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Governor

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News Release

## **Speed limit modifications approved for two state highways**

The New Mexico Department of Transportation reviewed accident history and conducted speed studies for a section of U.S. 62/180, west of Hobbs and N.M. 128, west of Jal. After reviewing the traffic data, it has been determined to adjust the speed limits accordingly. Speed modifications will be effective January 27, 2010.

The posted speed limit will be increased from 50 MPH to 60 MPH on a selected section of roadway along U.S. 62/180. The section of U.S. 62/180 starts at mile point 100, just west of the Hobbs Airport entrance and ends at mile point 102, just west of the intersection of West County Road and the Southwest By Pass; at this point eastbound traffic speed reduces to 50 MPH.

As a result of the speed study on U.S. 62/180, this section of roadway indicated that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of traffic in this area was 62 MPH. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is the measure of speed at which 85 percent of drivers are operating their vehicles at or below; accordingly 15 percent of the drivers are exceeding the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed.

The posted speed limit for N.M. 128 will be increased from 55 MPH to 65 MPH on a selected section of roadway along N.M. 128. The section of N.M. 128 starts at mile point 0.6, just east of the junction of N.M. 31 and N.M. 128 and ends at mile point 23.8, just west of the construction zone; at this point eastbound traffic speed reduces to 55 MPH.

As a result of the speed study on N.M. 128, this section of roadway indicated that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed of traffic in this area was 65 MPH. The 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed is the measure of speed at which 85 percent of drivers are operating their vehicles or below.

Based on the speed studies the increased speed will better meet the current traffic conditions and promote uniformity among speeds along these given highway sections. The benefit of a uniform speed is that vehicle collisions are less likely to occur if drivers are traveling at about the same speed.

The NMDOT wants to remind motorists that with the increased speed limit it is important to drive at the posted speed and obey all traffic signs.

For further information please contact Earle Smith, Traffic Engineer for the NMDOT District Two or Manon Arnett, Public Information Officer, at (575) 637-7200.

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