Caltrans
District 12–Orange County

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

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Caltrans Reconfigures Traffic Along Pacific Coast Highway for Phase 2 of Slope Preservation

Traffic reconfiguration begins at 8 p.m. Oct. 20 as crews prepare to install protective barriers and reinforce the base of the slope.

ORANGE COUNTY – Caltrans will reconfigure traffic lanes beginning at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 20, on Pacific Coast Highway (State Route 1) between Reef Point Drive and Irvine Cove Drive to accommodate Phase 2 of the Crystal Cove PCH Protection Project (CCPPP) at Moro Beach.

Both southbound lanes will close, and traffic in both directions will shift to the two northbound lanes, with one lane designated for each direction. The speed limit through the work zone has been temporarily reduced to 25 mph. This traffic configuration will remain in place as stabilization work progresses.

Motorists should follow posted signs and traffic controls, reduce speed and remain alert for workers and equipment. Delays are expected, so drivers should allow extra travel time and use alternate routes when possible.

Phase 2: Slope Stabilization
Contractors will begin installing layers of 4-foot-tall temporary protective barriers filled with sand as soon as low-tide conditions permit, anticipated as early as Wednesday. The barriers will be positioned along the base of the slope to help absorb and dissipate wave energy.

Following installation of the barriers, crews will build a fill buttress armored with large rocks between the barriers and the slope. The added mass and rock protection will help reduce erosion and limit further slope movement.

Work is scheduled around tidal conditions, as crews can only perform the work during low tide. The timing and progress of field operations may also be affected by weather and site conditions.

About the Crystal Cove PCH Protection Project
The CCPPP was initiated after a developing crack was identified in the coastal slope beneath PCH near the Moro Beach section of Crystal Cove State Park, where high tides and increasingly active waves have contributed to coastal bluff erosion. A drone survey model estimates the crack extends up to 360 feet long and reaches a width of up to 2 feet.

The project's three phases address immediate concerns, reinforce the slope and develop a long-term stabilization solution.

Phase 1: Immediate Protective Intervention — Complete.
Contractors placed plastic sheeting over the existing crack to help limit surface runoff and prevent rainwater from entering the slope. Caltrans will continue monitoring the slope and roadway through drone imagery and surveys to track movement and inform next steps.

Phase 2: Interim Stabilization — Underway.
Temporary protective barriers and fill buttress armored with large rocks will be installed to help dissipate wave energy and protect the slope from further erosion.

Phase 3: Long-Term Solution — In Development
Caltrans is working closely with California State Parks to develop a long-term stabilization approach to ensure roadway protection by drawing on geotechnical data and lessons learned from similar emergency repairs. The project timeline will depend on the selected approach, with a clearer timeframe expected as the evaluation and planning process progresses.

Caltrans has obtained $4 million in initial funding for emergency repairs. The total project cost will be determined once long-term stabilization plans are developed. The department continues to coordinate with California State Parks, the California Coastal Commission, the County of Orange, the cities of Laguna Beach and Newport Beach, and SoCalGas on the emergency response.

Caltrans will provide updates as additional information becomes available. For current traffic conditions, motorists can visit Caltrans QuickMap. All lane closure information is available through the Caltrans Lane Closures System.

For more information and updates, you may contact the District 12 Public Information Office via email at D12PIO@dot.ca.gov or on social media: Instagram, Facebook, Threads and X.

For those with sensory disabilities requiring alternate formats (Braille, large print, sign language interpreter, etc.) and those needing information in a language other than English, please contact Christianne Smith or TTY 711.

Visit build.ca.gov to learn about transformative infrastructure projects happening in communities throughout the state.