



Joint Agency News Release

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Rick Acosta, Mt. Hood National Forest at 503-668-1791, or
Don Hamilton, Oregon Department of Transportation at 503-731-8265, or
Annie von Domitz, Travel Information Council, Oregon Heritage Tree Program
at 503-373-0864.

July 14 2011

Barlow Road Tollgate Heritage Maple Tree Succumbs to Old Age

Sandy, OR- A 130-year-old bigleaf maple, which marks the spot of the western-most tollgate of the historic Barlow Road, has substantial decay and poses a hazard to travelers on U.S. Highway 26 (Mt. Hood Highway). The tree is planned to be felled within the next three weeks. The decision to fall the tree is the result of close coordination between Mt. Hood National Forest, the Oregon Heritage Tree Program, and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

The historic Barlow Road is a branch of the Oregon Trail that crossed the southern flank of Mount Hood. Today, a replica of the tollgate stands at the site of the original tollgate, which operated from 1879 until 1915. It is believed that two bigleaf maples were planted adjacent to the tollgate in the 1880s by Daniel Parker, the tollgate keeper at the time. Both tollgate bigleaf maple trees are at the end of their normal life span, but only one of them is leaning toward the highway and posing a hazard.

The old bigleaf maple to be felled has several stems: a main stem, with a diameter of 25 inches, and three smaller 4- to 6-inch diameter stems growing from the base of the trunk. These three smaller stems, each about 25 feet tall, will be untouched by the project, while the decaying main stem will be reduced to a height of two to three feet.

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