

## SYSTEM OPERATIONAL REQUEST: 2017-2

**TO:**

MG Scott Spellmon	COE-NWD-ZA Commander
LT COL Damon Delarosa	COE-WW Commander
David Combs	COE-NWD-PDD Chief
Steven Barton	COE-NWD-PDW Chief
Rock Peters	COE-NWD-PDD
Julie Ammann	COE-NWD-PDW-R
Doug Baus	COE-NWD-PDW-R
Aaron Marshall	COE-NWD-PDW-R
Donna Turnipseed	COE-NWW
Steve Hall	COE-NWW-EC
Ann Setter	COE-NWW-OD
Paul Cloutier	COE-NWD-DD
Lorri Lee	USBR-PN Regional Director
John Roache	USBR-PN-6208
Mary Mellema	USBR-PN-6204
Elliot Mainzer	BPA Administrator
Kieran Connolly	BPA-PG-5
Lorri Bodi	BPA-KE-4
Jason Sweet	BPA-PGB
Eve James	BPA-PGPO
Tony Norris	BPA-PGPO-5
Scott Bettin	BPA-KEWR-4

**FROM: Wanda Keefer, Port Manager, Port of Clarkston**

**DATE: August 8, 2017**

**SUBJECT: Lower Granite Dam Minimum Operating Pool**

### SPECIFICATIONS

Raise Lower Granite pool from Minimum Operating Pool (MOP) to MOP + 1 and hold for the 11 hour period from 0600 August 15, 2017 to 1700 August 15, 2017 before resuming normal operations

## **JUSTIFICATION:**

Economic impact: Cruise boats bring roughly 27,000 visitors and crew to the Lewis-Clark Valley every year. This tourist/recreation traffic has a significant impact on the local economy<sup>1</sup>. Early to late fall are the busiest times. These domestic and foreign visitors are typically between 70 and 90 years old.

Preparation: The Port of Clarkston anticipated shoaling around its cruise boat facilities and developed alternatives for deeper draft cruise boats as sediment increases between dredging efforts. More sediment than anticipated arrived in 2017 as a result of a very rainy spring which caused flooding and erosion (see Attachment A). As a result, more cruise boats, even those with less deep drafts, have been impacted. On August 15, there are insufficient alternatives to accommodate all the scheduled moorings. By making shifts and adjustments, the Port has been able to make other dates with conflicts work and requested that cruise boats use less than optimal locations and hours for mooring. However, it was just discovered that the final, riskier<sup>2</sup> alternative for mooring the boats has weak physical structure and should not be utilized.

Minimizing impact: Even the request for an 11-hour adjustment in MOP comes because cruise lines realize the importance of all the river operations and the need to conform with the Biological Opinion.<sup>3</sup> With this ask, we have pared down the desirable pool adjustments to only that which is *essential* for the safety of passengers and the environment.

Going forward: As it expects cruise boat traffic to increase, the Port will explore any and all options for accommodating cruise boats in 2018 and going forward. The Port is seeking help from the Ports of Whitman County and Lewiston to identify additional berthing options. In addition, the Port of Clarkston will explore berth dredging<sup>4</sup> because the cruise boat dock has been designed to assure safe over-the-water fueling, off-loading waste, etc. and is best suited, at this time, to meet passenger needs.

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<sup>1</sup> It is estimated at \$2 million annually to the local economy at current visitation rates.

<sup>2</sup> This was deemed riskier because it lacks appropriate amenities for safe over-the-water fueling, taking on water, off-loading waste, and transferring passengers from Location A to Location B. Now, with the weakened dock structure, it would not be safe to transfer passengers at that location.

<sup>3</sup> The cruise boat to be accommodated would have preferred a 22-hour MOP +1 adjustment, but has rearranged activities to compress off-shore interaction into just 11 hours. That cruise line and others have accepted accommodation at the freight dock; as a result, the request is merely for MOP +1 and not MOP +3.

<sup>4</sup> Please note: acquiring permits for dredging requires a significant amount of time.

# What happened to the highway?

Man has rude awakening on his early morning commute

- By KERRI SANDAINE of the Tribune
- Apr 14, 2017, Lewiston Morning Tribune



A landslide forced a temporary closure of State Route 129 Thursday morning near Boggan's Oasis at the bottom of Rattlesnake Grade, about 40 miles south of Lewiston.

RATTLESNAKE GRADE - A Clearwater Paper employee who was driving to work early Thursday encountered a huge wall of mud and uprooted trees blocking State Route 129.

Shannon Beach, 36, who lives on Buford Ridge in Oregon, said he couldn't believe what was in his headlights at 4:40 a.m. after he crossed the bridge by Boggan's Oasis on the Grande Ronde River.

Instead of a highway, the bottom of Rattlesnake Grade had transformed into a swirling mass of logs, dirt and debris. A small bridge over Rattlesnake Creek was completely wiped out and was sitting upstream in the Grande Ronde River.

"I drive this road every day," Beach said. "It was the craziest thing I've ever seen."

Beach said he headed home to notify the Asotin County Sheriff's Office and transportation officials about the slide, and to let his boss know he'd be late for work.

Ronnie Mock, maintenance supervisor for the Washington State Department of Transportation, arrived a short time later.

"We had to cut logs with a chain saw just to get a vehicle through," Mock said at the scene, about 30 miles south of Asotin. "Some of those logs will probably wind up downstream in the Snake River."

By mid-morning, state crews had one lane of the highway cleared, but it will take a week or more to clean up the damage, Mock said. Luckily, the area's main bridge over the Grande Ronde was not damaged.

Behind Mock stood a pile of skinned trees about 20 feet tall and 70-feet wide. The power of the slide uprooted a thick alder stand, peeled back the bark and took out cattle gates and fencing on a steep hillside near the road.

The log jam picked up rocks and blocked the highway as it made its way down the creek corridor toward the Grande Ronde. The final punch blew out the private metal bridge.

A portion of the highway at the bottom of the winding, aptly-named grade was closed for a few hours until a path was cleared. Pilot cars then assisted motorists through a curvy, 1.5-mile stretch of debris as road crews tackled the mess.

"It's right up to the edge of the pavement in a couple of places," Mock said. "We're hoping no one was in its path. So far, there is no sign of any victims."

Later Thursday, Shannon Beach brought his parents, Tom and Laura Beach, down from their ranch on the ridge to survey the damage.

"I call it Mother Nature," said 62-year-old rancher Tom Beach. "The only woman I'd never marry."

The area has had its fair share of weather-related drama in recent months, from ice jams on the Grande Ronde to flooding on county roads.

The latest gully washer was likely caused by a heavy rain that pelted the area Wednesday night and early Thursday, said residents gathered at Boggan's Oasis. Snow was falling at Fields Spring State Park near Anatone a few days ago, and all that water had to go somewhere.

"It rained so hard last night, we still have standing water on top of the ground," Tom Beach said.

An exact time of the slide is tough to pinpoint, but officials said it must have been an impressive incident, based on the aftermath.

"I would've liked to have seen it," Mock said. "I'd really like to know how that small bridge got upstream."

Shannon Beach said he's thankful he wasn't caught up in the powerful mud ball.

"I'm usually on the road 10 minutes earlier," he said. "When I got down here today, there was no highway left. It was quite a sight."