



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors  
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
(805) 568-2240

**Department Name:** CEO/OEM  
**Department No.:** 012  
**For Agenda Of:** March 20, 2018  
**Placement:** Administrative  
**Estimated Time:**  
**Continued Item:** No  
**If Yes, date from:**  
**Vote Required:** Majority

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Department: Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer and Director of  
Director: Emergency Services  
Contact Info: Terri Nisich, Assistant CEO  
Robert Lewin, Director of Emergency Management  
**SUBJECT:** Thomas Fire/Storm Incident – Update and Local Proclamation Re-Ratification

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**County Counsel Concurrence**

As to form: Yes

**Other Concurrence:**

As to form: NA

**Auditor-Controller Concurrence**

As to form: NA

**Recommended Actions:**

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Adopt a Resolution re-ratifying the Proclamations of a Local Emergencies related to the Thomas Fire and subsequent Storm Emergency declared by the Director of Emergency Services on December 8, 2017, and January 8, 2018, respectively, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, pursuant to Government Code Section 8550 et. seq. and Chapter 12, Section 12-5(a) of the Santa Barbara County Code, now combined and re-named Thomas Fire/Storm Incident; and
- b) Direct the Office of Emergency Management to return monthly for re-ratification of the Emergency until such time that the response and recovery conditions dictate otherwise; and
- c) Determine the above actions are not a “Project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to Section 15378(b)(5) of the CEQA Guidelines, because the actions consist of organizational or administrative activities of the government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

**Summary Text:**

The Thomas Fire began in Ventura County in December 4, 2017 and shortly thereafter spread to the County of Santa Barbara. The Thomas Fire is the largest in the history of California and caused power outages, widespread damage and destruction, and extensive smoke and ash created hazardous air quality.

Mandatory and voluntary evacuation orders were made throughout the County. Due to the Thomas Fire Emergency, the County of Santa Barbara declared a local emergency which was ratified and re-ratified by the Board of Supervisors as required by California law.

Subsequently, the County of Santa Barbara experienced unprecedented rainfall. Rainfall from the storm over the Thomas Fire burn area caused massive mud and debris flow leading to numerous deaths, further destruction and damage of public and private property, closure of State and local roads, and displacement of residents and businesses. Due to the impending Storm Emergency, the County of Santa Barbara declared another local emergency which was ratified by the Board of Supervisors as required by California law.

The President and Governor Brown have issued and amended emergency proclamations, declarations, and/or executive orders that consolidated the Thomas Fire and Storm Incident.

This resolution (Attachment A) re-ratifies the combined Local Emergency proclamation.

### **Background**

On December 4, 2017, at 1825 hours, the Thomas Fire began burning in Ventura County. The first impact to Santa Barbara County was extensive power outages in the South County, which affected 83,000 customers. Periodic power outages have continued, as a result of burn damage to the electric transmission lines. On December 5, 2017, Governor Brown declared a State of Emergency for the County of Ventura for the Thomas Fire, and on December 7, 2017 the Governor added the County of Santa Barbara to the State of Emergency.

Mandatory evacuation orders and evacuation warnings were initially issued for portions of the County on December 7, 2017. Extensive smoke and ash created hazardous air quality, which led to the closure of most South County schools December 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Many schools elected to remain closed and recessed early into their holiday break.

On December 8, 2017, the President proclaimed a Presidential Declaration of Emergency for the Counties of Santa Barbara and Ventura. The Presidential Declaration supports response activities of the federal, state and local government.

On December 8, 2017, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, the County Executive Officer, as the Director of Emergency Services, proclaimed a local emergency in order to utilize all resources necessary to respond to the damage caused by the local emergency and receive any needed funding through the California Disaster Assistance Act and any other funding both State and Federal funds that may be available. The proclamation was ratified by the Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2017 and covers the Santa Barbara County Operational Area (i.e., entire geographic area of the county), including cities, unincorporated county areas, and special districts. The local emergency was re-ratified on January 9, 2018.

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

On January 2, 2018, the President declared a Major Disaster for the State of California, as a result of wildfires, including the Thomas Fire.

On January 7, 2018, mandatory evacuation orders and evacuation warnings were issued for portions of the County due to anticipated Storm.

On January 8, 2018, when the Board of Supervisors was not in session, 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 forecasted Storm. The proclamation was ratified by the Board of Supervisors on January 9, 2018.

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 mudflows below the Thomas Fire burn scar. The mudflows captured boulders and debris that led to at least 21 deaths, missing and injured persons, destruction of property, and displacement of residents and businesses.

On January 11, 2018, FEMA granted the State's request for expanded federal disaster aid for the mudflows that occurred as a result of the Thomas Fire. The Presidential Major Disaster Declaration has been amended to include flooding, mudflows, and debris flows directly related to the compromised watershed as a result of wildfires and to include individual assistance.

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.

On January 12, 2018, Governor Brown issued Executive Order B-46-18 to further assist recovery efforts related to the Thomas Fire and subsequent mudslides.

This resolution (Attachment A) re-ratifies the combined Local Emergency proclamation issued for the Thomas Fire and for the Storm Incident.

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

To date, 21 victims have been identified and their bodies recovered. Two individuals remain missing.

On January 27, 2018, full repopulation occurred. The Cold Springs/Montecito and San Ysidro Long Term Declared Disaster Zones are open to residents and associated contractors.

10 of 11 debris basins have been cleared and 310,485 cubic yards of debris have been removed (95% complete). An additional 43,972 cubic yards of material has been removed from creeks (64% complete). 93,313 cubic yards of material has been removed from public right of ways and select channels.

All County roads are open, with the exception of numerous hard closure accesses to the Declared Disaster Zones or at unusable bridges. Testing, planning, and designing the replacement bridge structures is underway.

On February 8, 2018, the Boil Water Notice for Montecito Water District's customers was lifted.

On February 10/11, 2018, the County held the first private property clean-up event. Approximately 400 volunteers were engaged in assisting local property owners in partially clearing their properties.

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. The County is compiling Initial Damage Estimates (IDE) for costs incurred as a result of that event.

On March 3, 2018, the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) closed. The DRC included numerous public and private partners from local, state and federal agencies and organizations and provided assistance to 255 impacted families between February 3 and March 5, 2018 (DRC reception cumulative total = 776).

County staff continue to work to compile damage assessment information and inspect homes. Initially, 246 properties were posted as "Red" and 160 "Yellow". As of March 5, 2018, 210 properties remain red-tagged, 107 remain yellow-tagged, and 219 are now green-tagged. The County has developed an interactive Red, Yellow, and Green tagged properties map at ReadySBC.gov.

On March 5, 2018, the County opened the Montecito Center for Preparedness, Recovery, and Rebuilding at 1283 Coast Village Circle in Montecito and the Small Business Association opened a Disaster Loan Outreach Center (DLOC) in the Nursery Room at Calvary Chapel Santa Barbara.

On March 5, 2018, the County launched a materials exchange website to assist the public, facilitate the sharing of material deposited by the debris flows, and limit the amount of debris going into the landfills. The website is located at <http://sbcountymaterialexchange.com/>.

**Fiscal Analysis:**

The fiscal impact of efforts in support of this incident is being evaluated at this time and will be reported to the Board at future meetings.

**Special Instructions:**

Direct Clerk of the Board to send a copy of the minute order to: Office of Emergency Management, Attn: Sonia Thompson, Department Business Specialist

**Attachments:**

Attachment A: Resolution

**Authored by:**

Robert Lewin, Director of Office of Emergency Management

**cc:**

Eric Peterson, Fire Chief

Bill Brown, Sheriff