

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Division of Transportation Development
4201 East Arkansas Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80222
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MEMORANDUM

TO: STAC

FROM: Debra Perkins-Smith, Director, Division of Transportation Development

DATE: November 9, 2012

RE: Enhanced NHS

MAP-21 eliminated the statutory mileage cap on the NHS and required its expansion to include all principal arterials. This provision became effective on October 1, 2012 when FHWA added to the NHS all roadways classified as principal arterial that were not already included in the NHS. Previously the NHS in Colorado included only a limited number of off-system roads. The addition of all principal arterials adds roughly 1,800 off-system lane miles and 1,900 on-system lane miles, increasing the NHS in Colorado by 32%.

Background

On September 6, 2012 CDOT received a request from the FHWA Colorado Division to perform a review of existing principal arterials to determine whether there was a need to reclassify any of the routes. The request included a deadline of September 20 for the submittal of any changes. DTD coordinated review and collected responses from planning partners and forwarded the review results to FHWA. Many planning partners reported that they did not have sufficient time to perform the review or to consult with their local agencies.

FHWA is now providing an opportunity to review the new Enhanced NHS designations and provide modifications. The timeframe for this review is more generous and should allow sufficient time for more detailed review and input from CDOT and planning partners. The review includes both urban and rural principal arterials and includes an examination of roads currently classified as principal arterials, as well as those that aren't currently classified as principal arterials but may merit upgrade.

Next Steps

DTD will continue to coordinate review and will meet with CDOT Regions, MPOs, and TPRs, as needed, to facilitate. The submittal of NHS modifications to FHWA is due on March 29, 2013. The addition of off-system roads to the NHS has some implications and has generated a number of questions from planning partners. Answers to some commonly asked questions are included in the attached.