



January 12, 2023

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Santa Barbara County Major Disaster Declaration

Dear Governor Newsom:

We respectfully request the Administration pursue an expedited Major Disaster Declaration for Santa Barbara County in response to the devastating damage caused by the ongoing rainfall and flooding events. Additionally, we request the State secure resources at the federal level, including the assistance of FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers, in order to protect the life and safety of our residents.

We appreciate your fast action to secure a federal Emergency Disaster Declaration. CalOES and the National Guard, in partnership with our local governments and first responders, have made significant progress to protect our communities. The damage assessment is ongoing, and with continued rainfall and more expected it is clear more assistance is needed.

According to initial damage estimates from the County of Santa Barbara, most of the critical debris basins that protect the community are completely full with more than 550,000 cubic yards of material. This extraordinary quantity of debris is beyond the capacity of our local governments or contractors in the area to expeditiously remove without federal assistance.

At least three more significant storms are forecast in the near future. Five years ago, our community suffered from the tragic debris flow, resulting in the deaths of 23 individuals. The urgency of clearing out the debris basins cannot be overstated.

We respectfully urge you to pursue a Major Disaster Declaration for Santa Barbara County, and standby to work with you to ensure the safety of our community.

Sincerely,

GREGG HART
Assemblymember, 37th District

MONIQUE LIMÓN
Senator, 19th District