



FACT SHEET

Hurricane Marie Impacts to the Santa Monica Beach

Site conditions documented September 8-10, 2026

Summary

- **Hurricane Marie caused beach erosion damage, particularly south of the Pier.** Similar to beachfront locations up and down the Southern California coastline, storm impacts between September 5-7, 2026, caused erosion damage along Santa Monica's beach. In particular, the planned Ocean Way Festival site was impacted, as sand loss south of the Pier moved the observed high-water line 96 feet landward. Separately, runoff discharged through the Pico-Kenter Storm Drain outfall cut a channel through the southern end of the site, which impacted the festival's southern boundary by requiring a move approximately 500 feet to the north.
- **The beach is open and safe for everyday use.** While the planned Ocean Way Festival site was impacted such that the large-scale event could not proceed, both the beach and the Santa Monica Pier remain open and safe for use.
- **The change is difficult to see at low tide on a beach as wide as Santa Monica's.** The City documented site conditions on the beach following the storm, and a summary of our findings are included in this fact sheet.
- **Beach repairs are underway.** The City is now preparing the beach for ESPN's Super Bowl LXI coverage in February 2027, the return of the Ocean Way Festival in 2027, and the LA28 Games in 2028.

The Storm

Hurricane Marie, an Eastern Pacific hurricane that reached Category 2 strength, generated a large south swell that reached Southern California beaches on or about September 5, 2026, accompanied by rain across Los Angeles County on September 6 and 7. The National Weather Service maintained a High Surf Advisory for the Los Angeles County coast through September 8. The same conditions caused coastal flooding and property damage in Long Beach and Seal Beach; local emergency declarations in Malibu, Laguna Beach, and Dana Point; and beach erosion across the region. More recently, on September 14, the City of Carlsbad declared a local emergency due to continuing impacts from the storm event.

In Santa Monica, the storm's effects were concentrated on the beach south of the Pier, within the footprint the festival had been designed around.

Impacts to the Ocean Way Festival Site

1. Shoreline erosion: high-water line moved 96 feet landward

- **Site plan basis.** The approved site plan for the Ocean Way Festival was anchored by a production road running north to south along the seaward edge of the site. The road served as the fire lane providing emergency vehicle access along the full length of the festival, and every other element of the site plan – including the western gates, the beach club and cabana structures, the general admission viewing area, and the stage – was located in relation to it.
- **Storm effects.** Storm surf and elevated tides removed sand from the beach south of the Pier, lowering the beach profile and leaving a vertical erosion shelf. On a lower beach, each high tide reaches farther inland, and the new high tide line post-storm event infiltrated the original festival site plan.
- **Documentation.** On the evening of September 8, the tidal run-up was documented from the Pier. At 7:52 PM, the run-up reached approximately 96 feet landward of the original production road and fire lane. A second photograph at 8:02 PM shows the run-up extending along the length of the festival site.
- **Effect on the site plan.** Applying the same setback standard used in the approved plan, with the fire lane located landward of the observed high-tide line plus a buffer, the production road needed to be moved approximately 96 feet to the east. The buffer, the road, and every structure located in relation to the road would have had to move with it.

2. Storm drain outfall damage: southern boundary moved approximately 500 feet north

- Stormwater from the September 6 and 7 rains discharged through the Pico-Kenter Storm Drain outfall and scoured a channel across the southern portion of the site, undermining an existing beach access ramp.
- The festival's main entrance line was planned for that area, and avoiding the channel area damaged by the storm drain outfall required relocating the festival's southern boundary approximately 500 feet to the north.

City Assessment & Alternatives Considered

On Tuesday, September 8, and Wednesday, September 9, assessments of the site were conducted to evaluate sand conditions and grades; emergency vehicle access and egress; the installation of temporary structures, staging, and infrastructure; construction and load-in requirements; crowd circulation and capacity; tide predictions; and the extended forecast.

Based on that assessment, the City considered reducing the footprint of the festival; shifting the footprint east; relocating the festival north toward the Pier; relocating the festival to an alternate site; emergency sand regrading or replenishment; delaying load-in; and compressing the build schedule.

Ultimately, none of the possible alternatives was deemed viable. The reduced footprint could not meet egress and circulation standards at any attendance level that would have made the event feasible, and regrading and repair of the site could not be completed in time for load-in and construction, which was scheduled to begin September 15, 2026.

On September 11, the City provided Goldenvoice formal notice that the festival could not proceed.

Why the Damage Is Difficult to See

Santa Monica's beach is among the widest in Southern California. At low tide, the change in the beach profile is not readily apparent from the Pier, the beach path, or aerial photographs. Drone footage taken during low-tide on September 10 shows a wide, dry beach. The same image, with the September 8 high-tide photo locations marked from the lamppost references, shows where the water reached approximately 40 hours earlier.

To that end, the determination made by the City is that the beach is safe for everyday use, however, damage from the storm created a circumstance where the location was unable to support a fixed-footprint festival capable of safely hosting tens of thousands of event attendees.

Current Beach Conditions and Repairs

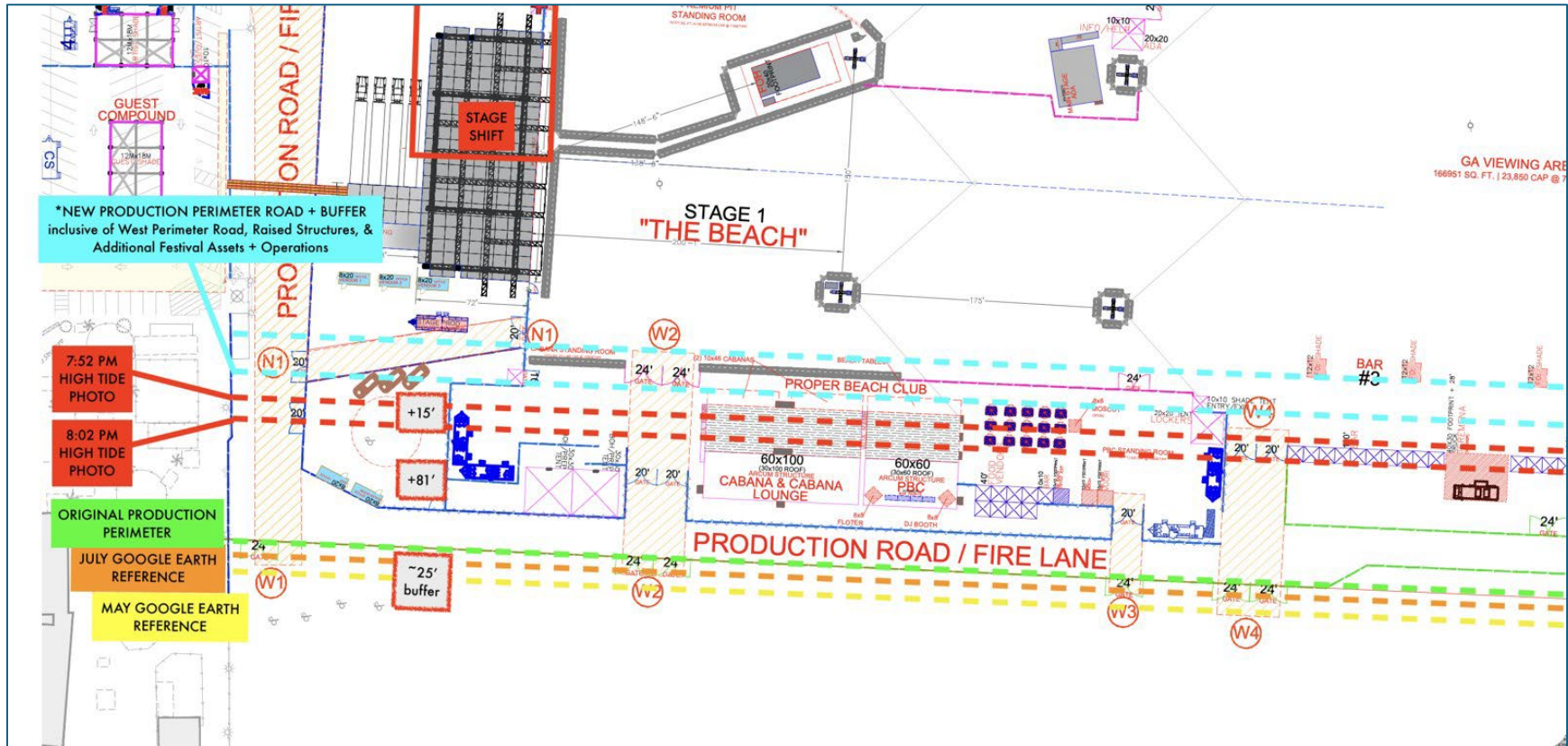
Santa Monica State Beach is open and safe for everyday use. The Santa Monica Pier was not damaged and did not close. Further, the City's Public Works crews have begun repair work, including restoring the beach profile south of the Pier; stabilizing the Pico-Kenter Storm Drain outfall channel; and preparing the shoreline for the winter season.

Timeline

Date	Event
Saturday, September 5	South swell generated by Hurricane Marie reaches Southern California beaches. High Surf Advisory in effect for the Los Angeles County coast.
Sunday-Monday, September 6-7	Rain across Los Angeles County. Runoff discharges through the Pico-Kenter outfall across the southern end of the site.
Tuesday, September 8	High Surf Advisory expires. Assessment of the site begins.
Wednesday, September 9	Assessment of the site continues (sand conditions, emergency access and egress, temporary structures, load-in requirements, crowd circulation and capacity, tide predictions, and extended forecast).
Thursday, September 10	Drone documentation coordinated.
Friday, September 11	City and Goldenvoice announce the cancellation of Ocean Way Festival.

EXHIBITS FOLLOWING

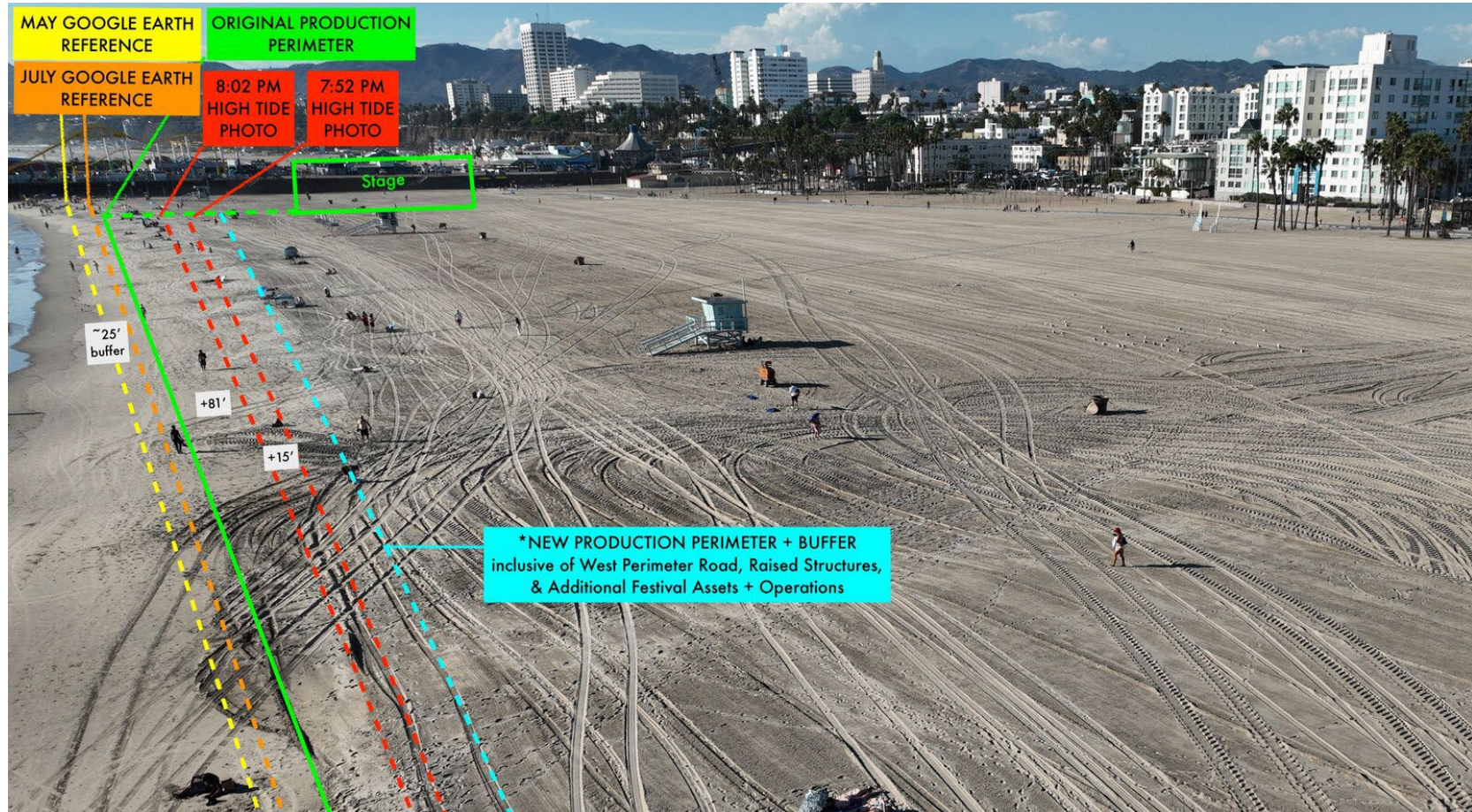
Exhibit A
Approved Ocean Way Festival site plan with storm impacts overlaid.



Western portion of the approved site plan.
 Green line represents the original water-edge perimeter for the Ocean Way Festival Site.
 Red lines identify high-tide intrusion as of September 8, 2026.
 Blue lines identify new water-edge perimeter that would have to be established for the festival in a post-storm environment.

Exhibit B

Erosion impact summary, drone photograph looking north toward the Pier, September 10, 2026.



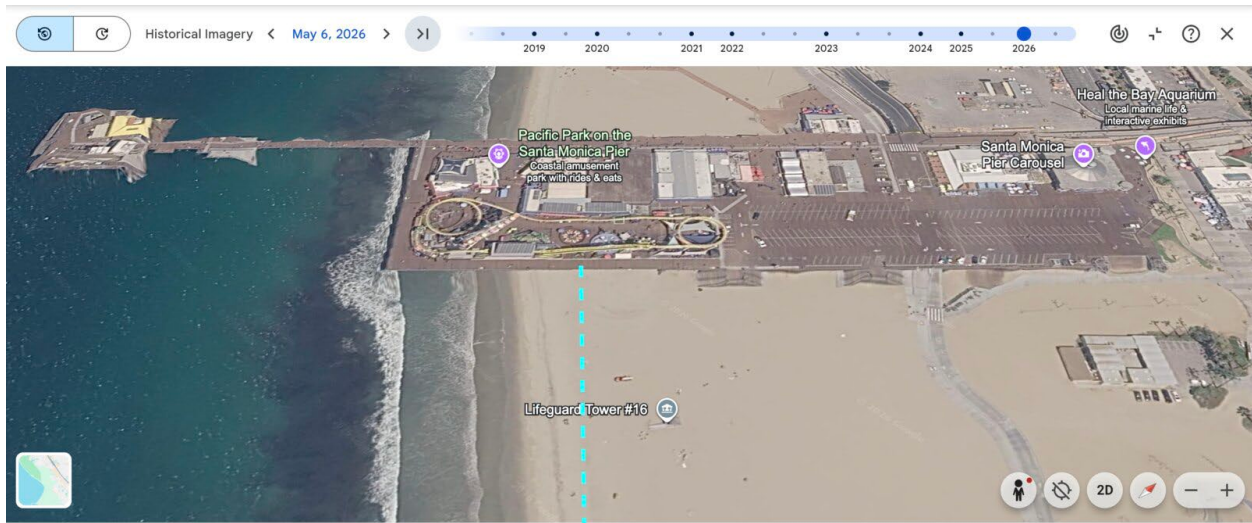
Drone photograph taken on September 10 with Ocean Way Festival reference lines included.

The original production road (green line) was located approximately 25 feet landward of the July high-tide line.

The September 8 high tide reached approximately 81 and 96 feet landward of the road (red line).

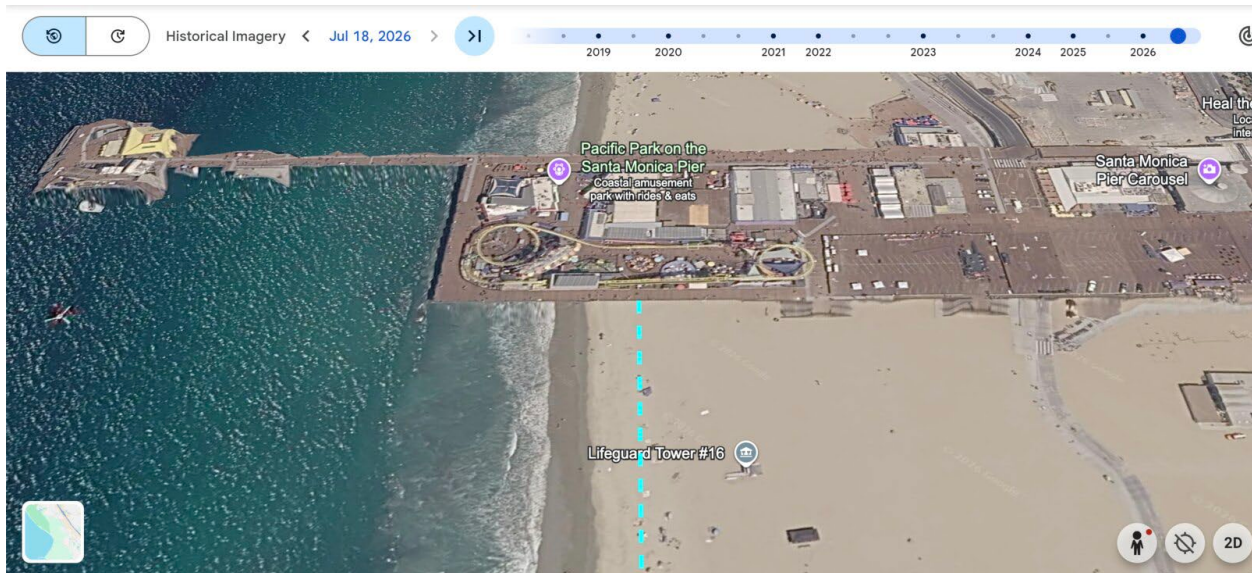
The blue line indicates where the road, raised structures, and festival operations would have needed to be relocated.

Exhibit C
Aerial imagery, May 6, 2026 (Google Earth)



High-tide line as identified in May 2026, which established the preliminary fire lane alignment.
The dashed line marks the production road and fire lane alignment.

Exhibit D
Aerial imagery, July 18, 2026 (Google Earth)



High-tide line as identified in July 2026, which established the final fire lane alignment for the festival site.

Exhibit E
Photograph, September 8, 2026, 7:52 PM



Photo taken from the south railing of the Pier approximately 15 feet east of the Lampost 1 (see Exhibit G).
Wet sand from high tide is visible at that location (~96 feet landward of the original festival edge.)

Exhibit F
Photograph, September 8, 2026, 8:02 PM



Photo taken from the Pier at Lampost 1 (see exhibit G), looking south along the beach.
The wet band of the tidal run-up is visible on the seaward side, extending along the length of the site.

Exhibit G
Drone photograph taken September 10, 2026, at approximately 3:00 PM



Pier Lampposts 1 and 2 are labeled.

Lamppost 2 marks the approximate location of the original festival production road and fire lane.
The dashed blue and green lines mark the locations of the September 8 photographs (Exhibit E & F).

Exhibit H

Erosion shelf at the Pico-Kenter Storm Drain outfall channel, south end of the site



Approximately four feet of sand removed by the storm, leaving a vertical shelf. Shelf illustrates the volume of sand removed from the festival site by the storm.

Exhibit I

Drone video, September 10, 2026: Pico-Kenter Storm Drain outfall channel

[View Exhibit I](#)

Shows the location planned for the festival's main entrance line post storm.

Exhibit J

Drone video, September 10, 2026: shoreline from north of the Pier, traveling south

[View Exhibit J](#)

Filmed beginning north of the Pier and moving south along the beach. The opening segment provides a view of the new shelf in the surf line created by the storm.