



State of California

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor Newsom announces early reopening of Highway 1 in Big Sur, months ahead of schedule

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: The Governor announced today that Highway 1 from Carmel to Cambria in Big Sur, which has been closed due to a landslide, will reopen—months ahead of schedule.

BIG SUR – Governor Gavin Newsom today announced that Caltrans will open the portion of Highway 1 closed by Regent’s Slide, starting at noon on Wednesday, January 14, months earlier than the estimated reopening date of March 30. The reopening restores full travel access along the iconic Big Sur coast and revives a vital economic lifeline for local business owners and residents affected by the closure.

“This reopening will bring much-needed relief to small businesses and families in Big Sur and the surrounding communities who have shown remarkable resilience and strength,” said **Governor Newsom**. “I’m grateful to Caltrans crews for delivering Highway 1 ahead of schedule—deploying remotely controlled heavy equipment, stabilizing slopes with thousands of steel reinforcements drilled up to 60 feet deep, and using cutting-edge monitoring systems to overcome extraordinary geological challenges while keeping workers safe. This vital corridor is the gateway to California’s coast and the lifeblood of the Big Sur economy—and today it’s restored.”

Early completion of the Regent’s Slide repairs will provide residents and visitors with uninterrupted access along the Big Sur coast between Carmel and Cambria for the first time in almost three years. The reopening reconnects communities, supports local businesses and facilitates the safe flow of goods and services along this vital coastal corridor.

“This reopening is the result of extraordinary teamwork and a shared commitment, led by Governor Newsom, to safely restore Highway 1 at Regent’s Slide,” said **California**

Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin. “Delivering this complex project ahead of schedule while protecting workers’ safety on one of the state’s most challenging slopes is a testament to the skill and dedication of everyone involved. We are thankful for the patience of the communities and businesses as we tackled this major reopening effort.”

Over the next months, travelers on Highway 1 at Regent’s Slide and other locations may encounter occasional full closures while crews remove debris following seasonal weather events and intermittent delays due to ongoing construction. In the days leading up to reopening the roadway, Caltrans removed approximately 6,000 cubic yards of mud and debris (enough to fill 240 dump trucks) from the Regent’s Slide repair site after strong winter storms impacted the Big Sur North Coast.

Regent’s Slide occurred on February 9, 2024, and overlapped with Paul’s Slide, six miles to the south, which closed the highway from January 14, 2023, to June 23, 2024.

“The full reopening of Highway 1 marks a significant milestone of local, national, and global interest,” said **Caltrans Director Dina El-Tawansy**. “There are few, if any, more iconic routes not just in California but anywhere in the world. Restoring access for residents and tourists boosts regional economies and reinvigorates the pride and cultural identity associated with one of the most scenic and picturesque roadways on the planet.”

Local state legislators representing Big Sur region also welcomed the early reopening.

“This reopening is welcome news for the Big Sur community, workers, and small businesses that have endured extraordinary challenges,” said **State Senator John Laird**. “For three years, I’ve worked with local leaders, Caltrans, Governor Newsom’s administration, business owners, and residents to secure resources, coordinate repairs, and keep Big Sur’s needs front and center. Highway 1 is more than a road; it is a lifeline for families, small businesses, and visitors. The closure at Regent’s Slide created lasting hardship, cutting off access and threatening the region’s economic stability. Reopening this vital corridor restores jobs, revives local businesses, and reconnects people to their homes and livelihoods. I’m grateful to the Caltrans crews, state and local partners, and the Big Sur community for their tireless work, patience, and determination.”

“The reopening of Regent marks an important step forward for the hundreds of families and workers in Big Sur and the millions of people who visit California every year,” said **Assemblymember Dawn Addis**. “This turning point will help restore revenue, access to our state parks, support jobs, public safety, and economic stability for many of our residents.”

Innovations in Engineering

Repairs at Regent’s Slide required advanced engineering techniques to ensure the safety of crews working atop one of California’s most challenging slopes. Crews worked

seven days a week as site conditions allowed, performing excavation and slope reinforcement utilizing cutting-edge equipment. Key elements of the project included:

- **Remote-Controlled Heavy Equipment:** Working with Caterpillar Inc., Caltrans deployed remotely operated bulldozers and excavators, controlled from a safe distance, allowing excavation to continue during periods of heightened geologic risk.
- **Shear Dowels:** Over 4,600 steel bars, up to 60 feet long, were drilled and grouted into the slopes in a 10-by-10-foot grid to tie layers of the hillside together and reduce the risk of future slides.
- **Spider Excavators:** Highly maneuverable smaller excavators were used in extremely steep terrain to remove material where conventional equipment could not operate.
- **Real-Time Monitoring Systems:** Daily drone flights, ground surveying, and subsurface monitoring provided data on slope movement, allowing crews to work under safe conditions.



Aerial views depict the Regent's Slide repair site along Highway 1 in the Big Sur North Coast

These innovative methods provided the safety necessary for crews to perform advance excavation throughout the emergency project despite challenges caused by geologic activity and adverse weather.

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has identified 75 miles of the Big Sur coastline as one of the most active areas for landslides in the western United States with over 1,500 mapped slides.

The contractor for this estimated \$82.6 million project is Papich Construction of Arroyo Grande, CA, which was recently acquired by Granite Construction Inc.

For information and updates on the Regent's Slide location, [click here](#).

General road information and updates can also be found on Caltrans District 5 Social Media platforms: X/Twitter at: @CaltransD5, Facebook at: Caltrans Central Coast (District 5) and Instagram at: Caltrans_D5.

For information about transportation projects transforming communities throughout the state, visit: [Build.ca.gov](https://build.ca.gov).

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