



# County of Santa Cruz

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **BOARD ASKED TO DECLARE LOCAL EMERGENCY**

On Tuesday, March 22, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors will consider a request to declare a local emergency in response to recent El Niño storms that damaged roadways and prompted flooding in several areas of the County.

Due to heavy rainfall throughout the month, numerous damaged local roads will require significant repairs. The County estimates the cost to be \$9,025,000, and will seek emergency funding from the California Office of Emergency Services.

“Given the amount of rain, our crews did well to respond quickly, prevent further damage and minimize storm impacts on residents,” County Public Works Director John Presleigh said. “However, we are a small county with a limited transportation budget. State assistance is needed to help return things to normal.”

March is on track to be one of the wettest months in years, with precipitation totaling 5.87 inches in Watsonville, 12.46 inches in Soquel and 18.87 inches in Ben Lomond, according to National Weather Service data. During a one-hour period on March 5, Soquel received more rain than the region did during the entire month of February.

The storms triggered brief evacuations in the Felton Grove, Paradise Park and lower Soquel Creek areas. They also triggered mudslides and felled trees across the county, prompting Department of Public Works crews to work long and difficult hours to keep roadways passable and assure residents could reach their homes.

The Board of Supervisors meeting begins at 9 a.m.