

Workers Scale Rock Face to Clear Highway 70

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Most people run from falling rocks. These guys go looking for them.

Ron Collins Engineer: "It's what they do for a living, they climb these steep slopes. And knock down rocks for a living."

A week ago a rock slide buried this stretch of Highway 70 in Plumas County under 15 feet of rubble. Dozers and trucks cleared the roadway but the slide left behind a dangerous situation on the steep slope above.



Ron Collins Engineer: "He sent a rock down and it actually made it to the road. So we decided to clear up all the small rocks."

Enter a four man crew of rock scalers. They free-climb the vertical face then reel their way down the slope, smashing loose rocks and boulders down to the ground below. This crew of scalers is from near Santa Barbara. They are some of the only people in the world trained for this type of dangerous work. Broken footing, treacherous slopes and tumbling rocks are all part of a days work.

Donny Cox, Rock Scaler: "You get used to it after a while, so I mean it's a different job but it's better than sitting in a office all day long."

Besides their battle with gravity, these workers are also racing against the clock. Another storm is expected to hit here Tuesday night. And they want try and get this entire face clear to prevent another slide from happening. On Highway 70, I'm Owen Clark for Action News.