

Special Report

*Beach Closure due to potential effluent along the bluff
and coordinated response of County and BCPUD*

September 18, 2024

Regular Board Meeting

Presented by Georgia Woods

BCPUD is coordinating with the County on assessing and responding to this issue

- The situation is still under “Preliminary Investigation”
- The County does not yet know the source of the potential wastewater contamination
- It will take time to assess this situation, and depending on the findings, the mitigation strategies will take time to implement → this will not be resolved in a week! As BCPUD and County learn more we will continue to update the community
- BCPUD and County had a meeting this morning (9/18/2024) with the “Regional Board” (California State Water Resource Control Board) to discuss this issue and next steps
 - The “Regional Board” is the specific State regulatory body that oversees BCPUD’s small wastewater collection and treatment system (this is BCPUD’s small sewer system that serves 164 customers that live in the areas of Downtown, the Little Mesa or along Terrace Ave. and treats collected wastewater at the Sewer Ponds)
 - This same Regional Board also oversees the County of Marin’s oversight of Bolinas septic systems. (The Environmental Health Services at the County of Marin issues all permitting associated with construction, repair, replacement, or modification of all OWTSS (Onsite Wastewater Treatment Sites/ a.k.a. “septic systems”) in Bolinas.
 - Again, we are in the very preliminary stages, and I do not have anything to report from this meeting, except to say that all our agencies are actively working on this issue!

Message from the County on NextDoor on ~Thursday, September 12.

If you have a well, here are some vetted resources for having your water quality tested and treating your well:

General info: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/public-health/environmental-health/programs-and-services/well-water-quality>

State-approved labs: <https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/health-and-human-services/health-services/divisions/public-health/environmental-health/programs-and-services/well-water-quality/well-water-water-testing>

County Resource: Steps to treat a water well can be found on Marin EHS's Well and Water Systems webpage:

<https://www.marincounty.org/depts/cd/divisions/environmental-health-services/wells-and-water-systems>

 **Marin County** 
Marin County Government • 6 days ago • Edited ...

Dear Neighbors:

We want to update you on the wastewater issue that partially closed Bolinas Beach on Friday, September 6, which led to a recommendation for Mesa residents using well water to switch to bottled water for drinking.

OVERVIEW

Wastewater is visibly seeping from the Bolinas Mesa bluffs in several areas, affecting an area over a mile long between Rosewood Road and Canyon Road, southwest of Brighton to south of Agate Beach. Samples taken on September 5 showed high levels of bacteria, including coliform, E. coli, and enterococcus, indicating that the liquid is likely wastewater and could pose health risks. Due to the presence of wastewater on the beach, we have closed the area to protect public health in accordance with the California Code of Regulations.

Please respect the closure. The beach is closed from the end of Rosewood Road, near Agate Beach, around the point to the end of Brighton Avenue; Agate Beach is open. See the attached map for clarification.

Although no illnesses have been reported, we are notifying the community of the potential health risks while additional testing takes place. Symptoms of sewage-related illnesses may appear days or weeks after exposure, making it hard to trace the illness to a specific event. Both humans and animals can suffer from issues like stomach infections, diarrhea, vomiting, and skin infections due to untreated sewage.

DRINKING WATER

Marin County Environmental Health Services (EHS) is working closely with Bolinas Community Public Utility District (BCPUD). BCPUD has confirmed that their water is tested weekly and comes from a source outside the mesa. Anyone who receives BCPUD drinking water may continue use tap water as usual.

However, if you are on the Mesa and rely on well water, we recommend that you do not use it for drinking, bathing, or irrigating food gardens at this time. Please use bottled water instead until more information is available. Alternatively, you may test your well water and treat it if necessary. Steps to treat a water well can be found on Marin EHS's Well and Water Systems webpage (<https://www.marincounty.org/depts/cd/divisions/environmental-health-services/wells-and-water-systems>).

FURTHER UPDATES

The exact cause of the wastewater seepage is still unknown: what happens underground is complicated and it is difficult to pinpoint an area. Marin EHS is continuing its investigation and will provide updates as more information becomes available.

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Bolinas Beach Closure Area



BEACH CLOSED

KEEP OUT

PLAYA CERRADA



By Order of the Marin County Health Officer :
Sewage Contaminated Water and Sand
Beach Closed from:
Brighton Ave to Duxbury Reef

BEACH CLOSED
KEEP OUT

FROM BRIGHTON TO DUXBURY



CONTAMINATED WATER

OCEAN WATER MAY CAUSE ILLNESS

BY ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER
County of Marin
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
CALL: (415) 499-6907

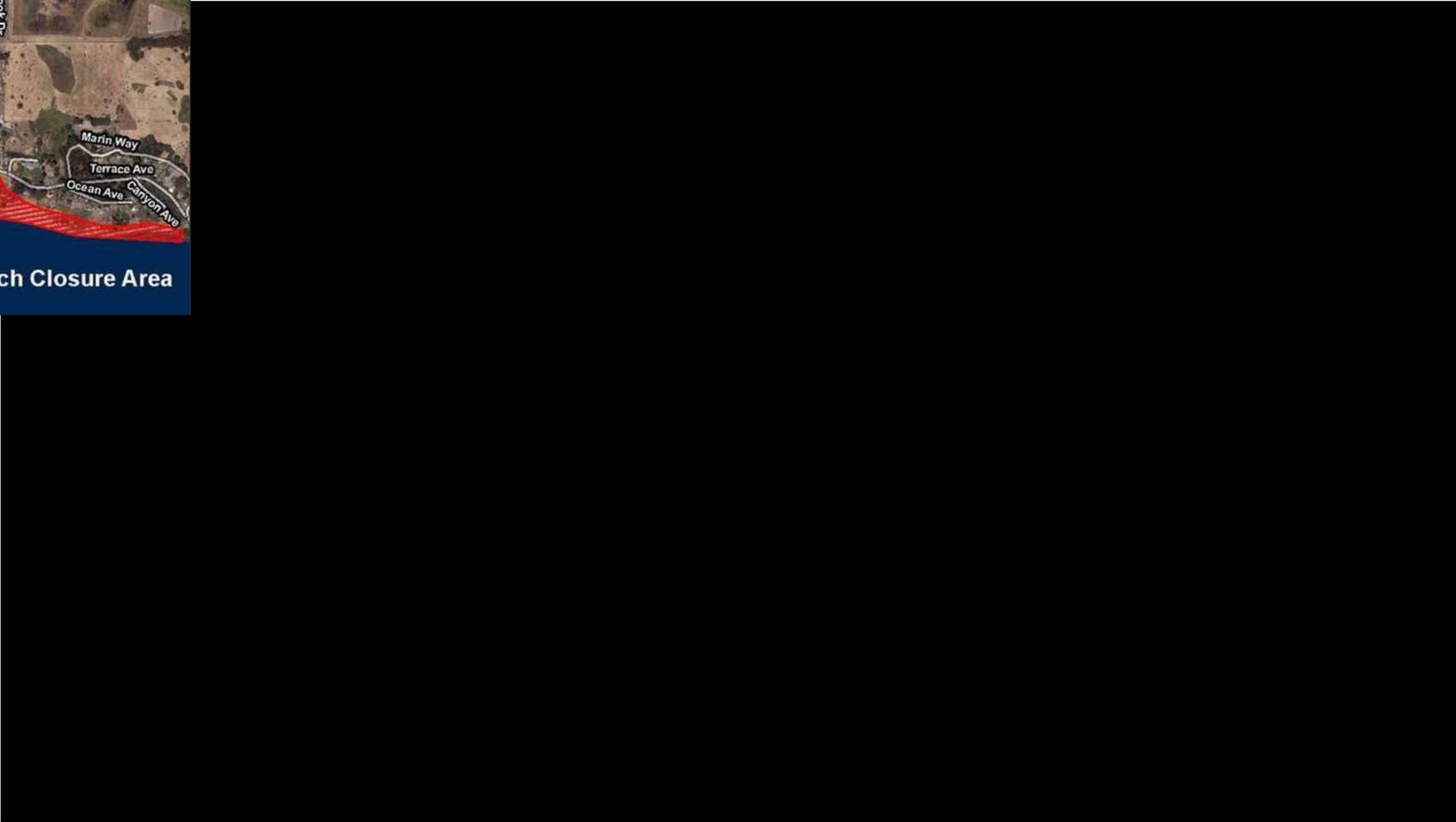
Images and videos of the active (and remnants) of seepage sites along the bluff

- The County samples ocean water at Bolinas Beach (towards Wharf) weekly. You can see those results here:

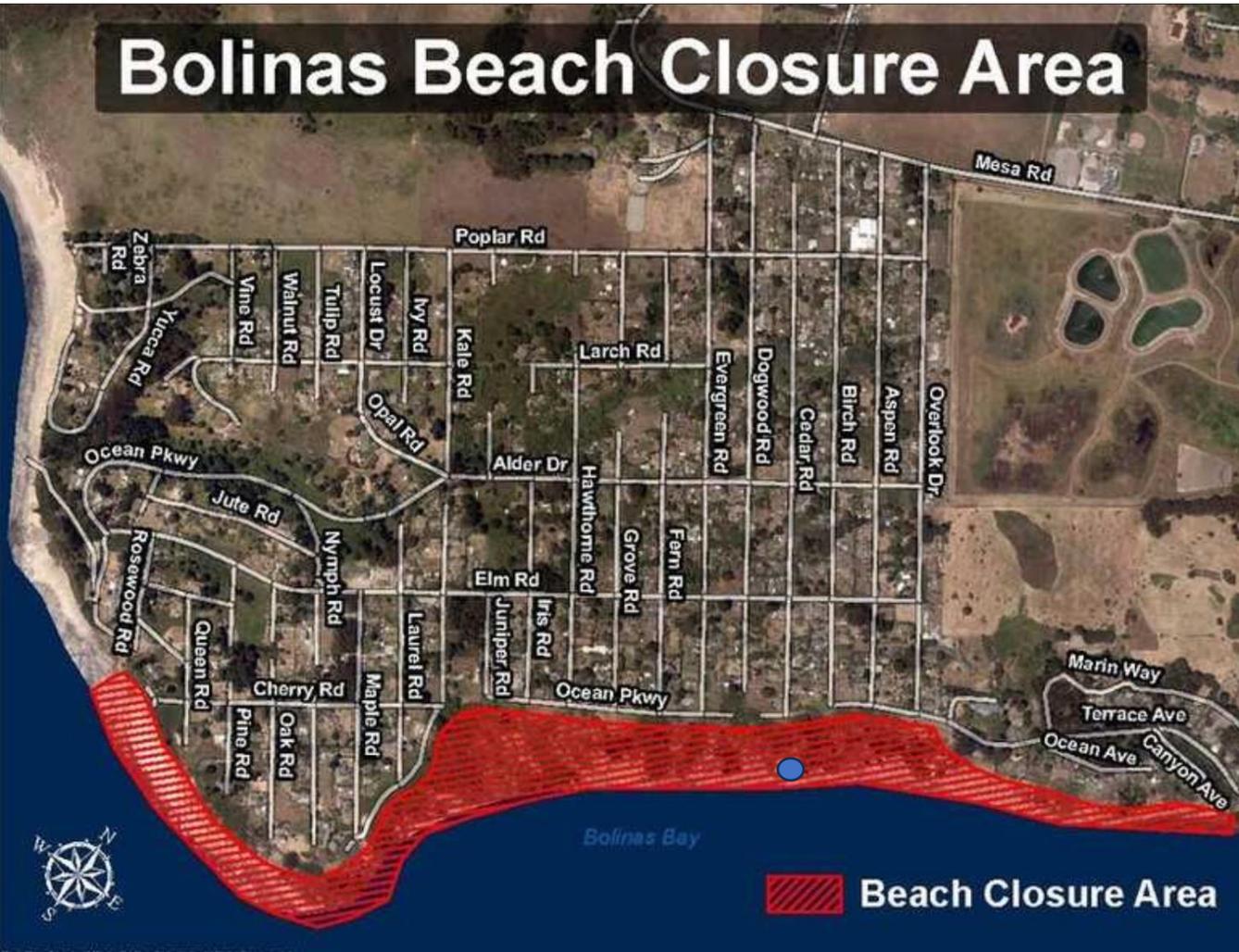
[Ocean and Bay Water Quality Testing Program - Community Development Agency - County of Marin \(marincounty.org\)](#)

- Last week the County collected additionally samples from the ocean at 3 sites closer to the seepage sites (at the base of Canyon Road –through the base of Overlook. Those results came back negative (i.e. these results indicate that water is safe).
- **However, the Beach Closure remains in effect until further notice**

Bolinas Beach Closure Area

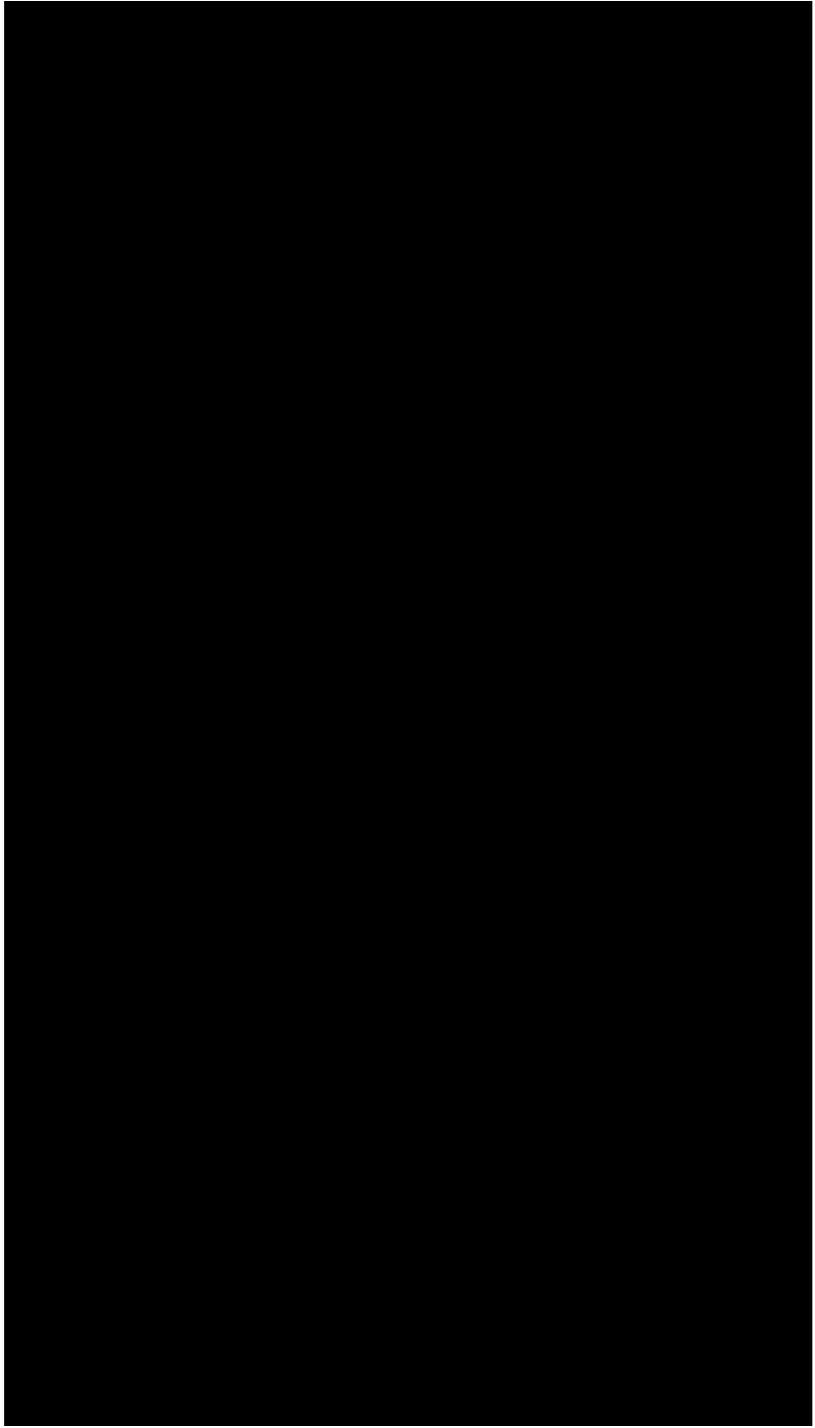
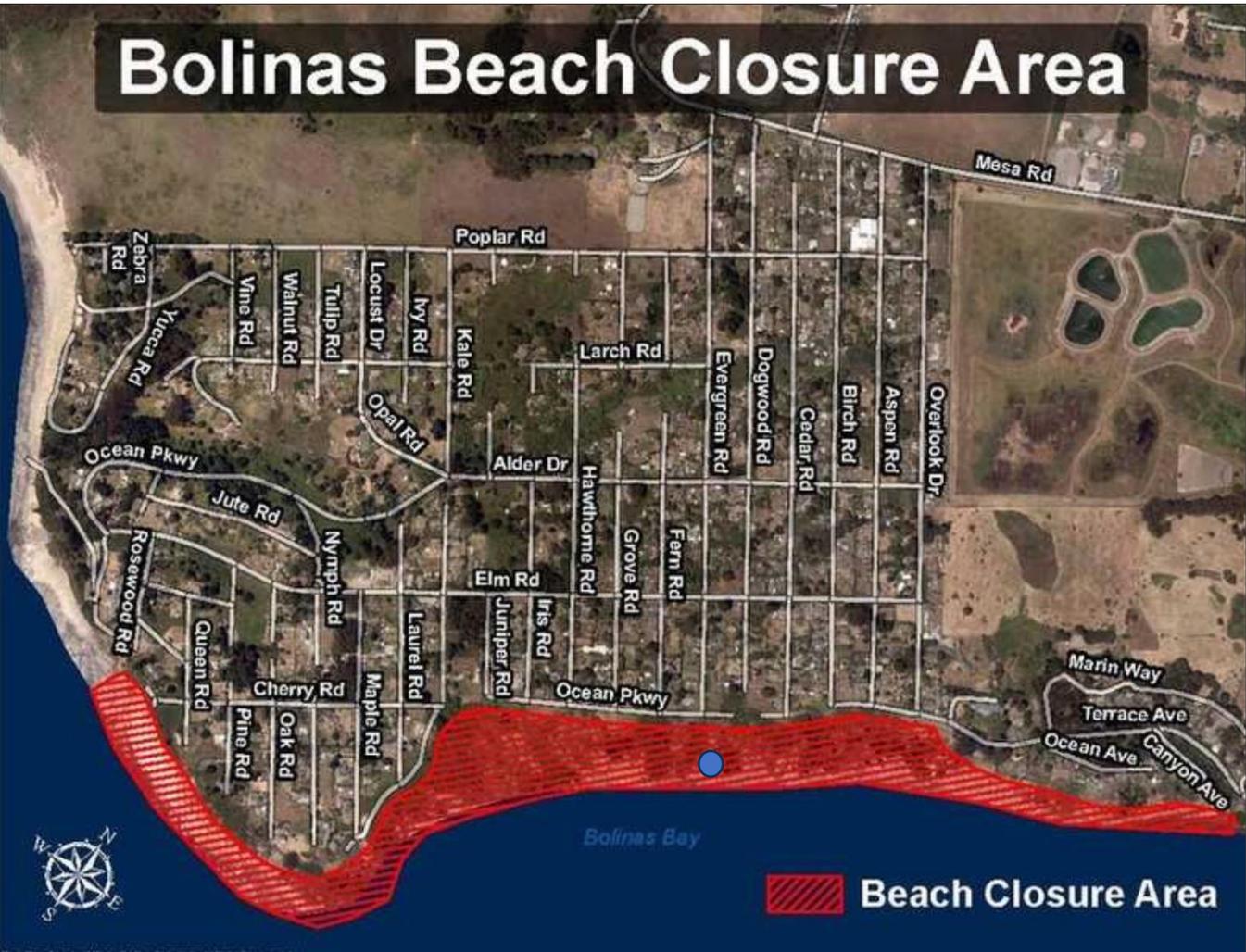


Bolinas Beach Closure Area



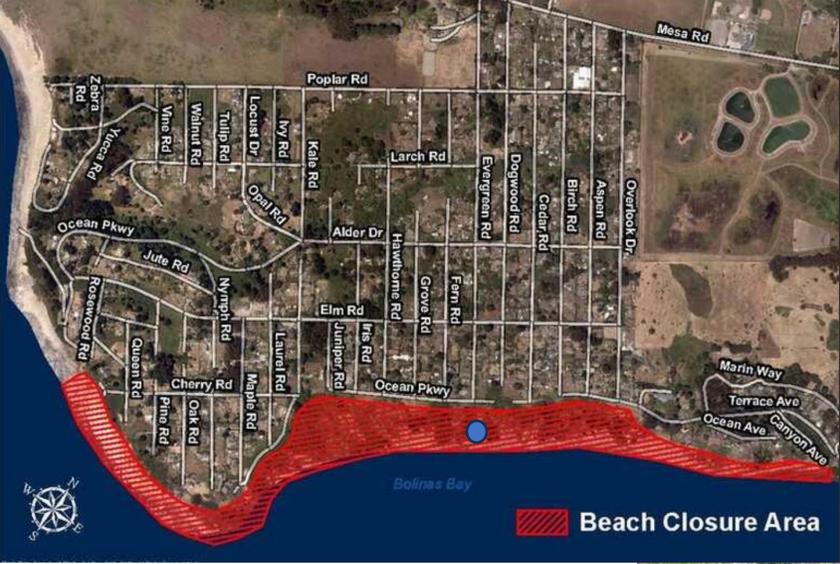
 Beach Closure Area

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