



COUNTY OF MONTEREY

# CAO Weekly Report

## In This Edition:

- > The story behind the Big Sur shuttle
- > Adorable alert! Otters on the crosswalk
- > Pride celebrated

## SPECIALREPORT



*First day shuttle riders board the bus for the trip to Pfeiffer State Park and the trail into Big Sur.*

## County Notes

- > Next week launches Rodeo Week. Is your division or department is getting into the spirit? Send your décor or dress photos to [carrollm@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:carrollm@co.monterey.ca.us)

## County Support Launches Big Sur Shuttle Project

When the Big Sur community was hit by fires and floods, the County provided assistance and support. When the Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge destabilized and mudslides locked in locals, a different kind of help was needed.

That help came in the form of a shuttle service which got underway July 1<sup>st</sup>, to get tourists and their dollars, back into Big Sur.



*Tourists enjoy food and the views at Nepenthe, which is in the area landlocked by the collapsed bridge and highway slides.*

The bridge collapse and road closures are unprecedented, even for a community that is used to disasters. Tourist dollars in Big Sur are important to the county economy so helping Big Sur businesses stay connected to their customers became a priority. But how to get them there?

Economic Development Director Dave Spaur explains how the shuttle service idea came about and why the County provided vital funding.

“Mary Adams, the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, held several meetings in Big Sur with locals and business owners about jobs and lost revenue,” says Spaur. “It became apparent that this was an emergency for residents who needed access and business owners who have payments to make and jobs were lost. Several ideas were floated and tested. The van shuttle was the most viable along with the partnership with the State Parks to provide parking and a limited access trail.”

You may recall hearing that the Board of Supervisors approved contributing \$275,000 for a contract to launch the shuttle program. The Economic Development Department also contributed \$52,000. Spaur emphasizes that this is a typical government or county tourism program - it is an emergency fix to provide aid to many people and a community in crisis to provide relief until the end of September when the bridge is planned to re-open.

County chose Sur Transportation for the shuttle service. Operators report they are averaging 160 riders per day since the service began. Riders catch the shuttle at Andrew Molera State Park (there is a \$10.00 parking fee) and take a 20-minute ride to Pfeiffer State Park where they can access the



*Visitors to Nepenthe enjoying beautiful weather and activities.*

community trail. The shuttle charge is \$5.00 which includes the ride and a map of stops and sites. Ambassadors on the shuttle treat riders to local stories and educational tidbits.

Is it working? Big Sur businesses say they are thrilled with the number of people willing to take the ride and walk the trail to enjoy what Big Sur has to offer.

“Prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, we were averaging 30 guests per day at Nepenthe,” says Kirk Gafill, General Manager of Nepenthe Restaurant and President of the Big Sur Chamber. “Since July 1<sup>st</sup>, our average guest count has been 260 guests per day. The

shuttle has not only been very successful in bringing guests to the enclave south of Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge, it is also providing additional transportation opportunities for guests who hike over the trail from Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park.”

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## Adorable Alert: Video of Sea Otter Using County-Made Crossing

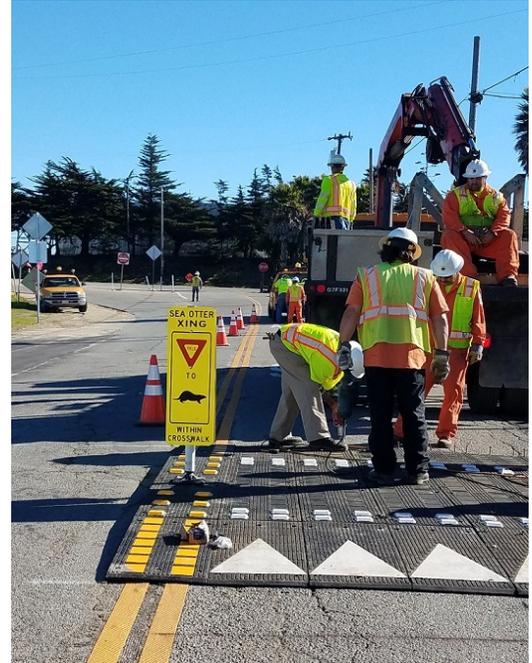
**Why did the sea otter cross the road? In Monterey County, it's to get from Elkhorn Slough to the Moss Landing Harbor, and thanks to an Otter Crossing built by RMA- Public Works, they are getting across safely.**

Last summer, RMA-Public Works came to the aid of otters who make this crossing, after a favorite local otter, dubbed 'Mr. Enchilada,' was hit and killed on Moss Landing Road making this journey.

Crews installed slow down and otter crossing signs complete with speed bumps to assure traffic would slow in the area.



*Still frame from Sea Otter Channel video.*



*Crews at work on the project last year.*

There haven't been any reports of otters hit since then, and it turns out, our local forefooted and flipped friends have been getting the word out amongst themselves about the crossing. When folks from the Sea Otter Channel, a sea otter conservation and education group, were in our area recently, they were able to film one of our locals using the crosswalk.

You can see this short but of course adorable trip for yourself, there is a link to the Sea Otter Channel's video on the [Monterey County Facebook page](#).

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## County Supports Pride Week

Monterey County employees and leaders took part in last month's Pride Parade in Seaside, supporting events as well the county's vibrant LGBTQ community.

Employees along with Supervisors Jane Parker and Mary Adams were among the more than 700 people who took part in the Monterey County Peninsula Pride Parade and Celebration.



*Supervisors Jane Parker (far left) and Luis Alejo (far right) present the LGBT Pride Month Resolutions on Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> to staff with the Epicenter's Our Gente Program and organizers of Monterey County Peninsula Pride.*

The parade began at the Monterey County Social Services Seaside location and ended at the Oldemeyer Center on Hilby Avenue.

Supervisor Adams congratulated the organizers and Supervisor Parker highlighted the importance of supporting LGBTQ youth. Her office issued a proclamation

recognizing June as LGBT Pride Month.

Health Department Analyst Amanda Mihalko organized the event and that department as well as the Libraries marched with a contingent of staff.

Besides the fun and camaraderie, there was quite a bit of health outreach happening during this event. The Health Department's HIV Prevention and Care Programs, Early Intervention Services and Health Equity all had information tables sharing important health information and resources for services.



*Supervisors Jane Parker (left) and Library Director Jayanti Addleman (right) show their pride and colorful parade banner.*