

ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

EXTERNAL MEMO

To: Leon Page, County Counsel
From: Michelle Anderson, County Emergency Manager *MLA*
Date: March 4, 2026
RE: Status Report, Item 12 for March 10, 2026, Agenda: Review the Need for
Continuing the Local Emergency

2026 MAR -5 PM 2:09

CLERK OF THE BOARD
COUNTY OF ORANGE
ORANGE COUNTY SUPERVISORS



The Airport Fire began on September 9, 2024 and was deemed 100% contained on October 5, 2024.

County Proclamations and Ordinance Status

- The Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed a Local Emergency on September 10, 2024, and continued the local emergency proclamation on November 5 and December 17, 2024; and February 11, April 8, May 14, June 24, August 12, September 23, and November 18, 2025; and January 13, 2026.
- The Orange County Health Officer proclaimed a Local Health Emergency on September 13th and renewed it on the 20th; the Orange County Board of Supervisors ratified the health emergency proclamation on September 24, 2024, and continued the local health emergency on November 5, December 3, December 17, 2024; and January 14, February 11, March 11, April 9, May 6, June 24, July 15, August 12, September 9, September 23, October 14, November 4, December 2, and December 16, 2025; January 13 and February 10, 2026. The continuation of the local health emergency will be considered by the Board of Supervisors on the March 10, 2026 agenda.
- On October 8, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an Urgency Ordinance for the Airport Fire Debris Removal Program.

Costs

There have been no changes to the previously reported costs incurred by the majority of agencies listed. Orange County Public Works continues to implement private property debris removal under contracts approved by the Board of Supervisors.

Recovery Efforts

Phase 1 (Hazardous Debris Removal): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 1.5 (Watershed Protection): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 2 (Private Property Debris Removal [PPDR]): Direct assistance was not available through Cal OES so the County has proceeded with County resources, including contractors and coordinating with volunteer organizations. Below please find an update as of February 20, 2026.

- **OC Debris Removal**
 - Long Canyon (100% complete)
 - Holy Jim (5% complete)
 - The National Forest Service (NFS) NEPA approval remains the critical path item before work can begin. NEPA approval still pending, however, NFS has authorized hand removal of previously identified asbestos materials. OCPW is reviewing and preparing a response for additional information requested from NFS on the work plan; OCPW Regulatory Unit is assisting with response and final signature of environmental documents.
 - Asbestos abatement completed at two cabins.

- The contractor continues hazard tree (approx. 250+) marking with yellow paint.
- Once start date is secured, work will take approximately 3-4 weeks to complete.
- El Cariso (Orange County side) (100% complete)
- Overall: 75% complete
- Estimated Completion Date: March 2026

- **Riverside County (RC) Debris Removal**

- OCPW completed Final Sign-Offs (FSO) inspections; final FSO's pending lab results.
- All re-scrape lab results received, but 1 property came back "hot". An additionally re-scrape will have to be performed and tested.
- No new issues
- Overall: 99% complete
- Estimated Completion Date: February 2026

- **Trabuco Creek Road**

- The road remains closed to the public and repairs appear to be performing as intended.
- No new issues.

Post Fire Debris Flow Events

On February 11, 2026, The Emergency Management Council approved minor revisions to the Airport Fire Post-Fire Debris Flow Plan. The February 16, 2026 storm did not meet updated triggers for field or Emergency Operations Center actions.

Recommended Action

Approve continuation of Local Emergency for the Airport Fire; and order review to determine need for continuing local emergency for May 5, 2026, 9:30 a.m. and every 60 days thereafter until terminated.

cc: County Executive Officer Michelle Aguirre
Clerk of the Board Robin Stieler
Undersheriff Jeff Hallock, Sheriff-Coroner Department