



February 10, 2012

R3-03-12

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Highway 42 to close for County Line slide repair

CAMAS VALLEY — The excavation and hauling of an estimated 10,000 cubic yards of earth from the County Line slide requires closing a one-mile section of Oregon 42, located roughly ten miles west of Camas Valley, from 5 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 18 to 1 a.m. Monday, Feb. 20.

ODOT maintenance officials held an emergency meeting earlier today to hire a contractor to remove the material. Bids are being accepted today; however, it could take another day or so before a contractor is selected.

The westbound lane along this stretch of Oregon 42 — hemmed in between a sheer rock wall and the Middle Fork Coquille River — has been under single-lane traffic with flaggers providing traffic control since January 19. ODOT District Manager Darrin Neavoll said the highway will reopen next Monday in a single-lane configuration and remain that way until the end of February. Drivers should continue to expect 20-minute delays during this period.

“Our rockfall protection strategy continues to evolve,” Neavoll said. “So far, mitigation has included scaling operations, improving fallout area geometry and regrading portions of the slope to remove launch features. We’re now looking at other long-term solutions such as increasing the size of the rockfall ditch and draping a protection mesh over unstable portions of the slide.”

The agency contacted demolition contractors earlier this month in hopes of using controlled blasting to remove material from the slide. The unanimous advice from the contractors was to pursue a slower, more manageable approach employing excavators, which reduces the risk of rocks being launched into the river.

“The material consists of shale and other low-grade rock that isn’t suitable for construction,” Neavoll said. “Our objective is to clear it off as quickly and safely as possible.”

##ODOT##