



Oregon Department of Transportation

NEWS RELEASE

Region 1 *Columbia, Washington, Multnomah, Clackamas and Hood River Counties*

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For More Information:

Shawn Uhlman, 503-731-8265, Shawn.D.Uhlman@odot.state.or.us
Dave Thompson, 503-731-8263, David.H.Thompson@odot.state.or.us
Regional Projects Website: www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION1

HIGHWAY 35 REOPENS SATURDAY, DEC. 9

The Oregon Department of Transportation has announced that a section of Highway 35, which had been severely damaged by debris flows Nov. 6 and Nov. 7, will reopen to traffic Saturday, Dec. 9 at 5 a.m. – a week ahead of the original estimate of Friday, Dec. 15.

“ODOT, in partnership with Tri-State Construction, has stepped up to the challenge and delivered for the people of Oregon,” Gov. Ted Kulongoski said. “I saw first-hand the damage to Highway 35 and the fact that they’ve completed their work a full week early will not only allow the ski resort to re-open this weekend, but will also help the economies of Hood River and Clackamas counties.”

ODOT’s contractor, Tri-State Construction, Inc., has been working 12-hour days since Tuesday, Nov. 14 to rebuild the 2.5 mile section of Highway 35 that was completely washed out. Construction highlights:

- There are more than 50 pieces of equipment currently in use (excavator, bulldozers, loaders, etc.)
- There are 50 dump trucks operating in the construction zone
- Workers have moved approximately 400,000 cubic yards of material

Although the road will reopen Saturday, ODOT estimates the work to be 50% complete. Significant work will continue off the highway during the coming months. This work should not affect traffic. For information on Mt. Hood Meadows Ski Resort visit: www.skihood.com

Public event

For updated information on highway work and current travel information throughout Oregon, visit www.tripcheck.com or call the Oregon road report at 511 or 1-800-977-6368
Visit the ODOT News Media Center at www.oregon.gov/ODOT/COMM

An event and press tour is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 8 at a location to be determined. Media will be notified as soon as the location is identified.

What Happened

On Monday, Nov. 6 and Tuesday, Nov. 7, a massive debris flow and sudden changes to the paths of several rivers on the east side of Mt. Hood severely damaged Highway 35. About 2.5 miles of the road were washed out, undercut and/or covered by massive boulders (some larger than pickup trucks) and mud. An estimated 2 million cubic yards of material—mud, trees and boulders—washed down the mountainside.

Gov. Kulongoski toured the scene with ODOT officials and community leaders on Nov. 21 and pledged to expedite the work to get the road repaired as soon as possible to minimize any economic impacts on the surrounding communities.

Impact

The White River dug a new channel through the road, burying the old channel (both over and under the White River Bridge) in mud and boulders and completely washing out a section of the highway north of the bridge. Washouts and undercuts also occurred at Clark and Newton Creeks and along the East Fork of the Hood River.

##ODOT##