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*Land of Cheese, Trees and Ocean Breeze*

June 23, 2016

### **Cape Meares Road Relocation Project**

The Tillamook Board of County Commissioners closed a 1.5 mile portion of Cape Meares Loop Road in January 2013 due to the unsafe nature of travelling over an active landslide. Since then, the County has opened Cape Meares Loop Road with a pilot car and flaggers on two occasions due to Oregon State Highway 131 being closed in December 2015 and February 2016 so that the community of Oceanside would not be disconnected or isolated.

#### **Project Information and Schedule Updates:**

The County, in partnership with the Western Federal Lands Highway Division of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) , is working on preliminary design and environmental reviews for the Cape Meares Road Relocation project. FHWA is the lead federal agency for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review.

The project is currently reviewing three preliminary alternatives. These include the following; **existing alignment, North alignment and South alignment**. Recent and ongoing survey work is reviewing and comparing these three preliminary alternatives. The County will select a preferred alternative to carry forward into the Environmental Assessment for analysis along with the No Build alternative.

#### **Funding Status:**

The County has secured approximately 6.5 Million in funding for the project. The County has applied for a TIGER grant for an additional \$6.1 Million to fund the currently proposed project. The County is also applying for a Federal Lands Access Program grant for the additional needed \$6.1 Million since TIGER grants are very competitive.

#### **Purpose and Need:**

The purpose of the project, as currently defined, is to restore service on Cape Meares Loop Road and reopen this section of the Three Capes Scenic Route which provides visitor access to Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge and Cape Meares State Scenic Viewpoint and Lighthouse.

The project proposes to construct a bypass around a historic landslide area that closed a 1.5 mile section of Cape Meares Loop Road located between the communities of Oceanside and Cape Meares on January 11, 2013.

Cape Meares has documented ongoing landslide activity dating back to the late 1890s. The hillside is prone to rapid and significant movement, with the slide moving approximately nine feet between 2007 and 2013. An emergency bypass of the active slide area on Cape Meares Loop Road was built in 2007, but additional slide activity in early 2008 prompted the County to complete a damage assessment. The assessment documented that the roadway had moved approximately 90 feet since the 1960s when the road was originally constructed.

With Cape Meares Loop Road closed to through traffic, visitors and local residents may only access the wildlife refuge and lighthouse from the south. According to visitor counts in 2011 and 2013, there was approximately a 12 percent decrease in visitors to the wildlife refuge and lighthouse following the closure of Cape Meares Loop Road. Additional benefits of the project include providing a tsunami escape route for the communities of Oceanside and Cape Meares and an emergency detour route for Oceanside and Netarts when Highway 131 is closed due to slope failures. Additionally, when slides and roadway closures occur on Bay Ocean Road, the community of Cape Meares is cut off from emergency services, schools and jobs. Construction of the bypass will alleviate the concerns caused by the current roadway closure.

Please check out our website <http://www.co.tillamook.or.us/gov/pw/Projects.htm> for more information. You can also make comments on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Tillamook-County-Roads-Public-Works/338910082905955>

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Tillamook County Public Works (Road) Department at 503-842-3419 or email us at [pubwks@co.tillamook.or.us](mailto:pubwks@co.tillamook.or.us)

