



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Olympic National Park

600 East Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA
98362

360-565-3005 phone
360-565-3015 fax

Olympic National Park News Release

February 22, 2007

For Immediate Release

Barb Maynes 360- 565- 3005

Progress Continues on Olympic National Park Road Repairs; Public Invited to Comment on Hoh Road Bridge Proposal

One by one, park roads and campgrounds are re- opening for public use after the severe storm damage of last November and December.

Olympic National Park maintenance crews, with help from the Washington Conservation Corps, local county and public utility district crews and National Park Service employees temporarily re- assigned from other parks, have succeeded in restoring access to many areas.

“We are grateful for the public’s patience and understanding as we continue to clear and repair park roads and trails,” said Olympic National Park Superintendent Bill Laitner. “As spring approaches, we urge people to use caution and to call our recorded hotline for current road conditions, 360- 565- 3131.”

The status of many park trails is still unknown; more information will be gathered this spring as the snow melts and crews are able to make damage assessments.

An overview of park road and conditions is provided below.

Hoh Road

Extensive progress has been made on the Hoh Road, with a temporary one- lane bridge now crossing West Twin Creek. Before the November 6 storm, West Twin Creek flowed through a culvert (or large corrugated metal pipe) under the Hoh Road. High water and storm debris plugged the culvert and led to a large (75 feet long and 25 feet deep) washout, now spanned by the new bridge.


The temporary bridge will be in place until a permanent repair can be completed. Installation of a permanent two- lane bridge is proposed for later this year or next. The park is currently seeking initial public input on this proposal to help define the range of issues that should be considered in an environmental assessment scheduled for release this spring.

Two other sections of the Hoh Road, at Taft Creek and Snyder Creek, were also seriously damaged.

(more)

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



A new culvert was installed last week at Taft Creek and a Port Angeles contractor was recently awarded the contract to place a new oversized culvert at Snyder Creek. The new culvert, to measure 16 feet wide by 11 feet tall, will be installed in March. After the new culvert is in place, park crews will surface the road with gravel; paving will be completed later this year.

Meanwhile, a crew from the Washington Conservation Corps has been clearing debris from the road shoulders and campground while public utility district crews are installing new electrical cable and transformers to restore power. New phone lines are also being installed. Once power is restored, park crews will restore the water system and clean buildings for use.

The Hoh Road and campground are scheduled to reopen to the public by May 1.

“We are eager to restore access to the Hoh Rain Forest,” remarked Laitner. “Travel may be slightly slower than usual, with several sections of the road surfaced with gravel and short traffic delays at the one-lane bridge, but we’re confident the public will still enjoy the opportunity to visit the Hoh.”

More work awaits park maintenance crews on the Hoh River Trail, where 200 trees block the first five miles of the trail.

Kalaloch, Mora, Ozette

The park’s coastal areas, including the Kalaloch, Mora and Ozette campgrounds, are open.

Quinault

Both the North Shore and South Shore Quinault Roads remain open and are in good condition. Both the North Fork Road and North Fork campground, which were heavily damaged by heavy rain and flooding, have recently reopened. With North Fork open, crews have turned their attention to reopening the Graves Creek area, where a massive blowdown has blocked the road.

Queets

The Queets Road is open as far as the Matheny Creek bridge and is closed beyond that point. An Environmental Assessment was released in December to examine the effects of a proposal to restore access to the upper Queets by using Washington Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service roads to establish an alternate route by this summer.

Sol Duc

The Sol Duc Road is scheduled to reopen by March 1. Crews have worked through much of January and February to clear the road of the hundreds of trees that blocked it after windstorms in late 2006. The Sol Duc campground will be open for primitive camping (vault toilets and no running water) on March 1, with full services provided beginning on April 6.

Lake Crescent

The Lake Crescent area is open. The Spruce Railroad trail and Marymere Falls trail have both been cleared, although the lower falls viewing platform is closed.

The Fairholme Campground is scheduled to open on April 6.

(more)

Elwha

The Olympic Hot Springs Road is open to the Glines Canyon Dam and is closed beyond that point due to slumping along the road, which will be repaired later this spring. The Whiskey Bend Road is closed due to washouts.

The West Elwha, West Lake Mills, Griff Creek and Cascades Rock trails have all been cleared. The Elwha Campground is open, with Altair campground scheduled to open on May 25.

Olympic National Park Visitor Center/Heart o'the Hills

The Living Forest and Peabody Creek loop trails have been cleared. The Heart o'the Hills campground remains closed because of severe wind damage and fallen trees. A date has not yet been set for reopening this campground.

Dosewallips

The Dosewallips Road remains closed due to a washout outside the park boundary.

Staircase

The access road to Staircase (Forest Service Road 24) is closed outside the park boundary because of unstable rock and landslide hazards created by last summer's Bear Gulch 2 fire. The situation will be re-evaluated this spring by U.S. Forest Service road engineers.

How to Comment on the Hoh Road Proposed West Twin Creek Crossing

Members of the public are invited to provide input on the proposal to install a permanent two-lane bridge over West Twin Creek along the Hoh Road. Comments received during this scoping period will be used to help define the issues and concerns to be addressed in an upcoming Environmental Assessment, scheduled for release this spring.

Comments should be submitted on-line by visiting <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>, the website for the National Park Service's Planning Environment and Public Comment system.

Comments may also be sent to the following address no later than March 26, 2007.

Superintendent – West Twin Bridge Crossing
Olympic National Park
600 East Park Avenue
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Fax: 360- 565- 3015
Website: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>
Email: olym_ea@nps.gov

Commentors should be aware that their entire comment – including personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While commentors can ask that their personal identifying information be withheld from public review, the NPS cannot guarantee that this will be possible.

For more information about this project, people may visit National Park Service's Planning Environment and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov> or call the park at 360- 565- 3004.

- - NPS- -