

The Board of Commissioners office released the following road related information:

COMMISSIONERS' WEEKLY REPORT

Friday, January 9, 2004

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OVERSIZE LOAD LIMITS ON JOHNSON BRIDGE

During the month of November 2003, at the recommendation of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the County Road Department, the Board of Commissioners established a load limit for vehicles that use Johnson Bridge on Long Prairie Road. The bridge is located at Milepost 3.18 over the Trask River just south of the intersection with Trask River Road.

The load limit restriction is related to the concrete structure of the bridge showing evidence of cracking. This is a problem identified throughout the state and has been in the news for the last year. Many concrete bridges state-wide constructed during the 1950's and 1960's are showing similar structural problems thus requiring load limits.

The load limits were based on detailed information from ODOT Bridge Section. The standard bridge load limit requires sign posting of 3 designated loads at the bridge site. One of these three loads is limited. Three additional standard loads typically are analyzed by the ODOT and all three of these loads are limited.

To assist in analysis of oversize overweight truck requests on this bridge, the County Road Department acquired engineering services from a private engineering firm to determine what loads beyond the 6 standards load can still use the load limited bridge.

The engineering consultant determined that under specified conditions loaded truck traffic may be allowed to cross the bridge. The conditions include the following:

1. When the permitted oversize load crosses the bridge, there will be no other moving or stationary traffic on the bridge.
2. The permitted oversize load will cross the bridge on the road centerline.
3. The permitted oversize load will cross at a constant speed, less than 35 mph. Do not accelerate or brake while driving across the bridge deck.
4. Traffic control halting traffic in both directions
5. MOST SIGNIFICANT is that any reviewed and approved load using this bridge, needs a permit authorization signed by the Road Department. An issued permit will apply only to a specified load.

There are likely some larger oversize loads that, even with the above movement restrictions in place, may still not be authorized to cross the bridge due to the conditions of the bridge.

The Road Department can review load requests presented to the main office at 503 Marolf Loop in Tillamook. Phone: 503-842-3419. Any requestor of a oversize load review should be prepared to provide truck axle spacing, weights over each axle and a specific vehicle identification. Number of axles and an overall weight is NOT adequate information for a review.

Until the Road Department has accumulated a number of approvals or denials of requested loads, it is likely that initial review requests may take a couple of days to process.

The County recognizes that Long Prairie Road is a valuable bypass route for large truck loads around Tillamook County. During Fall 2003, Tillamook County submitted 6 different applications to ODOT for replacement bridge funding as part of the 3rd round of the Oregon Transportation Investment Act (OTIA III). Johnson Bridge was ranked by the County as our highest priority replacement application. ODOT will release its funded project list during Spring 2004. If approved, Tillamook County hopes to start the replacement bridge design process as soon as possible after funding approval. The ideal goal would be for replacement bridge construction to occur Summer of 2005.

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*(the above information was only a portion of the entire Weekly Report)*