

Third mudslide closes Highway 1 on Big Sur coast

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Heavy rain triggered another mudslide on California's Pacific Coast Highway, cutting off road access to a roughly 50-mile stretch of the scenic Big Sur coastline, authorities said Monday.

The third mudslide to strike the Monterey County coast in less than two weeks occurred Sunday afternoon near Alder Creek, about 38 miles south of the rustic town of Big Sur, said Jim Shivers, a spokesman for the California Department of Transportation.

The section of Highway 1 was expected to remain closed at least until Tuesday and possibly longer, Shivers said.

The latest mudslide occurred just as Caltrans officials were reopening a section of the highway about 12 miles north that had been closed after a storm dumped mud and rocks near Limekiln State Park on Wednesday.

On March 16, heavy rain caused a section of Highway 1 to collapse near the Bixby Creek Bridge just north of Big Sur. That section is not expected to reopen for another month, Shivers said.

The Monterey County Herald reports that a company began offering helicopter rides to stranded residents seeking to cross the damaged highway north of Big Sur.

Farther up the California Coast in Mendocino County, a fallen redwood tree and rockslide closed a stretch of Highway 1 near Anchor Bay on Sunday night, the California Highway Patrol said.

The Santa Rosa Press Democrat said the highway was cleared by 6:30 a.m. Monday, but authorities were monitoring the area closely for more possible mudslides.