

# ✓ Historic Houses - South County Castro Adobe named a historic landmark

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WATSONVILLE — The 145-year-old Castro Adobe is now a national historic landmark.

The two-story, 3,800-square-foot adobe — technically known as the Rancho San Andres Castro Adobe — is located in the Calabasas area of South County. It becomes the county's fifth structure to be named to the national historic registry. Last May, it became South County's first-ever state historical landmark, and one of eight in the county.

Owned by local architectural conservator Edna Kimbro, it is hoped the two historic designations may entice state or federal grants to repair the adobe, which was heavily damaged in the October 1989 earthquake. Kimbro hopes the county can also receive grants to buy the land around the adobe for a historic park.

Santa Cruz County Parks Director Ben Angove said Wednesday that the new designation "can only help" when it comes to the possibility of grants. However, at the same time, Angove warned that money for historic preservation is getting more scarce all the time.

The adobe, which is currently fenced off, sustained heavy damage to its south wall and kitchen in the earthquake. Repair estimates have varied widely, ranging from \$300,000 to \$500,000, according to Kimbro.

As national historic landmark No. 998, the adobe joins four other such designated local structures. They are the Felton covered bridge, Faye Belardi Memorial Library in Felton, Blake Hammon Manor on Highway 9 and Valencia Hall in Aptos.

The adobe is one of four California Rancho-era adobes in the county, and is the largest.