

**Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance**

**Highway Name:** State Highway (SH) 140

**CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:**

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
140A	From the New Mexico State Line North To SH 160-A north of Hesperus

**Highway Location:**

Counties: La Plata  
Length (Miles): 23.298

**OAHP Site Numbers (for previously recorded segments, if applicable)\*:**

<i>OAHP Site No.</i>	<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Assessment Date</i>	<i>Site Name</i>
None	No previously recorded segments are found on or adjacent to this highway		

**Discussion of Site Forms (for previously recorded segments, if applicable):**

No Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory forms for previously recorded segments of this highway were identified in Compass.

**Historic Districts located within 250 feet of highway (OAHP Site Number and Name)\*:**

<i>OAHP Site No.</i>	<i>District Name</i>	<i>Assessment (If Applicable)</i>
None	No historic districts are found on or adjacent to this highway	

*\*Information based on data from Compass provided by OAHP*

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### Historical Data:

SH 140 is approximately 23 miles long and extends south from U.S. Highway (US) 160 in La Plata County, west of Durango, to the New Mexico state line. Southwestern Colorado is a generally mountainous region that owes much of its history to mining. The earliest transportation corridors in southwest Colorado were wagon roads that often followed trails established by Native Americans, explorers, fur trappers, and traders. The Colorado Gold Rush of 1859 brought an influx of people to Colorado's southwestern region in search of fortune and led to the establishment of mining camps through the area to supply activities at the mines and those working in the mines. Most mining areas are located to the north of SH 140 where early roads in the region were often built to serve and connect mining camps with nearby mining districts and communities for the movement of people and the transfer of commercial and agricultural goods. SH 140 does not have an association with early trails or important mining activities.

The southern border of Colorado surrounding SH 140 is characterized by arid sage- and grass-covered hills used for grazing livestock. The area also features mesas, canyons, and foothills. The Ute Mountain Reservation and Southern Ute Reservation are also located in this area. These reservations are comprised of approximately 16,000 acres of farmland and grazing land. SH 140 does not extend through any major towns or cities. Durango is located to the east of its northern terminus. Durango was established in 1880 after the Rio Grande Railroad extended its line through the area. Surrounded by coal and agricultural land, Durango became a major supply center within the area. The Good Roads Movement and founding of the Colorado Highway Department in the first decades of the twentieth century led to the establishment of a highway network throughout the region and state (Carter and Mehls, 1984: 138-141; (Colorado State Planning Commission 1941; 358-361). Historic state highway maps indicate that SH 140 was established by 1926 and extended for a significantly shorter distance and operated as a spur between US 160 and Ft. Lewis near Durango. This spur was paved by 1938. By 1939 SH 140 extended south to Kline and by 1954 it reached Marvel. By 1963 is extended south to the New Mexico state line.

State highways, farm-to-market roads, and small local connector roads served to link major regional transportation corridors and facilitate the transfer of goods as well as travel within the region. SH 140 functioned as one component of the overall regional transportation network to provide connections to other roads and common local destinations. Research, literature review, and historic mapping does not indicate that this highway provided direct access to destinations related to important historic themes.

(Unless otherwise indicated, sources used in the preparation of this section included state highway maps, the Highways of Colorado by Matthew Salek, Highways to the Sky: A Context and History of Colorado's Highway System, Colorado State Roads and Highways, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Submission, plans in the Online Transportation Information System (OTIS), and site forms for previously surveyed resources in Compass when available.)

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**Not Significant - No historical significance identified**

**Significant - Historical significance identified (see details below)**

**Property Type and Areas of Significance:**

A detailed explanation why this highway possesses historical significance is provided in the Significance Statement below.

**Cultural:**

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)

**Engineering:**

Subtypes

- Farm-to-Market Road
- Limited Access, Multiple-Lane, Divided Highway/Freeway
- Highway Bypass

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)
- Engineering achievement (Engineering)

**Aesthetic:**

Criterion A specific requirements

- Early and/or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department (Transportation)
- Association with a significant event (If applicable, the Area of Significance is indicated in the statement of significance below)
- Association with federal work relief programs (Politics/Government)

Criterion C specific requirements

- Representative example (Transportation)
- Engineering achievement (Engineering)
- Landscape architecture (Landscape Architecture)

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## Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

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### Historic periods of highway construction:

- Pre-territorial (pre-1861)
- Territorial and pre-automobile state roads (1861-1890)
- Automobile age (1890-1930)
- Depression and World War II (1930-1945)
- Postwar Interstate Era (1945-1973)
- Completion and Augmentation of Interstate System (1973-2000)

### Level of Significance:

- Local
- State
- National

### Significance Statement:

SH 140 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS.

#### *Criterion A*

SH 140 was established in the mid-1920s after the initial period of development of the state's highway network and operated as a short spur comprising part of the overall transportation network. As such, this highway does not represent an early or prominent project completed by the Colorado Highway Department. Research did not indicate the road was built or improved as part of a Depression-era federal work relief program. Although SH 140 passes through grazing land used for livestock raising no evidence suggests that it served as an important farm-to-market road or was pivotal in the transfer of agricultural goods or livestock within the region. As such, this road does not possess significance under Criterion A.

#### *Criterion B*

Research did not reveal this highway to be directly associated with the events or work of a person important in history, nor does research indicate the highway represents the efforts of a specific individual to secure construction of this highway for the economic development of a community or area of the state. Therefore, this highway does not possess significance under Criterion B.

#### *Criterion C*

Research and literature review yielded no evidence to indicate the use of innovative or important engineering design or construction techniques that serve to distinguish this highway from other roads within the mountainous southwest region and it does not appear to exhibit important engineering innovations or important later modifications. The highway's design and construction appear to fall within the established standard practices of state highway design and construction of the time and the highway does not possess significance under Criterion C.

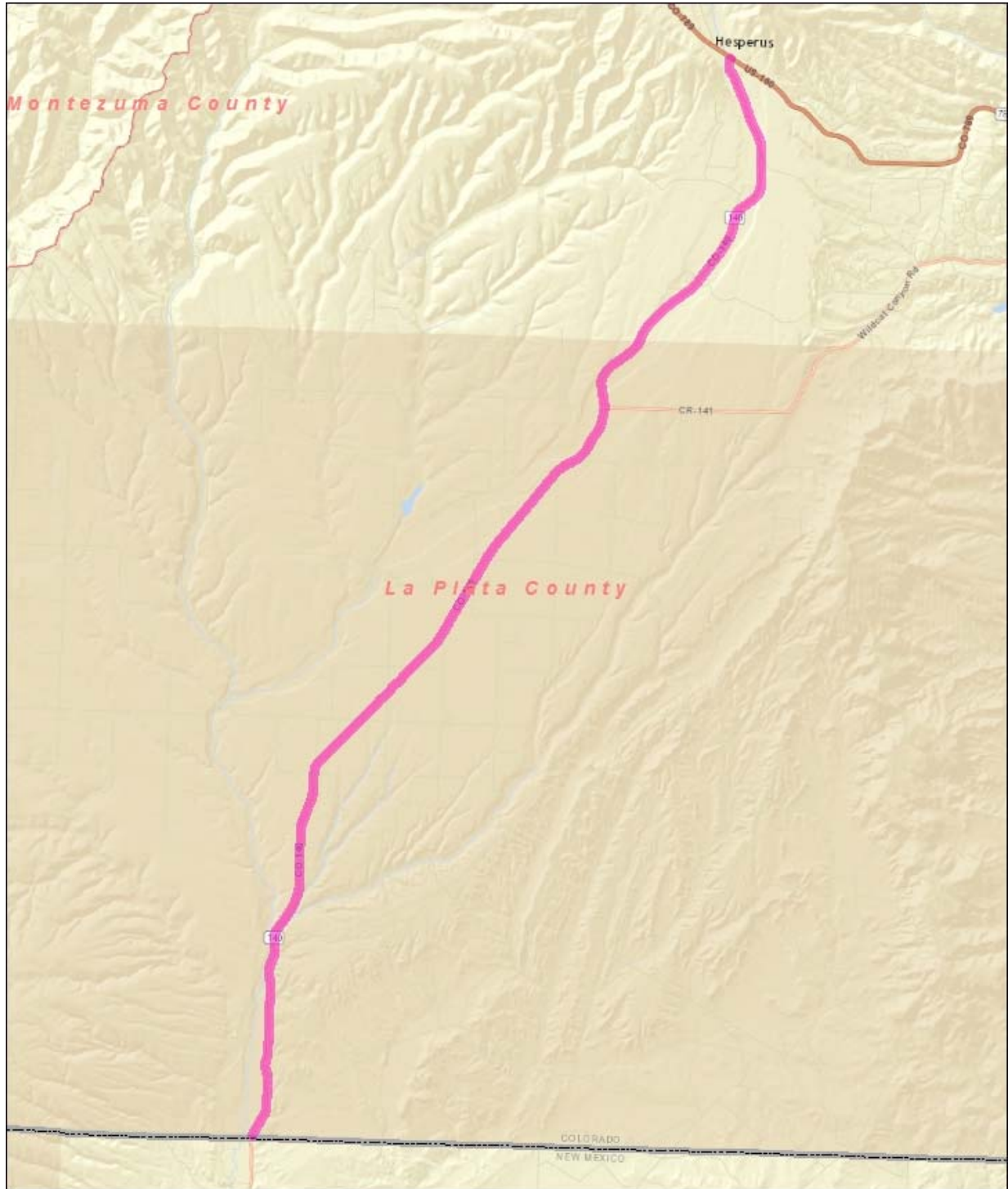
#### *Criterion D*

For a property to possess significance for information potential, the information yielded by the property must answer specific important research questions that cannot be otherwise answered. The technology of highway construction is well understood and documented. As such, this highway is unlikely to yield important information that cannot be discerned from archived plans and other records. Therefore, this highway does not possess significance under Criterion D.

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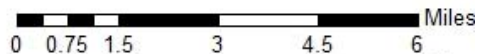
Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 140



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- SH 140
- State Boundary
- County Boundary



SH 140



Map indicates the extent of the highway based on CDOT GIS data; portions co-signed with other highways may not be indicated.