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Massive slide repair on schedule at Mud Creek

BY CHRIS COUNTS

A SOGGY spring has brought buckets of rain to Big Sur over the past month and caused a few closures along Highway 1, but the moisture hasn't slowed work on re-opening the scenic route at Mud Creek, which is blocked by the biggest slide in California history, and the project remains on schedule to be completed by late summer.

"Rainfall can delay projects, but in this case, there has been no major impact," Jim Shivers of Caltrans told The Pine Cone. "We've been able to make steady progress."

The scenic route at Mud Creek has been closed since May 20, 2017, when a massive slide dumped an estimated 5 million cubic yards of rock, dirt and debris on the pavement. The site is located just south of Gorda near the Monterey County line.

Workers at the site continue to shape the slope so it can support a highway. "We need to re-sculpt the hillside in such a way that it allows the new roadway to be placed on a stable surface," Shivers explained.

Another task involves placing large boulders at the toe of the slide, where it is vulnerable to erosion by the sea.

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County says fix coming for Highway 1 gridlock

By CHRIS COUNTS

IN AN effort to ease traffic along Highway 1 in Carmel, an extra lane is being added northbound from Rio Road to Carmel Valley Road. But construction work on the \$7.5 million project is causing some pretty serious traffic of its own, and motorists aren't happy about it.

A flurry of complaints about the improvements were raised this week by residents who faced lengthy delays during a busy weekend, April 7-8. They took aim at county officials, who are overseeing the work.

"It is not being done in a professional manner," suggested Shelley Risko, who sent a letter on the topic to Monterey County Supervisor Mary Adams. "The crews set up the barricades last Thursday and have not been back since. This has resulted in 30- to 50-minute backups in both directions. Why are they not working nights and weekends?"

Also chiming in was resident Dick Burns.

"I was quite surprised when I stumbled upon the traffic mess," Burns told The Pine Cone. "The way they have handled it is an imposition — they didn't plan it very well."

'Day from hell'

Some Big Sur residents said trips to "town" took up to two hours because of the traffic. A Carmel Highlands woman, meanwhile, said it took her two hours to drive to Marina.

Adams described Sunday "as an absolute day from hell as far as mishaps on Highway 1 are concerned. I had so many calls from people in the district who were very concerned about what was happening."

But the supervisor said a fix is on the way.

"I'm happy to say there are things we are doing to keep the traffic jams from happening," Adams said.

Enrique Saavedra, the county's acting public works chief, said county officials are working with Caltrans and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County to reduce the traffic.

Saavedra said Caltrans is "tweaking" the timing of traffic lights to enable traffic to flow more efficiently. "Different days have different demands, and weekdays are different than

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PHOTO/COURTESY CALTRANS

As a new segment of Highway 1 across the Mud Creek Slide begins to take shape, a 63-inch pipe just below the roadway allows the creek to reach the ocean.

MALPASO WATER ALLOCATION IS ALMOST GONE

By MARY SCHLEY

MORE THAN two years after former Mayor Clint Eastwood was given the OK to sell the rights to about 80 acre-feet of water to residents and businesses in Carmel and Carmel Valley for \$240,000 per acre-foot, 85 percent of it is spoken for, according to Michael Waxer, manager of Eastwood's Malpasco Water Co.

The water comes from the former Odello artichoke fields south of town, where Eastwood canceled development permits for 82 home sites. After donating the property to the Big Sur Land Trust for open space and flood control, and agreeing to let some of the water that had been used there to go back to the river, Eastwood's group spent a decade undertaking environmental review and working with state and local agencies to set up Malpasco Water Co., which started selling the water

in one-tenth-acre-foot increments in February 2016. A typical home in the Peninsula needs about one-third of an acre-foot.

"Sales have stayed strong, and we have about 85 percent of the total supply sold, or in the escrow process," Waxer told The Pine Cone. "There remains good interest, and we expect to be fully subscribed in the coming months, and sold out before the end of this year."

Waxer said now is the time for people who need water in order to build on empty lots or remodel their homes to see if buying some from Malpasco is a good option for them.

"We often get asked if a Malpasco Water entitlement can be used on a commercial lot, or to add onto an existing business," he added. "The answer, of course, is yes, Malpasco Water can be used for any lawful purpose that the jurisdiction and the

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Daughter of P.B. Co. founder, Mary Morse Shaw dies at 97

By MARY SCHLEY

MARY MORSE Shaw, a world traveler and bon vivant who always enjoyed good company and a challenging game of bridge or backgammon, and whose life spanned the

entire history of one of this country's most successful golf and real estate developments, died at her home in Del Monte Forest Tuesday morning. The youngest daughter and last surviving offspring of Pebble Beach Co. founder Sam Morse, she was 97.

(She was also this reporter's grandmother and namesake, and the woman whose unflinching standards for excellence and wide-ranging curiosity helped inspire my career in journalism.)

Even the circumstances of Mary Shaw's infancy hinted at the life she would lead: She was born in San Francisco on Sept. 5, 1920, and spent her first year in an apartment at the Fairmont Hotel on Nob Hill. She was Sam Morse's fourth child, and his only with Mary Relda Ford Morse, whom he married in 1919, the same year he founded Del Monte Properties and opened the Pebble Beach Golf Links — projects which became fabulously successful and world famous.

Buy it himself

"Sam Morse was broke when he went to work for William H. Crocker around 1910, managing a ranch in Merced," said Neal Hottelling, longtime historian for the P.B. Co. "But he was so good at managing the ranch, Crocker decided to put Morse in charge of liquidating his company's properties in Mon-

See **SHAW** page 14A

Kidman, Witherspoon attend grand opening of Lovers Point coffee shop

■ 'Big Little Lies' may also film in Carmel

By KELLY NIX

IT LOOKED authentic — and more than a couple of tourists thought it was — but a quaint coffee shop that suddenly appeared in a prime, oceanfront spot in Pacific Grove this week was only an elaborate set for the second season of the HBO series "Big Little Lies."

Hollywood A-Listers Nicole Kidman, Reese Witherspoon and Meryl Streep — along with numerous extras — were at Lovers Point Wednesday afternoon shooting scenes at the "Blissful Drip Café" in front of about 75 onlookers.

"Nicole Kidman is so skinny and small," said one woman about the 5-foot-11-inch Australian star.

The "coffee shop," in a gazebo setting, offered the "best coffee," and specials such as a matcha latte for \$4 and a frozen chai for \$4.50, a

sandwich board advertised. Pastries and sugar, creamer, honey and other accoutrements were there, too.

While the crew prepared for the day's shoot, "Big Little Lies" location manager Gregory Alpert playfully quizzed the curious crowd about the show's lead actors and filming locations. He gave those who answered the questions correctly bags of pretzels and chips.

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PHOTO/PAT HATHAWAY

"Big Little Lies" stars Reese Witherspoon and Nicole Kidman shooting a scene at Lovers Point in Pacific Grove Wednesday for the popular HBO series.



PHOTO/FAMILY COLLECTION

This image of Salvador Dali fiddling with a young Mary Morse's hair could have been taken for the famous Surrealist party, but she only ever said it was just Dali "being Dali."