

Many Americans in similar position as prices increases

BUSINESS, 4D



Kitsap Sun

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Development to reopen CK road



The intersection of Gluds Pond Road and Waaga Way on Nov. 17. PHOTOS BY MEEGAN M. REID/KITSAP SUN

David Nelson
Kitsap Sun
USA TODAY NETWORK

CENTRAL KITSAP – A "ROAD CLOSED" sign materialized along Highway 303 at Glud's Pond Street on Thursday, blocking access to a road that for about two decades has had very little utility to the larger public anyway. That is, it's essentially already been closed to nearly all traffic, because only a handful of neighbors and occasional visitors to a farm had use for the route. The temporary closed sign means that's about to change.

The immediately reason for the closure appears to be for more asphalt work on the 700-foot road, also known as Glud's Pond Road. It runs east from the connection at the highway, with just one driveway that accesses a number of residential properties and formerly a spur that went to what used to be known as the Minder Farm.

The farm is gone now, replaced by what will be 13 apartment buildings at the east end of what's known as the Royal Valley Development, a sprawling residential community under construction along the highway that spans from Glud's Pond Road to a midpoint of what used to be fields that stretch to Central Valley Road to the west, and to Paulson Road to the north.

The road that has been quiet and calm since 2002 will be the next to go, as



Work has been done to prepare for the opening of Gluds Pond Road at Brownsville Highway.

> **"Someone's going to pay with their life for this. This was closed for a reason."**
>
> **James Wheeler**
> Resident

Kitsap County commissioners are set to approve a resolution on Monday, Nov. 23 to officially reopen the Glud's Pond Road connection to Brownsville Highway. And the few neighbors there worry that the plan, negotiated as part of the overall development of the area, will re-introduce risks the state sought to eliminated more than 20 years ago when the decision was made to close it.

"Someone's going to pay with their life for this," James Wheeler, who's lived on one of the few Glud's Pond

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Legislature may tackle reform for lawsuit payouts

Jake Goldstein-Street
WASHINGTON STATE STANDARD

When Washington lawmakers return to Olympia in January they'll consider a variety of ways to address ballooning legal payouts hamstringing the budgets of the state and local governments.

One option: transformative changes to the state's legal system, such as capping skyrocketing damage payouts or limiting public liability. Conversely, attorneys who bring the cases and other advocates want to focus on reducing the harm that leads to these cases.

After months of work by a state panel to come up with solutions, all ideas are ready for lawmakers to ponder — but competing voices appear no closer to consensus than when the Legislature finished its work for 2026 in March, and created the committee.

"It really is upon us to decide, given the menu of options, where we want to go," said state Sen. Manka Dhingra, a Democrat from Redmond and chair of the Law and Justice Committee.

Everyone agrees on one thing: Action is needed.

"We need significant changes, and it has to happen now," said Derek Young, executive director of the Washington State Association of Counties. "I just refuse to believe that this Legislature is going to allow their governments to fail."

The claims leading to the fiscal crisis run the gamut from bungled child welfare cases to discrimination. Many involve childhood sexual abuse, especially in the foster care system. Governments have been found liable for failing to protect those children, and the cases often stem from decades-old conduct.

Court decisions over the past decade have opened up the state to more claims. At the same time, verdicts handed down from juries are growing. This spring, for example, a Pierce County jury ordered the state and a day care center to pay $130 million for the death of a toddler.

Last fiscal year, the state spent over $537 million resolving claims, a record-breaking annual figure that has jumped by hundreds of millions of dollars in the past few years. Beyond that, the state spent more than $90 million to defend the cases, including fees for insurance along with in-house and outside defense attorneys to handle

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