

Jan 14, 2026

Governor Newsom announces early reopening of Highway 1 through Big Sur

Reopening at Regent's Slide restores vital economic corridor for communities and businesses

What you need to know: Months ahead of schedule, Governor Newsom announced that Highway 1 from Carmel to Cambria in Big Sur has reopened after a landslide damaged the iconic and vital roadway.



Before and after: Aerial views at the Regent's Slide repair site along Highway 1 in the Big Sur North Coast. (Source: CalTrans)

BIG SUR – Today, Governor Gavin Newsom announced that Caltrans will reopen the portion of Highway 1 closed by Regent's Slide, starting at noon on January 14, nearly 90 days 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. 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.

Governor Gavin Newsom

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 community and businesses as we tackled this major reopening effort.”**

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.



Construction crews restore Highway 1 along Big Sur’s dramatic coastline. (Source: CalTrans)

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 the 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 California 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.”



Crews utilize specialized equipment on extreme slopes during Highway 1 repairs at Big Sur’s Regent’s Slide. (Source: CalTrans)

Pioneering solutions at the cutting edge of the cliff

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, utilizing cutting-edge equipment to perform excavation and slope reinforcement. 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.

These innovative methods provided the safety needed for crews to perform advanced excavation throughout the emergency project, despite challenges posed by geologic activity and adverse weather.



Caltrans crews install safety netting on steep coastal slopes during Highway 1 repairs in Big Sur. (Source: CalTrans)

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

Winter storms may bring temporary closures along Highway 1 at Regent's Slide, and other locations may experience occasional full closures while crews remove debris following seasonal weather events, along with intermittent delays due to ongoing construction.

For information and updates on the Regent's Slide location, [click here](#). To access video content and photographs of the Regent's Slide project, [click here](#).

© Copyright 2026