

NEWS RELEASE



*Where the Sun Rises
on the Smokies*

HAYWOOD COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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SEVERAL ALTERNATE ROUTES TO HAYWOOD COUNTY FROM WEST AVAILABLE

Rockslide Forces Closure of Interstate 40 in Western North Carolina, But No Need to Cancel Travel Plans

HAYWOOD COUNTY, N.C. (OCTOBER 26, 2009)—Though a rockslide has forced the closure of Interstate 40 near the North Carolina/Tennessee state line at Exit 451, there is no reason to postpone or cancel a visit to the beautiful mountain communities in Western North Carolina. While those coming from other directions are not affected in any way, several alternate routes are available to those with plans to travel to Haywood County, North Carolina, from Tennessee and other points west on I-40.

Here are a few detour options:

- Take Exit 435 (Newport, Tenn.) off I-40 West. Make a left off the exit ramp onto Highway 321/32 (Cosby Highway) toward Newport. Make a right onto Highway 25/70 (East Broadway Street). Continue on Highway 25/70 toward Hot Springs, N.C. In Hot Springs, make a right onto N.C. 209. Bear left at Ferguson Supply Store to stay on N.C. 209. Continue on N.C. 209 through the Crabtree and Iron Duff communities. N.C. 209 soon intersects with I-40 at Exit 24. Continue on N.C. 209 to Lake Junaluska. From here, take the Great Smoky Mountains Expressway (U.S. 19/23/74) east to Exit 106 to Clyde and Canton. Take Exit 103 off U.S. 19/23/74 West to Maggie Valley. Continue to the following exit (Exit 102) to Waynesville.
- Take Exit 407 (Sevierville, Tenn.) off I-40 West. Make a right off the exit ramp onto Highway 66 (Winfield Dunn Parkway) toward Sevierville. Continue straight through intersection with Main Street in Sevierville, where road becomes Highway 441/71. Stay straight on U.S. 441, which becomes 441/321/73/71. Continue on this highway through Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, at which point you will enter the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Follow U.S. 441 through the national park to Cherokee, N.C. Make a left onto U.S. 19 and follow to Maggie Valley.
- For those who would prefer an all-interstate detour, take I-40 East to I-81 North to I-26 East to I-40 West. From I-40 West, take Exit 31 to Canton, Exit 27 to Clyde, Lake Junaluska and Waynesville, and Exit 20 to Maggie Valley.

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The initial estimates of the engineers are that it could take several months to clean up the entire slide and restore traffic, according to the N.C. Department of Transportation. The last exit open on Interstate 40 westbound is Exit 20 at U.S. 276 to Maggie Valley. Travelers heading to Haywood County on I-40 from Asheville and points east are not affected, with exits 31, 27, 24, and 20 still accessible. Visitors from areas to the south and north, not traveling on I-40, will not be affected.

“This only impacts those coming to Haywood County through Tennessee on I-40,” said Lynn Collins, executive director of the Haywood County Tourism Development Authority. “And with several alternate routes available, there really is no reason to cancel any travel plans to the area, whether for these last weeks of great leaf-looking as the autumn colors peak or the upcoming ski season.”

In fact, she said, the aforementioned detour options are terrific scenic routes with some amazing views along the way.

For more information and updates, including maps highlighting alternate routes, log onto www.VisitNCsmokies.com (<http://www.visitncsmokies.com/news/getNews/87>).

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Haywood County, North Carolina, “Where the Sun Rises on the Smokies,” is 554 scenic square miles of spectacular country, with beautiful mountains and valleys dotting the landscape. More than a dozen of its mountain peaks soar to elevations of at least 6,000 feet (more than any east of the Mississippi River), and the county is one of the highest, with a mean elevation of 3,600 feet, east of the Rockies. One of its most notable mountain peaks is Cold Mountain—the basis for the award-winning, best-selling novel by Charles Frazier and the ensuing 2003 major motion picture—at 6,030 feet. The county sits at the western edge of the state, with the Blue Ridge Parkway running along its southwestern border. The Great Smoky Mountains National Park and Pisgah National Forest are located in the northern section of the county. Call 800.334.9036 to request a Media Guide, or visit www.VisitNCsmokies.com/media for a downloadable version and to browse the News Releases Library.