

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

**Highway Name:** State Highway (SH) 300

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

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
300A	From SH 24-A Southwest of Leadville West and North To County Road 5A

**Highway Location:**

Counties: Lake  
 Length (Miles): 3.365

**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>
5LK.42		1980	NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY
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.

Site form 5LK.42 (National Fish Hatchery) was reviewed. The National Fish Hatchery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register) in 1980. There is no period of significance identified on the nomination, but the building was constructed in 1890. The form does not discuss any history about the transportation methods of the hatchery; only the architecture of the building itself.

According to the National Register summary for this property, “the hatchery was established in 1889 by Executive Order of President Benjamin Harrison as the first national fish hatchery in the Rockies. National fish hatcheries have played a leading role in the conservation movement by endeavoring to stabilize and increase the number of fresh water food fish in the nation’s inland waterways. An 1890 one-story hatchery building of native red sandstone with a steeply pitched gabled roof remains on the site.”

**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 300 begins at the junction of U.S. Highway (US) 24, southwest of Leadville and travels west to County Road 5A past the National Fish Hatchery. The total distance of SH 300 is 3.365 miles.

SH 300 entered the state highway system in 1939 (Salek). Earlier maps from 1891 of the Leadville area show an unimproved road leading west to what would become the location of the National Fish Hatchery from the train stop of Malta and then looping back into Leadville before heading east toward Mosquito Pass. Travel maps show the highway after 1949 with the route from Malta to the National Fish Hatchery and then heading east over Mosquito Pass and finishing in Alma. However, a portion of the road over Mosquito Pass was never paved, thus there is a gap on state highway maps. By 1954, most of the route to the east of Leadville was no longer under State Highway administration and just the western segment to the Fish Hatchery was shown on maps (USGS; Salek). CDOT records shows the portion from Malta to the Fish Hatchery was paved in 1954 (CDOT Records, Project S 0132 (1)). This route is the current SH 300 today.

Historic themes for this route include mining and environmental conservation in the Malta/Leadville area. Leadville was a successful mining town beginning in the late 1870s. Leadville boomed with silver as an important industry. The town of Malta was first established in 1875 with a smelter used for mining. The town experienced growth due to the mining boom at nearby Leadville. However, by the late 1880s, Malta's mining boom had ended and the town was little more than a stop on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (Eberhart 1969: 202). SH 300 is one of the many roads that connected Leadville and smaller communities to the area's mining industry. The route of SH 300 through Leadville to Alma was never fully completed, and thus was not a primary access road to the mines and other communities in the region. U.S. Highway (US) 24 and SH 91 and figure more prominently in the role of transportation of the mining industry in this area.

The Leadville National Fish Hatchery is one of the oldest national fish hatcheries in the country. The location of Leadville at the base of Mt. Massive was chosen for the cold climate and fresh water sources. The National Fish Hatchery is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its role in conservation in the Rocky Mountain Region (US Fish and Wildlife). The role of the fishery is important to conservation of fish in regional rivers. SH 300 is the only direct connection to transportation corridors for this region. Therefore, SH 300 is important for its role in providing transportation to this significant property.

(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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### 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 300 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS.

#### *Criterion A*

SH 300 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS. As an Engineered Route, SH 300 possesses significance in the areas of Transportation and Conservation. The highway connects the National Fish Hatchery to important transportation corridors such as railroads and US 24 in Leadville. This highway has a direct association to the development of the National Fish Hatchery and provided important access with early conservation activities in Colorado. As such, the highway possesses significance under Criterion A at the local level.

#### *Criterion B*

Research did not reveal State Highway 300 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*

As a representative example, a state highway that exhibits physical features indicative of an important type or subtype identified in the MPS reflecting its original design or important variation may possess significance. A state highway may also possess significance for particularly important engineering achievements.

State Highway 300 is not considered to be an early or prominent project of the Colorado Highway Department. 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 and 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.

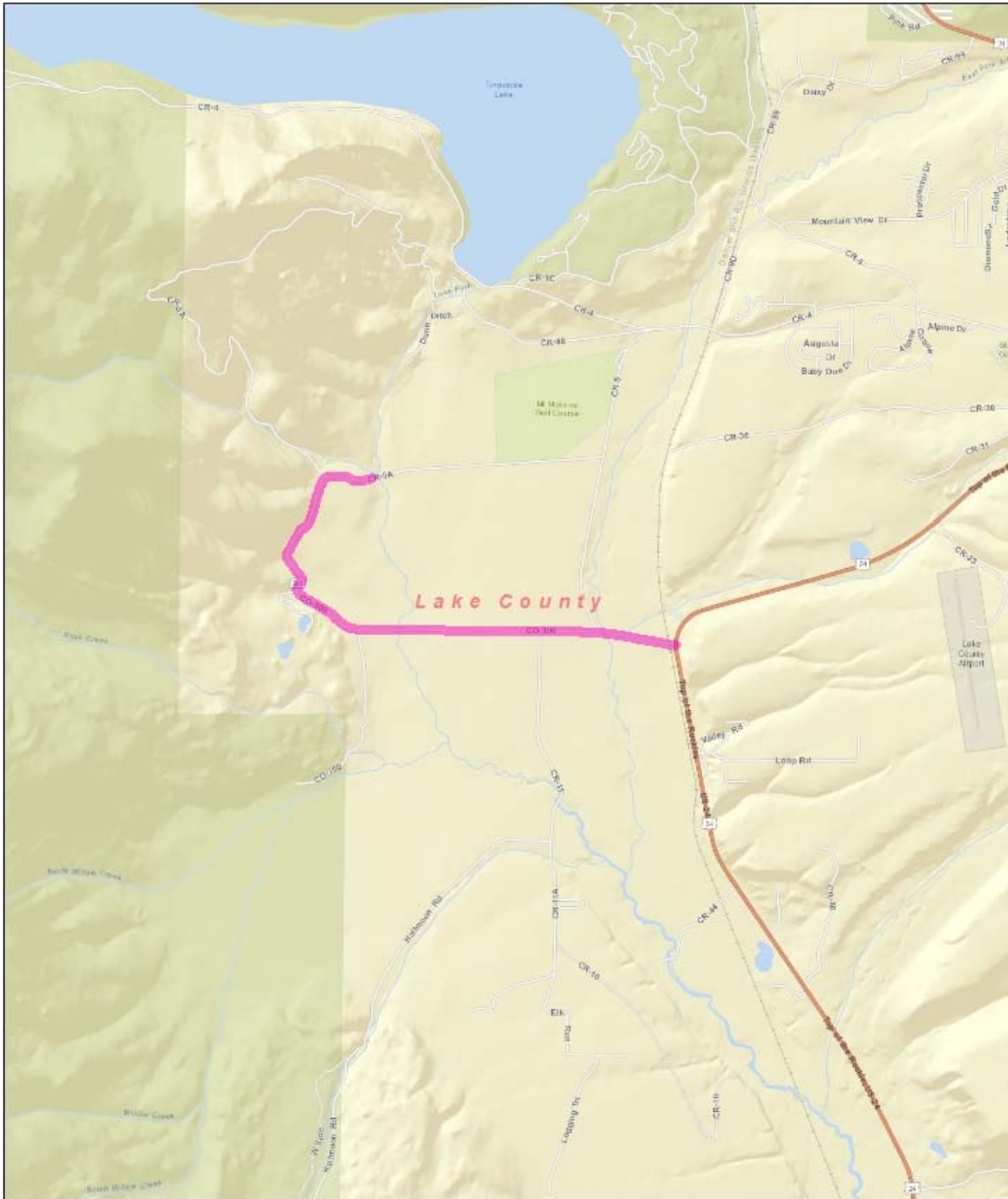
#### *Criterion D*

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.

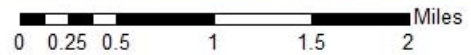
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- SH 300
- County Boundary

**SH 300**



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