

Rockslide Stabilization May Keep Road Closed For Weeks

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Barnet village residents may have to wait a few weeks to travel north on Route 5.

On Nov. 20, an early morning rock slide deposited a massive pile of rocks and boulders across Route 5, closing the road to both lanes of traffic a few miles above the village. Motorists trying to get from the village to Passumpsic, East Barnet or St. Johnsbury were forced to detour onto Interstate 91.

Since then, several rock slides have occurred. Some of the slides came naturally, while others were forced by Janod Enterprises of Quebec in an effort to stabilize the cliff face. The company used heavy equipment and inserted inflatable airbags in cliff face cracks to oust rocks by puffs of air, according to Barnet road foreman Maurice Gingue in an earlier interview.

Now that the loose rock is down, Janod Enterprises are expected to drill holes in the cliff face, insert bolts and cover the surface with cement, according to Vermont Agency of Transportation employee Jerry Hodgdon on Friday morning at the site.

Janod Enterprises also shored up the cliff face on Mt. Pisgah on Route 5A in Westmore after the rock slide there last year.

The rocks were loaded into dump trucks (Friday) to be transported to Bimson Drive for use as a base for the proposed firehouse road.

Route 5 is expected to be closed at least another week or two, Hodgdon said.

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