



Highway 38 to close near Elkton

Friday, May 9, 2008 11:07 AM PDT

Construction crews working at the Elk Creek tunnel will close state Highway 38 from 9 p.m. Friday, May 9, to 6 a.m. Monday, May 12. The closure is planned to allow workers to prepare the bridge for replacement work.

The section to be closed is between Drain and Elkton. Traffic will be detoured to state Highway 138 and Interstate 5 while the closure is in effect. Oregon State Police will enforce the closure.

Those traveling from Bandon or areas south on U.S. Highway 101 can also take state Highway 42S to get to the I-5 corridor.

The bridge replacement is part of a project to replace five aging bridges on Highway 38 between Elkton and Drain. The bridges were built between 1929 and 1932.

This project marks the first time ODOT has used a technique called "rapid replacement" to build a new state highway bridge. Rapid replacement involves using hydraulic machinery to slide the new bridge into place after the old structure is demolished.

ODOT's contractor, Slayden Construction, also will use the rapid replacement technique this summer to replace the bridge on the west end of the tunnel. Slayden had planned to replace both Elk Creek tunnel bridges by June, but the closure of the Coos Bay rail line delayed the delivery of structural steel girders for the bridges from Reedsport. As a result, replacing the bridge on the west end of the tunnel now is scheduled for July or August.

For more information about the project, those interested can go to the Web site at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/ElkCreek.shtml.

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