

S.O.S.B. – SAVE OUR SKYLINE BLVD!

HOW YOU CAN HELP

By Dick Schwind, Feb. 20, 2017

During the February, 2017 storms, we lost part of Skyline Blvd. It is reasonable to believe that our community may be in for additional road failures this season. A local resident, knowledgeable in the behavior of highways, predicts we will see more road collapses due to culvert failures. “Ponding” (massive water accumulation) was observed at the culvert alongside Skyline Blvd. north of Las Cumbres before the section of highway washed down the hill – indicating that a clogged drainage culvert may have been a critical factor in the disaster.

CalTrans is undoubtedly stretched to the limit with all the road issues they must deal with. Consequently, routine survey and cleaning of culvert drainage may be delayed or postponed until after the more pressing emergencies are addressed, which only increases the potential for additional road failures. However, the Skyline residents may be able to help spot culvert issues for CalTrans and help prevent a road “blowout”.

How you can help:

Check the culverts in your area and report your results (good and bad) to me, Dick Schwind, at schwindr@yahoo.com

What to look for:

During a period of extended heavy rain, when the highway ditches are flowing with a lot of runoff, are there pools of water collecting on the uphill side? This indicates either the culvert is blocked or collapsed, all that water is saturating the fill, and a road failure may be imminent. Please report any signs of pooling water to me immediately – be sure to include a detailed description and location. I will forward the info to the appropriate people at the CalTrans regional office, documenting that this has been reported.

Prevention measures to take before each big storm:

It is no fun to go out looking for water ponding at culvert entrances during a storm. A better approach is to check the culvert before it rains by looking through it. If you can see light at the other far end, that is a good sign that it is functional. However, even functional culverts can cause road failures if they're older metal units (almost all) and show signs of rusting. Pay close

attention to metal culverts and look for signs of rust or other deterioration that may allow water to seep below it, or cause the culvert to collapse.

In summary:

Please report results to Dick Schwind at schwindr@yahoo.com with clear location details. Use the mile marker signs (white paddles) that should be located at each drainage culvert along our highways, to provide an accurate location. The signs list both the county and mile mark as "SM___" or "SCL_____".

Our community urgently needs help with culvert survey. I am located at SCL 16.42, about a mile south of the San Mateo county line and will coordinate inspection in my area. Additional coordinators at the south end of Skyline Blvd and in San Mateo County are needed to provide coverage beyond my neighborhood – contact me if you can volunteer as a regional coordinator for culvert inspection and reporting.

Let's S.O.S.B. – SAVE OUR SKYLINE BLVD!

Dick Schwind, schwindr@yahoo.com

408-867-9422

PS: The South Skyline Association, SSA, has appointed me to head this effort, but due to many other volunteer obligations and responsibilities, it would help me greatly if someone else can take over the leadership role on this issue.