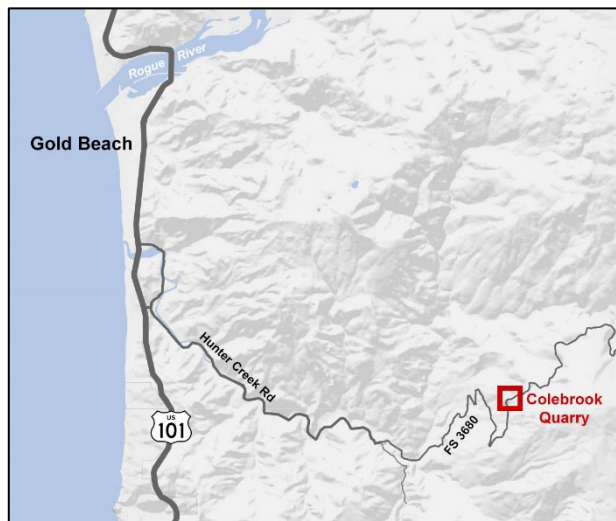


Colebrook Quarry

March 2022

A local rock source for local highway projects

ODOT is coordinating with FHWA and BLM to make Colebrook Quarry available as a rock source for future projects on U.S. 101. The quarry contains high-quality rock and is located southeast of Gold Beach on Hunter Creek Road/FS 3680.



U.S. 101 is an essential transportation link connecting several communities along the southern Oregon coast. The highway is a vital part of the local economy, providing a route for tourists, emergency services, freight and local residents. The highway is Curry County's lifeline.

Unfortunately, the south coast is prone to landslide movement and the highway requires frequent maintenance. This includes grinding and paving travel lanes every 15-25 years, filling in potholes and repairing cracks. It also involves responding to major incidents like the 2019 Hooskanaden Landslide, which closed U.S. 101 for two weeks and deeply impacted every south coast community.

ODOT's mission is to provide a safe and reliable multimodal transportation system that connects people and helps Oregon's communities and economy thrive. In Curry County, that means one of our top priorities is keeping U.S. 101 open and safe for travel.

Purpose and need: U.S. 101 is a federal highway. To effectively maintain and operate U.S. 101 as an agent of the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA), ODOT needs high quality rock at locations that are relatively close to the highway system. The rock at Colebrook Quarry meets ODOT specification for all required aggregate products for paving and landslide repairs. Additionally, Colebrook Quarry is centrally located in an area of the south coast with a high incidence of landslides, including Arizona Landslide complex to the north and Hooskanaden Landslide to the south.

Background: As an agent for FHWA, ODOT identified Colebrook Quarry as a possible quarry site in 2015. ODOT specifically searched for sites on Bureau of Land Management property because BLM and FHWA have an existing agreement for use of material sources on federal land for highway purposes.

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Testing confirmed high-quality rock of sufficient quantity for pursuit in 2018 and work began in 2019 to prepare an application for right-of-way land transfer for use of the rock source.

The application is a formal process which includes studies to identify impacts of the quarry as well as public outreach. Studies were conducted in compliance with the FHWA National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for Categorical Exclusion (CE). These studies were completed in the fall of 2021.

Public comment: We believe ODOT reaches the best outcomes when we work in partnership with local communities and individuals. We understand that those who live along Hunter Creek Road are most likely to feel impacted by quarry operations. As a result, we decided to send letters to property owners in this area to learn about their concerns. Our goal is to determine if we or our local partners can address those concerns and reduce negative impacts.

We used information from the Curry County Assessor's website to identify all properties located within 1,500 feet of Hunter Creek Road (there are no residences along Forest Service Road 3680). We sent a letter to all 200 property owners on January 27, 2022. We e-mailed the same letter to 45 local agencies, interest groups or other stakeholders on February 2. As the NEPA process usually calls for a 30-day comment period, we initially suggested a March 4 deadline for comments. However, several individuals requested more time and ODOT has decided to extend the public comment period four weeks to April 4, 2022.

Community benefit: In most cases, ODOT-owned quarries are used intermittently for highway maintenance and repair in nearby areas. A material source site that is located near a roadway construction project can make a substantial difference in the overall cost and timeliness of project completion. This results in reduced production and hauling costs of aggregate material, a cost savings to taxpayers and overall reduced environmental impact.



In 2010, ODOT paved nearly 17 miles of U.S. 101 between Gold Beach and Thomas Creek. The project also removed landslide material at the base of Kissing Rock, just south of Hunter Creek. The proposed Colebrook Quarry near Hunter Creek Road will allow ODOT to continue maintaining the highway, paving the travel lanes, filling cracks and potholes and repairing landslides along the southern Oregon coast.

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The path forward: ODOT is currently working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to obtain an Endangered Species Act (ESA) clearance. Once the ESA clearance and the public involvement requirements of the NEPA process are completed, the Categorical Exclusion Closeout Document will be finalized. Then FHWA will submit the right-of-way request, including the Categorical Exclusion Closeout Document, to BLM for consideration. BLM will review the application for consistency with their management plan.

Upon BLM approval, the application process will be finalized in fall 2022. ODOT will then submit a reclamation plan and other documents necessary to permit the site through the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI). We anticipate that Colebrook Quarry will be available for ODOT contractor use as early as summer 2023. Ownership of the land will remain with BLM.

Anticipated operating plan: Based on use at other ODOT quarries across the state and how often we resurface U.S. 101 in Curry County, ODOT expects Colebrook Quarry will be used for a few months every two to three years. This will usually take place during paving season, between late spring and early fall. The quarry may also be used in winter months when landslides affect the highway. Contractors will have the option of using other rock sources, including those on private lands. Operations at the quarry will include drilling, blasting, excavating, crushing, processing, batching, and hauling.

ODOT complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws to mitigate impacts to nearby properties. Blasting occurs once or twice at the beginning of a project and always during daylight hours. A Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) permit will address issues related to stability of excavation, stormwater, erosion control, and site reclamation.

Road safety: All speed zones will be observed. ODOT expects the quarry to generate truck traffic of 30-60 round trips per day when paving projects are underway. These jobs typically last 2-3 months and rarely longer than five months. Hauling of aggregate is intermittent as paving progresses in stages along U.S. 101. Residents along Hunter Creek Road should contact ODOT or local law enforcement to report any illegal or dangerous driver behavior.

Road and bridge conditions: Future uses of Hunter Creek Road and FS 3680 will not significantly change from current uses. These roads are owned and maintained by Curry County and the U.S. Forest Service. While we do not anticipate increased “wear and tear” above existing levels, we will share concerns about road conditions, bridge conditions, safety and hazard concerns with the responsible parties.



The February 2019 Hooskanaden Landslide closed U.S. 101 between Brookings and Gold Beach for two weeks. Rock from the proposed Colebrook Quarry could be used to help with future emergency landslide repairs.

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Environmental clearances: There are no known hazardous materials, archaeological artifacts, rare plants or wetlands present within the area of potential impact for the proposed use. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documentation for this project falls under a Class II review using the FHWA NEPA process. Actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant environmental effect are excluded from the requirement to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Surveys completed included Northern Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet surveys, bat surveys, an archaeological survey (which involved tribal coordination), rare plant surveys, wetlands and waters survey and a hazardous materials clearance. ODOT is currently working with USFWS to obtain an Endangered Species Act (ESA) clearance.

Hunter Creek: Colebrook Quarry is located nearly a mile from Hunter Creek. In accordance with DOGAMI operating permits, storm water runoff is not allowed to leave the permitted area without routine monitoring. Through coordination with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), ODOT uses best management practices to prevent toxic and hazardous substances and other pollutants from reaching receiving waters as outlined in Section 00290.34 of the Oregon Standard Specifications for Construction. No chemicals are used during mining operations. A water resource located within the proposed quarry will be given a vegetated 150-foot buffer from any mining activities.

Noise: Colebrook Quarry is located two miles from the end of Hunter Creek Road, where the nearest residence is located. ODOT will make all reasonable efforts to reduce the impact of noise from the quarry. Any equipment used will contain sound control devices and comply with pertinent equipment noise standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Noise control will be consistent with DEQ standards for aggregate operations as provided in Chapter 340, Division 35, of the Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR).

Dust suppression: Operations at the site are required to meet DEQ air quality regulations. Water is hauled in on trucks and sprayed along the haul route to suppress dust. Roads are paved near residences and are expected to produce no dust from mining activities.

Property values: Current uses of the access road to Colebrook Quarry include logging and quarry traffic. Given the intermittent nature of the activities at Colebrook Quarry and decreasing logging traffic (per Forest Service communication), traffic volumes will not significantly change if Colebrook Quarry is approved.

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Please send questions or comments to ODOT Geologist Jill DeKoekkoek:

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