FERGUSON SLIDE
Restoration Project

Project History

State Route 140 is a two-lane highway that begins at Interstate 5 on its western end and serves such cities and towns as Merced, Cathey's Valley, Mariposa and El Portal before it ends at Yosemite National Park on its eastern end. State Route 140 provides travelers year-round access to not only Yosemite National Park but other recreational areas such as the San Luis and Kesterson National Wildlife Refuges, the Sierra National Forest, and the Merced River.

- Within the Merced River Canyon, unusually heavy rainfall in March and April 2006 destabilized the steep hillside above State Route 140 and rockslide activity began in the area on April 29, 2006. Since April 2006, rockslides have damaged and blocked State Route 140 between Mariposa and El Portal.
- State Route 140 was closed to traffic periodically until concrete barriers and protective fencing were erected in late May. One lane of the highway was reopened to vehicles on May 25, but another rockslide damaged the barrier and the highway was closed again.

- On May 28, a major rockslide covered approximately 600 feet of the highway. As a result, State Route 140 was closed to traffic from 3.2 miles east of Briceburg to approximately 6.0 miles west of El Portal. The closure of State Route 140 created severe hardships for residents and businesses in the area. It became necessary to reopen State Route 140 as soon as possible.
- A State of Emergency in Mariposa County was declared that expedited work on a temporary highway detour around the rockslide. The California Department of Transportation began an emergency project to bypass the rockslide on the eastbound side of State Route 140.

- The emergency detour project erected two bridges across the Merced River to temporarily divert traffic on State Route 140 around the Ferguson Rockslide until a permanent solution could be developed and built.

10-0P9200_jd_eeb_5-18-2007

Caltrans

United States of America Department of Transportation