

Erosion worsens under Pebble Beach Drive

February 1, 2024



Heavy rain and storm surge have eroded bluffs along Pebble Beach.

Crescent City has closed through- traffic on iconic Pebble Beach Drive between 7th and 8th streets until further notice.

Unusually heavy rainfall and storm surge tides along the Pacific continue to endure damage on the bluffs along Pebble Beach Drive and pose a vehicle safety hazard along this prominent route.

City Manager Eric Wier said, “Public Safety is our primary concern. We ask pedestrians to respect the orange barriers blocking road access until the city deems it safe to return.”

The recent history of coastal bluff stabilization goes back to December 2016. Wier related the city council took advantage of, in his words, “a once in a lifetime opportunity” to fund a bluff stabilization project along Pebble Beach Drive. Wier stated severe storms seven years back caused significant coastal banks damage from 6th Street north to Preston Island.

The event prompted a funding request from the Federal Highways Administration, California Department of Transportation and local participation to restore Pebble Beach Drive.

The breakdown of the funding is FHHA: 88 percent, California Transportation: nine percent and the city’s contribution of three percent to bolster support for the bluffs and keep Pebble Beach Drive intact.

The city project is estimated to be about \$30 million for the its portion of bluffs’ stabilization. Over the seven years since Crescent City voted for participating in the coastal zone stabilization program, costs have predictably risen. In 2019, city staff and consultant estimates placed the preliminary engineering costs at \$458,000 and another \$3.9 million for construction.

The city was originally approved to receive funds for \$458,000. By 2020, the PE cost had risen to \$1.1 million, creating a deficit of over \$651,000. Full funding of this project has yet to be secured. The city manager underscored the daunting challenge to stabilize Pebble Beach Drive.

Councilors will continue to discuss funding options in an effort to keep Pebble Beach intact. In the meantime, the city urges caution and asks drivers to avoid this immediate area.