Welcome!

Public Open House
(Study Introduction)

Southern Mountain Loop Planning and Environmental Linkages Study

September 18, 2019:
5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

No Formal Presentation
Study Background:

PURPOSE OF PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to improve safety, provide a regional and local multi-use trail, and improve connections and access to recreational facilities and communities along the Colorado Scenic Highway of Legends Byway (US 160 and SH 12) between Walsenburg and Trinidad.
What is a PEL Study?

- Planning-level study for transportation issues and environmental concerns along a corridor.
- Decision-making tool for “projects”.
- Enables CDOT and local agencies to advance projects into next steps based on priorities and funding.

Note: Next steps would include funding, NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) Studies, public meetings, design, and permitting, before construction of a project could begin.

Kinds of Decisions in Study

- Scope and limits of projects
- Environmental setting and issues
- Plan for implementation

Types of Analyses within Study

- Travel characteristics and demand
- Economic development and land use
- Natural and manmade environment
- Agency and public involvement
Study Process and Schedule:

Agency/Public Information

- Study Intro - June/July 2019
- Existing Issues - Aug/Sept 2019
- Alternatives - Dec/Jan 2020
- Recommendations - April/May 2020
- Implementation Plan/Report - July 2020

HOW TO STAY INFORMED

- Stakeholder Meetings
- Coffee Chats
- Public Open Houses
- Project Website
- eNewsletters
- Social Media
- Press Releases
- Presentations
US 160 and SH 12 Traffic and Safety

1. Roadway Section
   The corridor has highly variable shoulder widths ranging from 0-feet to 10-feet.

2. Traffic Volumes
   Current and projected traffic volumes do not exceed roadway capacities.
   *Does not include possible future truck traffic from New Elk Mine.

3. Crash History
   Based on historical records from January 2013 through December 2017.
Multi-Use Trail

COLORADO FRONT RANGE TRAIL
Planned trail by Colorado Parks & Wildlife along Front Range from Wyoming to New Mexico.

LEVEL OF TRAFFIC STRESS FOR BICYCLISTS
Traffic volumes, number of lanes, pavement markings, shoulder widths, and posted speed limits affect stress levels for bicyclists.

CONNECTIONS AND ACCESS
- Local communities and resorts
- State Parks (Lathrop and Trinidad Lake)
- Trailheads and Trails
- State Wildlife Areas
  - Wahatoya
  - North Lake
  - Bosque del Oso
- San Isabel National Forest
- Spanish Peaks National Wilderness Area
**Scenic Byway Features**

**SCENIC HIGHWAY OF LEGENDS BYWAY**
One of the first highways designated (1989) as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway.

**Total Spending (2017) = $15.3 Billion**

- **Transportation** 21%  $3.3 Billion
- **Eating/Drinking** 21% $3.3 Billion
- **Recreation** 15% $2.3 Billion
- **Retail** 13% $1.9 Billion
- **Accommodation** 30% $4.5 Billion

**IMPACT OF TOURISM IN COLORADO**
Tourism is a significant contributor to the state’s economy.

**BYWAY INTERPRETIVE SITES**
The byway includes a number of existing and planned pull-offs with interpretive signs for tourists to enjoy the surrounding scenery and learn about the area’s rich history.
Environmental Resources

- Archaeology
- Environmental Justice
- Farmlands
- Floodplains
- Geologic Resources and Soils
- Hazardous/Solid Wastes
- Historic Resources
- Land Use and Ecoregions
- Noise
- Public Lands and Recreation Resources
- Socioeconomics
- Threatened and Endangered Species, Other Special-Status Species, and Wildlife
- Visual Resources
- Wetlands and Other Waters of the US
Thank you for attending!

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Comments may be provided:
- Comment form
- Email — SouthernMountainLoop@gmail.com

Stay Connected:
- https://www.codot.gov/library/studies/co-12-sml-pel
  or
- https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sccog
  Click on Development link to access additional information about the SML PEL Study.

Questions?
- Call: 719-427-1078
- Email: SouthernMountainLoop@gmail.com