



March 22, 2017

For More Information Contact:

Joe Harwood, 541-685-7471
Eugene Water & Electric Board

EWEB powerhouse rebuild will close public access to Trail Bridge, Lakes End campgrounds and Smith Reservoir for five years

Beginning March 27, and continuing for the next five years, the Eugene Water & Electric Board will launch a project to retrofit, refurbish and upgrade equipment at its Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric facility along the upper McKenzie River, about 70 miles east of Eugene off of Highway 126.

In order complete the project safely, EWEB will close public access to Trail Bridge and Lakes End campgrounds, the Trail Bridge Reservoir boat launch and Smith Reservoir. In addition to the campground, reservoir and boat launch closures, Forest Service Roads 690, 730, and 689 will be closed to all public use during the reconstruction project. Trail Bridge and Smith reservoirs are popular fishing spots.

The five-year closure – through 2021 – is necessary because it is not possible to maintain safe public access through or around the construction areas. See attached closure map for more information.

“It’s unfortunate that we have to close the road during this long-term construction project,” said Mike McCann, EWEB’s generation manager. “But with an active construction zone at the Powerhouse, this is the only way to guarantee public safety and the safety of our staff and contractors.”

The McKenzie River Trail and associated trailheads will remain open throughout the reconstruction period. However, in the vicinity of Trail Bridge Reservoir, trail users will be restricted to the McKenzie River Trail.

In order to provide for visitor safety, access to Trail Bridge Reservoir will be blocked by fencing. Fishing in Trail Bridge Reservoir will be allowed via pedestrian access over the dam located on the south side of the reservoir and along the banks of the reservoir adjacent to Highway 126.

In addition to modernizing and replacing equipment at its Carmen Powerhouse and elsewhere throughout the hydroelectric generation project, EWEB will also make significant improvements to fish passage facilities and habitat, and upgrade Trail Bridge and Lakes End campgrounds. The utility expects to invest approximately \$100 million modernizing the project and making the habitat and recreation improvements.

For more information, visit www.eweb.org/carmen-smith.

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