

Hi, Fred Nelson for Community Comment,

'Last Chance Grade'! I am sure that most of you residing in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties are aware of the problem area located within our local highway system. For those of you not familiar with the location, it is a portion of Highway One O One located on the shoreline just a few miles north of Trees of Mystery. The problem is the instability of the earth with portions of the highway and the surrounding area shifting causing slides and slip outs on a continuing basis. At one location, a recent collapse of the highway has left the maximum width of the road at about eighteen feet. There has been lots of talk about solutions. There are federal, state and private agencies loaded with ideas as to what to do next but narrow mindedness keeps them from sharing. Only recently have some of these organizations agreed to come together. Will the remainder of the road stay together long enough for a new road to be built? Caltrans says that based on what they have seen over the past one hundred years, they believe it will but it is possible there is the chance that the highway may fail. In other words "Who knows?" With this type of vagueness how do you think the parents must feel about putting their kids on one of the three school buses that have to travel this hazardous road twice a day. You also have some very nervous school bus drivers. A number of the school staff at the elementary school in Klamath live north of the slide area and must pass over it twice a day to get to work. I haven't even addressed the people who live on one side of the slide and work on the other. I heard someone recently say that it is only a small population that is really effected so the attention is not focused. Anyone who thinks that the lives of many are more important than the lives of a few needs his head examined. How many tourists traveling to our area to see the Redwoods will innocently end up traversing this dangerous piece of ground? A number of weeks ago there were two separate homicides in the Klamath area where law enforcement is sparse. Only one or two officers were on duty in the vicinity with no other emergency services available south of Last Chance Grade so Del Norte County had to ask for backup from Humboldt County. That brings up the question "How much emergency response time is lost due to the traffic control now required on Last Chance Grade?" For a number of years the Postal Service has been entertaining the idea of moving the mail dispatch facility from Eureka to Medford. Those of us who oppose this move cite the weather and the condition of parts of Highway One Ninety Nine. Now, with the deterioration of Last Chance Grade, we have another reason why the facility should not be moved.

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