



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Eric Carpenter (714) 560-5697
Megan Abba (714) 560-5671

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San Clemente Rail Closure Update: May 16

Work will continue seven days a week, including Memorial Day, to get the emergency work completed by early June and the rail line open to passenger service as soon as possible

ORANGE – Crews continue to make strong progress on emergency efforts to reinforce the most vulnerable areas along the rail line in San Clemente. Project leaders announced this week that they will continue to work seven days a week, including through Memorial Day weekend, to finish the work and safely reopen the track to passenger rail service as soon as possible.



This week, crews continued to strategically place large boulders, also known as riprap, in Project Areas 1 and 2. With most of the work in Area 2 complete, the Mariposa Pedestrian Undercrossing in this area reopened for beach access. And since the work began in late April, approximately 4,200 tons of riprap have been placed next to the track to repair and replace previous riprap.

The construction team, in coordination with California Coastal Commission staff, determined that the work area needs to be extended to the area between Project Areas 1 and 2 to safely and effectively protect the entire rail line through that segment. The modification approved by the Coastal Commission will add a 530-foot-long segment of riprap slope repair and reinforcement (referred to as Area 1a). This work is not expected to affect the overall timeline for the repairs, still anticipated for completion in early June.

Construction work is scheduled to continue daily, primarily between 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. Some beach access points may be inaccessible during construction. Beachgoers will be safely guided around work zones on the coastal side.

The riprap is being strategically sorted and placed primarily within the area where riprap previously existed to fortify the track and protect against coastal erosion. Approximately 240,000 cubic yards of sand will also be placed on the beach in Areas 1 and 2 between Mariposa Point and North Beach.

The California Coastal Commission earlier this month granted the Orange County Transportation Authority, which owns the coastal rail line and is leading the project, a permit to build a 1,400-foot-long catchment wall in Area 3, on the inland side of the track. The schedule to construct that wall is still being determined. On Friday, the California Transportation Commission approved the allocation of \$92 million for the construction of the catchment wall.

Amtrak Pacific Surfliner and Metrolink passenger rail service will remain temporarily halted until the current work is finished next month. For the latest updates on rail service, passengers are asked to check www.pacificsurfliner.com/alerts and metrolinktrains.com/service-updates.

Background:

Passenger rail service through San Clemente was suspended beginning April 28 to allow for crews to safely conduct emergency work to reinforce sections of track at immediate risk from landslides and coastal erosion.

The rail line is expected to be shut down for passenger service for a total of approximately six weeks, through early June. OCTA, in coordination with Metrolink and Amtrak Pacific Surfliner, is taking action to protect the only coastal rail link between San Diego and Orange counties, following continued threats from the privately owned bluffs and from coastal erosion and storm surges.

Over the past four years, San Clemente's eroding bluffs – on both city and private property – have repeatedly forced the closure of the rail line that has operated largely uninterrupted for more than 125 years.

During the closure, passengers are asked to check metrolinktrains.com/service-updates and www.pacificsurfliner.com/alerts for the latest service updates.

For the latest on the project, visit www.octa.net/railemergency.

OCTA submitted an emergency Coastal Development Permit application to the Coastal Commission that was partially approved in April. Additional work was approved on May 7. The total package of projects is estimated to cost approximately \$300 million. The project components consist of 95% sand and 5% armoring.

The current work in Areas 1 and 2, estimated to cost approximately \$10 million, is underway, utilizing an emergency authorization from the California Coastal Commission.



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About OCTA: The Orange County Transportation Authority is the county transportation planning commission, responsible for funding and implementing transit and capital projects for a balanced and sustainable transportation system that reflects the diverse travel needs of the county's 34 cities and 3.2 million residents. With the mission of keeping Orange County moving, this includes freeways and express lanes, bus and rail transit, rideshare, commuter rail and active transportation. To sign up for more OCTA news, visit octa.net/GetConnected.