

US199: Redwood Highway Safety Review

Jered W. Carpenter, PE

OTSC – September 11, 2019



Why are we here?

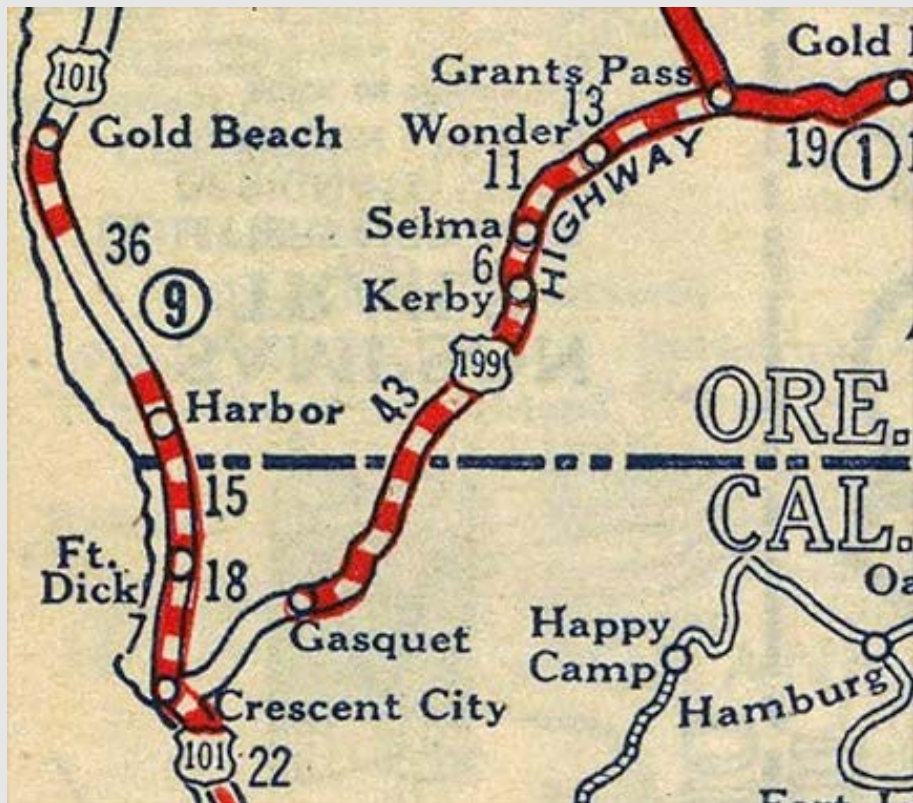
- 4 Fatalities on US199 this year.
- Several websites have published data showing US199 as one of the nations deadliest highways
- Fleetowner.com list US199 as the 13th deadliest highway (0.58 deaths per mile, 2011-2015, data source unknown, Dec 2017)
- Bestonline.com lists the highway as 16th deadliest (0.58 deaths per mile, June 2018)
- Local media repeats this narrative after we have fatalities on US199, rarely if ever citing their data sources

The screenshot shows a news article on the NBC 5 2 website. The article is titled "Highway 199 on list of most dangerous highways in the country" and is dated November 13, 2017. The article content includes a video player showing a highway sign for "199 CRESCENT CITY" and a yellow play button. Below the video, the text reads: "Josephine Co., Ore. — A Southern Oregon I highway has been named one of the deadliest in the nation." The website header includes navigation links for Home, News, Features, Weather, About, News Tips, and OSF Rush Report. There are also social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A sidebar on the right contains advertisements for KLA-MO-YA Casino and West Coast Air Conditioning.



Overview of Redwood Highway

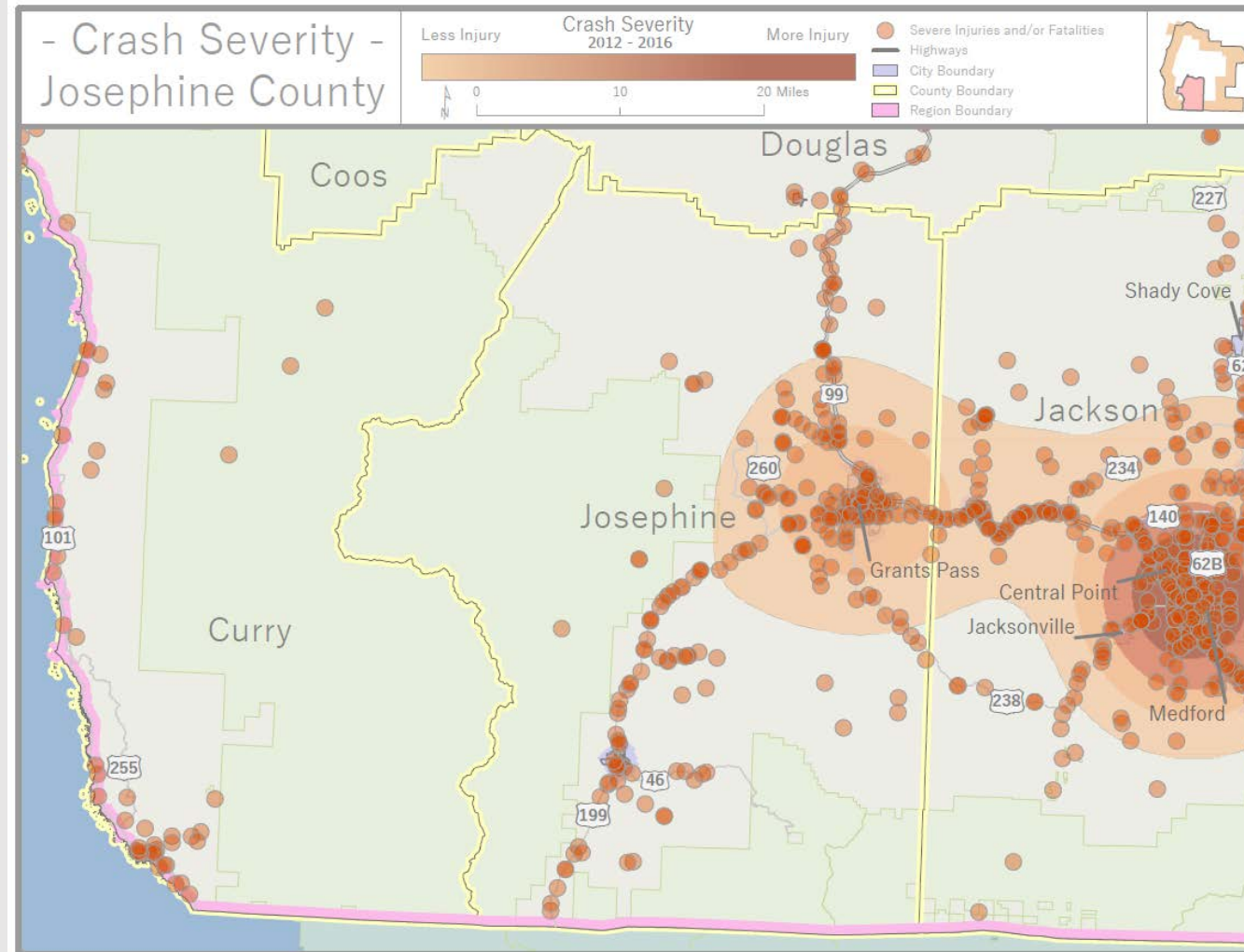
- Hwy extends from MP -2.74 in Grants Pass to 41.69 at the California Border
- Expressway/Urban Principal Arterial in Grants Pass
- Rural Principal Arterial outside of Grants Pass
- AADT Ranges from 3,500 to 32,000
- Mixture of commerce, commuting, and tourist traffic
- Less than 10% trucks in most areas



Fake News or Real Problem?

- ODOT Data shows 24 fatalities from 2011-2015 = 0.54 crashes per mile (does not include California data)
- 2016 US199 Crash Rate = 2.15 crashes per MVM
- 2016 OR62 Crash Rate = 2.30 crashes per MVM
- Statewide crash rate of similar highways is 1.70 per MVM
- For comparison, OR62 had 11 fatalities between 2011-2015, OR42 had 14, OR38 had 12.

Where are the problems at?



Recent Crashes

- 4.34 PM on 8/15/19 – Head on Crash @ MP 38.72 one fatality. Motorcyclist passing in a no passing zone.



Recent Crashes Continued

- 4:45 PM on 8/4/19 – Head on Crash @ MP 14.67 one fatality, two serious injuries, factors involved unknown

FATAL CRASH ON REDWOOD HWY AT HAYES HILL

<https://kobi5.com/news/fatal-crash-on-redwood-hwy-at-hayes-hill-107895/>

August 4, 2019



WONDER, Ore. — Around 5 PM Sunday evening, Rural Metro fire, AMR Josephine County and Illinois Valley Fire District responded to a head on crash on Redwood Highway at Hayes Hill.

Rural Metro says four occupants had to be extricated from the vehicles and were all taken to a local hospital. Two people are in serious condition and one of them was transported to the hospital via Mercy Flights helicopter. One person was pronounced dead at the scene.

Oregon State Police is still investigating the crash.

Redwood highway was backed up for some time but has been reopened around 9:30 PM.

Recent Crashes Continued

- 7:08 AM on 6/7/19 – Head on Crash @ MP 8.5 one fatality, four serious injuries, medical emergency suspected as a cause.

Fatal, head-on crash on Redwood Highway

by KTVL | Friday, June 7th 2019



Pictured is the scene of the crash (Courtesy Rural Metro Fire)

Recent Crashes Continued

- 8:38 PM on 6/1/19 – Head on Crash @ MP 21 one fatality, three serious injuries, factors involved unknown.


ONE PERSON DEAD FOLLOWING MULTI-CAR CRASH ON REDWOOD HIGHWAY



Oregon State Police said one person died and three people were taken to the hospital because of the crash.

Posted: Jun 1, 2019 9:03 PM

Updated: Jun 3, 2019 10:28 AM

Posted By: Leah Thompson 



JOSEPHINE COUNTY, Ore. --

UPDATE: Oregon State Police say Ryan Risely (26) of Lexington, KY died at the scene of the crash because of fatal injuries.

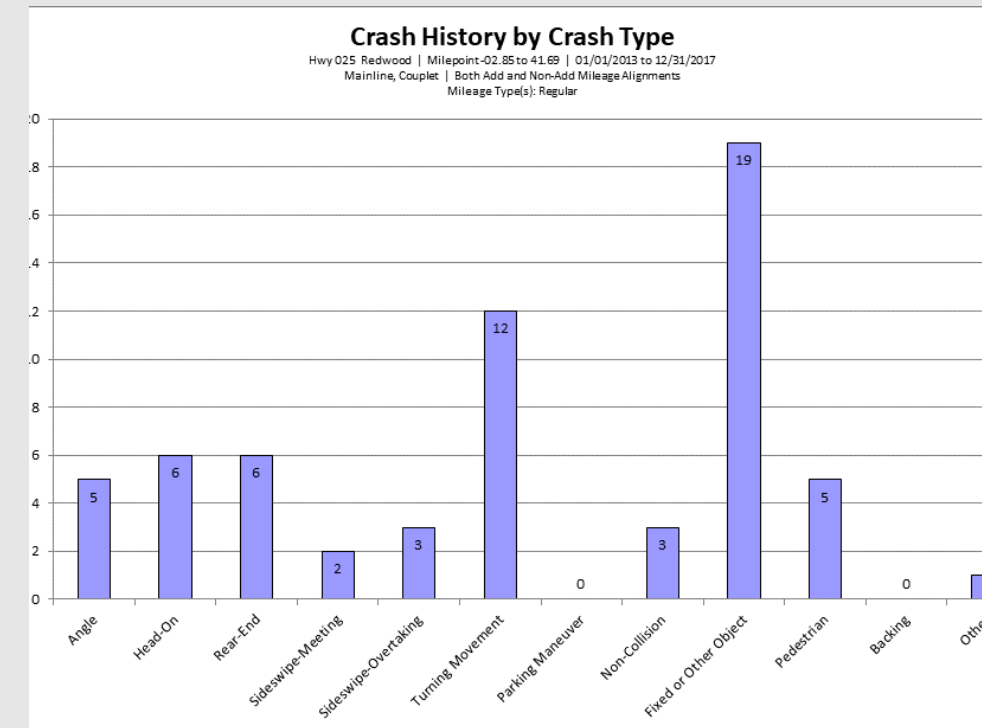


Recent Crashes Continued

- 7:20 PM on 11/23/18 – Head on Crash @ MP 22.0, one fatality, three serious injuries, driver was reported as driving erratically prior to the crash
- 3:00 PM on 11/19/18 – Turning Movement Crash @ MP 30.5 while making a left turn. One fatality, one serious injury, driver was 89 years old.
- 1:50 AM on 6/2/18 – Pedestrian hit @ MP 33.0 after he leapt out of a vehicle following a domestic dispute.
- 8:48 AM on 5/30/18 – Head on Crash @ MP 5.42 in urban area. One fatality, one serious injury, factors involved unknown.
- 6:45 PM on 2/20/18 – Head on Crash @ MP 24.39 in curve. One fatality, one serious injury, factors involved unknown.
- Afternoon on 2/8/18 – Head on Crash @ MP 24.50. One fatality, factors involved unknown.

Trends?

- Crashes are not concentrated to “Hot-Spots”, but rather spread out .
- Time of day, weather, roadway geometry, & traffic control devices do not seem to be a factor.
- Turning movement & fixed object crashes result in majority of severe injuries and fatalities.
- Spot speed studies have shown 85th percentile speeds 5-10 MPH above the posted speed limit.
- Human Factors!



What has ODOT Done to Address the Problem?



IV Community Development Meeting - 2018

- Systemic Safety Improvements
 - Applegate River Bridge and Cave Junction have recently installed rumble strips.
 - U.S. 199 between the South Y and Applegate River Bridge funded in 2020, rumble strips.
- U.S. 199 Clear Zone Project MP 9.46 to 40.06 funded in '21—'24 STIP
- U.S. 199 Kerby Pedestrian Bridge funded '18-'21 STIP
- U.S. 199 Corridor plan will begin from Grants Pass to Cave Junction.
- Public Outreach & Working With Local Partners

What is the Path Forward?

- Short term messaging
- US199 Stakeholder Working Group
- Media campaign
- Corridor study
- Systemic safety improvements (clear zone, rumble strips, etc.)
- Continued public outreach
- Community support for long range, large scale projects

What About A Safety Corridor?

- ✓ A fatal and serious injury crash problem that has been demonstrated over a defined period of time
- ❑ Dedicated enforcement resources available
- ❑ A segment of roadway that has a reasonable length
- ✓ An active multi-disciplinary stakeholder group
- ✓ The five year average of the local fatal and serious injury crash rate is at or above 150 percent of the latest statewide five year average for a similar type of roadway (as determined by the ODOT Crash Analysis and Reporting Unit).
- ❑ Corridor length is manageable from an enforcement and education (media coverage) standpoint. Highway must be similar in nature. Two to 10 miles in length is preferable. Rural sections may be substantially longer than urban sections.

Conclusions

- Crash rate similar to other comparable highways in the Region
- Crash severity is worse than other comparable highways in the Region
- No “Easy” fixes
- Long term projects (systemic and large scale projects) will be ongoing
- More law enforcement resources are needed to influence driving culture



Questions

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