

## **Expert -- San Pedro Landslide repair poses dangers**

*Panel meets tonight to look at ways to deal with collapse.*

**Donna Littlejohn, Torrance Daily Breeze, 3-15-12**

SAN PEDRO -- Cleaning up the broken pipes, chunks of road and other debris left in the wake of last November's coastal landslide in San Pedro could be complicated, a city deputy engineer said Wednesday.

A new citizens committee meets for the first time tonight to begin looking at how best to deal with the aftermath of the Paseo del Mar collapse.

One of the priorities - a cleanup - could have to wait a while, though.

"Even though we don't see any measurable movement in the slide area, we don't know what can happen in the future," said Los Angeles City Deputy Engineer Vincent Jones. "My geotechnical engineers still consider this a precarious situation."

Retrieving sections of county pipe that have fallen to the rocky beach below, he said, is dangerous. So is trying to salvage the isolated palm tree that became something of a community icon when it wound up sitting on an island of the sheared-off cliff.

"That could give way at any moment, we just don't know," Jones said Wednesday.

"It's really not safe to go in there and clean out those pipes," he said. "There might be a point when (the bluff) hasn't moved in six months or a year when it might be safe to go in and clean it up."

While the land has shown no movement in the months since the Nov. 20 slide, heavy rainfall in the future continues to be a cause for concern.

Nearby homes are in no immediate danger, Jones said, describing the extensive engineering survey that has been conducted over the past few months.

A final draft report from surveyors who have been monitoring the area is expected sometime in April and will likely be ready for public release in early May, Jones said. The report will provide a description of "how the slide occurred and what the options are as we go from here," he added.

"We want to take a week or two to look at it (in-house) to make sure we understand everything it says. Once it goes out to the public, we will have community meetings" that will include engineers and technical staff who can answer questions, he said.

Included in the final report will be possible options to re-route and rebuild the destroyed section of road, including the possibility of a land bridge for traffic, Jones said.

Community opinion is mixed on whether the road should be replaced or not. If the decision is made to rebuild, it would need to be rerouted inland toward the White Point Nature Preserve on stable land. Finding funding for the project would be a major hurdle.

"It's all expensive, whatever we come up with," Jones said. "The bottom line is the city has to find the money to pay for it. But I always say there's a solution to every issue."

The temporary, 8-foot-tall chain-link fence keeping people out of an affected area of the White Point Nature Preserve will be replaced over time with "something more aesthetically pleasing," Jones said.

As to the cause of the landslide, Jones said the report may not be able to specifically pinpoint a single trigger.

The community has long suspected there may have been a manmade cause involved, with speculation ranging from a suspected broken pipe to the underground Nike missile site tunnels or the irrigation of nearby properties, including the nature preserve.

"We don't know for sure whether we will be able to say that definitively, yes, this (particular factor) caused the slide," Jones said.

The primary cause pinpointed for the collapse to date, he said, amounts to "gravity, water and coastal erosion."