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PRESS RELEASE

DATE: February 26, 2018

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1/9 DEBRIS FLOW SEDIMENT DEPOSITS END AT GOLETA BEACH COUNTY PARK AND CARPINTERIA BEACH AT ASH AVENUE

Efforts Continue to Remove Sediment from Carpinteria Salt Marsh

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – Since the 1/9 Debris Flow, one of Santa Barbara County's primary health and safety priorities has been to clear debris basins, creeks and roads of material as quickly as possible to prepare for future storms and to help the community of Montecito recover.

A majority of the debris on public lands has now been cleared to meet these goals. More than 18,000 truckloads of mud, sediment, boulders, rocks, trees and trash have been removed from Montecito and Carpinteria. Approximately 12 percent of the total amount of public property debris, consisting predominantly of sediment, was trucked to two federal and state-permitted beach disposal sites, including Carpinteria Beach at Ash Avenue and Goleta Beach County Park. The remaining materials were trucked to various public and private disposal sites in the region.

First District County Supervisor Das Williams noted, "These past six weeks have been tragic and trying for everyone. Completing the debris removal from public roads, basins and creeks was a major accomplishment and helps the community of Montecito move toward recovery."

Material deposited in the ocean was pre-sorted and inspected to remove large rocks, trash and vegetation before placement. The sediment placed at both beaches was tested by an independent laboratory and met all guidelines set by the Central Coast Water Board.

Due to high bacteria levels, however, ocean waters at Goleta Beach and Carpinteria Beach at Ash Avenue have been closed to the public since January 11, 2018. In order to safely reopen the ocean waters to the public, and as part of the routine ocean water monitoring program, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department has been conducting biweekly sampling and will continue this schedule of testing for bacterial levels in ocean waters near the sediment deposit buffer zones at the locations indicated. This level of testing will continue until results are within acceptable range.

Following Public Health's established protocols, ocean waters at these two locations will be reopened when they have two consecutive acceptable results. Current and historical ocean water testing results are available at: <http://cosb.countyofsb.org/phd/environmentalhealth.aspx> or www.ReadySBC.org.

With the slowing of debris removal from public lands and facilities, the Carpinteria Beach at Ash Avenue disposal site closed on February 9 and the Goleta Beach site closed on February 20.

Given the extensive work completed thus far, the County will not continue the hauling and disposal of sediment to Ash Avenue and Goleta Beach from the 1/9 Debris Flow. The permit for this specific activity has expired and the permit modification issued by the Army Corps of Engineers on February 22 no longer allows for this activity.

Second District County Supervisor Janet Wolf, whose district includes the Goleta Beach disposal site, said, "I am supportive of the decision to stop hauling sediment for beach disposal at Goleta Beach County Park. It is now time to allow the ocean and marine life at Goleta Beach to return to normal. I want to thank the residents, park visitors and fishermen for their patience and understanding during the immediate aftermath of the 1/9 Debris Flow tragedy."

County Public Works plans to remove the remaining 1/9 Debris Flow sediment still deep within the Carpinteria Salt Marsh. The Army Corps of Engineers directed that the individual permit issued for hauling activity be modified to accommodate the removal of sediment by hydraulic dredging within the Carpinteria Salt Marsh. Dredged materials will be discharged into the surf zone at the mouth of the marsh via a pipeline from the dredge. No other activity is allowed by the current permit. The Regional Water Quality Control Board, California Coastal Commission and California Department of Fish and Wildlife have approved the hydraulic dredging. The dredging project begins in two weeks and must be completed by April 15th. Public Health will also test the ocean waters near the mouth of the marsh.

"We are highly concerned about future storms that could cause debris flows similar to the 1/9 event, requiring additional debris removal efforts," said Scott McGolpin, Director of Public Works for Santa Barbara County. "The County will continue to search for options to dispose of debris and sediment from public lands that balance the needs and desires of everyone impacted," he added.