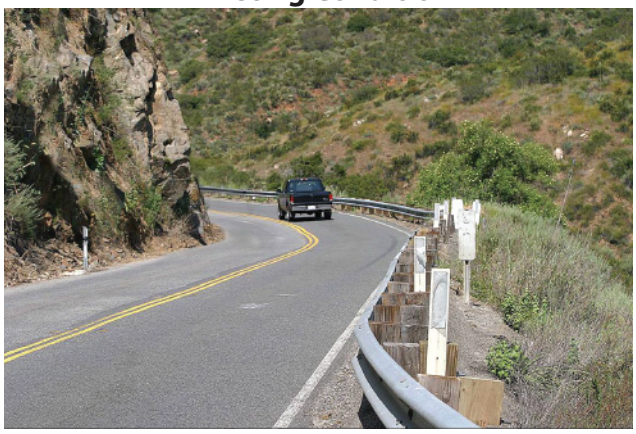
State Route 74 Ortega Highway Safety Improvement Project

What is the Ortega Highway Safety Improvement Project?
Ortega Highway, was constructed in the 1930's for recreational purposes, primarily to provide access to beaches in Orange County, Lake Elsinore, and various recreational areas in the Cleveland National Forest. Ortega Highway is a two-lane mountainous road with curves and steep slopes, and runs parallel to San Juan Creek. In the early 1930s, Ortega Highway carried about 200 vehicles per day. Today, with the growth of urban centers, it carries an increasing number of commuters and truck traffic averaging10,000 vehicles per day.

Project Goal
- To improve roadway safety and highway drainage

Project Area
Caltrans Ortega Highway Safety Improvement Project will take place on a three-mile section from San Juan Hot Springs and the Orange County line. This stretch of road has a section of narrow lanes, limited turn-out areas and high accident rates.

Existing Condition



Project Features
- Adding 4-foot shoulders to each side of the Highway
- Adding safety enhancements to reduce road closures due to rock slides
- Place rumble strips in the median
- Improving motorists sight distances by removing protruding rock walls
- Widening the existing 10-foot lanes to standard 12-foot lanes
- Improving drainage facilities into San Juan Creek
- Improve turnouts and add two new turnouts, one in each direction

Status
Construction is expected to begin in February 2007 and is anticipated to last 3 years.

Funding Source
Project is funded by the State Highway Operation Protection Program. Construction cost is $40 million.

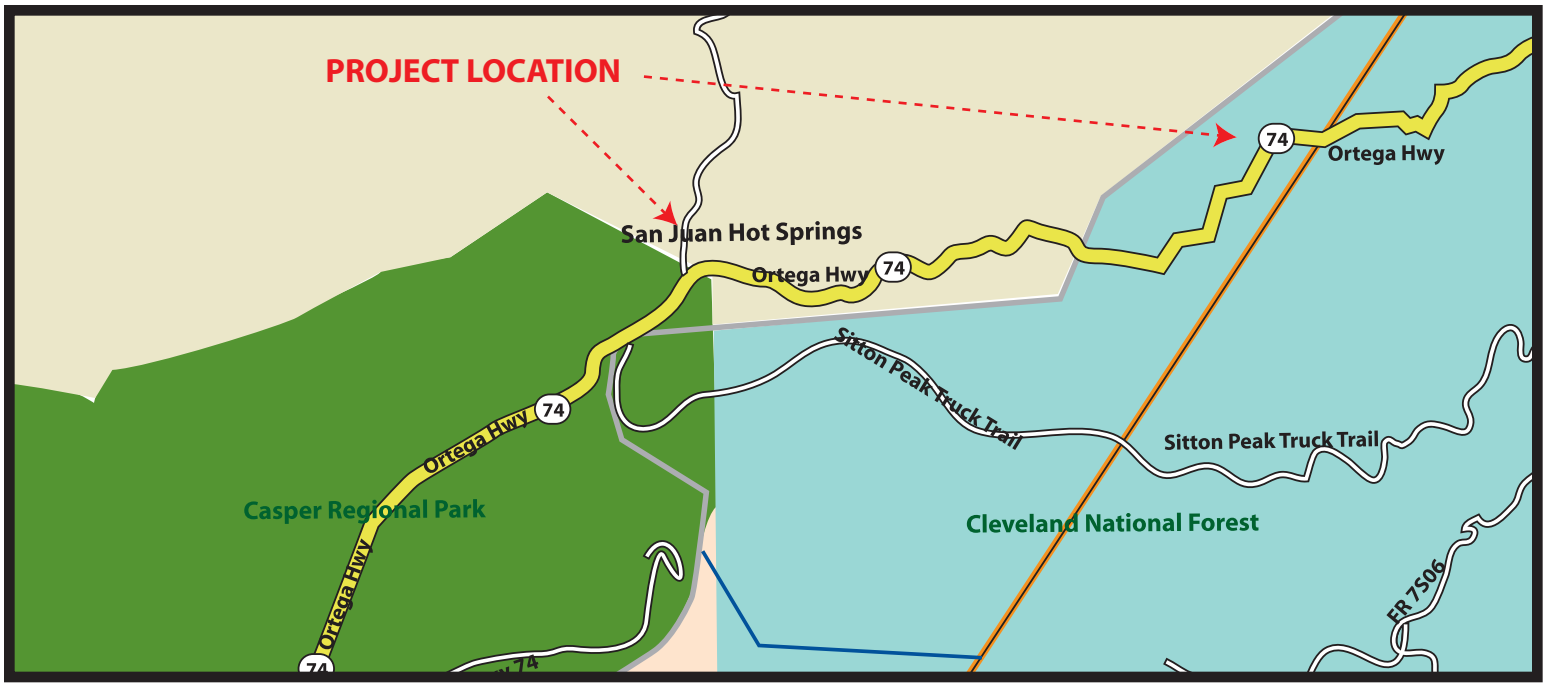
Project Partners
Federal Highway Administration, United States Forest Service and California Highway Patrol

SLOW FOR THE CONE ZONE
CALTRANS
WWW.DOT.CA.GOV

Caltrans reminds motorists to please "slow for the cone zone"

Project Location

The Ortega Highway Safety Improvement Project will target a three-mile section between San Juan Hot Springs and the Orange County line.



FAQs

Why is this project necessary?
Safety is Caltrans number one priority. The goal is to reduce accidents and to save lives.
The project will improve sight distance, and provide more room for motorists to safely maneuver within the project area.

What will happen to traffic during construction?
Full closures will take place during nighttime hours only. Priority will be given to westbound morning commute traffic and eastbound evening commute traffic. During the day, flagging operations will be in place. Commuters should expect delays.

Public Outreach
Caltrans has a comprehensive public outreach planned to keep motorists, residents, businesses and elected officials informed about this project. Community Open Houses will be scheduled in February for both Lake Elsinore and San Juan Capistrano. In addition, briefings and speaking engagements are available to provide interested groups with schedules, traffic management efforts and updates on construction activities.

Contact Information

For more information about the project scope of work, please contact the toll free Orange County Transportation Helpline at (800) 724-0353 or log onto the caltrans website at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/district12

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