

Construction to close U.S. 101 south of Bandon for one weekend in September

June 23, 2025



BANDON – ODOT plans to close U.S. 101 south of Bandon for one weekend in September to replace a culvert deep under the highway in difficult terrain.

The closure, scheduled for Friday night to Sunday night, Sept. 19-21, will allow contractors to dig down more than 20 feet to remove the failing pipe and install a larger culvert. The work zone is sandwiched between a steep slope on one side of the highway, wetlands on the other and a stream that snakes its way in between.

There are no local road connections around the work zone. During this 48-hour closure, the only available detour is a lengthy drive along U.S. 199 (Redwood Highway), Interstate 5 and Oregon 42 (Coos Bay-Roseburg Highway).

The total construction window will likely extend about 4-6 weeks, with about 2-3 weeks of single-lane closures before and after the weekend full closure of the highway.

In most circumstances, ODOT attempts to stage projects in a way that keeps highways open to all traffic at all times. However, that would require a single-lane bypass to be constructed either through a hillside or over wetlands, relocating the stream while adding more cost to the project and disrupting highway traffic for about six months.

“We know how disruptive highway closures can be for communities on the south coast, but we believe this is the best approach and the least impactful option in the long run,” said ODOT District Manager Glen Pederson. “We’re announcing the closure now because we want to give everybody as much time as possible to plan ahead.”

The rapid replacement approach offers several benefits:

- Shrinking the total construction window from six months to six weeks will reduce overall traffic impacts of the project.
- Eliminating the need for a temporary bypass and shortening the construction timeline could save more than \$1 million from the total cost of the project.
- Completing the project in October means the new culvert will be ready before the worst weather hits the south coast this winter. Under the traditional approach, the new culvert wouldn’t be operational until a year later.
- Construction in September and October would avoid impacting the local summer tourist season.
- A shortened schedule and reduced number of traffic stages decreases the safety risk to both workers and the traveling public.
- The rapid replacement approach maintains the existing stream alignment and avoids impacts to adjacent wetlands entirely.
- Closing the highway for one weekend will allow construction to take place entirely within existing ODOT right of way.

The pipe failed during a December 2024 storm, washing away the ground under the highway’s southbound travel lane. ODOT repaired the culvert, but in its current condition the pipe is unable to handle expected winter stream flows. Another failure could compromise the roadway above.

Unlike the existing pipe, the new 11-foot-wide culvert will meet federal fish passage requirements while accommodating far more water.

For more information and to sign up for updates, visit the project webpage or contact ODOT Public Information Officers Dan Latham (541-817-5200, Dan.Latham@odot.oregon.gov) or Julie Denney (503-

949-2366, *Julie.Denney@odot.oregon.gov*).

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