

Contractor Sacked on Blowing Rock Project

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Slow progress on the US 321 project around Blowing Rock? It may speed up now, but the completion estimate has been pushed back 6 months, that as the state has changed prime contractors on the project. Maymead Inc. of Mountain City, Tenn., has replaced Taylor & Murphy of Asheville as the prime contractor on the project in Blowing Rock, as Taylor & Murphy has been undergoing a company restructuring and could not continue work on the project. A new subcontractor, Vecellio & Grogan Inc. of Beckley, W.Va., has been hired to support rock blasting and grading work. The DOT release said the transition from Taylor & Murphy to Maymead, as well as poor weather this winter, have slowed work on the project. Additionally, NCDOT and the town of Blowing Rock worked together to change the wall pattern on 36 of the 40 walls being built along the project to better fit the character of the village. Because of these changes, the scheduled completion date has been revised from the fall of 2015 to June 30, 2016. The road has not been closed for blasting since December and, weather permitting, crews made temporary road repairs, cleared right of way and filled deep valleys in the southern part of the project toward Lenoir. Once blasting resumes, motorists should expect the road to be closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and traffic detoured around the blasting area.