

# Montecito Debris Net in San Ysidro Creek Fills Following Rainstorm

*Drone footage shows water spilling over the top of the 25-foot-tall net because of rocks and debris caught behind it*



by [Giana Magnoli, Noozhawk Managing Editor](#) January 15, 2023 | 5:18 pm



*The upper San Ysidro Creek debris net works as advertised in Montecito. Harry Rabin photo*

One of the debris nets installed on creeks above Montecito is packed with rocks and sediment after last week's major rainstorm, while others are clean, according to the nonprofit group that installed them.



Photos and drone footage of the Upper San Ysidro Canyon net across the creek show water spilling over the top of the 25-foot-tall net because of the debris caught behind it.

The two nets across Cold Spring Creek and the lower San Ysidro Creek net are clear, said Pat McElroy.

He's a former Santa Barbara city fire chief and executive director for the [Project for Resilient Communities](#), the nonprofit group that formed and raised funds for the nets following the deadly and destructive Jan. 9, 2018, debris flows in Montecito.



*The debris net on Upper San Ysidro Creek seen Wednesday. The net is at least 25 feet high and is packed with debris after this week's storms. Pat McElroy photo*

As of Thursday, they hadn't been able to get to the Buena Vista Creek nets to check them out, McElroy said.

The storm caused flooding and washouts in roads and trails in Montecito's foothills, making the canyons difficult to access.



The nets originally were installed in 2019 with emergency permits, and the Montecito Planning Commission [supported a plan to keep the six nets in place until the end of 2023.](#)

The Project for Resilient Communities received a permit to install 11 flexible debris-catching nets and installed six of the nets — two each in Buena Vista Creek, Cold Spring Creek and San Ysidro Creek.

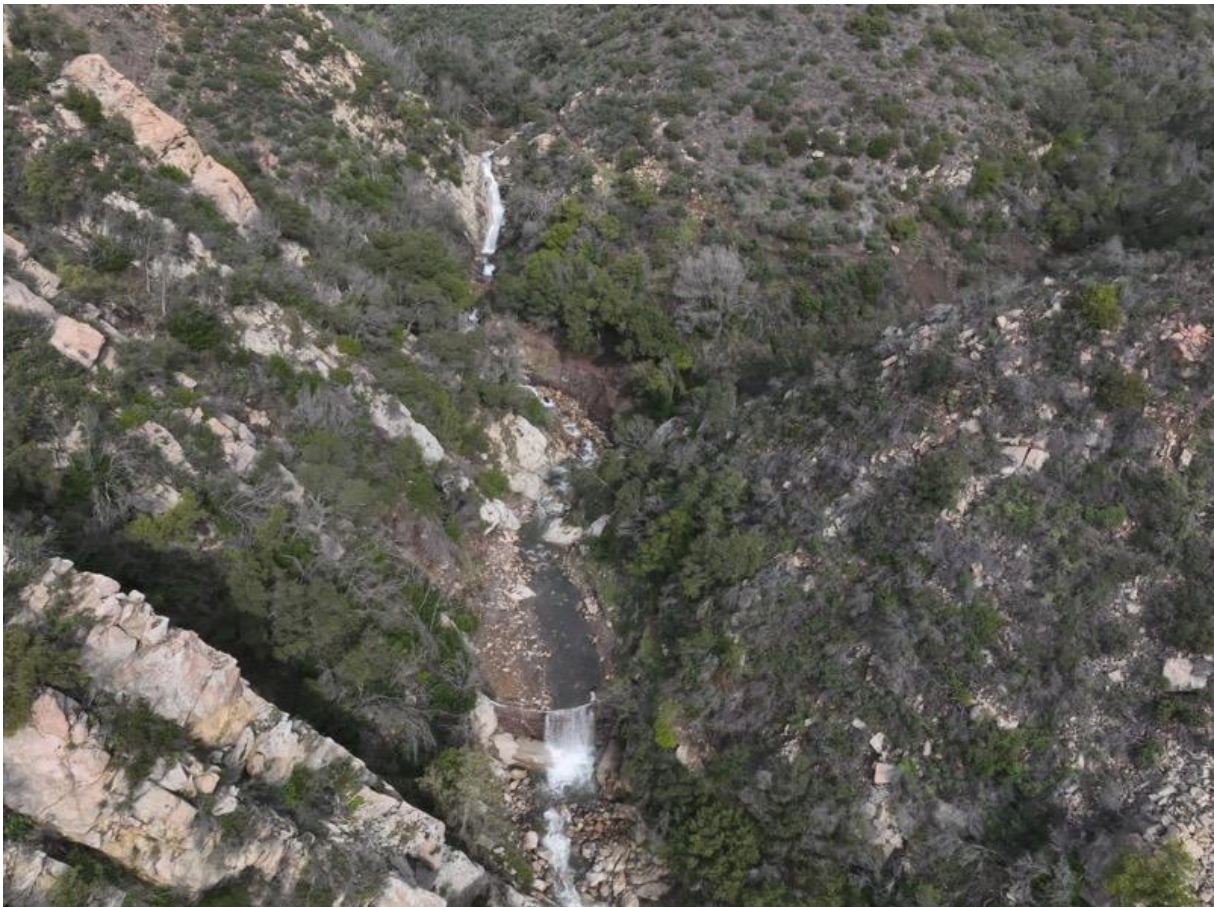
McElroy said the group's biologist and contractors are working on a plan to clear the debris from behind the net, as part of the plan approved by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

## Sign Up for the A.M. Report

---

Keep up with Noozhawk's daily news coverage, delivered at 4:15 a.m. right to your inbox.

## SUBSCRIBE



*Aerial drone footage shows San Ysidro Creek canyon above Montecito and the built-up debris behind the debris net, making water spill over the top. Harry Rabin photo*

The Randall Road debris basin is another piece of flood control infrastructure built after the 2018 debris flows. Homeowners in the area initiated the project and sold their properties to the county, which built the basin along San Ysidro Creek above East Valley Road.

A California National Guard unit from Chico is in town to help clean out debris from the basin.

The work removing mud, rocks, trees and other debris from basins around South County is expected to be a 24/7 operation for several weeks, according to the county Public Works Department.

“We need to clear about 500,000 cubic yards of material in a matter of weeks, so once we get them out here, we’re going to be asking them to work 24/7 until we get the basins cleared,” Deputy Director Julie Hagen said Tuesday.

“As you know, it’s the beginning of the winter, there will be more storms coming, so we want to make sure we’re prepared.”

Public Works will be clearing debris basins to make way for the next storm and reduce the possibility of being topped or flooded.