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Erosion to be remedied with state grant

BY BARRETT J. BRUNSMAN | BBRUNSMAN@ENQUIRER.COM

MIAMI TWP. - Dry Run Road is one of the most scenic in this Clermont County community, but residents complain it's been unsafe for years because of erosion.

Township Trustee Ed Humphrey has lined up a state grant to help remedy that.

The Ohio Public Works Commission grant will cover 60 percent of a \$425,000 project to shore up parts of Dry Run Road that have been eaten away by high water in the creek, Humphrey said.

The township's share of the project, \$170,000, will be budgeted for next year, Humphrey said.

Work is to begin when the grant money becomes available in July and should be completed by October, said Mike Mantel, service director for the township.

A Nov. 26 meeting has been scheduled to inform residents of the details. Targeted are a quarter-mile stretch near Galley Hill Road and a 600-foot stretch near the entrance to the Laurelwood subdivision, Mantel said.

Portions of the road will have to be closed, which could affect hundreds of homes - as well as people driving to Meadowview Elementary School off intersecting Mount Zion Road and students commuting to Live Oaks Vocational School off Buckwheat Road.

Part of Dry Run Road, near U.S. 50, will be rebuilt to eliminate a dangerous S-curve, Mantel said.

Speed limits vary from 25 mph to 45 mph, but motorists often ignore them because they find the twisting road fun to drive, Mantel said.

Engineering work for the project began months ago, Mantel said.

O'Neal Johnston, who has lived on Crooked Creek Lane for 27 years, said Friday he and other residents were unaware that help was on the way for Dry Run Road, which leads to his subdivision.

A retired scientist, Johnston drafted a petition that he and 20 other residents of the Foxwood subdivision (also called Laurelwood) signed Oct. 28 to express concerns about the road to Humphrey and the two other trustees.

Flooding in May 2003 caused significant erosion, collapsing part of Dry Run Road and reducing a small stretch to one lane.

"That whole area is a nightmare as far as road maintenance because of the creek," Mantel said of the tributary of the East Fork of the Little Miami River.

The problem has been exacerbated by runoff from subdivisions built in recent years, Mantel said.

The road probably dates to the 1800s, when it was a horse path, Humphrey said. Now, it includes homes that cost up to \$500,000.

"It's a windy, narrow road that follows the creek," Humphrey said. "It's beautiful. No wonder people want to live there."

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