A short section of U.S. 321 in Blowing Rock will be closed twice a week starting next week for blasting operations as part of the road widening project. Construction crews will continue blasting the rock at Cliff Dwellers Inn at Westview Drive near the intersection of U.S. 321 and U.S. 221/U.S. 321 Business. The closure will have a significant impact on trucks and tractor trailers servicing Blowing Rock or passing through the area.

Starting Nov. 27, U.S. 321 will be closed in both directions on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. until further notice. The closures during these times will affect traffic as follows:

· All through traffic on U.S. 321 will be directed to follow a detour route onto U.S. 221/U.S. 321 Business through downtown Blowing Rock;

· Through truck traffic will not be allowed on U.S. 221/U.S. 321 Business. All through truck traffic must follow the signed detour along N.C. 18 and U.S. 421 in Caldwell, Wilkes and Watauga counties; and

· Access to businesses will be maintained at all times for local traffic and truck deliveries along U.S. 321 from Broyhill Home Furnishings at U.S. 221/U.S. 321 Business to Cliff Dwellers at West View Drive.

Visitors heading to the High Country this week for the holidays will not encounter lane closures along U.S. 321; lane closures will be suspended until Monday, Nov. 26 at 6 p.m. Please note that

The speed limit along U.S. 321 remains 35 miles per hour. The N.C. State Highway Patrol continues to monitor this corridor for speeding violations.

The N.C. Department of Transportation reminds all motorists to drive slowly using caution in work zones. When lane closures are in effect, remember to watch for flaggers standing near the roadway and be prepared to stop.

Call the project hotline at (828) 964-3260 to speak to an NCDOT representative during regular weekday business hours (8 a.m. until 5 p.m.). The hotline will not be available on Thursday, Nov. 22 and Friday, Nov. 23. The hotline will reopen on Monday, Nov. 26.

For more information or updates on the U.S. 321 road widening project, visit the project website www.ncdot.gov/projects/BlowingRock321/ .