



City of Capitola

NEWS RELEASE

Attention: Editors

For Immediate Release
March 27, 2011 1:30 p.m. PDT

Contact: Derek Johnson
Public Information Officer
(831) 475-7300
djohnson@ci.capitola.ca.us

CAPITOLA VILLAGE FLOOD OVERVIEW

CAPITOLA— Beginning Thursday afternoon, due to the historic amounts of rain and storm runoff, City public works crews responded to concerns regarding the volume of water backing up in Noble Gulch Creek at the Bay Avenue undercrossing. At approximately 4:30 PM the underground pipe that transmits water from Noble Gulch Creek between Bay Avenue and Capitola Avenue failed flooding the Pacific Cover Mobile Home Park and portions of Capitola Village. The pipeline failure day lighted approximately 100' of Noble Gulch Creek and caused significant damage to Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park and the Capitola Village.

Several manufactured homes in the Park were significantly damaged and park residents were directed to go to the Jade Street Community Center. The Red Cross assisted residents impacted by the flood, and with funding assistance from the City, provided affected residents with hotel vouchers.

By approximately 10:00 PM Thursday night, the City had cleaned up most of the mud and debris and streets in the Village were open. The Jade Street Community Center was closed at that point as all evacuees had found alternative shelter.

Early Friday morning, City crews, working with heavy equipment operators from Granite Construction, began clearing the damaged section of pipe. By Friday afternoon, the channel had been cleared, and the pipeline opened. Heavily equipment remained deployed to respond to the storm due Friday night.

The next storm hit late Friday night/early Saturday morning, bringing more rain than forecasters had anticipated. City crews working with city contractors worked feverishly to keep the damaged section of pipe at the top of Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park open, but by approximately 9:00 AM, the crews were unable to keep up with the volume of water and were forced to seek refuge on higher ground.

Capitola Police, working in close coordination with Central Fire Protection District and California State Parks, evacuated those residents in danger due to flood waters, and closed the Village to all vehicle and pedestrian traffic. The City's emergency shelters at both Jade Street and New Brighton school were reactivated with Red Cross assistance.

By late afternoon yesterday, the flood waters had again receded, and Noble Gulch was directed through pipes to Soquel Creek. After flood waters subsided, significant damage was observed to Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park and the downtown Capitola Village.

The City's Building Official, in coordination with County Environmental Health, and PG&E, immediately began evaluating structures damaged by flood waters, and restoring gas and electricity to buildings as possible.

Late last night the coach which had been straddling the failed drainage pipe at the top of Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park was removed, and more than 10 tons of large rock was placed in the now-exposed Noble Gulch drainage channel. City crews and engineering staff are working with Granite Construction to repair the drainage pipe at the top of Pacific Cove Mobile Home Park, and have established a plan to restore piping by the end of the week.

While no significant weather event is forecasted over the next 5 days, residents and business owners are advised to remain vigilant as additional rain and saturated soil conditions could result in additional flooding until the section of pipe is repaired.

Due to flood damage, the Capitola Police Station has been temporary relocated to modular buildings in the Pacific Cove parking lot to ensure the City's high level of police service to City residents is maintained. It is expected Police Station repairs will be completed within 3-4 weeks.

City clean-up crews with assistance from the County, the City of Santa Cruz, and Central Fire District are working to clean the Village, and at approximately noon today the Village was reopened to vehicular traffic. County Health inspectors and the City Building Official are now on-scene to help local businesses reopen. Dumpsters to help residents and businesses clean up have been deployed in the Village.

During the course of the flood, City staff and police went above and beyond the call of duty to respond to the emergency, and continue to do so as we speak. The City kept residents and the media up-to-date through the issuance of more than 7 press releases, while conducting more than 30 on-camera interviews with local, regional and national media.

At this point, a complete damage assessment has not been completed, however it is anticipated costs of clean up and repair will be significant.

The City would like to thank the City's staff and volunteers, Central Fire Protection District, the County of Santa Cruz, the City of Santa Cruz, the State Parks swift water rescue team, and all of the City's partners in responding to this emergency.

Mayor Dennis Norton said of the City's response *"I am very proud of the coordinated response of emergency safety personnel, public works, and other agencies; I hope the worst is behind us. I know the City of Capitola will pull together during the upcoming weeks to help Capitola get back on its feet"*.

Sand bags and sand has been positioned behind City Hall in Pacific Cove Parking Lot and are available for public use. Capitola residents can reach the Red Cross at 831-427-8115 should shelter or other immediate needs be required. For immediate emergencies, call 911.

For more information contact Derek Johnson at (831) 475-7300 or at (831) 234-3737.

#