

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE
COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**IN THE MATTER OF RE-RATIFYING
LOCAL EMERGENCY
PROCLAMATIONS, FOR THE THOMAS
FIRE/STORM INCIDENT**

RESOLUTION NO. 20-85

WHEREAS, on December 4, 2017, at 1825, a wildfire that has been named the Thomas Fire, began burning in Ventura County. Later that night, Santa Barbara County experienced wide-spread power outages, which impacted 83,000 customers. The main Southern California Edison transmission lines were compromised by the fire. On December 7, 2017, mandatory evacuation orders and evacuation warnings were issued, as the Thomas Fire approached the southeast portion of the County. Extensive smoke and ash created hazardous air quality that led to the closure of most South County schools on December 7th and 8th. Many schools elected to remain closed and recessed early into their holiday break. The Thomas Fire crossed into Santa Barbara County on December 9, 2017. Evacuation centers were opened for residents and for animals; and

WHEREAS, on December 5, 2017, Governor Brown declared a State of Emergency for the County of Ventura as a result of the Thomas Fire, and on December 7, 2017 the Governor added the County of Santa Barbara to the State of Emergency; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2017, the President proclaimed a Presidential Declaration of Emergency for the Counties of Santa Barbara and Ventura; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2017, the County Executive Officer, as the Director of Emergency Services, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, proclaimed a local emergency due to the Thomas Fire. This local proclamation was ratified by the Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2017 and re-ratified on January 9, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 2017, the Santa Barbara County Health Officer and Public Health Director declared a Local Health Emergency and Order Prohibiting the Endangerment of the Community Through the Unsafe Removal, Transport, and Disposal of Fire Debris. This Local Health Emergency was re-ratified within each fourteen days in

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accordance with Health and Safety Code, section 101080 until Governor Brown waived the requirement on January 12, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on January 2, 2018, the President declared a major disaster for the State of California, as a result of several California wildfires, including the Thomas Fire, pursuant to his authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Pub. L. No. 93-288 (1974) (codified as amended at 42 U.S.C. § 5121 *et seq.*) (Stafford Act); and

WHEREAS, on January 7, 2018, due to imminent forecasted storms, mandatory evacuation orders and evacuation warnings were issued to alert over 25,000 residents living in flood and debris prone areas of the need to evacuate areas by noon on January 8, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2018, a series of storms (“Storms”) began impacting Santa Barbara County, including areas that were burned by the Thomas Fire; and

WHEREAS, on January 8, 2018, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, pursuant to Government Code, Section 8558 and 8630, et seq., and Chapter 12 of the Santa Barbara County Code the Director of Emergency Services of the County of Santa Barbara proclaimed the existence of a local emergency within Santa Barbara County as a result of the Storms. The Board of Supervisors ratified the local emergency for the Storms incident on January 9, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on January 9, 2018, the Thomas Fire was only 92% contained, and the County of Santa Barbara experienced an extreme rain event that resulted in several massive debris flow below the Thomas Fire burn scar. The debris flow carried boulders and debris that led to 23 deaths, injured persons, destruction of property, and displacement of residents, businesses and closure of Highway 101, State Route 192, and many streets and major thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, on January 11, 2018, FEMA granted the State’s request for expanded federal disaster aid for the debris flow that occurred as a result of the Thomas Fire; and

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2018, the Thomas Fire was 100% contained having burnt 281,893 acres in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. It burned significant portions of Santa Barbara County’s critical watershed and damaged or destroyed over 80 structures in Santa Barbara County; and

WHEREAS, on January 12, 2018, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-46-18 to further assist recovery efforts related to the Thomas Fire and subsequent debris flow; and

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WHEREAS, on January 15, 2018, FEMA approved Individual Assistance and the Presidential Major Disaster Declaration was expanded to include January 9, 2018, flooding, mudflows, and debris flows directly related to the compromised watershed as a result of the wildfires; and

WHEREAS, as of January 27, 2018, the Storm was reported to have destroyed or damaged 550 structures; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2018, new storm activity caused an evacuation of approximately 21,000 people in the debris flow risk areas. Fire, law enforcement, public works and Emergency Operations Center personnel were activated during the storm. Full repopulation occurred on March 2, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2018, new storm activity caused an evacuation of approximately 5,000 people in the debris flow risk areas. Fire, law enforcement, public works and Emergency Operations Center personnel were activated during the storm. Full repopulation occurred on March 13, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2018, new storm activity caused an evacuation of approximately 21,000 people in the debris flow risk areas. Fire, law enforcement, public works and Emergency Operations Center personnel were activated during the storm. Full repopulation occurred on March 22, 2018; and

WHEREAS, on January 15 to 17, 2019, as part of a series of storms, evacuation and a shelter in place order were issued for storms. 3,600 people were affected. Fire, law enforcement, public works and Emergency Operations Center personnel were activated during these storms. The debris basins received approximately 30,000 cubic yards of debris, which was cleared out before the next significant storm; and

WHEREAS, from February 1 to 3, 2019, a series of storms prompted an evacuation order for 3,600 people living in risk areas below burn areas. Fire, law enforcement, public works, and Emergency Operations Center personnel were activated during these storms. Debris flows and flooding caused damage, temporary closure of Highway 101 and 154, disruption of utility services and the need to clear additional large quantities of debris from debris basins and channels; and

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WHEREAS, winter rainstorms have eliminated emergency drought conditions in the County. On March 19, 2019, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors proclaimed that conditions of extreme peril warranting the Proclamation of Local Emergency Caused by Drought Conditions no longer exists. However, Thomas Fire sediment and carbon accumulation in the Jameson and Gibraltar reservoirs continue to affect water quality and reduce the capacity of the reservoirs; and

WHEREAS, on February 21, 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency in 21 counties for January and February 2019 storms, including Santa Barbara; and

WHEREAS, on March 5 to 6, 2019, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff issued an evacuation order for 3,600 residents living in debris flow risk areas due to a forecasted storm. The Santa Barbara County Emergency Operations Center was activated to its second highest level for the duration of evacuation order and fire and law enforcement resources were prepositioned. Public Works resources were deployed; and

WHEREAS, the Thomas Fire/Storm Incident caused conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the County of Santa Barbara, which are beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment and facilities of the combined forces of Santa Barbara County Operational Area to combat; and

WHEREAS, recovery efforts are ongoing, potential future storms may cause additional debris flow leading to more damage to homes, properties, businesses, local roadways and bridges, and potential road closures; and

WHEREAS, the County and allied agencies are continuing to prepare for additional debris flows which may occur with future storms, and

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that the conditions warranting the Proclamation of Local Emergency Caused by the Thomas Fire and resulting storms and debris flow continue to exist and the Proclamation of the Local Emergency Caused by Thomas Fire/Storm Incident shall remain in place; and

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that the local emergency shall be deemed to continue to exist until its termination is proclaimed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, California.

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PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara, State of California this 19th day of May, 2020 by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Williams, Hart, Hartmann, Adam and Lavagnino

NOES: NONE


ABSTAIN: NONE

ABSENT: NONE



GREGG HART, CHAIR
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ATTEST:
MONA MIYASATO
CLERK OF THE BOARD

By 
Deputy

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
MICHAEL C. GHIZZONI
COUNTY COUNSEL

By smckenzie@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
Deputy

Digitally signed by:
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KELLY HUBBARD
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

By 