

**CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION**

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February 3, 2025

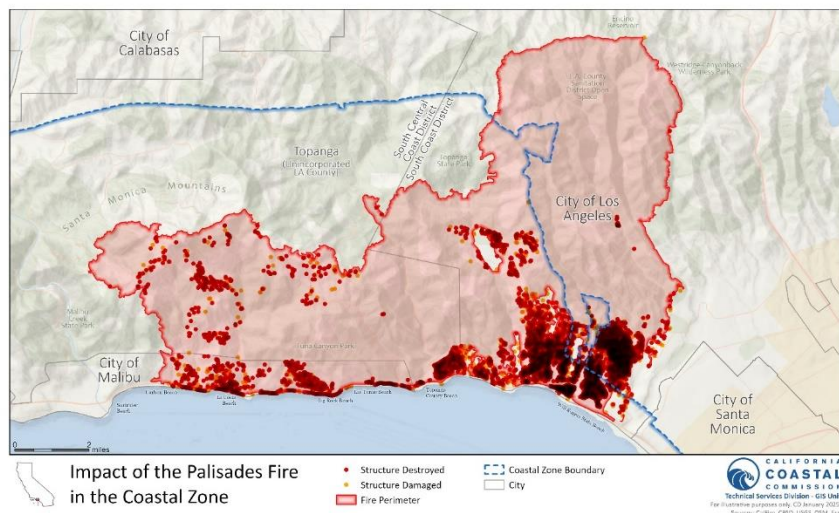
**TO:** California Coastal Commission and Interested Parties

**FROM:** Dr. Kate Huckelbridge, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Executive Director's Report

## Palisades Fire Update

The Palisades Fire started on January 7<sup>th</sup> and is 98% contained as of January 31<sup>st</sup>. The damage caused by the multiple fires in the Los Angeles area during the month of January is unprecedented and the Palisades Fire alone burned 23,448 acres of land and destroyed 6,837 structures (4,537 of those structures located within the Coastal Zone) with another 1,017 structures damaged (810 of those structures located within the Coastal Zone) as of January 31<sup>st</sup>. The fire impacted multiple jurisdictions, including the Palisades community in the City of Los Angeles, the City of Malibu, and the unincorporated area of the Santa Monica Mountains in Los Angeles County, as shown on the map below.



As part of federal assistance pursuant to the January 8, 2025, Federal Disaster Declaration, the U.S. EPA will assess, remove, and safely dispose of hazardous materials from all burned areas. On January 16, U.S. EPA's first teams began assessing burned properties in the Palisades Fire burn areas and will soon begin collecting hazardous materials from burned properties. U.S. EPA teams will be working with teams from the State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control, Army Corps of Engineers,

and in coordination with local government agencies as part of a unified response. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders, Coastal permitting requirements have been suspended for fire-impacted areas in Los Angeles to facilitate rapid recovery. Coastal Commission staff is working with the Governor's office and our local government partners to ensure a unified effort toward rebuilding the community and helping residents return to their homes.

To help communicate this message, Deputy Director Steve Hudson and I attended two community meetings in Los Angeles on January 18 to listen and answer questions about the LA fires. The meetings were organized by Senate Pro Tem Mike McGuire and Senator Ben Allen who represents Malibu and the Pacific Palisades. The goal was to bring together local, state, federal first responders, elected officials, responsible agencies, and community leaders to enhance coordination during what was still a rapidly evolving situation, facilitate assistance through shared resources, and provide accurate and timely information. We appreciate the leadership of both Pro Tem McGuire and Senator Allen for organizing this gathering and for reaching out to Commission staff to participate. It was particularly valuable to meet directly with City and County officials to personally reiterate our agency's unconditional support as they navigate this tragic and devastating disaster.

In addition, on January 25, Deputy Director Steve Hudson attended the City of Malibu's Townhall Meeting to listen and answer questions about the LA fires. The meeting was organized by Mayor Doug Stewart, the City Council, Acting City Manager, Joseph Toney, and City staff. The meeting was well attended by several hundred Malibu residents. The goal was to bring together local, state and federal first responders, elected officials, and responsible agencies to answer questions by members of the public to provide accurate and timely information relating to fire recovery and rebuilding efforts

## **2026-2030 Strategic Plan Update**

The Commission is launching a public engagement process for its 2026-2030 Strategic Plan update. Listening sessions are being scheduled for March and April and will include opportunities for English speakers, Spanish speakers, tribal representatives, and local governments to participate. Details on the listening sessions and other ways to engage will be posted on the Commission's [Strategic Plan website](#) in the coming weeks. The Commission and public will have additional input opportunities on the public draft in the fall and the final draft in winter.

## **Meetings/Events**

On January 31, CNRA hosted an hour-long "Coastal Commission 101" informational briefing over Zoom for legislative staff in Sacramento. Chair Cummings and our legislative team covered the Commission's history, its basic functions, how to handle constituent questions, upcoming topics of interest and answered questions. Big thanks to CNRA for organizing these briefings for all their departments, boards, and Commissions.

On January 25 I attended the Planning and Conservation League's annual Environmental Assembly at UC Davis. Sarah Christie was asked to moderate a plenary panel on 50 years of successful coastal protection, which was a timely reminder of how much the Commission has accomplished over the last 5 decades, along with other coastal conservation laws.

## **Emergency Permits:**

### North Coast District

G-1-24-0078 – Emergency permit issued to Ryan Bode to replace a failed culvert with a tide gate in an existing agricultural dike at 1509 Walker Point Rd, Bayside, Humboldt County

G-1-24-0080 – Emergency permit issued to El Capitan Environmental Services to repair a breach in an existing agricultural dike at 4639 Myrtle Ave, Eureka area, Humboldt County

G-1-24-0082– Emergency permit issued to California Department of Fish and Wildlife & County of Del Norte to mechanically breach the sandbar between the Lake Earl/Lake Tolowa Lagoon Complex and the Pacific Ocean, ~15 miles north of Crescent City, Del Norte County

### South Central Coast District

G-4-25-004 – Emergency permit issued to City of Ventura for removal of sand and woody debris from mouth of Sanjon Lagoon to prevent imminent flooding of adjacent roads, homes and businesses.

### San Diego District

G-6-24-0081 – Emergency permit issued to Joseph Steinberg to construct an approx. 3 ft. wide, 12 ft. long inland extension of the existing southern return wall to prevent erosion and flanking of the seawall and bluff below 633 and 629 W Circle Drive, Solana Beach.

G-6-25-0002-W– Emergency permit waiver issued to the City of Oceanside to excavate approximately 5 cu.yds. of cobble rock to breach the berm at the Loma Atla Creek mouth on January 27, 2025 to facilitate stormwater outflow and prevent flooding upstream in response to rain.

G-6-25-0005 – Emergency permit issued to the City of Encinitas to construct temporary fire station to maintain public services as the existing fire station was deemed seismically unsafe and will undergo repairs, at 390 W. F Street, Encinitas.