CAUSED BY HOMELESS
ENCAMPMENTS IN A HUMANE
MANNER, AND WHAT ARE THE
INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS TO
IMPLEMENTING THESE
STRATEGIES?**



“Wicked” Problem

Complex cyclical problem

Expensive

Limited resources

Multiple stakeholders with differing agendas

Policy reports offers contradictory recommendations

Variation in population requires multipronged approach



Methodology

MIXED METHODS INVOLVING :

**FIELD OBSERVATIONS
IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH HOMELESS
POPULATIONS AND AGENCY ACTORS WITHIN
AND OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY
ANALYSIS OF COUNTY DATA
POLICY REVIEWS AND LITERATURE REVIEW**

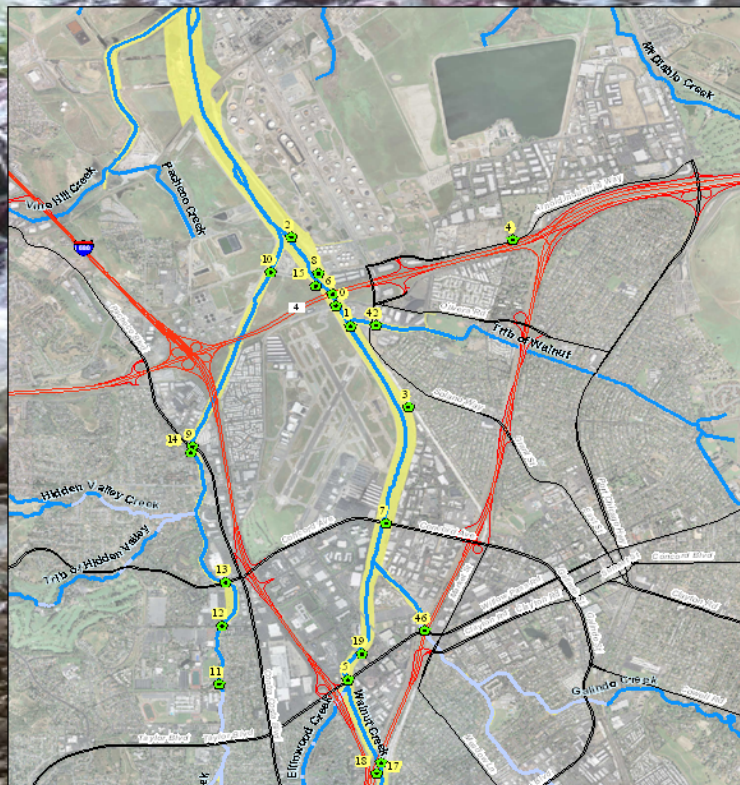
United States

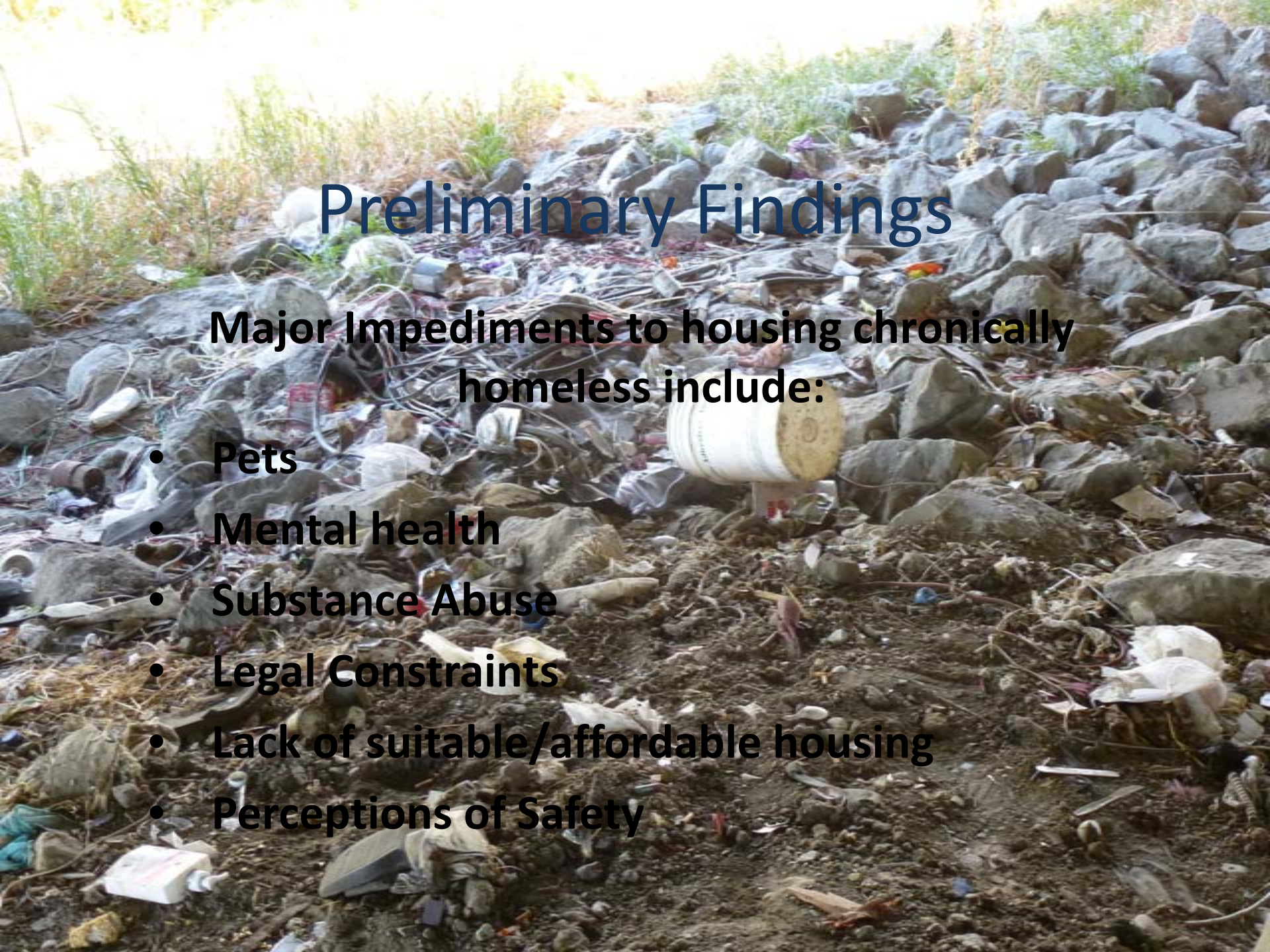
Estimated 634, 000 homeless
44% of homeless are unsheltered
18% of homeless are chronically homeless
Homeless in Encampments tend to be single,
Older single non-white men with dual mental health
And substance abuse diagnosis

Contra Costa

Estimated of 15,000 Homeless
Chronically homeless constitute 10% of homeless population and majority of
population in encampments
Encampments throughout the county, on or near waterways
Older single white men who are native to the area with
High levels of substance abuse and mental health diagnosis

Focus area

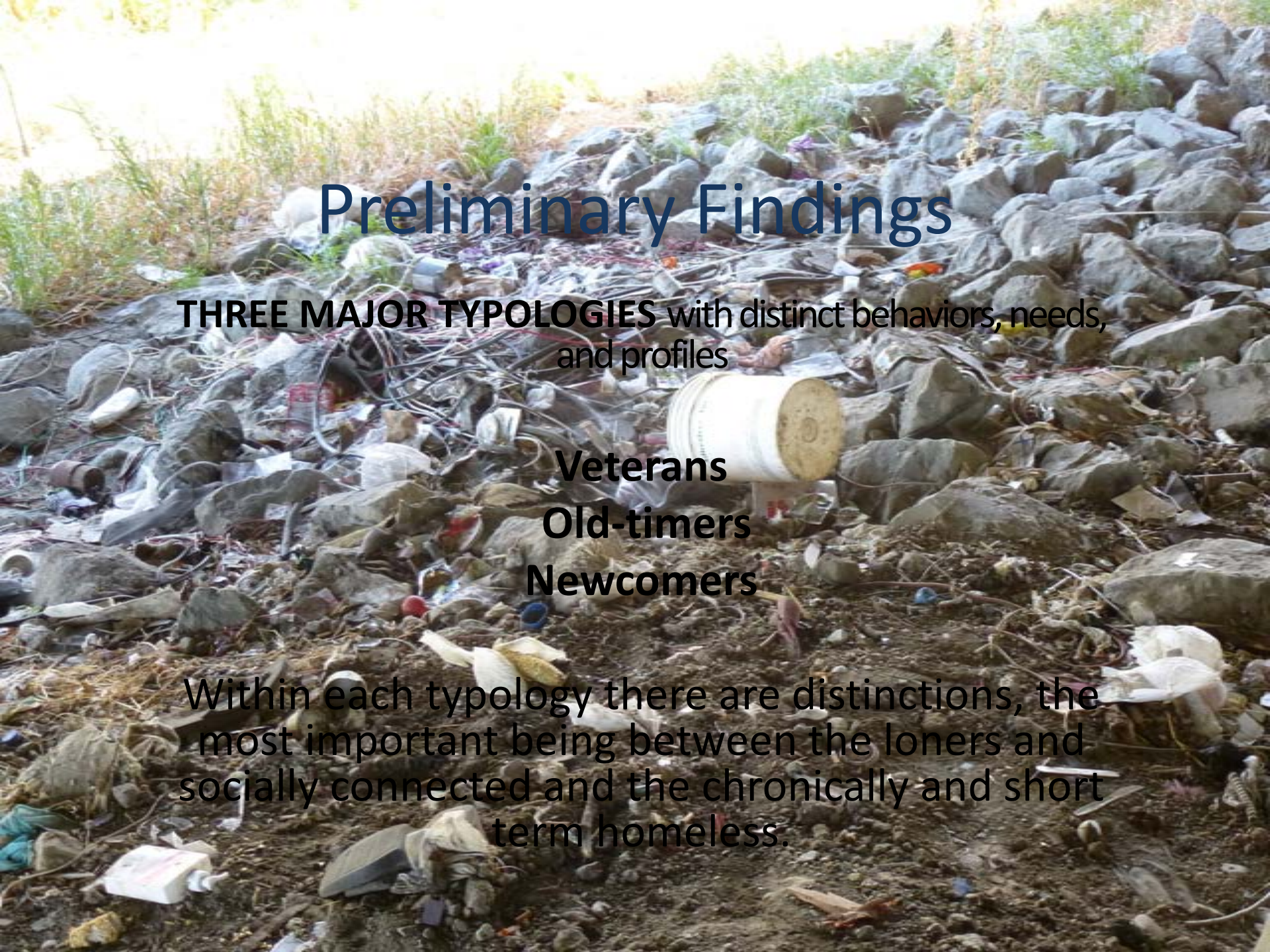


The background image shows a desolate, rocky terrain covered with a significant amount of trash and debris. A large, white, cylindrical container, possibly a discarded can or bucket, is a prominent piece of litter in the center. Other smaller pieces of trash, including plastic fragments and unidentifiable debris, are scattered throughout the scene. The ground is composed of dark, uneven soil and numerous grey, jagged rocks. In the upper portion of the image, there is some sparse, dry, yellowish-brown vegetation. The overall scene conveys a sense of neglect and environmental degradation.

Preliminary Findings

Major Impediments to housing chronically homeless include:

- **Pets**
- **Mental health**
- **Substance Abuse**
- **Legal Constraints**
- **Lack of suitable/affordable housing**
- **Perceptions of Safety**



Preliminary Findings

THREE MAJOR TYPOLOGIES with distinct behaviors, needs, and profiles

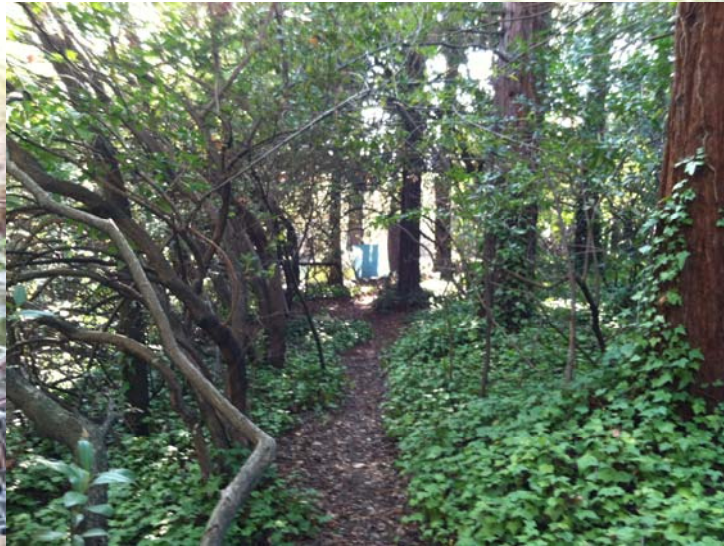
Veterans
Old-timers
Newcomers

Within each typology there are distinctions, the most important being between the loners and socially connected and the chronically and short term homeless.

Preliminary Findings

THREE MAJOR TYPOLOGIES with distinct behaviors, needs, and profiles





VETERANS CAMPS

Low profile
Hidden camps
Often Isolated
Often Hoarders

POPULATION

Generally alone
Distrust outsiders
Rely on construction and recycling
Many have pets



OLD TIMERS CAMPS

High and low profile
Generally not visible from outside,
May be full of garbage
Have specific order
Return to same camps

POPULATION

Rely on disability recycling and temp work
Organized social structure
Most adept at navigating systems
Many have pets

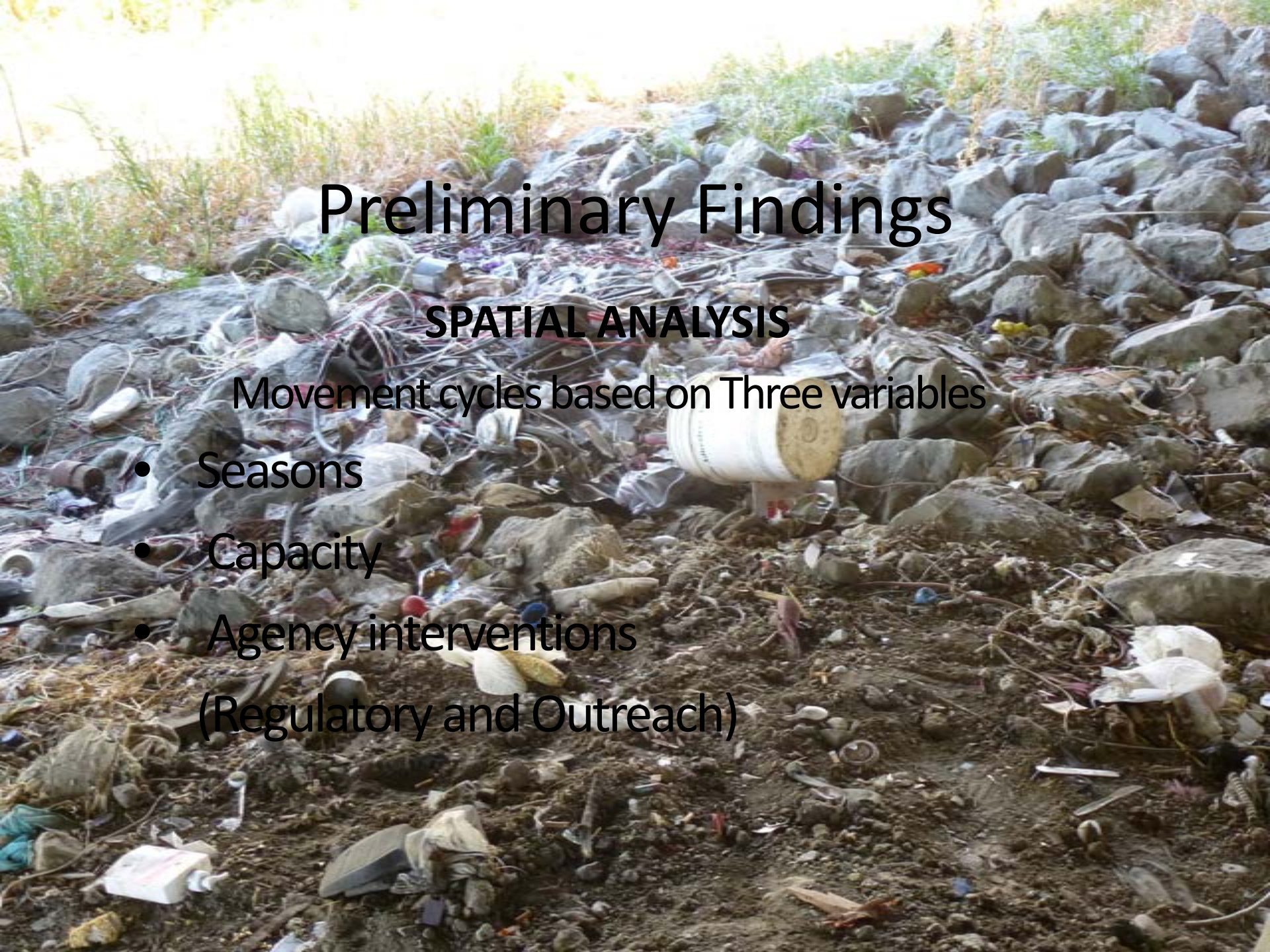


NEWCOMERS CAMPS

High profile
Most transient and obvious camps

POPULATION

Maintain social ties in community
Prevalent drug use
Generally in small social units
Antagonistic with agencies
Uninterested in help



Preliminary Findings

SPATIAL ANALYSIS

Movement cycles based on Three variables

- Seasons
- Capacity
- Agency interventions
(Regulatory and Outreach)



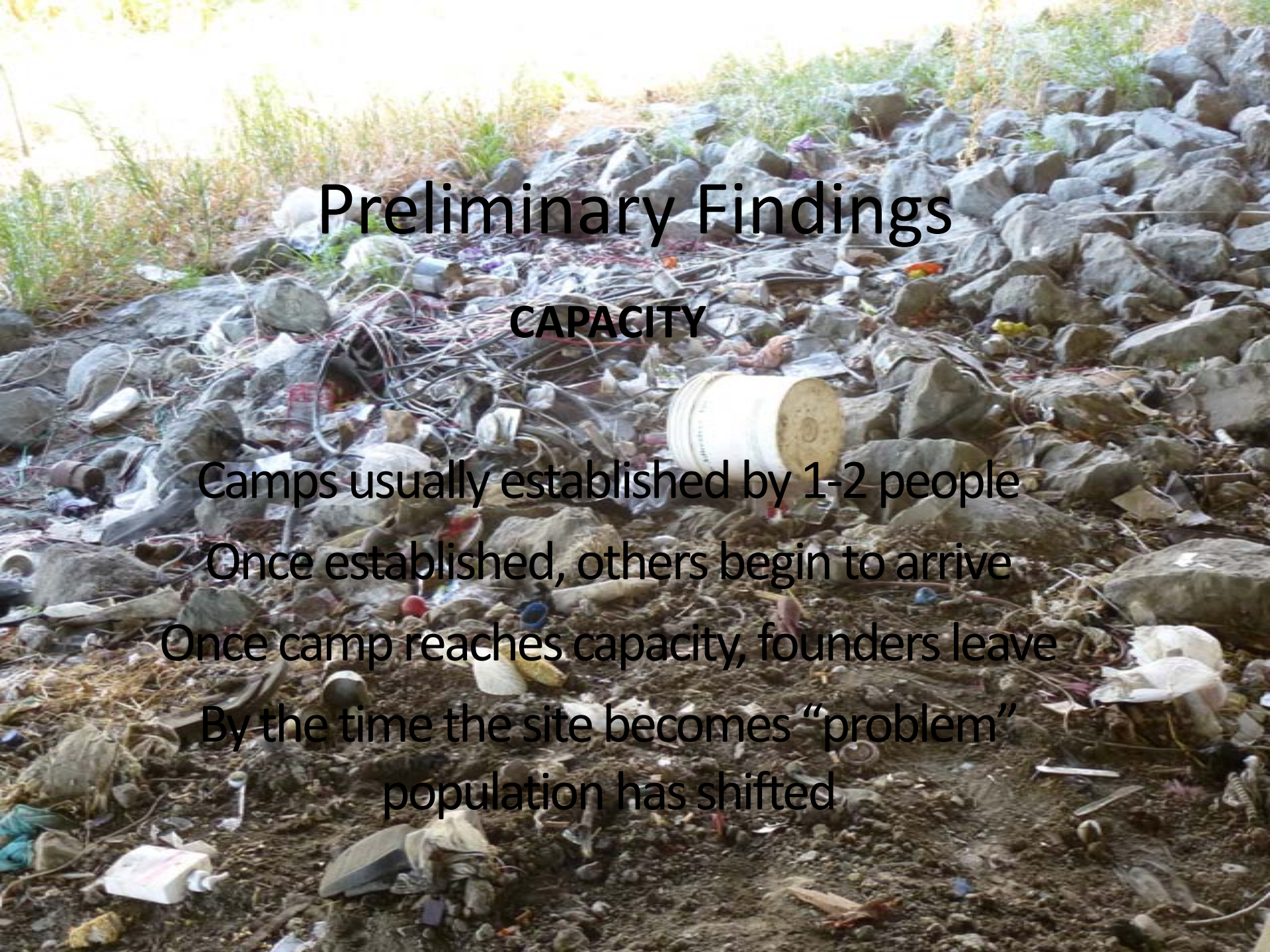
Preliminary Findings

SEASONAL SHIFTS

Summer: more homeless, more creek-side camps, shaded areas sought

Fall: those who can begin to move elsewhere

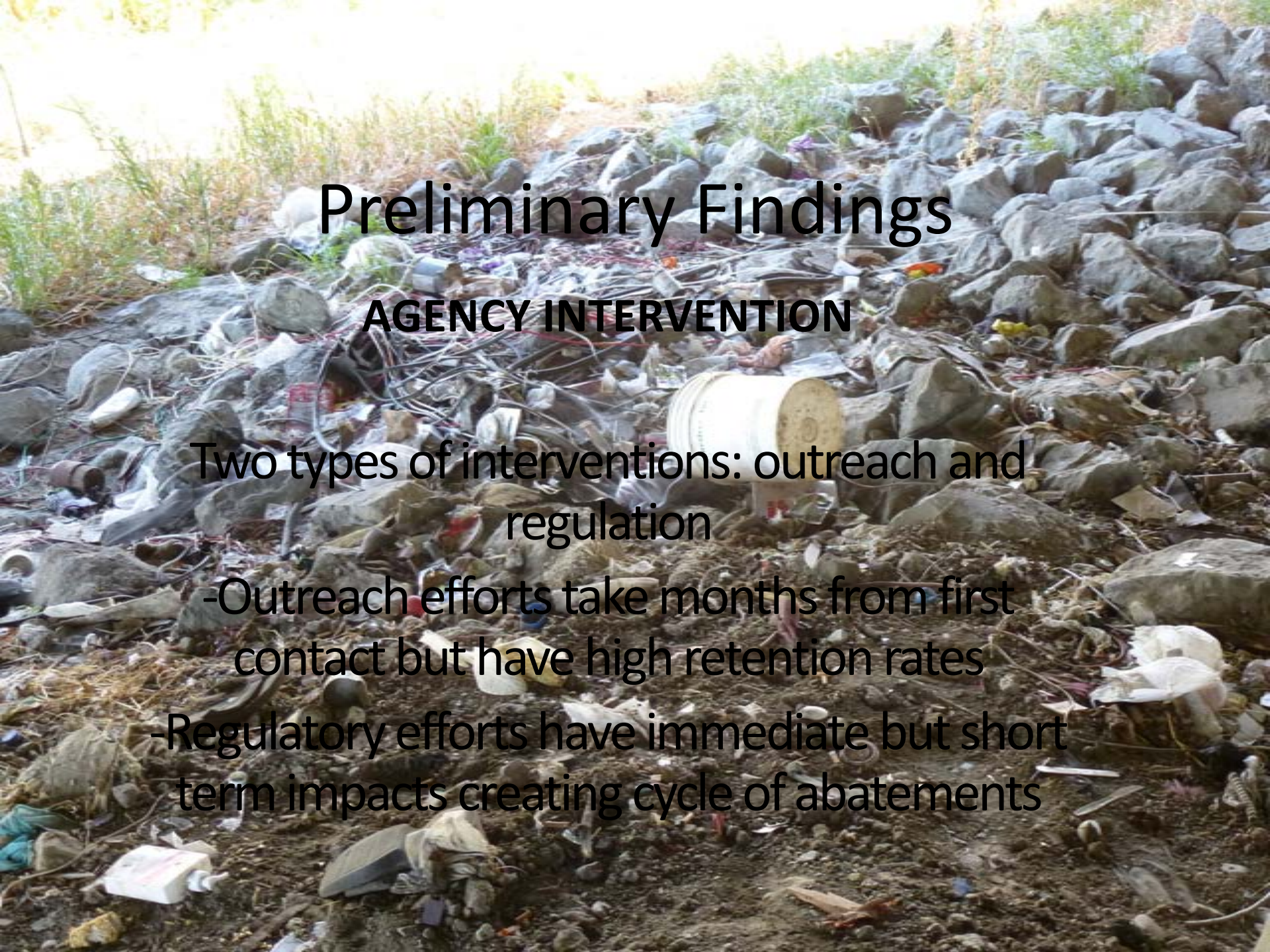
Winter: more old-timers, higher shelter use
areas with rain cover safe from flooding sought



Preliminary Findings

CAPACITY

- Camps usually established by 1-2 people
- Once established, others begin to arrive
- Once camp reaches capacity, founders leave
- By the time the site becomes “problem”
population has shifted

The background image is a photograph of a rocky, uneven terrain covered with various types of trash and debris. A large, white, cylindrical barrel is prominently placed in the center of the frame. The surrounding area is filled with rocks, broken plastic, and other waste materials. In the upper left, there is some sparse, dry vegetation. The overall scene suggests a neglected or illegal dumping site.

Preliminary Findings

AGENCY INTERVENTION

Two types of interventions: outreach and regulation

- Outreach efforts take months from first contact but have high retention rates
- Regulatory efforts have immediate but short term impacts creating cycle of abatements



Winter

Summer

Fall

Ideal



Agency collaboration and consistency

The background of the slide is a photograph of a rocky, uneven terrain covered with various pieces of trash and debris. In the center-right foreground, a white, cylindrical container with a wooden base is lying on its side. The ground is composed of dark soil, small stones, and scattered trash, including plastic bags, food wrappers, and other unidentifiable waste. The background shows more rocks and some sparse, dry vegetation under a bright, possibly overexposed sky.

THANK YOU!

Questions or Comments?

saneta@berkeley.edu

Sources: Rittel, Horst and Webber, Melvin *Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning* (1973)
Imperial, Mark *Collaboration as a Governance Strategy: Lessons from Six Watershed Management Programs* (2005)
Contra Costa Housing Element (2009)
Ending Homelessness in Ten Years: A County-Wide Plan for the Communities of Contra Costa County (2004)
Chamard, Sharon *Homeless Encampment: Problem Oriented Guides for Police* (2007)