

Missoula County Media Release

Contact: Erik Dickson

County Engineer

(406) 258-3772

edickson@missoulacounty.us

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Missoula County to Address Needed Road Maintenance

Several of Missoula County's roads were adversely impacted this year as a result of spring flooding and the melting of adjacent snowpack. Missoula County's Public Works Department and the Office of Emergency Management closely monitored changing conditions to ensure public safety. Now that engineering reports have been completed, preliminary repairs on Six Mile Road are slated to begin in the coming weeks.

Although work has been ongoing in these areas, more extensive repairs are needed to fully remedy roads. Missoula County Public Works has applied to obtain all necessary permits to complete maintenance from the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). However, because certain portions of Six Mile Road are entirely within existing right-of-way, Public Works can begin some repair work now. Next spring or summer when all permits are in place, Missoula County will undertake the full repair project.

To identify a funding mechanism for these needed repairs, the Board of Missoula County Commissioners voted this summer to temporarily cancel the dust abatement program in order to allocate these funds for Six Mile Road.

As a next step, Missoula County Public Works hired a geotechnical engineering consultant and a civil engineering consultant to ensure repairs will be a stable and long-lasting solution. The process for determining Six Mile Road repairs is challenging, as workers are bound by bedrock and a fiber optic cable on the uphill side of the road and unstable slopes, delineated wetlands, overhead power and right-of-way limitations on the downhill side. While the road failed in the one location, there are numerous other areas around the road's curve that are of concern and are being addressed at the same time.

To address these concerns, partner agencies, including MDT and Army Corps of Engineers, provided feedback on rights-of-way issues and wetlands concerns. By incorporating this feedback, consultants outlined three options for Missoula County Public Works who have determined a course of remedial action that avoids disturbing underground utilities, removes slope stability concerns by lowering the road by approximately seven feet in certain areas and minimizes impacts to the existing wetlands.

Work will begin as soon as permit authorizations have been obtained. Public Works is optimistic that a portion of the designed work can start in the coming weeks which will stabilize the road in the current alignment through the winter.

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