



**SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS
DEPARTMENT**

123 E. Anapamu St. • Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-3010

www.countyofsb.org/pwd
[Facebook.com/countyofsbpublicworks](https://www.facebook.com/countyofsbpublicworks)
Twitter: @cosbPublicWorks

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Media Contact:

Lael Wageneck, Public Information Officer
(805) 568-3425 , lwageneck@countyofsb.org

COUNTY CELEBRATES NEW ASHLEY ROAD BRIDGE

Original bridge built in 1918 was destroyed in the 1/9 Debris Flow

Construction on the Ashley Road Bridge is complete, and the road is now open to traffic. The \$1.8 million bridge connects East Mountain Road to Sycamore Canyon Road and provides essential access to Montecito Fire Department Station #2 and Cold Springs School. Residents, government officials, and local partners gathered on Thursday morning at the bridge to celebrate the project.

During the 1/9 Debris Flow, Cold Springs Creek was overwhelmed by debris that came from the Thomas Fire burn area. Debris from the mountains traveled an estimated 14 feet above the Cold Springs Basin and down to the Ashley Road Bridge 1/3 mile downstream. Stone railings from the bridge were demolished and washed away, and the spandrel wall along the right side of the arch was significantly damaged. Sections of the abutments had also broken away and washed downstream. In June 2018, the original bridge was demolished and replaced with a temporary bridge for emergency use only. The new bridge is a structural and aesthetic improvement from the previous bridge. It includes a higher arch and longer span to allow a 100-year storm event to pass under the bridge, and has a natural sandstone facade to match the style of the previous arch bridge.

First District Supervisor Das Williams praised the progress in recovery in Montecito and the partnerships that are helping in the process. "The stones from the old Ashley Road bridge are proof of the ongoing transformation and endless possibilities of our recovery as they are now part of the Cold Springs Trail that was reopened early January. Those stones are also a symbol of the difference that a small group and even one person and can make in the community when we work together- benefiting thousands more each year into the future."

Public Works Director Scott McGolpin said, "We are very proud of this project because it is an improved bridge that also has the same look and feel of the previous bridge. I want to thank my Public Works team for prioritizing the re-creation of many features contained within our 1918 structure to make this feel like home again to the residents in this neighborhood."

Montecito Fire Chief Kevin Taylor highlighted the importance of bridges and roads in responding to fires and other emergencies. "For the Montecito Fire Department, this bridge, and all bridges that come back into our system of roads here in Montecito mean a few more minutes that we can arrive to a scene earlier. While we hope we will not need to see evacuations for a very long time, this bridge means not only a safer flow of traffic but also greater ease of mind for all of our planning efforts to be resilient, ready and prepared."

Granite Construction, Inc. served as the contractor on the project that began in August 2019. The project funded by FEMA Federal Aid for Disaster Funding (\$1.4 million), California Office of Emergency Services State Aid for Disaster Funding (\$341,000), and the Santa Barbara County General Fund (\$114,000). For more information on Santa Barbara County Public Works, visit www.countyofsb.org/pwd.