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## Construction begins at Merlin's I-5 interchange

*Work requires five-day closure of northbound off-ramp starting May 18*

MERLIN — Highway construction work is underway on a \$2.2 million improvement project at the Interstate 5 Exit 61 interchange for Merlin. The project is designed to make safety and operational improvement to the rural interchange located north of Grants Pass.

According to ODOT Project Manager Ted Paselk, all roadways will kept open during the project except for a five-day closure of the northbound off-ramp that will begin on May 18.

"The northbound off-ramp closure is needed so the contractor can widen and rebuild the ramp," said Paselk. "We understand the closure will be a big deal, especially for commuters who travel between Grants Pass and Merlin. We're getting this particular stage finished now to minimize disruptions during the summer recreation season on the lower Rogue River."

During the five-day off-ramp closure, local traffic will be directed to use detours such as Highland Drive. A signed detour for commercial vehicles will direct that traffic to use I-5 Exit 66 at Hugo.

JRT Construction of Oakland, Oregon is the prime contractor. Go online for more information about the project: <http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/REGION3/Pages/I-5-Exit-61.aspx>.

The \$2.2 million improvement project will:

- Add a second northbound lane and new traffic signal at the end of the off-ramp;
- Construct a westbound receiving lane on Merlin Road to Monument Drive, and a right turn lane onto Monument Drive;
- Modify the existing signal at Merlin Road and Monument Drive; and
- Add a new signal at Highland Drive and Merlin Road.

**##ODOT##**