



## U.S. 199 Redwood Highway Safety Corridor

### Redwood Highway Safety Corridor

ODOT has approved a Safety Corridor for Redwood Highway from MP 20.67 to 27.69, between Selma and Cave Junction. The planning period was from Oct. 2019 - April 2020. It is expected to take effect in May 2020 and be in place through May 2023. Enforcement fines will double. It will be the first Safety Corridor for Redwood Highway since a similar safety corridor was decommissioned just west of Grants Pass near the R.C.C. campus.



The Illinois Valley Community, including the US 199 Safety Corridor Stakeholder group is supportive of establishing this safety corridor. Members of the group include Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, State and County Road authorities and several community members.

### **Background:**

Redwood Highway has a higher than average crash rate compared to other rural interstate highways. The more serious injury and fatal crashes, over the years, tend to be run-off-the-road or head-on type crashes.

Crash rates tend to be higher where there are intersections and crossroads, such as the urban area. In the summer of 2019, there were four fatal crashes between June 1 and August 30.

Most common crash causes tend to be:

- Driving too fast for conditions, following too close, other driver error
- Fixed or other object, rear end, turning movement

Most common crash occurrences:

- Daytime
- Weather: dry and clear
- Road characteristic: straight or horizontal curve
- All days, with Monday being the worst; crashes increase through afternoon to evening
- Increase in May thru end of year, with July the worst
- All driver ages, with 20-29 being the highest age group
- Injury Severity: throughout corridor with worst between Kerby and Cave Junction

### **Enforcement:**

Typically, safety corridors receive increased law enforcement presence and double fines for traffic infractions. Also, drivers may be asked to turn on headlights during the day, further encouraged to



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obey posted speeds and refrain from passing. Signs are placed at each end of the safety corridor letting motorists know when they enter the safety corridor.

Past reductions in law enforcement have had a negative effect on crashes and traffic enforcement. The number of critical patrols are coming back, especially sheriff's deputies in Josephine County.

### ***Education:***

ODOT has brought its crash cars to the Illinois Valley, both to markets in Selma and Cave Junction but also to area schools. The presence of the cars caused an open conversation with the community and schools.

In addition, there is an active Safety Awareness group that has met several times over the years. Most members of this group agreed to serve as the corridor's stakeholder committee.

Other items that have helped with education include:

- ODOT permanent and variable message board safety campaign late summer/fall 2019 that called out fatality numbers in the corridor.
- "Guerilla sign" sign campaign using consecutive "Burma Shave"-type signs both north and southbound.
- Hour long interview on local Illinois Valley radio station in November.
- Purchase of safety advertising display ads in the Illinois Valley News.

### ***Planning and Engineering***

ODOT will continue to monitor all areas within the safety corridor for safety-related issues and to pursue additional safety funding to significantly reduce or eliminate the serious injury and fatal crashes within the corridor.

An ODOT Planning effort to program future improvements as funding is available is expected to begin in 2020.