

Governor Otter leads groundbreaking ceremony for new Dover Bridge

DOVER -- Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter joined business and government leaders this morning to formally launch a project that will replace one of Idaho's most dangerous bridges, improve safety for motorists and sustain or create 400 jobs.

More than 100 people participated in a groundbreaking ceremony for a new Dover Bridge on U.S. 2.

Popular Mechanics and *The History Channel* consider the 72-year-old Dover Bridge one of the worst in America. The bridge has a sufficiency rating of 3 on a scale of 100, is a safety risk and commercial bottleneck on one of the major east-west routes in northern Idaho.

"The long-awaited start of work on this project reflects my determination to address the deferred, delayed and still growing backlog of maintenance, repair and improvement needs on Idaho's roads and bridges," Governor Otter said. "This is not a quick fix, but its a necessary part of governments long-term responsibility to our citiz! ens. From now on, let the Dover Bridge be a symbol of that commitment."

Dover Mayor Randy Curless said the community has worked tirelessly for many years to remind the transportation department, legislators and governors of the importance of the bridge and the need to replace it.

"This day has been a long time in coming. The first public meetings to discuss replacing the bridge were held 25 years ago," Curless said. "The new bridge will improve the safety for all who travel it and strengthen this key economic corridor."

Curless thanked Governor Otter and the Idaho Transportation Board for their efforts to fund the project.

The narrow, restricted bridge over railroad tracks will be replaced with a five-lane structure, 72-foot wide, and 1,200 feet long. The \$21.6 million project is funded with federal stimulus money.