

Creek clearance studied

Six months after the disastrous Jan. 4 storm, a county official reports that Soquel Creek isn't in as bad condition as originally feared.

Assistant County Public Works Director John Fantham joined Soquel Chamber of Commerce President Davè Tunno and Chamber Disaster Committee members Michael Ponza and Vince Brown late last month in inspecting the stream channel from the Porter

Street bridge up to Bargetto's winery, marking downed trees that should be cut and removed before the next winter storms, and outlining sand bars and rock piles that still block the creek.

Fantham said he now plans to meet with representatives from the county's Watershed Office and the state Department of Fish and Game and ask them to inspect the stream before he files

applications with both agencies for stream clearance permits.

Fantham said there were a half dozen sand bars that could present new problems next winter and a lot of trees down in the stream or growing near the water line that should be removed.

But the situation, in general, he said, "wasn't as troublesome as I thought it would be. There were not as many

trees and sand bars there as I thought."

Soquel Creek stream clearance is one of the items included in the Measure A storm tax proposal. Without that money, Fantham said, there may be problems getting enough public funds to do the work.

He said it is possible that the Soquel Chamber of Commerce will be asked to provide volunteer labor for part of the work.