
From: McKeon, R B <McKeonR@wsdot.wa.gov>
Sent: Monday, May 1, 2023 4:18:37 PM (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)
To: McKeon, R B <McKeonR@wsdot.wa.gov>; Ambler, Melissa <AmblerM@wsdot.wa.gov>
Cc: Sehlke, Madison <SehlkeM@wsdot.wa.gov>
Subject: FW: WSDOT NEWS: Full closure on SR 542/Mount Baker Highway begins after Memorial Day weekend

Good afternoon:

As we gear up for the beginning of the SR 542 Squalicum Creek to Bellingham Bay Fish Passage [project](#) at the end of the month, below please find the news release that was shared with over 8,000 subscribers to our Whatcom County e-newsletter as well as local media outlets. We have been previewing this work over the past few months and you may have seen the recent [story](#) in the Bellingham Herald about this work. We understand that full closures are not ideal, and we do take into consideration the impact they have on the public, emergency services and our partners when we make these decisions.

Throughout construction, we will be providing regular updates to the community on our project page as well as via social media. We are currently doing direct outreach to local businesses along the SR 542 corridor. If you have questions or need more information both the project engineer, Melissa Ambler and I are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Best,
RB

RB McKeon
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From: Washington State Department of Transportation <wsdot@service.govdelivery.com>
Sent: Monday, May 1, 2023 12:56 PM
To: McKeon, R B <McKeonR@wsdot.wa.gov>
Subject: WSDOT NEWS: Full closure on SR 542/Mount Baker Highway begins after Memorial Day weekend

Washington State Department of Transportation - NEWS
Northwest Region – 1019 Andis Road – Burlington, WA 98233 – 360-757-5999

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 1, 2023

Contact: [RB McKeon](#), communications, 360-399-9328
[Melissa Ambler](#), project engineer, 360-788-7400

Closure of SR 542/Mount Baker Highway east of Bellingham begins after Memorial Day weekend

Highway will close between Britton and Noon roads for fish passage project

BELLINGHAM – Local residents and tourists who use State Route 542/Mount Baker Highway should prepare for a summer-long closure of the highway between Britton Road and Noon Road beginning Tuesday, May 30 for up to 105 days. During the closure, contractor crews working for the Washington State Department of Transportation will build a new bridge for the [Squalicum Creek to Bellingham Bay fish passage project](#).

Crews will remove the current fish barrier and replace it with a single-span 105-foot-long bridge that allows native species of fish to access upstream habitat.

What can travelers expect?

Building a new bridge requires closing all lanes of SR 542/Mount Baker Highway. Detours will be:

- Eastbound on SR 542 via north on Hannegan Road to East Smith Road to SR 542.
- Westbound on SR 542 via East Smith Road, south on Hannegan Road and back to SR 542/Sunset Drive.

To help deter travelers from bypassing the detour, there are additional closures at the following intersections:

- Kelly Road and Hannegan Road
- Van Wyck Road and Hanegan Road
- Van Wyck Road and Noon Road

Travelers also will see the speed limit reduced to 35 mph on Hannegan Road as well as a temporary traffic signal at the intersection of East Smith and Everson Goshen roads.

Updated project information

Regular project updates including the latest on lane and ramp closures will be posted on the [project page](#). Travelers can access WSDOT's [real-time travel center](#) and follow [@wsdot_north](#) on Twitter for more information on this project as well as additional summer construction and maintenance work in the region.

Project will increase access to fish habitat

Squalicum Creek is a tributary of Bellingham Bay located 2.5 miles east of the Nooksack River delta. It primarily supports pink, chum and coho salmon as well as resident and sea-run cutthroat trout. Removing the existing barrier will provide about 3 additional miles of habitat.

Hyperlinks within the release:

- Squalicum Creek to Bellingham Bay fish passage project: wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-542-squalicum-creek-bellingham-bay-fish-passage
- Project page: wsdot.wa.gov/construction-planning/search-projects/sr-542-squalicum-creek-bellingham-bay-fish-passage
- Real-time travel center: wsdot.com/Travel/Real-time/Map/
- @wsdot_north: twitter.com/wsdot_north

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