



Pacific Northwest Region
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
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News Release

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Construction Continues on Wallowa Mountain Loop Road (Forest Service Road 39)

BAKER CITY, OR – Work on the Wallowa Mountain Loop Road -- also known as Forest Service Road (FSR) 39 -- will resume April 13.

Tidewater Contractors from Brookings, OR, will first plow the alternate route, Forest Service Road (FSR) 66, and gate off the seasonal snowmobile route that follows FSR 39 by April 15, weather permitting.

The 18-mile construction area between the junction of Highway 86 and the 39 Road heading north to the junction of the 39 Road and the 66 Road will be gated closed until June 16. Contractors hope to have the 66 Road detour route cleared of snow by April 15, but there may be delays. Please check the Wallowa-Whitman website for the most current information
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman/>

Beginning June 16, FSR 39 will be closed to passenger vehicles from 8 a.m. Tuesday to 5 p.m. Thursday to allow campers and others to use the route on the weekends. The 39 Road is *not* maintained for passenger travel until after June 15.

Beginning July 1, through completion of construction, visitors can expect rough surfaces and delays of up to one hour on FSR 39, or use the alternate route (FSR 66).

“We appreciate the contractor’s efforts to minimize the inconvenience to motorists and consider them a partner in our effort to improve the visitor experience along this Scenic Byway,” Forest Supervisor Tom Montoya said.

Slated for completion this fall, the \$5.3 million project is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and is the largest of its kind in the Forest Service system.

Baker County Commissioner Bill Harvey and Wallowa County Commissioner Mike Hayward said they look forward to the re-opening of the roadway, which is a popular visitor route.



NEWS RELEASE

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“We are very pleased that the contractor will finish the reconstruction work on the 39 Road this summer,” Hayward said. “The promotion of this area through Travel Oregon’s 7 Wonders of Oregon Campaign has significantly increased the interest in this route and along with Cycle Oregon visiting this area in the fall will have tremendous economic impact to Wallowa County. Let’s get the project done as soon as possible to take advantage of these wonderful opportunities to showcase our county and region.”

Crews began reconstructing 13 miles of FSR 39 beginning at the junction of Highway 86 (10 miles east of Halfway) and northward to the junction of FSR 66 in 2013. An additional five miles were added to the project in the summer of 2014, for a total of 18 miles of reconstruction.

The detour route, FSR 66, is 30 miles in length and is a well-maintained single-lane gravel road with pullouts, but it is not recommended for motor homes.

First designated as a National Forest Scenic Byway in 1992, the Wallowa Mountain Loop Road was named a State Scenic Byway in 1996. In 2000, the Federal Highways Administration established the Hells Canyon All-American Road for its qualities of exceptional scenery, widely varied terrain, recreational opportunities, and historical significance.

For more information about the construction project, closures, and detour information, please continue to visit the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest web site at: www.fs.usda.gov/wallowa-whitman or contact your local Ranger District office contact the Wallowa Mountains Office at 541-426-5546.

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Crews placing geogrid and backfill on the 39 Road in 2014. Construction will continue this summer.