

Tennessee Infrastructure In The News

April 13, 2010

A daily roundup of recent news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure

For the full story, click the headline or use the link.

['The Dragon' Partially Reopens After Rock Slide \(Associated Press/Schelzig\)](#)

As of Monday, motorcycle and sports car enthusiasts will once again have access to most of a twisty stretch of road known as "The Dragon." But a rock slide that caused the segment of U.S. Route 129 to be shut down in March will still block access from the Tennessee side of the road that winds into North Carolina. Warmer weather usually marks the beginning of the busiest time of the year for merchants clustered on both ends of the stretch of road famous for its 318 curves in 11 miles. Businesses on the Tennessee side will have to wait until the \$2 million stabilization and cleanup is completed in July until they can once again reap the benefits from the swarms of motorcyclists hungry for barbecue, new tires, T-shirts and other mementos. Despite 70 degree temperatures and blue skies on Saturday, businesses near the Tennessee end of The Dragon saw only the occasional motorcyclist pass through over lunch time, including two Blount County police officers and a reporter.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?clid=tennessean&sParam=33254477.story>

[Dragon Reopens In NC; Tennessee Resort Looks For Signs Of Improvement \(WBIR-TV\)](#)

On Monday the state reopened an 11-mile stretch of US 129 known as "the tail of the dragon" at the North Carolina border during daylight hours. While businesses that cater to motorcycle riders at Deals Gap, NC, say they were very busy Monday, the Punkin Center Motorcycle Resort on the Tennessee-side of the rock slide saw another slow day... "One of our biggest problems is going to be getting emergency personnel up there in the event of a crash," said Lt. Don Baird with the Tennessee Highway Patrol. "Unfortunately we've had a lot of fatalities over the last few years and the main thing is for everyone to be careful. It is a narrow road with a lot of twists, and that is the draw." TDOT expects crews to have the rock slide completely repaired by July 31.

<http://www.wbir.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=118708&provider=rss>

[U.S. 64 Opening In Days \(Chattanooga Times Free-Press/Sohn\)](#)

U.S. Highway 64 through the Ocoee Gorge may reopen Wednesday afternoon, a couple of days earlier than the projected Friday deadline, highway and local officials say. "They're working like ants out there," Tennessee Department of Transportation spokeswoman Jennifer Flynn said Monday. "We still have to repave the roadbed, get the bit crane out of the area, put up guardrail and paint on some roadway marking." Friday is the deadline, "But earlier would be even better," she said. That was welcome news to Polk County Assessor of Property Randy Yates, who on Monday was looking on the Internet at TDOT's live camera to see if an early drive on the road might be possible. "They're paving as we talk," he said. "If it opened just right now, we'd be tickled about it. We want it open now." Mr. Yates said the normal drive on U.S. 64 from Benton to Ducktown, Tenn., is 28 miles, but his trips across the county by detour to review properties while the road was closed covered 88 miles and took an hour and 45 minutes, one way.

<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/apr/13/us-64-opening-in-days/>

[2010 Tennessee Transportation Map Now Available \(Associated Press\)](#)

The official 2010 Tennessee Transportation Map is now available. The map is formatted with large, easy readable information and includes a listing of Tennessee's biofuel green island corridors, information about emergency reference markers, attractions throughout the state and other details. Maps are free and available at welcome centers and rest areas across the state. The state map is also available for download from the Tennessee Department of Transportation Web site at www.tn.gov/tdot/maps.htm. The map is a joint effort between TDOT and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development.

<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?clid=tennessean&sParam=33261545.story>

[Historic Hwy. 41 Bridge Set For Demolition \(Marion County News\)](#)

Nearly five years ago, the Hwy. 41 Marion Memorial Bridge was slated for demolition to build a more feasible bridge over the Tennessee River and Nickajack Lake near Haletown. Efforts mounted to try to save the bridge, which was built in 1929, and the structure was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is one of the last former toll bridges in Tennessee. But, despite the efforts, Tennessee Department of Transportation officials still say the bridge will be demolished eventually. "Regarding the current truss bridge, there have been conversations about preserving the historic bridge but no one has agreed to accept liability and maintenance for the bridge, so currently there is a plan to demolish it," states TDOT Region Communications Officer Jennifer Flynn in an email.

<http://www.marioncountynews.net/default.asp?sourceid=&smenu=98&twindow=&mad=&sdetail=2074&wpag e=1&skeyword=&sidate=&ccat=&ccatm=&restate=&restatus=&reoption=&retype=&repmin=&repmax=&rebe d=&rebath=&subname=&pform=&sc=1650&hn=marioncountynews&he=.net>

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