

Travel on weekday mornings

Eastbound I-40 travelers and truckers are being encouraged to drive through the area around Exit 39 on weekday mornings to avoid major delays. At this time, eastbound I-40 is reduced to a single lane, while westbound I-40 has two lanes open.

A spokeswoman for the New Mexico Department of Transportation contractor working on a bridge rehabilitation, ramp and roadway improvement project, says backups during afternoons after 2 pm and on weekends can be as long as four to six hours.

Since there are no viable detours, travelers are encouraged to plan trips with extra time included and pay attention to slow-moving commercial vehicles and obey all posted traffic signs in the construction zone.

The project underway is located 18.7 miles east of Gallup, north of Jamestown at Exit 39. It runs from Mile Marker 37.6 to Mile Marker 42.8, including Exit 39. Project officials hope to complete construction in early September, depending upon weather conditions.

The project is needed because the bridge and roadway are old and need to be upgraded to today’s standards.

The contractor, Fisher Sand and Gravel, is working from 6:30 am - 7 pm six days a week to complete construction as quickly as possible.

At this time, workers are tending to the final part of the project and hope to open two lanes to eastbound traffic by next month.

When completed, the 5.2 mile stretch of I-40 will provide:

- Improved safety;

- Improved roadway structural integrity;

- New acceleration and deceleration lanes for the ramps at Exit 39;

- New guard rail, signage and roadway striping; and

- Improved erosion control

Project officials noted construction is also taking place on I-40 about 4 miles east of the Arizona/New Mexico state line and in Cibola County at the bridge over Rio San Jose.

It is possible to learn the most current status by visiting www.nmroads.com or calling (800)-687-3417.

Staff Reports