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**Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council Meeting**

Friday, July 11, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Big Sur Lodge, 47225 Highway One, Big Sur, CA 93920

*Congressman Jimmy Panetta and Supervisor Kate Daniels, Co-Chairs*

**MINUTES**

- I. Call to Order**
  - a. 10:06am
- II. Roll Call and Introductions**
  - a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast – Martha Karstens
  - b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast – Lucas Handy
  - c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce - Kirk Gafill
  - d. Community Association of Big Sur – Patte Kronlund
  - e. County of Monterey Planning Department – Melanie Beretti
  - f. Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District – Caine Camarillo
  - g. California Coastal Commission – Breylene Ammen
  - h. Caltrans – Aaron Henkle
  - i. California State Parks and Recreation – Dan Shaw
  - j. NOAA Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary – Absent
  - k. United States Forest Service – David Eisenberg
  - l. 5th District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors – Supervisor Kate Daniels
  - m. 30th District, California State Assembly – Mauricio Arias
  - n. 17th District, California State Senate – Justin Tran
  - o. 19th District, United States Congress – Congressman Jimmy Panetta
- III. Approval of the May 2, 2025 Draft Minutes**
  - a. Martha Karstens recommended edits.
  - b. Congressman Panetta asked if the minutes would be accepted if the edits were made.
  - c. Martha agreed.
  - d. Motion carried, minutes approved with proposed edits.
- IV. Tina Nieto introduced Chief Deputy, Eric Bixler**
  - a. Eric Bixler introduced himself.
- V. Appointment of South Coast Representative**
  - a. Appointed Lucas Handy to the BSMAAC as the South Coast Representative
  - b. Lucas Handy introduced himself.
  - c. Congressman Panetta welcomed him.
- VI. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items – limited to 3 minutes**
  - a. Congressman Panetta welcomed members of the public provide public comment.
  - b. Bruce Merchant – Asked a question about how speed limits are set?
  - c. Sharron P. Whilden – Commented on behalf of Keep Big Sur Wild, they are having a trash pickup in August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10:00am at Hurricane Point. Also commented on the plastic delineators that are bright and out of place that were placed at the Rocky Creek Bridge. Expressed that the delineators degrade the natural aesthetics. In her opinion it does not align with the Big Sur Coast Land Use Plan (BSLUP). It directly contradicts the purpose of the BSLUP. Does it provide any meaningful difference? They are asking Caltrans to consider the cumulative visual harm of the delineators. They need a long-term solution to this problem.
    - Congressman Panetta asked if Caltrans would like to respond
    - Caltrans explained that they will take speed data, and it is set by the law.

As for delineators they are trying to slow people down and remind people that it is narrow and to travel at a safer speed.

- d. Peggy spoke about SB540.
  - Caltrans replied and spoke about the rebar and what the CCC would like to see.
  - Panetta said there will be follow-up.
- e. Brian Goldberger – trash clean up in the Ventana wilderness. Their program is made possible by California Fish and Wildlife. Reach out to him if they would like to talk about the Cannabis Restoration Program.
- f. Eleanor Coning commented on reckless driving around school buses.
  - Justin Tran from Senator John Laird office commented
  - Mauricio Arias from Addis office commented
- g. Alyssa Rendon from See Monterey said that See Monterey recently launched the How-to Highway 1. Which explains how to responsibly visit Big Sur. They are committed to do more updates at BSMAAC and Big Sur Byways Organizatin (BSBO).
- h. Connie McCoy commented and said the Pacific Valley School is the normal meeting place . The South County Land Use Advisory Council (LUAC) and South Coast LUAC. It occurred to her that Big Creek is in the South Coast LUAC. County officials and State Officials haven't been on the South Coast within the year or past 5 years. She would like to take people on back country tours. She wants people to visit the back country.
  - Supervisor Daniels responded that the meeting location has been changed.
- i. Martha Diehl commented she applauded that the BSMAAC is working in a good way. Spoke in favor of Caltrans – Caltrans has been saying that they cant do things due to legislative problems. She understands that Caltrans may need help to resolve some of the issues and respond productively.
- j. Sharron commented and requested that Congressman Panetta provides big sur specific updates. Big Sur residents did not know until later.
  - Congressman Panetta replied

## **VII. New Business**

- a. Rocky Creek “Ribbon Cutting” – Caltrans
  - John O. spoke and provided a brief history
  - Caltrans played a video.
  - John O. introduced Chad Stoher, project manager of the Rocky Creek project.
  - Chad Stoher spoke and explained that they finished repair about 1 month ahead of what they anticipated. Introduced Paul Peterson, Rodger Morris, Neil Weller, Bob Regans. Ray Ferani, and there were over 50 individuals involved in this project.
  - John O. requested that they take a group photo.
  - Congressman Panetta asked why they were ahead of schedule and under budget.
  - Chad Stoher responded.
  - Congressman Panetta asked if that was normal or was it unique situation.
  - Chad explained that it was unique.
  - Congressman Panetta thanked them.
  - Supervisor Kate Daniels thanked them and expressed that we should apply this knowledge to Regents Slide.

- Martha K. commented.
- Kirk Gafill commented.
- BSMAAC took a group photo.

## VIII. Old Business

- a. Update on Restrooms at Garrapata State Park – California State Parks/State Coastal Conservancy
  - John Hiles provided a PowerPoint for the Garrapata project
  - John Hiles did introductions for his team (Olivia Wise from DD&A and Tyler Potter)
  - John H. state parks is providing various restrooms at different state parks and beaches. For this project they are looking into improving existing facilities at Garrapata State Parks with a two stall vault toilet restroom and an ADA compliant route. Milestones they are going to meet to address CEQA.
  - Olivia – they are anticipating an Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND). Tribal Consultation will be initiated this month.
  - Simulation photos were shown and explained. Public meetings will occur. There are various opportunities for the public to participate.
  - John H. this has been an issue for decades and they view this as an opportunity to address this issue. He welcomes the community to engage.
  - Supervisor Kate Daniels asked a question
    - John H. responded
  - Supervisor Kate Daniels – Would it be visible
    - John H. they are trying to have it blend in with existing environment.
  - Sharron commented are they taking the BSLUP into consideration? The bathrooms are not viewable from the road. The issue with the generated images is that you can see them from the highway . We know Soberanes is a bad chokepoint. They will have people stopping to use the restroom and creating a bigger choke point.
    - John Hiles responded and said that they are looking at alternatives. It is set below grade of the highway. They are trying to look at ways to reduce the roof pitch. There would be some tree and branch removal. They are looking at every way to provide less visual impact. It is challenging because visitors use the areas and they need to provide safe and clean restrooms to visitors. Garrapata Beach didn't have any restrooms and there was human waste along the beach and highway.
  - Martha Diehl commented the analyses need to include a full safety analysis of all parking in the vicinity . They are formalizing something that hasn't been included safety before. It needs to include traffic flow, parking, and safety. Putting a structure in coastal chapparal ruins the aesthetic and putting vegetative screening changes the coastal chapparal.
  - Collin Tunick – is there a possibility of further excavating to further sink the restroom down? Would it have significant impacts?

- John H. they are limited to the number of locations. They chose that location due to it already being disturbed. They are taking in numerous factors and there will be further analysis. They are trying to limit the amount of waste around the highway. There is a reason this project has been discussed for decades. They are looking to have something that fits into the LUP, CEQA, etc.
- Tyler Potter – they are at the beginning of the CEQA process then they will work with MC through the CDP process. They will address the direct and indirect things associated with the project.
- Eleanor – The restrooms being put in would attract more people to the state parks. Then they would need somewhere for people to safely cross the road.
- John H. thanked the public and encouraged the public to participate.
- Supervisor Kate Daniels – thanked John and DD&A for attending.
- California Coastal Commission – expressed that the commission is excited about this planning effort. They are high visitation areas and the restrooms are necessary.
- John finished the presentation.

## **IX. Reports from Member Agencies**

### **a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast**

- Grange:
  - Grange has been quite busy. The grange has been there for many years. On August 1 there will be a special performance. They will have a potluck and a movie viewing of the Big Sur Movie “The Way It Was”. The movie will be shown on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. They are working on spiffing up the Grange with new curtains in the kitchen and the outside will get a new coat of paint.
- Historical Society
  - On June 28<sup>th</sup>, Stanley Harlan went to the Big Sur Grange and he is selling his book which over what it was like to grow up on the South Coast. He is 97 and has experienced a lot of change within his life. They are doing a training coming up. They have 4 cookbooks in the final version. The cookbook and potluck will be coming soon to use the recipes in the book.
- Big Sur CERT
  - They have been working on learning the CAL Topo App for evacuations. That has been challenging. The disaster trailer is being worked on with new tires, spaces and other necessary work. It will be parked at the health center under a recovery tent to protect it.
  - Trailhead Advisor Ambassador Program (TAAP) which is in conjunction with the Ventana Wilderness Alliance (VWA). They need more people to help at the backcountry parking lot and count people who go in or help work on trails. 54 hikers entered the back country. They check in with the backpackers.
- Choose Ridge Lookout – they are doing fundraising for the new roof. Visit Kate’s website for more information.
- Over the weekend at Pfeiffer Ridge a new sign was placed.
- John O. replied

- Forest Services – they did a quick turnaround with Caltrans to put the signage. They can bring the signage
  - Sharron – every weekend
  - Forest Service – whenever there is need for increased staff
  - Martha – did it help?
  - Forest Services doesn't know if it helped directly.
- b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast
- South coast residents understand the vulnerabilities that come with the location. Although small in number their community is self sufficient. They have been isolated for the past 2 years. They appreciate the ongoing efforts to restore Highway 1. They thanked US Forest Service for their continued presence on the South Coast . They congratulated the graduates. Thanked South Coast Big Sur fire volunteers. 6 urgent calls to action: Caltrans dangerous contractor driving behavior. Public restroom access and signage – low-cost resolution. The south coast recommends clear signage along highway 1 with clear signage that directs the public to those resources. Thanked District 5 US Forest personnel. Clarification needed on the Ca Coastal Trail. It is confusing related to the scope and timeline of the trail. Temporary fixes becoming de facto solutions. The USPS mail is delivered once a week . They often do not arrive to their designation. Trash pickup is once every other week. Basic services should not be compromised due to a road closure. Encouraged the county to implement better solutions and consistency. They deserve a weekly or biweekly status update. South Coast offers their willingness to collaborate, working together with transparency allows everyone to protect Big Sur.
  - Jimmy Panetta replied.
- c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce
- As stated at the last BSMAAC:
  - Notwithstanding the highly impacted hot spots of Pt. Lobos, Soberanes, and Bixby Bridge, that impact traffic flows on Highway 1, traffic and general business levels continue to be significantly depressed due to the closure of Highway 1 at Regent's slide. Vacancies at campgrounds and cabins in Big Sur in July are at levels not seen in years during peak summer season.
  - The resumption of two-lane access at Rocky Creek is a welcome improvement to traffic flows for residents, employees and visitors. The completion of this phase of the project also means that there will no longer be attendant PM and occasional 24 hour planned closures whose impacts are amplified by the necessary media releases that reinforce the message for many that Big Sur is closed or inaccessible.
  - Another positive development for visitation to the area is the launch of the How2Hwy1 campaign by SeeMonterey. This campaign is making clear to the public that in spite of Regent's slide, Big Sur is accessible from the north and south and the messaging includes key points on encouraging responsible visitation.
  - As in past reports, it is important to continue to emphasize that Highway 1 has now been closed continuously in one or more locations since the first week of January in 2023, and the re-opening time frame at the last closure location, Regent's Slide remains uncertain.
  - While the long-term prospects for the Big Sur business community are very positive, the accumulated and ongoing negative impacts of reduced traffic levels due to the Highway 1 closure to the south continue to pose

enormous financial challenges to owners and their employees.

d. Community Association of Big Sur

- As always, the Community Association of Big Sur (CABS) has remained busy & deeply engaged, and looking ahead, our focus for 2025 has centered on 4 critical priorities: Community Housing, Visitation Management, Fire Preparedness, and Disaster Preparedness and Relief. I will now go into more detail on each of these categories.
- Community and Workforce Housing -
  - CABS continues to advocate for long-term solutions to housing that reflect the needs of our community. With both the Big Sur Land Use Plan Update and the Monterey County Housing Element Update - conversations continue on ADU's, JADU's & Caretaker Units as community long-term housing options, including alternative & affordable types of construction for example: Shibusu System SIP panel kit homes, modular homes, tiny homes, yurts, trailers, etc. When we speak of this housing we are also speaking to possible County incentives for property owners who want to offer community workforce housing for example: "affordable & streamlined permitting".
  - Transfer Development Credits - defining what makes a site eligible for transfer and an eligible receiver site. Might this work for the 24 homes at the Navy Base or a hybrid of this?
  - The outcome of the Vacation Rental Ordinance with the Coastal Commission and what impact it will have in Big Sur
- Visitation Management
  - With summer here and the Rocky Creek Slip Out now fully opened and Regent's Slide keeping the highway closed to the south, we are seeing an uptick in visitation, especially with one way traffic in and out. July 4th was the perfect storm - 3 day weekend, perfect weather, and a day trip to Big Sur. From Pt. Lobos south to Bixby Bridge these multiple hotspots were more than law enforcement could manage but they were out in force. Thank you! A couple of hotspots to highlight:
  - Bixby Bridge - This is NOT a new problem and definitely more needs to be done here with safety the priority!
    - We ask that both Caltrans and the Coastal Commission give this area more attention and look at creative solutions to address the safety concerns, traffic congestion and parking control.
    - The Big Sur Byways Organization, the Bixby Bridge Emergency Task Force, Supervisor Daniels, Monterey County Public Works, and the Big Sur community are asking for your help.
    - What the County has done to date:
      - Monterey County Public Works with support from the Board of Supervisors and the Bixby Bridge Emergency Task Force took the first step last year to place K-rails on the Old Coast Road to prevent parking at the entrance and added more No Parking Signs. Law Enforcement made themselves present on weekends.

- This year the Board of Supervisors voted & passed to keep the Old Coast Road closed and the K-rails there to further prevent parking on the east side of the highway. Law Enforcement presence is still necessary, especially on weekends.
  - This is not the final solution but it does help.
- What more can be done at the County Level:
  - Increase the County budget for more law enforcement time at Bixby Bridge & other hotspots.
  - Bring back a Resident Sheriff for the Big Sur area.
  - Increase the parking citation fee.
- What can be done at the State Level:
  - Look at implementing solutions to manage the highway corridor at Bixby Bridge e.g. prevent parking on both sides of the highway; promote a "visual access" experience; do not have turn outs at either end of the historic bridges...
  - A Safety, traffic flow study by Caltrans. Coastal Commission to re-look at Visual vs Physical Access along the 70-mile stretch of Highway 1 per the Big Sur Land Use Plan.
- Pfeiffer Beach/ Sycamore Canyon -This, too, is not a new problem.
  - The beach has become a photo attraction: Key Hole & Purple Sand
  - Most visitors staying no more than an hour which adds more traffic & congestion on a single lane residential road.
  - This holiday weekend an Electronic Sign was placed temporarily at the entrance to Pfeiffer Ridge Rd. and Parks Management Company was staffed to provide coverage at the top of the road and at the Kiosk with USFS presence & support during the weekend.
- What more can be done by the USFS & with the Visitor Use Management Implementation Plan:
- Immediately –
  - Explore a Long-term Encroachment Permit for an Electronic Sign on the highway with messaging in real time to what is happening at the beach and parking -example: "Beach Parking is Full" or "Do not enter the road".
  - An additional sandwich board sign to be placed at the top of the road when the parking lot is full and removed when parking is available.
  - PMC honors their contract & maintains the proper staffing (minimum 2 staff at the top of

Sycamore Canyon directing traffic and 2 staff at the Kiosk at the beach area) with support of USFS personnel.

- Mid to Long-term –
  - USFS Engineering - do a Transportation Plan for an analysis of various options to mitigate safety concerns: Reservation System
  - Shuttle System
  - USFS Website specific to the Big Sur area for visitation planning and information & what to expect prior to getting here.
- Both of these areas were studied & suggestions made in the Destination Stewardship Plan, and while it is an advisory document, it is worth revisiting which solutions may be effective today.
- Fire Preparedness - FABS Report
  - Big Sur Chipping Program - As of July 1, the Program has completed 61 appointments for 50 properties (1,400 cubic yards of slash from 177 acres of vegetation), including all of Partington Ridge Road and Clear Ridge Road to create defensible space for Big Sur residents and businesses. We began chipping in late February 2025. Chipping is available year-round to Big Sur residents and businesses, at no charge. The Chipping Program has two contractors: Perez Services remains our primary chipping contractor and the Big Sur Fire Ground Division Hand Crew. The South Coast participated in this free program last month and chipping days are scheduled in July. [CHIPBIGSUR.ORG](http://CHIPBIGSUR.ORG)
  - Firewise USA® - Big Sur has three Firewise USA®-recognized communities, with an additional two in the application process.
  - Gaining Firewise USA recognition helps Big Sur neighborhoods reduce wildfire risk and may even lead to insurance discounts. If you are interested in helping your community become Firewise, contact Rayner Marx to get started.
- Disaster Preparedness –
  - CABS is starting the conversation with Big Sur Incident Command, and many individuals and agencies on how to better prepare the Big Sur community for the next disaster and better define each of our roles.
  - CABS has been an Advisor to a new program at the Community Foundation for Monterey County - called COAD or "Community Organizations Active in Disasters". A large network of services led by Nick Zafiratos the COAD Manager at the CFMC. Nick will be with the Department of Emergency Services for all County disasters. What this means to CABS, the Big Share, the Big Sur Health Center, etc. is Nick will be "our voice & support" for services & supplies needed for community assistance.
  - Fundraising for disasters as a community will also be a part of these conversations so we also have financial capacity to act quickly.
  - When I first moved to Big Sur a local, who was a stranger to me

at the time, walked up to me and asked: "What are you going to do for Big Sur?" That moment stuck with me - and it has shaped my approach ever since. So today I am turning that question back to all of you in this room: "What are we going to do for Big Sur, together?" Because building a resilient, thriving future here is not the job of one person or one agency - it is going to take all of us, united in action and purpose, to care for this place.

- Three News Bulletins -
  - 2025 MC Gives Campaign - Applications are due July 31st
  - NOAA Weather Transmitter in Big Sur - A community project for 16 years that is again stalled. Climate Change and the recent storms and weather events, and thinking of the flooding in Texas, this would be an invaluable tool for Big Sur.
  - Palo Colorado Road - a request for assistance by the Monterey County Public Works team: The closed section of Palo Colorado Road - can this section be scheduled for "Brushing"? There is a mini slide covering Palo Colorado Road before the Fire House on a blind turn & narrowing of the road. The community asks that Public Works remove this slide to make this section of the road safe.
- e. County of Monterey Planning Department
  - Thanked everyone for attending. Introduced staff members: Katie Scariot, Sarah Wikle the new Principal Planner. The County currently has various planning positions that are open right now. Bixby Bridge, the County issued an extension for the emergency Coastal Development Permit (CDP) of the placement of the k-rails and signage. There is backup that occurs even if Rocky Creek opens. Housing Element draft has been updated and submitted to State HCD following a 7-day public review and it is available on the Housing and Community Development (HCD) website. HCD will be responding to manufactured homes, tiny homes, etc. Planning Commission (PC) has requested to look further on addressing the housing issues. HCD will return to give a presentation to the PC to discuss some of these issues. Processing the updated fire hazard maps. They will be formally adopted in the County.
- f. Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District
  - Caine – Palo Corona Regional Park project has broken ground. They are restoring to native floodplain. Also provide flood relief to surrounding communities. \$30 mil. Thanked both Federal and State level partners. The park will remain open during construction. They will be maintaining public access. They are hoping to coordinate a presentation at a future BSMAAC meeting. This is the busiest time of year at the preserve and they have an onsite care taker to ensure there is no illegal camping and trespassing. They have hired a new General Manager, Erik Morgan from Bureau of Land Management, his first day will be July 15..
- g. California Coastal Commission
  - Coastal Cleanup Day – September 20, 2025. More info on the commissions website. It will be held in Pismo Beach. CRFREE project is being heard. The Commissions august meeting will be in Calabasas. Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinance will be going to that meeting. Participation can occur in person and virtually. They recently received the county application.
  - Connie McCoy commented – revisit the CCC mitigation project for Caltrans. Thanked Caltrans for their work at Rocky Creek. The recently

- BSBO meeting, she appreciated that he was open to the public input
- CCC staff replied.
- h. Caltrans
- Aaron Henkle – Garrapata creek bridge there will be more temporary delineators and lower traffic to 25 mph. They will be setting up speed tracking devices at the bridge to see if it will work to get their speed down. They do not want to back to one lane. That work will start in 1-3 weeks. Regarding contractors speeding the south coast, they are working with law enforcement and the contractors. They are the subcontractors who are speeding. Reference to restrooms – signs have to meet certain regulations and what the CCC wants. Regents – they added someone else from south coast to the stakeholders group. They release information every week. Recommended for the public to attend Big Sur Byways Organization. Any concerns can be sent to Aaron
- i. California State Parks and Recreation
- Thanked everyone for listening to their presentation. They have had the pleasure of working with volunteers and partner agencies. Thanked guest services at Big Sur Lodge. Central Coast Light House is all volunteers, and a tremendous team. Critical partnership with historical . Big Sur Historical Society - Ventana Wildlife Society has a program called Upward Bound and they are at Andrew Molera. 3 California conservation groups. Oak grove is reopening since the Basin Fire.
- j. NOAA Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Absent
- k. United States Forest Service
- David Eisenberg – sitting in for Fin Eifert . Last week they welcomed Kim Winter their new Forest Supervisor on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Thanked Roman Torres who has been helping them during the transitional period. The disaster supplemental – California Conservation Corps did work on Buckeye Trail and will be working on Soda Springs Trail. Storyboard updates and the project is moving forward as planned and working with various community representatives. The coastal trail project – they are working with Matt Freeman and Senator John Laird. They have started their new FMO, Herald who was working with Ventana Hot Shots Crew. Nacimiento Station Rebuild (fire station burnt down during Dolan Fire) – the decision has been made to rebuild on the King City land. Monterey District Office in King City.
  - Comments from their law enforcement officer, John Ares – signage was put out at the road to Pfeiffer Beach which led to lower violations. Please reach out to John Ares with any questions
- l. 5<sup>th</sup> District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors
- Introduced new District 5 staff member, Evan Snider. They are now fully staffed. She expressed that her other staff members, Kimbly Craig and Claudia Link were present. They just completed the first budget hearing, it was a successful budget process. The services that are valued as a county are funded. An important note is there is a request to reach out to the D5 office. It is going to be challenging over the next few years. They invest \$100,000 to streamline housing efforts to streamline permitting. It was their office to put in the referral to extend the parking ban at Old Coast Road.
- m. 30<sup>th</sup> District, California State Assembly

n. 17<sup>th</sup> District, California State Senate

- With the Senate's bill deadline now behind us, I'm proud to share that 17 of my bills are advancing to the Assembly. This legislative package addresses urgent issues facing both the state and the Central Coast – from expanding affordable housing in the coastal zone and modernizing participation on state boards and commissions, to improving safety standards for clean energy projects and protecting the health of our firefighters. Each of these bills moves us closer to a California that works better for everyone. You can find the full list of bills below.
- SB-22 Gift Certificates.
- SB-29 Civil actions: decedent's cause of action.
- SB-230 Workers' compensation: firefighters.
- SB-283 Energy storage systems.
- SB-333 Transactions and use taxes: San Luis Obispo Council of Governments.
- SB-340 General plans: housing element: emergency shelter.
- SB-391 Community colleges: Chancellor of the California Community Colleges: data request fee policy.
- SB-428 State Auditor: permanent office.
- SB-470 Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act: teleconferencing.
- SB-484 Coastal resources: coastal development permits: infill area categorical exclusion.
- SB-491 State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission: chair: report to the Legislature.
- SB-504 Communicable diseases: HIV reporting.
- SB-544 Railroad crossings: permit applications: review.
- SB-577 State Government.
- SB-609 Fish: commercial fishing.
- SB-697 Determination of water rights: stream system.
- SB-839 Oil spills: fishing: water closure: grants: liability.
- I want to also congratulate my colleague, Senator Monique Limón, on her historic ascension as the next President Pro Tempore of the California State Senate. We've worked closely on a range of critical issues — from supporting working families and expanding environmental protections to uplifting marginalized communities. Together, we've stood strong for the Central Coast, and I look forward to continuing that partnership in her new role as we fight for a stronger, more equitable California.
- Lastly, as wildfire season intensifies across the state, California is investing more resources in CAL FIRE than ever before thanks to critical funding secured by California's Democratic leadership in this year's state budget.
- This year's historic investment begins the landmark transition of CAL

FIRE'S antiquated seasonal firefighter staffing plan to a modern day staffing model, which will eventually transition all 3,000 seasonal CAL FIRE firefighters to full-time status 365 days per year. The 2025-26 state budget includes funding to begin the transition of hundreds of seasonal firefighters, who will officially be on the fire lines full-time early next year.

- Facing longer and more destructive fire seasons each year, the investments builds on massive efforts by Democratic leaders over the past decade, which have nearly doubled the ranks of CAL FIRE firefighters from 6,700 to over 12,000 today. Another 2,100 CAL FIRE firefighters will be hired over the next 48 months thanks to a previous budget agreement championed by state Democrats.
- o. 19<sup>th</sup> District, United States Congress
  - Appreciated everyone for coming together. The reconciliation package that was signed into law on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Public Lands in Big Sur were not impacted directly. Multiple California representatives pushed back against Senator Mike Lee, and then that language was removed. For now, stretches of Los Padres National Forest are not included. One bill is trying to roll back protections of vast stretches of federal lands. They are doing this under the guise of affordable housing. It is important to protect Federal Lands. Roadless rule. They are working to push for full funding of the US forest service . National Weather Service has been cut. The complexity and frequency of disasters we face at the edge of the continent . He wants to ensure they are appropriately staffed. The weather transmitter will be installed. NOAA will pay for the cost necessary.

**X. Report from Non-Member Agencies on Issues Pertinent to Big Sur**

- a. United States Forest Service, Law Enforcement Officer
  - John Ares is working on Madres Fire. Great signage at Pfeiffer Beach.
- b. California Highway Patrol
  - Officer Moreno is new.
- c. Monterey County Sheriff's Office
  - Ivan Rodriguez, the Commander from the coastal region is retiring . He will be replaced by Brandon Smith. They went through a difficult budget process, and they are not sure if they will be able to implement a Big Sur deputy specifically. They are still actively discussing with the Board. Through the budget process they lost 6.5 million dollars with the budget cut. They are evaluating their service levels, and they will do what they can to ensure health and safety is maintained.
- d. Big Sur Fire
  - Muster is tomorrow, July 12<sup>th</sup> from noon to 3:00pm. Nine new firefighters will be celebrated at the muster. The hand crew has had more than 50 requests for services. They have been working on defensible space and the hand crew has been well received. They are housing the crew at Pfeiffer State Park. July 30 they are not extending the stay there. They are exploring housing alternatives.
- e. Big Sur Byway Organization
  - Last meeting was the first meeting that was fully staffed. They followed up on the Mud Creek and Shell Point issues that were raised at BSMAAC and they were brought to BSBO. There was a great presentation done by Caltrans regarding a technical update on Regents Slide. They are excited about Caltrans updating the Coast Highway Management Plan (CHMP). It

is important that this document be usable and collaborated on. The project is supposed to be funding starting in July. Caltrans will coordinate a special meeting.

f. Big Sur Health Center

- They are recruiting for a nurse practitioner.

g. State Parks

- Law Enforcement Rachell Tuter. Mike Dipple couldn't be here. Illegal camping on the highway continues to be a major issue. Their staffing levels have been an issue, so they cannot address every issue. The public tries to do the right thing by choosing a turnout that doesn't have a sign. She's been enforcing illegal camping for years. A sign doesn't have to make it illegal. They want to have better signage. The Bixby issue continues, and they responded to multiple issues that were raised and it is a public safety concern. Due to the marine layer they can not always use helicopters for emergencies.

h. Public comment:

- Bruce Merchant- negotiate with SLO to address issues with mail and emergency response.
- Supervisor Daniels : they are thinking about how to address the trash issue. Thanked State Parks Law Enforcement for their report and they would like for that report to be written so it can be sent to the Board of Supervisors.
- Jimmy Panetta commented

**XI. Adjournment Motioned by Supervisor Kate Daniels and seconded by Martha K. 1:06pm**

Next Meeting – Friday, October 24, 2025

~Thank you to the Big Sur Lodge for your hospitality and for the use of the conference room at the Big Sur Lodge~

For BSMAAC Agendas and Minutes please visit

<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-a-h/housing-community-development/planning-services/current-planning/committees-hearings-agendas>