

One of two road closures on Hwy. 1 north of San Simeon is open again

Kathe Tanner, San Luis Obispo Tribune, 4-7-11

On Highway 1 between Cambria and Carmel, it's one down and one to go.

Caltrans said around noon Wednesday that crews had cleared enough of the debris from a massive March 27 mudslide near Alder Creek, about two miles south of Gorda, to allow traffic on the scenic highway in both directions.

There will be no restrictions, but the agency warns motorists to continue to be alert and watch for falling rocks in the area.

Area businesses and Hearst Castle remain open.

Highway 1 remains closed in both directions north of Big Sur, where a sizable section of the highway's southbound lane near Rocky Creek slid into the sea March 16. Work continues there to stabilize the northbound lane so it can accommodate one-way traffic controlled by a signal. That could happen as soon as the end of April, Caltrans said. However, the actual opening date for that temporary fix depends on rainfall and other conditions at the site.

Pedestrians can walk across the half-mile section twice daily, at 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. Escorts accompany the pedestrians. Bicycles can be walked through the closure area at those times. People are asked to park cars in the Bixby Creek/Old Coast Road turnout at the south end, and the Rocky Creek Bridge turnout at the north end.

Once the northbound lane is reopened, Caltrans engineers could declare a vehicle weight limit there of 5 tons or less, which could preclude many motor homes, passenger buses and delivery trucks from making the trip across the damaged area.