Oregon Department of Transportation

Islanding - Vulnerable Areas and Staying Connected

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What is an ‘island’ community?

- Natural disasters can "island" communities—**cutting them off from essential resources** and support by damaging or destroying roads, bridges, and other transportation infrastructure
- Oregon's **unique and diverse geography** and weather patterns pose threats to vulnerable communities across the state
- **Islanding causes** in Oregon include:
  - Wildfires
  - Extreme weather events
  - Landslides
  - Flooding
  - Earthquakes

I-84 flooding near Stansfield in February 2020 (ODOT Region 5)

Islanding Risks

- US101 and Coast Range routes have multiple types of hazards—unstable slopes, flooding, erosion and earthquake damage
- Cascade Range routes are most at risk for severe winter events
- Wildfire risks exist across the state
- Highway 99W is next priority corridor identified for “seismic triage” investment to complete the north-south lifeline connection from Eugene to Portland

US101 at Arizona Inn Landslide (ODOT Region 3)

ODOT's Role in Multi-Agency Preparedness

- ODOT's responsibility is maintaining and operating the state highways that connect communities, to keep services accessible and to bring resources to communities
- We employ both proactive and reactive strategies to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of natural disaster events to **keep communities connected, critical services accessible, and Oregonians safe**
  - Proactive measures -- Resiliency of the System
  - Reactive measures -- Response & Recovery on the System

US30, MP 74 at Bradley Hill (ODOT Region 2)

OR58 near Oakridge (ODOT Region 2)

ODOT's Role – Investing in a Resilient System

- Prioritization of lifeline routes
- Seismic triage route investments
- PROTECT funding investments
- Unstable Slopes Program
- Climate risk assessments
- Collaboration with partners for interdisciplinary resilience planning

Unstable slope mitigation under construction for seismic resiliency on I-5 at Siskiyou Station (MP 5.2, ODOT Region 3)

Building Statewide Resiliency

Investments prioritizing **infrastructure resilience and emergency response:**

- **Work complete:** US97 lifeline resiliency
- **Work underway:** HB 2017: Southern Oregon Seismic Triage and Resiliency project
  - Secures a seismically resilient route from US 97 to I-5 via Hwy 140 and south of OR 58 to the California border
- **Projects identified for future funding:** 99W Seismic Triage Bridge Replacements
  - Focuses on creating a seismically resilient route north of OR58
  - Includes replacing bridges along OR99W from Eugene to Portland, where no detour is available

Southern Oregon Seismic Triage and Resiliency Project (HB 2017)

ODOT's Role – Response & Recovery

- Emergency detour route planning
- ODOT Emergency Operations Plan – Cascadia Annex Development
- Community outreach
- Statewide partnerships with OEM, ODOE, PUC, Counties
- Tabletop exercises

US20 Flood damage & repair in February 2025 (ODOT Region 5)

Challenges to Islanding Prevention/Mitigation

- Growing risk, shrinking budgets
- Cross-agency coordination and planning for resiliency, response and recovery
- Sustainable funding emphasize resiliency, response and recovery
- Triage funding limitations

Hooskanaden landslide on US101 (ODOT Region 3)


Questions?