

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 46

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
046A	From JCT SH 119-A north of Black Hawk southeast via Golden Gate Canyon State Park To at the Gilpin/Jefferson County Line Begin Goden Gate Dr

Highway Location:

Counties: Gilpin

Length (Miles): 6.459

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>
5GL.260.1	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible>Field not eligible	09/04/1992>07/14/1992>12/01/1982	GOLDEN GATE TOLL ROAD
5GL.265	Field not eligible	12/1/1982	RALSTON ROAD
5GL.266	Field not eligible>Field not eligible	06/28/1996>12/01/1982	BLACK HAWK-GOLDEN ROAD, SMITH HILL ROAD
5GL.564	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible	09/04/1992>07/14/1992	DORY HILL ROAD

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

Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory forms for previously recorded segments of this highway listed above and available in Compass were reviewed. The only forms available in Compass for review were 5GL.266 and 5GL.260.1. 5GL.260.1 discusses the historic wagon road, the Golden Gate and Gregory Toll Road, which is the historic wagon road associated with SH 46. Originally surveyed in 1982 and reevaluated in 1992 and 1995, 5GL.260.1 was officially determined not eligible by SHPO in 1992. Site form 5GL.266 provides information about the Black Hawk-Golden Stage Road that intersects with SH 46.

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 46 begins at the Junction of SH 119 north of Black Hawk and travels southeast through Golden Gate Canyon State Park to the Jefferson and Gilpin County lines. The total distance of the route is 6.459 miles.

SH 46 was one of the multiple wagon roads that were built during the early gold rush period to reach the gold mines near Central City and Black Hawk. It was first established in 1862 as the Golden Gate and Gregory Toll Road, and operated until 1871. The route went up Tucker Gulch and traveled along and near the current alignment of SH 46 and Golden Gate Road into Black Hawk (Norman, 2002: 18). A 1906 map of the Black Hawk area shows the road leading from Tucker Gulch to Dory Hill and south to Blackhawk. Portions of the original alignment of the wagon road were used in building the road up Golden Gate Canyon (form 5GL.260.1). In the 1920s, the route was included in the state highway system as SH 58 (Salek). Road improvement plans indicate that two improvement projects included work done under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the 1930s. The National Recovery State Road Project No. 367 project included a new alignment of the road near Dory Hill at mile marker .5 to mile marker 1.5 with grading and culverts. Project 827-C WPA (revision date of 1940) included a new alignment of the roadway from the previous roadway, culverts and grading near the Gilpin County Line at milepost 6. By 1942, topographic maps show the route connecting to SH 119 north of Black Hawk and the route traveled from the junction with SH 119 through Golden Gate Canyon to the town of Golden then east to Denver, along the current SH 58. From 1954-1972, state travel maps show the segment from Golden to SH 119 as a county road and no longer part of the state highway system. In 1971, this segment of SH 58 was redesignated SH 46 and extended from SH 119 to the entrance of Golden Gate Canyon State Park and it remained unpaved. By 1985, the segment was extended to the county line of Jefferson and Gilpin Counties. The entire segment was fully paved by 1986 (Salek).

The discovery of gold in 1859 in the central Colorado mountains brought the first prospectors and first wagon and stage routes to the area. Even after the arrival of the railroad to the larger mining communities such as Georgetown and Leadville, wagon roads remained the primary means of travel to isolated mining communities, transporting tools, lumber, food supplies and mining materials to the gold fields as well as back to the supply centers of Golden and Denver.

Research and previous site form 5GL.260.1 indicate that this route was constructed to provide access to the mining camps of Gilpin County. This road was one of the many wagon routes to reach the early gold mining areas of Black Hawk and Central City although one previous evaluation concluded there is no indication that this route is distinguished from others for its mining connections (Norman, 2002: 16). In addition, research indicates that the route was improved in the 1930s under WPA work projects such as the National Recovery State road project. SH 46 was surveyed in 1982 and reevaluated in 1992 and 1995 (5GL.260.1) and officially determined not eligible by State Historic Preservation Officer in 1992. However, the previous site form did not use the registration requirements of the MPS nor was there any reference to the WPA work on the route, thus this reevaluation of the significance of this route under the current study.

(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 46 is classified as an Engineered Route under the classification system in the MPS and has significance under Criterion A for the portion of the route with an association with Depression-era federal work relief projects in the 1930s at the state level. Although previously determined officially not eligible for its association with area mining activities, research indicates the role of the WPA under the registration requirements of the MPS was not considered in the previous evaluation of the route.

Criterion A

State Highway 46 possesses significance under Criterion A. Research and literature review indicate that portions of the highway was improved as under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in two projects. Work included a new alignment of the roadway in two areas and new culverts and grading and graveling the road. Plans dating to 1940 confirm an association with the WPA. The portion of the highway associated with federal work Depression-era relief work programs possesses significance under Criterion A in the areas of Transportation and Politics/Government at the state level.

Criterion B

Research did not reveal this SH 46 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, SH 46 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.

This highway 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. Previous evaluations confirm this conclusion. The highway's design and construction, including the work completed by the WPA, appear to be common improvements and 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.

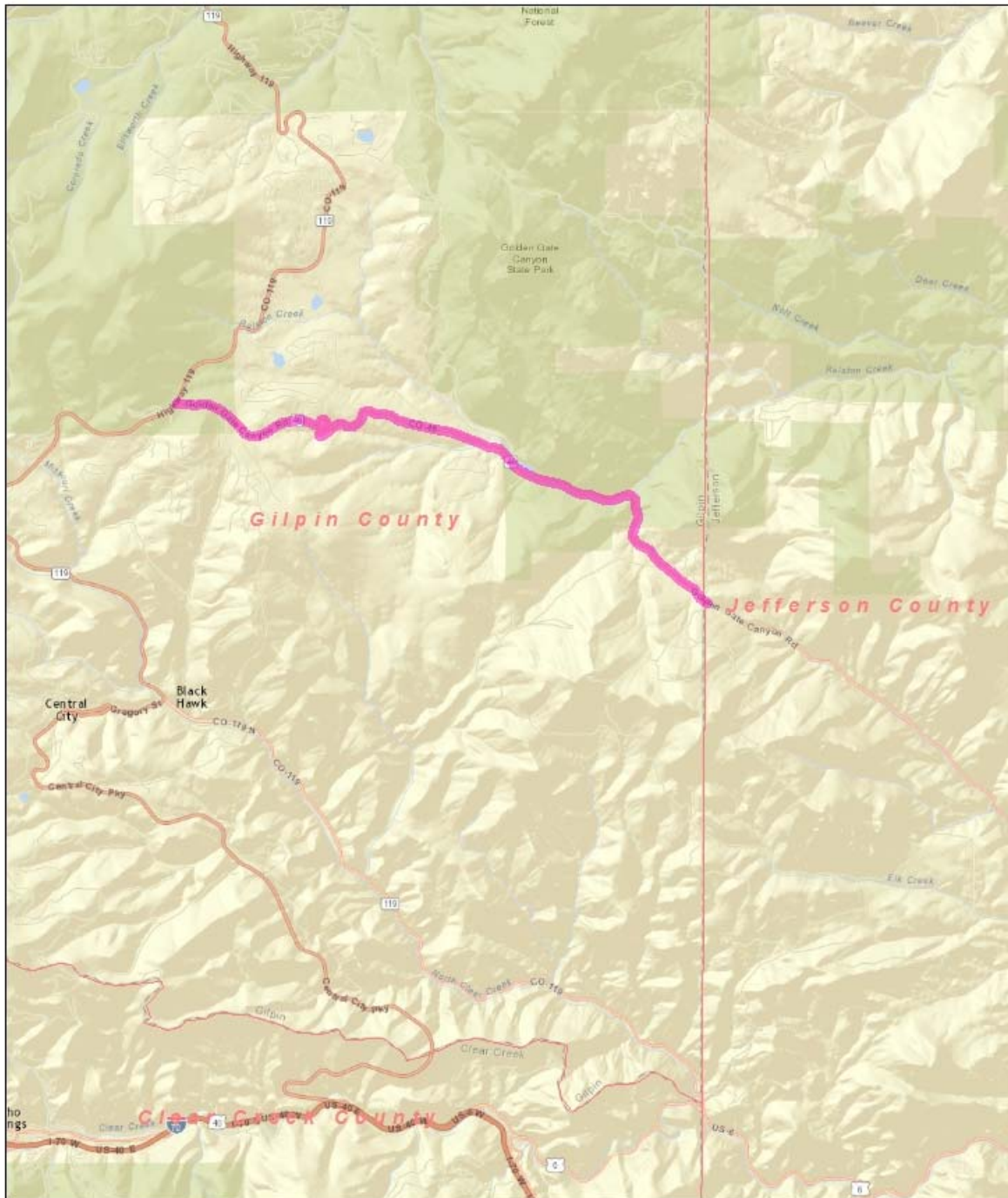
Criterion D

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.

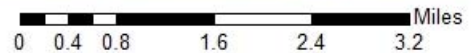
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- SH 46
- County Boundary

SH 46



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