

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 389

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
389A	From the New Mexico State Line North via Branson To SH 160-C East of Trinidad

Highway Location:

Counties: Las Animas
Length (Miles): 12.621

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 389 is a two-lane highway that extends approximately 13 miles from U.S. Highway (US) 160 near Walts Corner south through the community of Branson to the New Mexico border. Research and historical mapping indicate that a portion of current SH 389, from just north of Branson to Walts Corner, formed earlier portions of SH 100 and US 160. This portion of current SH 389 first appears on the 1922 historic state highway map. By 1930, state highway maps indicate SH 100, including the northern portion of current SH 389 from just north of Branson to Walts Corner, was cosigned with US 160 while the remaining portion of current 389 served to connect SH 100/US 160 to New Mexico. According to Salek, by 1949, US 160 was moved to a new alignment, and old US 160 that extended south to Branson was numbered as SH 389. By 1954 the section south of Branson had been turned back and SH 389 did not connect to the New Mexico border. The road was extended back to the New Mexico border by 1964 and entirely paved by 1965.

The early history of the northern portion of SH 389 is associated with the history of SH 100/US 160 (current US 160) prior to 1949, which is recommended as possessing significance as an early and prominent transportation route across southern Colorado constructed by the Colorado Highway Department (CHD). This evaluation notes the entire route of US 160 as it existed historically in southern Colorado is significant as an early highway that opened western Colorado for automobile transportation and by providing a vital link between southwestern Colorado and the southeastern portion of the state. See the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory form for US 160 for more detail.

The portion of the highway from just north of Branson south to the New Mexico border is not associated with SH 100/US 160. This portion of the highway was established later when the road functioned as one of several state highways to provide access between Colorado and New Mexico during the post-World War II period. As such the history of this portion of the highway is not related to important historical themes. Rather it served as part of the overall regional transportation network by providing connections to other roads.

(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:

The northern portion of US 389 from just north of Branson to Walts Corner formed a portion of US 160 until 1949 and is historically associated with the early history of this route. As such, this highway is classified as a Cultural Route and an Engineered Route - the same as US 160 - under the classification system in the MPS.

Criterion A

Under Transportation, the portion of the US 389 associated with the earlier history as a portion of US 160 and is noted as a Cultural Route for its use as an early Native American trail under the area of Transportation at the state level. As an Engineered Route under Transportation, the portion of the route associated with US 160 that extended east of Trinidad (encompasses the northern portion of current SH 389) represents efforts of the Colorado Highway Department (CHD) by 1922 to open the southern portion of the state by linking the western portion of US 160, which crossed the continental divide/San Juan Mountains, and thereby linking the southeastern and southwestern portions of the state to areas to the north. As such, this portion of SH 389 is an example of a prominent project by the CHD. This portion of the highway also functioned as part of US 160 to provide direct and important east-west connections serving as a link for conveying agricultural goods in southern Colorado to market centers and other prominent transportation corridors within the region and state. The northern portion of SH 389 possesses significance in the area of Transportation at the state level for providing early access to southern Colorado and at the local level for its role in facilitating agricultural development under Criterion A as a farm-to-market road.

The southern portion of SH 389 from just north of Branson to the New Mexico border served as one of many post World War II roads providing access to other roads within the overall transportation network. Research does not indicate the southern portion of SH 389 provided direct access to destinations related to important historic themes and 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

Historically the northern portion of SH 389 was associated with the history of US 160 (See the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory form for US 160 for more detail), which serves as an example of a prominent project by the CHD and was among the first roads designed and constructed for motorized vehicular traffic across the continental divide in the state. However, the portion of US 160 crossing the continental divide is located to the west of SH 389. Research and literature review yielded no evidence to indicate that SH 389 represents the application of innovative or important engineering design or construction techniques based on topography or challenging site conditions. Significance under Criterion C for its early history and association as one component of US 160 is better demonstrated by those portions of the US 160 crossing the continental divide and specifically noted on the Colorado Historic Highway Inventory form for US 160. SH 389 does not possess significance under Criterion C.

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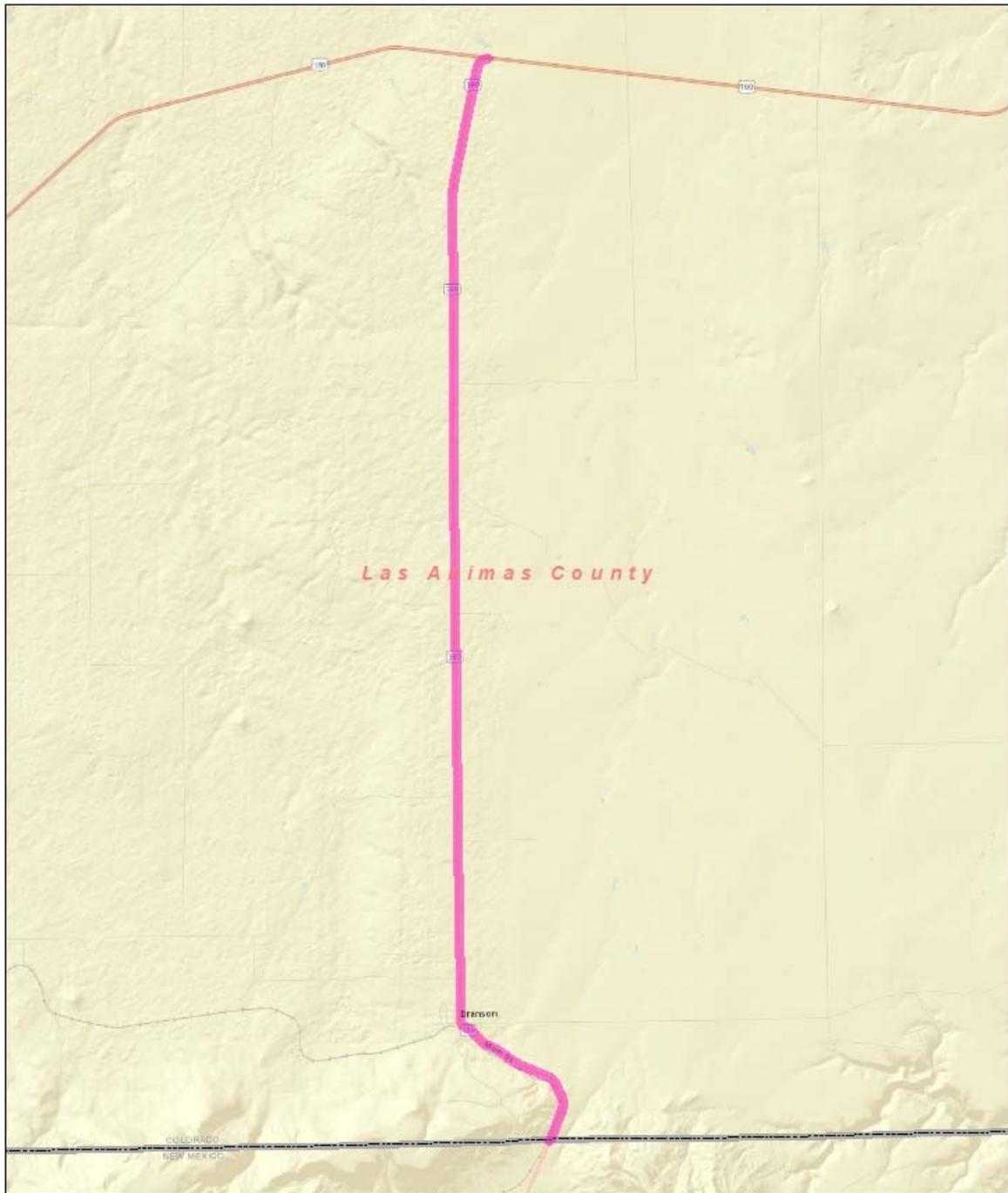
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Criterion D

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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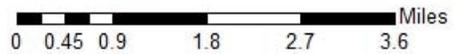
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- SH 389
- State Boundary
- County Boundary



SH 389



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