



Zion National Park News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Zion Announces New Road Reconstruction Schedule

Superintendent Jock Whitworth has announced a new work schedule for the reconstruction of the Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway within Zion National Park. The new schedule will only have nighttime road closures. These will occur from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m., Sunday through Thursday. Previous schedules have all included daytime closures. Weekends and holidays will remain open 24 hours a day. Although the new schedule creates some additional challenges for the project, it should mitigate frustration for travelers, help park operations, and ease economic impacts to the surrounding communities.


Superintendent Whitworth stated, “We have been working with the Federal Highways Administration, area businesses, and the contractor to set a schedule to reconstruct the 80 year old Zion Mount Carmel Highway section from the switchbacks to our east entrance. We feel that the new schedule should still allow us to complete the project before winter, allow visitors to travel to and through Zion, and allow local businesses to fair well during the reconstruction process.”

Zion National Park will remain open for the duration of the project. People travelling to Zion National Park on State Route 9 from Interstate 15 can enjoy Zion Canyon’s recreational opportunities, access the park shuttle, campgrounds, Zion Lodge, and visit Springdale without being in the construction area. Those travelling between US Highway 89 and Zion Canyon through the park’s East Entrance will be affected by the following schedule.

ZION-MT. CARMEL HIGHWAY RECONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE:

June 27-October 28, 2010

Sunday – Thursday; NIGHT CLOSURES 8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.	
Open 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.	Traffic control with up to 30 minute delays. Parking and hiking allowed 8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. All hikers and vehicles must be moving out of the area by 8:00 p.m. Bicycles and pedestrians are prohibited in the roadway.
Friday, Saturday and Holidays; NO CLOSURES, ROAD OPEN	
Open 24 hours (On Monday holidays, there will be no closures on Sunday night.)	Traffic control with up to 30 minute delays. Parking and hiking allowed all hours. Bicycles and pedestrians are prohibited in the roadway.



The road is graded gravel in the work sections and the surface can be uneven. Please use caution and low speeds in these areas. When closures are not in effect, there will still be areas of roadway that are one lane with traffic control and up to 30 minute delays. Due to safety concerns, bicycles are not allowed on the roadway for the duration of the project. Bicyclists wishing to travel between the Canyon Junction and the East Entrance need to arrange for a private vehicle to take them between those locations.

Alternate routes of travel between Zion Canyon and U.S Highway 89 are Utah State Route 59 from Hurricane, Utah to Arizona State Route 389 (better for large vehicles) or Utah State Route 14 from Cedar City, Utah to Long Valley Junction (high elevation/steep grades). In most cases, it should still be faster to use the Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway.

For those using alternate routes during the daytime, driving via Utah State Route 59 and Arizona State Route 389 takes travelers directly past Pipe Spring National Monument, another unit of the National Park System worth visiting. Utah State Route 14 allows for travelers to visit Cedar Breaks National Monument via a short side trip on Utah State Route 148.

The Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway reconstruction started June 1, 2010, and is expected to end by October 28. The road construction is occurring from the junction of the Zion Canyon Scenic Drive to the East Entrance, a distance of 9.5 miles. The construction does not include Zion Canyon, the most visited area of the park.

For updated information, Call 435-772-3256 (press 1, then 4) or visit the park website at www.nps.gov/zion. To automatically receive news releases, sign up for the RSS newsfeed on the website.

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