

US 199 Safety Awareness Working Group
Kerby Belt Building / September 30, 2019
10 a.m. - noon

Attendance: Jeff Gavlick, IVFD; Jon Zehe, ODOT Maintenance Manager; Jean Ann Miles, Cave Junction City Council; Sgt. Ed Burke and Lt. Todd Moran, Grants Pass Dept. of Public Safety; Jorge Gonzales, Will Fitzgerald ODOT Traffic; Rosalee Senger, ODOT Transportation Safety Coordinator; Jerry Marmon, ODOT District Mgr.; Charlene Shelton, Community member; Lt. Stephanie Bigman, OSP; Deputy Donald Moore, JCSO; Tyler Humphries, Rural Metro; Gary Leaming, ODOT Public Affairs.

1. Welcome and introductions – Jerry Marmon

Not simple task, success thru partnerships,

- a. Role of the working group – what we hope to achieve
 - i. ID issues – all from different backgrounds and perspectives
 - ii. Brainstorm solutions
 - iii. Voice of community: Need your help seeing what's in community and report
 - iv. Raise awareness- we've taken some small steps

What we're not:

Not a decisions making body- make recommendations

1. Won't develop policies
2. Won't determine funding allocations
3. Open to suggestion

2. Brief overview (why we are here)

Crash data, severity, causal factors- Senger- Overview of presentation to RVACT and Oregon Traffic Safety Commission

I. What has been done so far: ODOT

- Generated extensive media coverage in Mail Tribune, Daily Courier, Oregonian, Curry Coastal Pilot, local TV. Mail Tribune editorial calling for more OSP funding.
- Agency purchasing safety messaging in the Illinois Valley News, weekly newspaper.
- Exploring 'Burma Shave' signs for placement in ODOT R/W.
- Implemented Portable Variable Message and permanent message campaign pre Labor Day of number of fatalities in corridor since June 1 (which is all of 2019).
- Presentations to RVACT and Oregon Traffic Safety Commission.
- Website established as repository for information and data for media and public.

II. Other Agencies:

- After years of cutbacks, JCSO getting back on its feet, according to Lt. Moran, GPDPS.
- Lt. Bigman: Grants Pass Field office has 10 troopers total- six during the day, 4 at night. Hours from 7 a.m. to 3 a.m. for Josephine County.

- From 6:30 p.m. until 3 a.m., OSP handles all calls and takes those calls until troopers are “too exhausted”, thus leaving gap when there are none on duty.
- OSP handles 300 calls a month, in addition to all of their OSP calls. Troopers are exhausted due to OT shifts.
- US 199 OT shifts: 10 hours normal day, but troopers working 10-13 day, every day.
- Senger noted that in the OPB radio interview, she said LEOs are doing everything they can.
- Bigman added those same 10 troopers are arresting more drunk drivers than any other office, even beating Portland OSP. It was noted that tells how many drunk, impaired drivers are out there.
- Bigman noted good, motivated troopers – plus there’s a lot of impaired drivers out there.
- Lt. Moran said the Victim’s Impact Panel has 70-80 people showing up for the panel every other month. He also noted that this is “part of the local culture” – they know when law enforcement is “on or off”.

Charlene Shelton inquired about law enforcement funding, how allocated. She said more OSP needed on US 199. Lt. Bigman responded:

- Trooper difference is funding GP field office from 27 troopers to 10 in 30 years.
- OSP is catch-all for different programs without add’l. funding
- \$84M approved by 2019 legislature for additional troopers but various needs – backfill retirements, recruiting difficult.
- GP office has two recruits graduating from academy in November. Once here, they will shadow other trooper for 3 months. Then they will be on 18 mo. probationary period.
- The Grants Pass command includes all of Josephine County. If someone calls in sick, they try to tag another trooper from Jackson or Douglas County OSP offices.
- Deputy Moore: more funding needed with JoCo Sheriff – back to traffic patrol.
- Moran: OSP handles all major crimes in addition to patrol.

Lt. Moran: About four years ago, Grants Pass tried to get red light intersection cameras. For the city, safety is related to intersections. Moran discussed his perception of the state policies with regard to red light running cameras that seem to be more about cost vs. risk. Grants Pass only had one qualifying intersection.

Moran said they would like to have ‘tattletale’ at that intersection lights – lights that LEOs can see downstream if someone has run a red light - but they apparently were not approved.

Marmon noted he did not know they asked for that.

Other notes:

Fatal crashes may be caused by those not familiar with the road system. An increasing trend of out- of-state temporary residents, “trimigrants”, who travel with the marijuana crops.

Cave Junction/Illinois Valley population doubles during growing season. That equals more out of state people and trespassers. Homeless population.

Jeff Gavlik noted IVFD is using Facebook on all crashes.

Since 2016: each year has seen numbers increase in TA or Traffic Accidents. IVFD states that it responded to more crashes this past May than any other previous month dating back to 2016.

All TA in the IV that IVFD Responded					All TA On HWY 199 that IVFD Responded				
	2016	2017	2018	2019		2016	2017	2018	2019
Jan	12	15	19	22	Jan	6	8	8	7
Feb	9	17	10	20	Feb	5	6	5	8
Mar	19	20	25	7	Mar	11	12	12	5
Apr	8	12	11	13	Apr	5	6	4	3
May	15	17	15	29	May	9	7	5	10
Jun	17	21	16	20	Jun	9	3	2	9
Jul	18	18	20	24	Jul	8	7	6	8
Aug	14	21	13	21	Aug	5	4	6	7
YTD	112	141	129	156	YTD	58	53	48	57
Sep	24	17	14		Sep	7	2	7	
Oct	20	19	20		Oct	7	11	4	
Nov	14	17	24		Nov	2	8	11	
Dec	12	19	28		Dec	2	4	7	
YTD	182	213	215	156	YTD	76	78	77	

Issues we're seeing – group discussion

Councilor Miles: Blind curve near US 199/Wild Park Lane Road. School bus stops on blind corner – no signing to alert motorists of the upcoming bus stop. ODOT will check for 'school bus stop ahead' signs and consider lighted bus-activated sign.

JCSO Deputy Don Moore said he's seen drivers clock more than 80 MPH, even when he has his overhead lights on. "There's a complete disregard for law enforcement."

Lt. Bigman: a Safety Corridor with double fines will get driver attention. She said many times at passing lanes, drivers will wait for it and then the slow moving traffic will speed up and others will go speeding by.

Senger noted the requirements for a Safety Corridor are prescribed but the ODOT Region Manager may ask for an exception.

Councilor Miles: US 199 has a reputation and is damaging economic development, livability in IV/CJ.

Deputy Moore noted that a driver could be safe, but opposing driver could come into your lane. He added once he's off duty at 7 p.m., there is no respect for traffic laws. He also said some drivers aren't just going over 80 MPH, they're also cutting 'cookies' in the roadway.

ODOT Traffic Engineer Jorge Gonzales noted Traffic section could look at existing rumble strips since there are not many on the shoulder. It might slow drivers down to have them in both center line and shoulder.

Lt. Bigman noted many head-on crashes are caused by drivers 'peeking' around slow moving vehicles to see if they can pass.

Other ideas:

Lt. Bigman stated she could request traveling DUI processing center. She could request teams from other area to come as well as coordinate with county and city to process all they can.

Bigman said local Facebook groups and scanner pages announces OSP is running code (lights and siren) and everyone knows the location of the law enforcement officers (LEOS). The problems in Cave Junction are similar to the highway: people throwing beer bottles out the window.

Some drivers are avoiding US 199 altogether due to safety. They're taking Bear Camp Road instead.

Deputy Moore: If LEOS are in pursuit of speeders, lawbreakers, they know they can get the chase terminated by going into the opposing lane.

Shelton asked with regard to fatal crashes how many more vehicles are using US 199 today vs. 1980?

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/Data/Pages/Traffic-Counting.aspx>

What is the ADT on U.S. 199 ODOT inventory highway #25

2017 Avg. Daily Traffic depending on location: 9,900 near Applegate River Bridge to 3,500 near CA Border.

ODOT Maintenance Mgr. Jon Zehe: traffic counts are up, especially on I-5. Work we used to do during the day, we now have to do at night based on increased traffic counts.

Senger note the "E" around the 4 – E's that we can work on best seems to be *Education* (The others being Enforcement, Engineering and Emergency Medical)

Other Ideas to improve safety:

Lt. Bigman: Oct/Nov/Dec are typical months we get our overtime grants in. She suggest speeding it up so troopers can be on the road in the later months of the year instead of in January. Rose noted Oct. 1-Sept 30 is the lifecycle of typical grants.

Shelton asked about funds for checkpoints. *They are illegal under Oregon constitution but DUI saturation patrols are allowed.*

What can we do to help each other:

Education until grant funds come out for additional hours.

IVFire: Photo radar in GP: There's only one legislative pilot study in Portland that involved speed cameras. There is technology that can be utilized.

Lt. Bigman suggested using red reflector crosses, or whatever acceptable color, to denote a fatal crash. Reflectors would need State Traffic Engineer approval and be of regulation size. ODOT Will Fitzgerald said in Montana, the American Legion installs them.

Shelton noted lots of regulations, but believes signs could be helpful such as the sign used in the MADD campaigns. Handmade signs by concerned citizens. She'd like to ask property owners for permission. She'd like to place them on county roads and get into the schools.

ODOT's Marmon noted state regulations cover signs on state highways. (ODOT will send sign regulations).

Other odds and ends:

- There's a lack of drivers education in schools.
- Rural Metro: Need to show the impacts. With education.
- ODOT Crash car coming in October. Scheduled for Rays Market in Selma.
- Will need to protect the crash trailer from vandalism and theft, along with the portable message signs.
- Institute a radio ad campaign using local voices, similar to Region 5 examples
- Get on local radio station. KXCJ News and Views – 6-7 p.m. Tuesdays
- Look for billboard opportunities....
- Lt. Bigman: the ones that drive safe are already engaged and drive safe...
- Councilor Miles: Those that don't care are the ones that are running into people who do care.
- Senger: Needs to be personal responsibility....
- Dep. Moore: Hard to turn off the highway with no turn lanes.
- Miles: Kerby Mainline Road needs turn lane for people going to waste transfer site.
- Shelton: What I see is the number #1 thing: We need more patrols. Suggested to contact Sen. Baertschiger and Rep. Carl Wilson.
- Miles: Looks like we're \$3 million short of full time patrols by Sheriff.

Meeting frequency- Perhaps meet quarterly for the next 2- to 3 years. Perhaps sooner.

- a. Rose will get back sooner.
 - i. Marmon asked if we could get group email that if you see something- low hanging fruit- sign distance- alert us to any operational issues.
 - ii. If you have suggestions, send to Rose and will distribute...

Perhaps have next meeting before IVCANDO Public Safety Task Force that meets in the Family Resource Center on River Street, Nov. 20 @ 3 p.m. ###