



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Bob Wilson, CDOT Public Relations
(303) 757-9431

Lori Nakanishi, U.S. 50 Corridor East
(719) 520-5800

U.S. 50 Corridor East Begins Second Year of Environmental Study

Pueblo, Colo. – February 27, 2007 – The U.S. 50 Project Team will continue to work closely with key stakeholders in 2007 to identify a full range of alternatives for the future of U.S. 50 throughout Southeast Colorado. The Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (Tier 1 EIS) for U.S. 50 will result in a general corridor location decision and highway facility type from Pueblo to the vicinity of the Kansas state line.

During the next 12 months, the project team will concentrate on completing the Purpose and Need statement; the full range of alternatives; developing the screening criteria, and other evaluations required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

At present, the project team is gathering environmental data to conduct the analysis required under NEPA. This data includes information on

- historic and cultural sites;
- community land use;
- wetland and riparian areas,
- wildlife and habitat; floodplains;
- prime and unique farmlands,
- and other resources.

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“The project team continues to engage residents of the U.S. 50 communities in project decision-making,” said Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Project Manager Mike Perez. “The team hosted public meetings in late February and March 2006, as well as community workshops in August. At both series of meetings, public comments clearly indicate that the communities are ready for the team to present a recommended alternative.”

The project team (CDOT and the Federal Highway Administration) are working with the Community Working Group and Agency Working Group to identify the range of alternatives and evaluate the implications to the communities and to the natural environment of the Lower Arkansas Valley.

The next series of public meetings are tentatively scheduled for the summer of 2007. The range of alternatives, screening criteria, and a recommended corridor location alternative with the implications of that proposal will be presented to the public at that time.

After completion of the Tier 1 EIS document, the draft EIS will go before the public for review in 2008, with a Record of Decision expected by 2009. Tier 2 projects will be initiated as funding is identified.

Currently, CDOT is also exploring how to best apply the funds earmarked by SAFETEA-LU for U.S. 50 in a manner that ensures the most effective use of those dollars and within federal guidelines. For more information on the SAFETEA-LU funds, please contact CDOT Project Manager Mike Perez at (719) 546-5406.

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CDOT is *Partnering for Progress* by bringing together communities, public officials, regulatory agencies and citizens to identify a corridor location for an improved U.S. 50 that effectively balances the diverse needs.

For additional information about the U.S. 50 Corridor East Tier 1 EIS or to be placed on the project mailing list, please visit the project Web site at www.us50east.com or contact Public Involvement Coordinator Lori Nakanishi at 1-866-GO50NOW (1-866-465-0669).

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