

Soda Springs Road Speed Ordinance



**NEVADA
COUNTY**
CALIFORNIA

**Public
Works**



Introduction

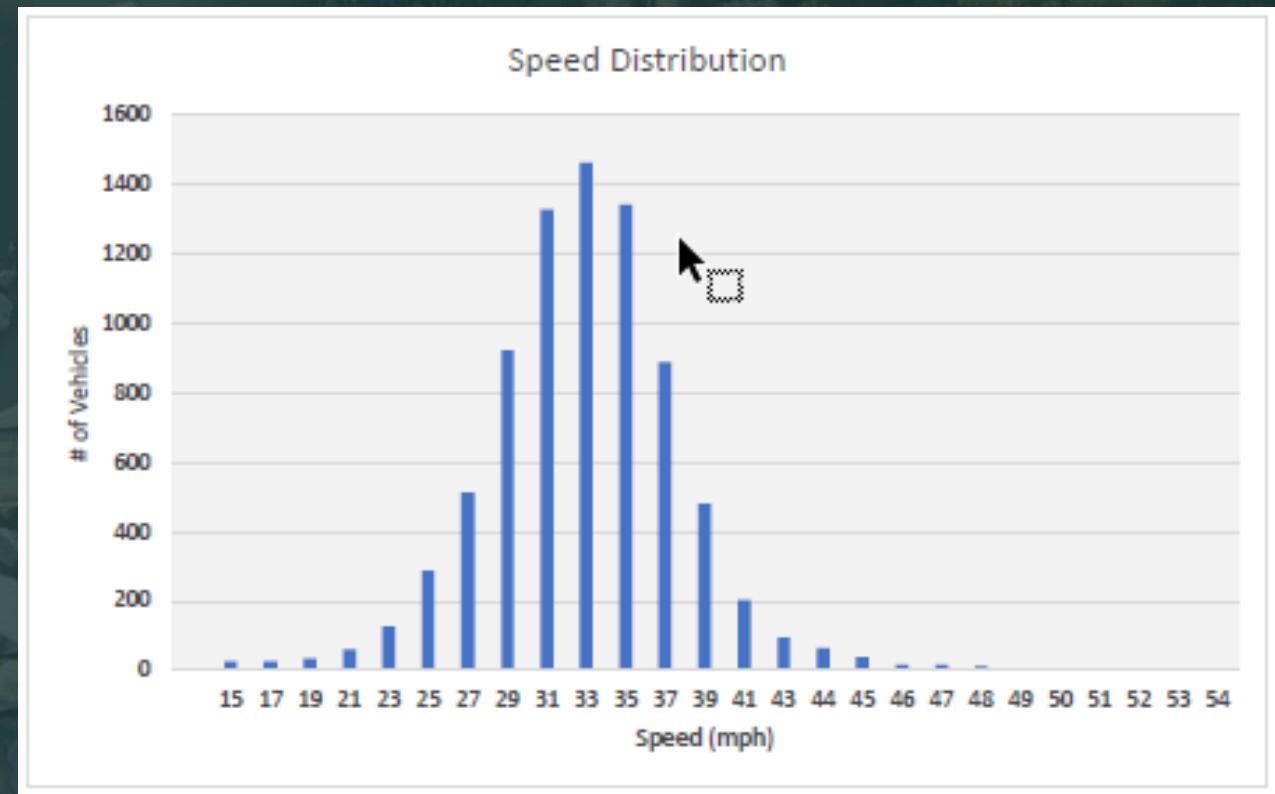
- Speed limits on all County roads require an Engineering & Traffic Survey
- Radar detection instruments are placed on trees or poles adjacent to the roadway.
- The Importance of the 85th Percentile Speed
- Laws and Standards



Engineering And Traffic Surveys

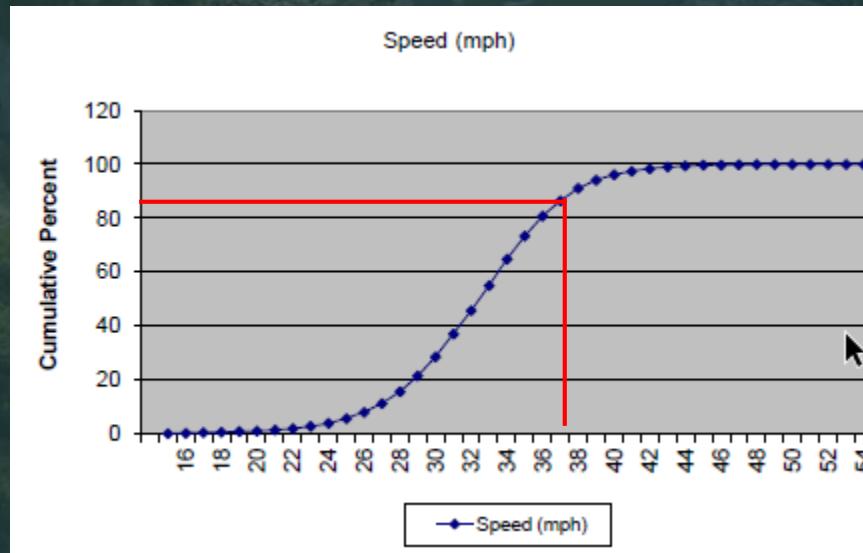
Engineering & Traffic Surveys (E&TS) are used to understand the current traffic flows on a section of road and determine the appropriate speed limit. They include information such as:

- Average Daily Traffic
- Average Speed
- Speed distribution
- Pace Speed
- 85th Percentile Speed
- Collision Information
- And other factors that are not readily apparent to drivers

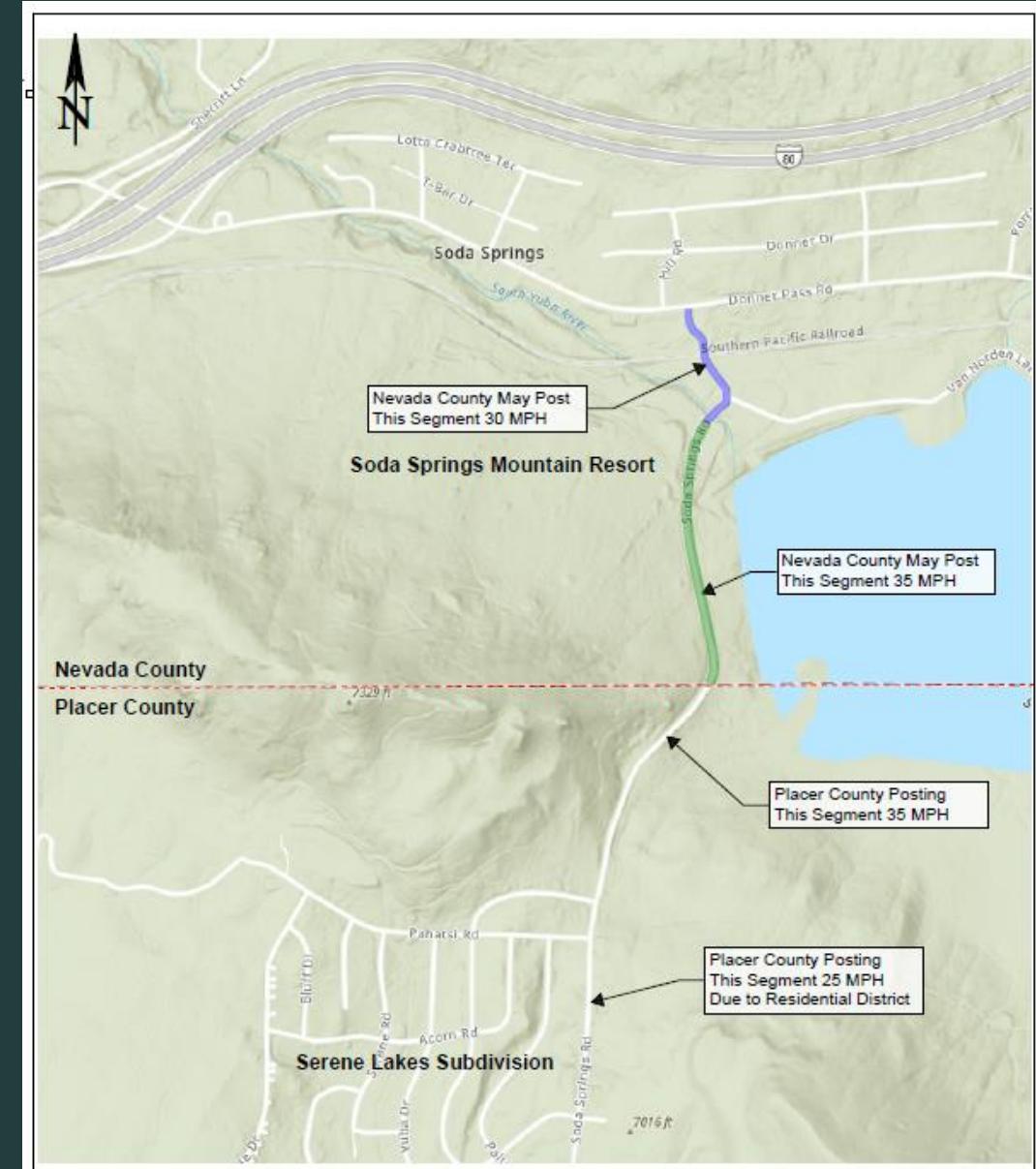


Initial Results of Soda Springs Road E&TS

- 85th percentile speed: 36.7 mph



Soda Springs Road

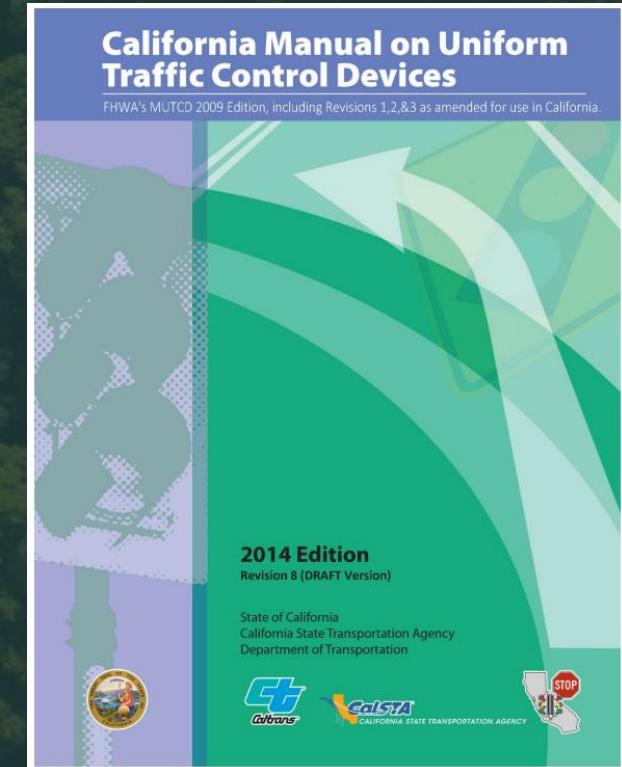


Laws and Standards

California Vehicle Code (CVC) and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) are the primary governing documents for speed setting in California.

The CVC is the law that must be followed when preparing engineering & traffic surveys as well as enforcing speeds.

The CA MUTCD references the CVC and provides more detailed information and guidance for posting speed limits.



Summary

- Speed limits must be set in conformance with California law.
- It is recommended that that Soda Spring Road speed limit be set 30 and 35 mph in accordance with the attached ordinance.
- It is recommended that the ordinance to amend the speed limits on the listed road be brought forward for its first reading and be adopted at the December 16th, 2025 Board of Supervisors Meeting.

Soda Springs Ski Area



Soda Springs Ski Area



Soda Springs Ski Area



Importance Of The 85th Percentile

- *“The setting of speed limits can be controversial and requires a rational and defensible determination to maintain public confidence. Speed limits are normally set near the 85th-percentile speed that statistically represents one standard deviation above the average speed and establishes the upper limit of what is considered reasonable and prudent. As with most laws, speed limits need to depend on the voluntary compliance of the greater majority of motorists. Speed limits cannot be set arbitrarily low, as this would create violators of the majority of drivers and would not command the respect of the public. Artificially low speed limits can lead to poor compliance as well as large variations in speed within the traffic stream. Increased speed variance can also create more conflicts and passing maneuvers.” (CA MUTCD 2B.13.00)*



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Importance Of The 85th Percentile

- *“The Department of Transportation shall, in the next scheduled revision, revise and thereafter maintain the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices to require the Department of Transportation or a local authority to round speed limits to the nearest five miles per hour of the 85th percentile of the free-flowing traffic.”* (CVC Section 22358.6.a)
- *“It is the intent of the Legislature that physical conditions such as width, curvature, grade and surface conditions, or any other condition readily apparent to a driver, in the absence of other factors, would not require special downward speed zoning, as the basic rule of section 22350 is sufficient regulation as to such conditions.”* (CVC Section 22358.5)