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# Demolition of quake-damaged Moss Landing Marine Lab looms

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Within the next two to three weeks, Moss Landing's most costly casualty of the Oct. 17, 1989, earthquake, will no longer exist as a coastline eyesore.

By then, the Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, oceanographic center for the California State University system, will be leveled even as officials scramble to locate a site on which to rebuild.

The 10,000-square-foot building, which moved four feet during the quake, sustained \$8 million in damages. Even today, those passing by the lab, located just across Sandholdt Bridge on what is known as the Moss Landing island, can see separated floors, cracked walls and fractured ceilings.

Since the disaster, classes have been conducted out of the Monterey County Office of Education headquarters in Salinas and from several trailers situated shore-side

in the parking area adjacent to the condemned building.

However, before the present site is abandoned to the elements, representatives from several public agencies want to ensure it's vulnerable position alongside the crashing surf doesn't court trouble.

In a Dec. 28 letter signed by Gail Shook, president pro tem of the Moss Landing Harbor District, lab director John Martin was asked to allow for a dune-restoration program in its demolition contract.

That request could be satisfied if an addendum is included in the document, Shook states in his letter.

Shook said the original contract called for land to be leveled off four feet above sea level, a height he considers unsafe. "Any storm at high tide could wash through," he said. A dune standing 15 to 20 feet high, to be built with volunteer labor and materials already offered, appears to be a certainty

at this point, Shook said.

Initially scheduled for demolition two weeks ago, the center gained a reprieve when officials were forced into initiating a disposal plan when jars of pickled fish were found in an attic, said Martin said. Contents from the center, built in the 1960s and expanded in the middle 1980s, are still being removed.

Meanwhile, officials are closing in on land deals, a spokeswoman with the chancellor's Long Beach office, said: "They're negotiating for a new site right (in the Moss Landing area) now," said Colleen Bentley-Adler.

There's talk of enlisting the architect who designed the Monterey Bay Aquarium, to prepare the blueprint for the new center, which could break ground within the next two years, said Melanie Mayer, lab project manager with the chancellor's office.

"We don't anticipate any major problems," Mayer said.