

From: [Stillwater County](#)
To: [Stillwater County](#)
Subject: Stillwater River Road rockslide update
Date: Wednesday, October 07, 2015 10:56:04 AM

Rockslide update:

At least once a week, one or more members of the assembled team photographs the area of the rock slide on Stillwater River Road to assess changes in the scenario. It is clear from these photographs and from eye-witness accounts that rocks, of sizeable weight and mass, continue to break away from the cliff wall and even beyond the area identified in the Geo-Technical reports. It is also evident that there are individuals who are visiting the site. Please understand that not only are these individuals putting themselves at considerable risk, they are in fact trespassing. One of the arguments given, when a trespasser was confronted, was that it is impossible to trespass on county property because it belongs to the public. This is misinformation. For your safety, everyone is advised to stay clear of the area, and especially do not climb, walk, or ride four-wheelers on the rocks.

The road remains closed, and the rocks on the road will not be removed until there is a plan to address the cliffs. There have been some suggestions that the County abandon the road. Please know that the County Commissioners do not have the authority to take action to abandon any petitioned county road without following a specific legal process. Thus far, there have been no submissions through the abandonment process for the County to abandon this road. Therefore, the County Commissioners cannot, at this time, take any action to abandon Stillwater River Road in part or in whole.

This rock slide was unexpected and as such, funds were not budgeted for this type of event. As you would expect, dealing with the rock slide has already been quite costly to the County. Today, October 6th, at the Commissioner's regular agenda meeting, the Board adopted Resolution 2015-39 which provides for a 2-mill emergency fund. The County will utilize these limited funds toward the Stillwater River Road rockslide situation.

The County is soliciting proposals for engineering services to assist the County in Rockslope Stabilization engineering services and/or safe removal of rock from the slope with firms that specialize in unstable slopes and performing rock slope characterization, rock slope design, rock fall mitigation, rock slope stabilization, rock slope mapping, and landslide investigation and stabilization design. Responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) are due in to the County no later than October 20, 2015.

The County Team, consisting of the Commissioners, County Attorney, Road and Bridge Superintendent, Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator, Sheriff, and Finance Specialist, understands and sympathizes with the affected residents and land owners who are troubled and inconvenienced by the closing of the road. However, safety for everyone remains the priority. Addressing the rock slide and rock wall is a primary focus for the County. Updates will continue as information comes in.

Thank you.

This is a "notice only" email system. Please do not reply to this email address as your email will not be viewed. Questions or concerns regarding the content of the message may be addressed to the Stillwater County Commissioners at the Stillwater County Courthouse in Columbus, Montana, at 406-322-8010.

The team members:

dshupak@stillwater.mt.gov

mdavey@stillwater.mt.gov

gdell@stillwater.mt.gov

nrohde@sca-mt.org

carkell@stillater.mt.gov

jmorse@stillwater.mt.gov

superintendent@stillwaterroadbridge.com

cbrophy@scsomt.org