

Colorado Historic Highway Inventory - Historical Summary and Evaluation of Significance

Highway Name: State Highway (SH) 9

CDOT Route Nos. and Milepost (MP) Limits:

<i>CDOT Route</i>	<i>Route Description</i>
009A	From SH 50-A Northeast of Parkdale northwest To SH 24-A at Hartsel
009B	From SH 24-A west of Hartsel northwest To SH 285-D south of Fairplay
009C	From SH 285-D in Fairplay north via Hoosier Pass and Breckenridge To I 70-A at Frisco
009D	From I 70A and SH 6F in Silverthorne Northwest To SH 40A at (6th St) in Kremmling

Highway Location:

Counties: Fremont, Grand, Park, Summit
 Length (Miles): 132.721

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>
5FN.514	Field not eligible>Field not eligible	06/06/2000>10/1979	COLORADO HIGHWAY 9
5PA.2004.1	Field eligible	1/31/2002	US HIGHWAY 24 - SEGMENT
5PA.332	No assessment given on form>No assessment given on form>No assessment given on form	08/16/1985>10/21/1977>03/01/1976	CURRENT CREEK PASS
5PA.396	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible>No assessment given on form>No assessment given on form	09/05/2003>07/24/2003>01/27/1976>07/29/1974	HOOSIER PASS
5ST.401	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible>No assessment given on form	09/05/2003>07/24/2003>01/27/1976	HOOSIER PASS
5ST.937.2	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible	09/05/2003>07/24/2003	HOOSIER PASS WAGON ROAD - SEGMENT
5ST.937.4	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible	09/05/2003>07/24/2003	HOOSIER PASS WAGON ROAD - SEGMENT
5ST.937.6	Officially not eligible>Field not eligible	09/05/2003>07/25/2003	HOOSIER PASS WAGON ROAD - SEGMENT

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

Colorado Cultural Resources Inventory forms (forms) for previously recorded segments of this highway listed above and available in Compass were reviewed. The site forms for the Hoosier Pass Wagon Road (5PA.396; 5ST.937.2; 5ST.937.6) discussed a segment of a wagon road on Hoosier Pass, however this wagon road is not named in any published sources. SH 9 intersects this road and thus these forms provide historical background on earlier travel routes over Hoosier Pass. There is one Historic District, 5ST.103, in the town of Breckenridge. SH 9 passed directly through the historic district on Main Street until 2005 when it was rerouted off of Main Street. Site forms 5FN.514 and 5PA.332 were not available for review.

Also available for review was 5ST.324, Slate Creek Bridge. This bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and crosses the Blue River on an old alignment of SH 9. The site form provided good historical background information about SH 9 in the area from Silverthorne to Kremmling.

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>
5ST.130	BRECKENRIDGE HISTORIC DISTRICT	Listed on National Register

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5ST.324	SLATE CREEK BRIDGE, MILEPOST 0.40, CDOT NO. 117145000.40005	Listed on National Register
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Historical Data:

SH 9 travels from the junction of SH 50 at Parkdale northwest to Hartsel, then northwest from Hartsel to the junction of SH 285 at Fairplay. At Fairplay, SH 9 travels north via Hoosier Pass to Breckenridge to Interstate (I)-70 at Frisco. From the junction of I-70 and US 6 in Silverthorne, SH 9 travels along the Blue River to SH 40 in Kremmling. The total distance is 132.721 miles and crosses Fremont, Grand, Park and Summit Counties.

The original route of SH 9 travelled from Hartsel north through Fairplay to Breckenridge, Frisco, and Kremmling. The southern segment of the route to Parkdale and the Junction of U.S. Highway (US) 50 was built by 1939 and extended south towards Canon City. By 1954, the segment from Hartsel to Canon City was removed from the state highway maps with the route terminating in Hartsel. In 1955 the segment south of Hartsel to Guffey was again listed on state highway maps. The extension to Parkdale was listed on maps by 1957 (Salek).

The segment from Kremmling to Breckenridge was originally established as State Primary Road No. 47 in 1911-1912. In 1922, as part of the first Federal Aid System improvements, State Primary Road No. 47 was improved and designated SH 9 (Site Form 5ST.324). According to a Colorado Highways article, the road followed an old railway bed until a spot 6 miles north of Dillon where the former railroad alignment was washed out by the Blue River. "This meant moving the road to the west bank which was infested with heavy boulders. It was the removal of these boulders that presented many difficulties to the engineers on the job" (Colorado Highways October 1922: 3).

The segment of SH 9 over Hoosier Pass was first completed in 1929 and improved by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1937 (Site Form 5ST.937.2). Other segments of SH 9 were part of WPA projects of the 1930s. The portions of SH 9 from Hartsel north was part of Federal Aid Project No. 2-A and Federal Aid Project 28 in 1937; and from Fairplay to Alma was PWA project No. 5001 in 1936. The portion from Alma to the Summit County Line was also a Federal Aid Project in 1938. Changes to SH 9 include the following: The segment of SH 9 near the Green Mountain reservoir was realigned when the reservoir was built in 1942 (Summit Historical). Portions of the highway in Dillon were re-routed with the building of the Dillon Dam and Reservoir in 1961. In addition, the segment of SH 9 in Dillon was rerouted to the Dillon Dam road when I-70 was completed in the area in 1971. In 2005, SH 9 was realigned in the town of Breckenridge off of Main Street (Salek).

Beginning with the early gold rush that began in 1859, Colorado's mining industry was a significant contributor to the state's economic, political, and social development. This trend continued as the industry expanded with the discovery of silver, copper, lead and zinc in the central mountain region and resulted in population explosions in mining camps and nearby supply centers. Technological advances such as smelting allowed these ores to be more successfully processed and contributed to the increase in mine production. Wagon roads and railroads were essential to the transportation needs of the mining industries and the communities that surrounded them. At times, wagon roads were the only access to in the narrow and steep mountain canyons. Some of these wagon roads and railroad grades later became automobile roads. Towns such as Leadville, Alma, Aspen, Breckenridge became supply, processing, and transportation hubs for the mining industries in the Central Mountain region.

SH 9 connects the mining communities of Alma and Breckenridge. Alma was a support town with a smelter to process ores from the mines of the Mosquito range. Breckenridge was a bustling gold and silver mine town that was at the heart of hard rock mining and supply center for nearby mines. Mining in Breckenridge peaked in the 1880s with an extended period of dredge gold mining through the 1940s in French Gulch (Form 5ST.130). After World War II, these mining communities relied on tourism and recreation such as skiing for their businesses. The Breckenridge ski area was first started in 1961. The connection of SH 9 with I-70 allows for greater access to the town and Front Range communities (Town of Breckenridge).

SH 9 also historically served agricultural needs for communities in South Park and the Blue River Valley. The first white settlers to the area established cattle ranches to supply the mines of Alma and Breckenridge. Sam Hartsel established the Hartsel Ranch in 1866. After trying his luck in the gold fields, he decided to supply meat to the miners instead. He raised hardy short-horn cattle that could weather the cold South Park winters and graze on the native grasses. He amassed huge holdings in the area of the town that bears his name until he sold the operation in 1906 (Simmons 1999: E-8). The town of Hartsel also had a stop on the Colorado Midland Railroad to ship cattle to bigger markets (South Park Heritage). The peak of the big cattle ranches was in the 1880s, but ranching continued through the mid-1950s with diversification into sheep and hay ranching. With changes in consumer tastes, market conditions and sale of water rights in South Park to municipalities and other users, the postwar period saw a decline in the number of ranches and they were gradually converted to residential and recreational use (Simmons, 1999: E-18). At the north end of State Highway 9 is the town of Kremmling. Kremmling is also a supply town for the ranches that

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settled along the Blue River in the 1870 and continue to operate today. Kremmling was a stop on the Denver and Northwestern Railroad (Moffat Road) and a shipping point for agricultural products.

Research indicates that SH 9 was an early construction project of the Colorado Highway Department that traverses South Park to Kremmling in Middle Park and served to provide important connections for the development of ranching, mining, and tourism across the Continental Divide.

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

Criterion A

Research and literature review indicated that SH 9 was an early project of the Colorado Highway Department (CHD). Portions of the road were improved in 1911-1912 with subsequent portions improved in 1922. The route connected the ranches along the Blue River and in South Park to shipping centers such as Kremmling and Fairplay for the shipping of agricultural products and cattle. In addition, the route connected the mining communities of Fairplay, Alma and Breckenridge. Therefore, SH 9 possesses significance in the areas of Transportation and Industry for its association with mining at the state level, as an early project of the CHD at the state level, and its role in agricultural development at the local level for the direct and important role the road played in providing point-to-point connections to facilitate the development of agriculture and mining in the region both before and after the state highway designation.

SH 9 is also associated with WPA projects that included constructing, grading, and graveling the road. Construction plans dating to 1937-1938 confirm an association with the WPA. As such, this highway is associated with a federal work relief program and possesses significance under *Criterion A* in the area of Politics/Government at the state level.

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

As an Engineered Route, segments of SH 9 possess significance under Criterion C in the area of Engineering at the state level of significance as an example of early highway construction to address challenging site conditions. The historical realignment of the segment from Dillon north to Kremmling required moving large boulders and building a new road next to a river without a solid road base and was noted as an engineering challenge. As such, the portion of SH 9 from Dillon north to Kremmling possesses significance under *Criterion C* for engineering at the state level for transportation.

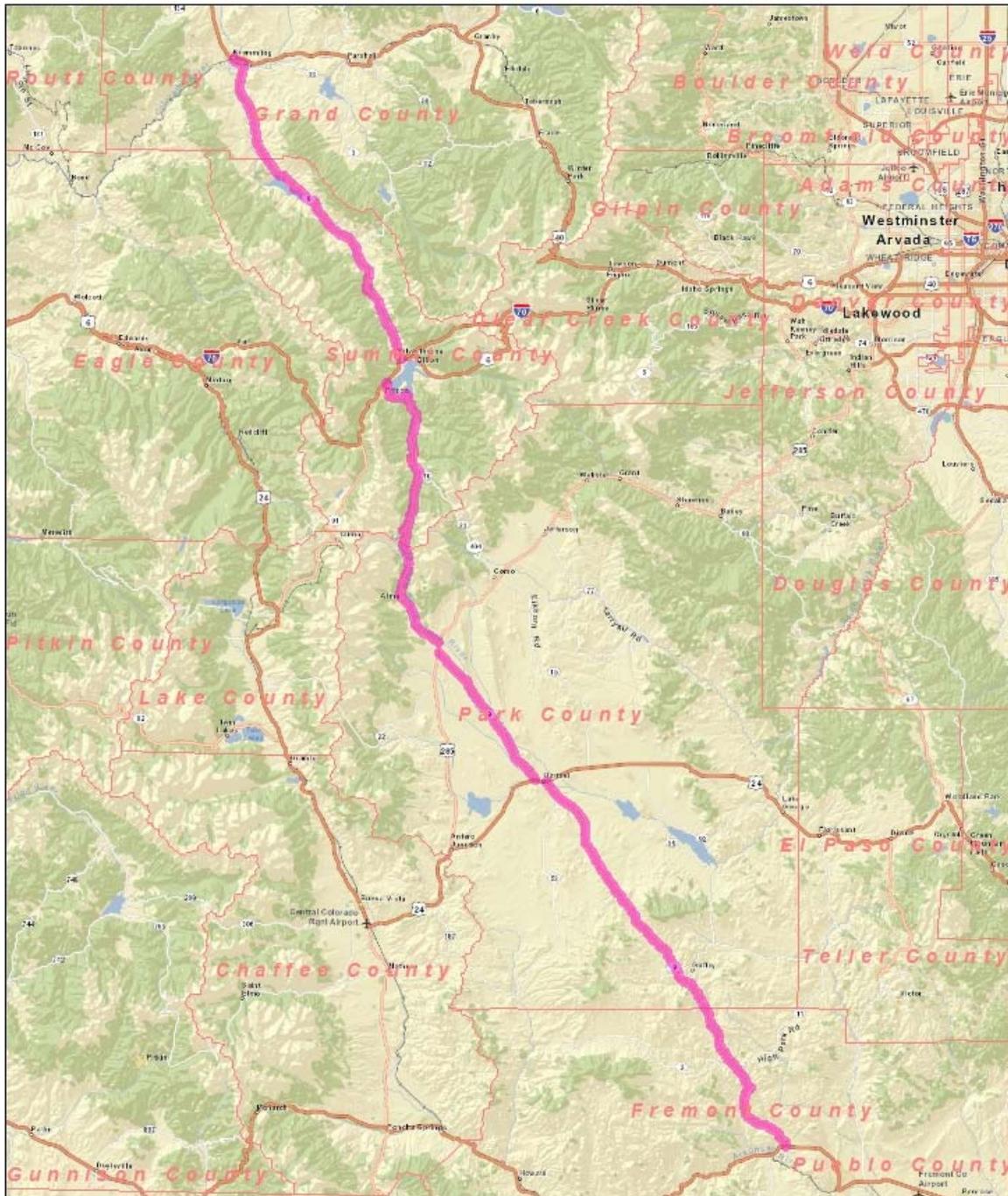
Criterion D

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, State Highway 9 does not possess significance under *Criterion D*.

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- SH 9
- County Boundary

SH 9



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