

Gondola cable repairs to start



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By NICOLE NOLAN
Staff writer

KELLOGG - It has been 20 years since the Silver Mountain Resort's gondola was built, and now it is the focus of a massive repair in preparation for this year's snow season.

The original gondola cable, the mechanism that carries the gondola cabins up and down the mountain side, came up in the last inspection as due for replacement.

Its replacement comes with a price tag of more than \$1 million according to John Williams, Silver Mountain marketing director. Silver Mountain had the replacement, 6.2 mile cable custom made in Switzerland this summer, and it will arrive this morning in two spools to kick off the extensive process of replacing the old cable.

According to Rick Brooks, head of maintenance at Silver Mountain, crews will splice the first spool of new cable onto the original cable, which they will use to pull the new cable through. The splice itself will be 200 feet long, the entire process requiring the work of five to 20 men, depending on the stage in the process. A 180 ton crane has been brought into the Silver Valley from Spokane to help lift the 70 tons of cable spool.

Brooks expects the project will be completed around Nov. 12. Residents should be aware that traffic may make a slight detour through the Silver Mountain parking lot off Bunker Avenue during various stages of the repair.

Spooling a new cable up the mountain

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By NICOLE NOLAN

Silver Mountain has taken on the monumental task of replacing the gondola cable, which has been in place since the gondola was constructed 20 years ago. Tuesday morning two 70 ton spools carrying the custom-made replacement cable arrived to kick off the process of replacement. Pictured here is the first of the two spools as it is unloaded by the Silver Mountain maintenance crew from the tractor trailer using a 180 ton crane from Spokane. It will be spliced into the old cable, pictured in the foreground, and the original cable will make one last round on the gondola as it pulls the new cable through before it is then placed into retirement.

