

Blasts Continues to Remove Unstable Rocks

May 24, 2010

Tennessee Department of Transportation emergency contractor Pacific Blasting & Demolition Ltd. used a third trim blast today to focus on the remaining unstable rock on the slide area over U.S. 129/SR 115 in Blount County.

Last Tuesday, a trim blast focused on three different unsafe areas on the mountainside. That blast helped to remove approximately 2200 tons of material from the slope. Last Saturday's blast removed an estimated 1400 tons of unstable rock so far.

Crews will spend the weekend, scaling the areas blasted this week to remove any loose rock from the slope. After scaling operations conclude for the week, workers will once again resume drilling to continue to stabilizing the slope using rock bolts.

Since rockslide repairs started on April 6, crews have drilled, installed and grouted approximately 3,600 feet of rock bolts.

TDOT has created a web page for information on the rockslide and detours which can be found at <http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/US129rockslide/default.htm>. To view rockslide repair work on U.S. 129/State Route 115 go to <http://earthcam.com/clients/tennesseedot/>.

U.S. 129/SR-115 remains closed from just past the Foothills Parkway to the Tabcat Bridge. However, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. U.S. 129/SR-115 is open from Tabcat Bridge to the state line. Through traffic is not allowed to travel through the slide area at anytime. Detours remain in place to allow motorists to get around the rockslide repair area.

TDOT has offered a \$195,000 incentive for early completion if the contractor opens the road by July 1, 2010. However, the completion date of the project is July 31, 2010.



Rock falling after a trim blast on Saturday.