



DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOM KRESS CHRIS BOICE TIM FREEMAN

Douglas County Courthouse, Room 217
1036 SE Douglas Avenue, Roseburg, Oregon 97470

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Construction Begins on Rice Creek Bridge Replacement Project

(Douglas County, Ore.) Douglas County Commissioners, Tom Kress, Chris Boice, and Tim Freeman are pleased to announce the commencement of the construction phase for the Rice Creek Bridge Project. The Douglas County Public Works Department will manage the project and work with contractor, Carter and Company, Inc., to build a completely new bridge in the existing location. The new Rice Creek Bridge will feature two vehicular travel lanes, wide shoulders to allow for pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized traffic, and improved safety features. The bridge replacement project is expected to wrap up by the end of 2023, but is subject to delay depending upon weather and material availability.

Built in 1977, the existing steel stringer bridge has a concrete deck and is listed in poor condition. It is located on Rice Creek Road (County Road #43) at milepost 1.41 about 5.5 miles south of the unincorporated town of Dillard, where it takes traffic and utilities over Rice Creek. It was determined in 2014 that the bridge had insufficient capacity to carry the heavier modern vehicles and equipment loads and the bridge was reduced to single lane traffic while additional beams were installed under the structure's approach spans. This effectively provided additional strength and the bridge was reopened, however since that time the larger steel girders in the main span of the bridge have begun to deflect, a sign of overloading. Without replacement, the existing bridge would continue to fatigue, and routine maintenance would not be enough to keep it open for traffic.

Through a cooperative effort by the Douglas County Commissioners and Douglas County Public Works in 2019, Douglas County was awarded a grant of \$3,227,931 from the Oregon Department of Transportation through the State Funded Local Projects Program. The remaining funding will come from Douglas County's Public Works fund.

"The vast majority of the bridges in Douglas County are quickly approaching their useful lifespan. The Rice Creek Bridge is almost 50 years old and exposure to our weather and natural elements has not been its friend. This is another example that nearly all of the 300+ bridges in county inventory are in dire need of major repair or replacement. The safety of our residents is a high priority and we were elated to be able to replace this aging bridge," commented Board Chair, Commissioner Tom Kress.

The contractor has been moving equipment into the work zone, clearing brush near both ends of the bridge and installing signs for the last few weeks. They plan to work on half of the bridge at a time and provide a single signalized lane of travel for local access. Intermittent road closures are anticipated throughout the construction process; however, traffic shall not be held for longer than 20 minutes at a time. Safety is always a priority for the motoring public, as well as for construction workers. Please understand that road construction projects will impact drive times, so we are asking residents to plan accordingly. We are asking motorists to proceed with caution, be patient and obey all posted signs, signals, warnings and flagger instructions as they travel thru all road construction zones. For more information, please contact DCPW at (541) 440-4208 or log onto <https://douglascounty-oregon.us/>.

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