



## **SPECIAL CLIENT BULLETIN: MONTECITO MUDSLIDE DISASTER**

All of us have been deeply moved by the Montecito Mudslide disaster.

Our firm was directly affected. One of our firm's attorneys, Rebecca Koch, lost her step-mother, Rebecca Riskin, and her father, Ken Grand, was seriously injured. Another firm attorney, David Grokenberger, was lucky to escape with his family, but suffered the total destruction of his house on the 300 block of Hot Springs Road. Several of his immediate neighbors were lost or seriously injured in the debris flow.

Regrettably, it appears the disaster was preventable. Preliminary investigations have revealed the Thomas Fire was likely caused by the negligence of Southern California Edison. Experts believe the subsequent and devastating mudslides would not have occurred but for the loss of vegetation and scorched soil conditions created by the Thomas Fire in the mountains above Montecito. The resulting damages and impact on those affected are unfathomable.

A call to action against the entities responsible for this tragedy has been made. Due to our reputation and strong local ties, we have been in discussions with multiple firms to act as local counsel.

We made the decision to partner with Panish Shea & Boyle, one of the preeminent mass tort litigation firms in California, to represent the victims of the Montecito Mudslides. Combining our firm's 45 years of experience and commitment to representing the Santa Barbara community, with the vast resources and expertise of Panish Shea & Boyle, we have assembled a strong legal team to prosecute damage claims and seek justice for our clients. We have already engaged a group of experts to assist in building the legal case against Southern California Edison.

We will be holding a free informational workshop on January 30, 6:30 p.m., at the Hyatt Centric, 1111 E. Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara. There will be a presentation by multiple experts, including our attorney, David Grokenberger, who will share his first-hand experience of the event and in dealing with his insurance carrier, State Farm, who recently confirmed coverage for the loss.

In addition, our firm is well equipped to handle all the other types of issues raised by this catastrophe, including real estate, insurance, construction, land use, landlord-tenant, and estate planning.

If you, your family, friend, or neighbor may be interested in pursuing legal action to recover damages or need assistance navigating issues related to the disaster, please contact Travis C. Logue ([travis@rogerssheffield.com](mailto:travis@rogerssheffield.com)) or Jason W. Wansor ([jason@rogerssheffield.com](mailto:jason@rogerssheffield.com)) for more information.