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**News**

# Half of Mackinac Island's M-185 shoreline road closed, repairs to last into September

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MACKINAC ISLAND, MI - A large section of Mackinac Island's M-185 highway that rings the island has been closed to all traffic - humans and horses alike - as state transportation officials map out a plan for \$1.4 million in emergency repairs.

High water and wave issues have damaged sections of the 8.2-mile road in the last few years, and caused some other temporary closures. Currently, about 4 miles of the road is closed, and there are some sections that have been washed away, island parks officials said.

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On Wednesday, the Mackinac State Historic Parks staff posted this message on Facebook: "M-185 is closed from the state park boundary just east of Mission Point Resort to British Landing. This is an indefinite closure as repairs will begin to help repair damage done by high water levels. We hope to have the road open in July."

A repair project will start on Monday, June 15, the Michigan Department of Transportation said today. The estimated date to complete the work is Sept. 15.

"The Michigan Department of Transportation is investing about \$1.4 million in emergency repairs addressing high-water and wave erosion damage to M-185 on Mackinac Island," MDOT spokesperson Dan Weingarten said in news release. "Roughly 4 miles of the highway around the island (the only state highway in Michigan that does not regularly allow automobile traffic) has sustained ongoing damage that escalated last fall and winter. The project will establish a full-width gravel surface suitable for bicycle/horse/vehicle traffic in the damaged areas of M-185. Paving is planned to take place later."

Work crews will repair and create an aggregate surface on the road, and try to mitigate future erosion damage.

"The work will require segments of M-185 to be closed during repairs. Work will begin at the city limit and move north. Each segment will have bicycle/horse/pedestrian traffic detoured inland during construction and will be reopened to traffic when complete."

Phil Porter, director of Mackinac State Historic Parks, said his team is working closely with MDOT on the repairs, which will be undertaken by a Team Elmers crew. The priority is to fix and reopen the section of highway that runs from near Mission Point Resort north to Arch Rock, which is a hugely popular place for island visitors.

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"If we can do that, it will really satisfy a number of our guests. That's the priority," Porter said, adding the repair work will keep moving north from there and the road is expected to reopen in sections as summer moves toward fall.

While the short-term goal is to repair the road, the long-term plan is to also bring in and place huge rip-rap rocks to use as a buffer along the shoreline.

"We are going to try and deal with the most seriously impacted sections this year," he said, adding more work could be done in the fall. "Until the water goes down, it's going to be a constant threat."

