

An aerial photograph of a mountain range. The peaks are covered in snow and set against a clear blue sky. Below the mountains, a valley opens up, showing a winding road that curves through a landscape of brown and green vegetation. The foreground shows a dark, shadowed area, possibly a road or a ravine.

Corridor Management Plan

Scenic Highway of Legends Byway

Close to Heaven, Down to Earth

January 2020

Acknowledgments

This plan would not have been possible without the participation of byway stakeholders, current and past members of the Governing Board, and elected officials of Huerfano County and Las Animas County.

This Corridor Management Plan for the Scenic Byway of Legends was adopted on January 3, 2020, at a Stakeholders meeting at the La Veta Mercantile by the following current and past Board Members and County Officials:

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Document Produced By:

The Governing Board, Scenic Byway of Legends
January 2020

Cover Photo: The Great Dike, radiating north from the foot of the Spanish Peaks, Photo: John Wark

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To Guide the Work of the Board OF Directors
The Scenic Highway of Legends
January 2020

Colorado’s Scenic Highway of Legends (SHOL) has just celebrated its thirtieth anniversary. The leaders who have guided the organization for the past decades felt successful in the balance of preservation and promotion. Over the thirty years, they produced a handsome collection of multimedia marketing materials that pair the stunning views of the Spanish Peaks with the authentic charm of the byway’s mountain towns. These materials enjoy high demand from visitor centers and warm appreciation from local businesses. A series of public engagement meetings in 2019 have reinforced how deeply local citizens revere the roadway itself, and treasure both the history of the region and the legends that continue to enhance the mystical quality of the drive.

Natural events of 2018, however, have dictated that the priorities this byway organization must change. The Spring Wildfire, the second largest wildfire in Colorado’s history, burned 108,045 acres of forest, with flames coming right to the edge highway 12. Persistent drought conditions

and climate change have set the stage so that wildlife, the San Isabel National Forest, the geological features, and the towns themselves remain at risk from both fire and flooding.

In 2019 Huerfano and Las Animas Counties contracted for a PEL (Planning and Environmental Linkages) Study that is evaluating the safety conditions on the 82-mile Scenic Highway of Legends Byway, its suitability to serve as the Southern Loop of the Front Range Bicycle Trail, and its potentials for multimodal travel for locals and visitors alike. Public involvement in this planning process has been extensive, and has moved the byway to the forefront of discussions in all five of the byway towns.

Work in the first thirty-one years has been accomplished through agency partnerships, funding of competitive grants offered through the Federal Highways Administration, and the volunteer efforts of a handful of people who comprise the Byway Board. However, to meet both the economic opportunities that come with a new breed of active outdoor recreationists

(described in the PEL Study) and possibility of ongoing weather events that threaten the National Forest, a more robust organization is needed. Organizational changes now underway include broader representation of stakeholders, recruitment of a new generation of leaders, a new administrative “home base,” and a plan for financial sustainability. The first steps have been taken in the reorganization process, and it is the members of both previous and newly formed Byway Boards that have collaboratively constructed this document.

This edition will be the first of a living, ever-evolving plan to guide the work of a reconstituted Board, its expanding membership and local stakeholders. It seems fit that this version is released for review in the first week of what promises to be a lively decade.

The Scenic Highway of Legends, Inc. is committed to promoting, preserving and protecting the byway’s resources. We understand and appreciate the uniqueness of our resources and the need to protect them for all time.

SCENIC BYWAY LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

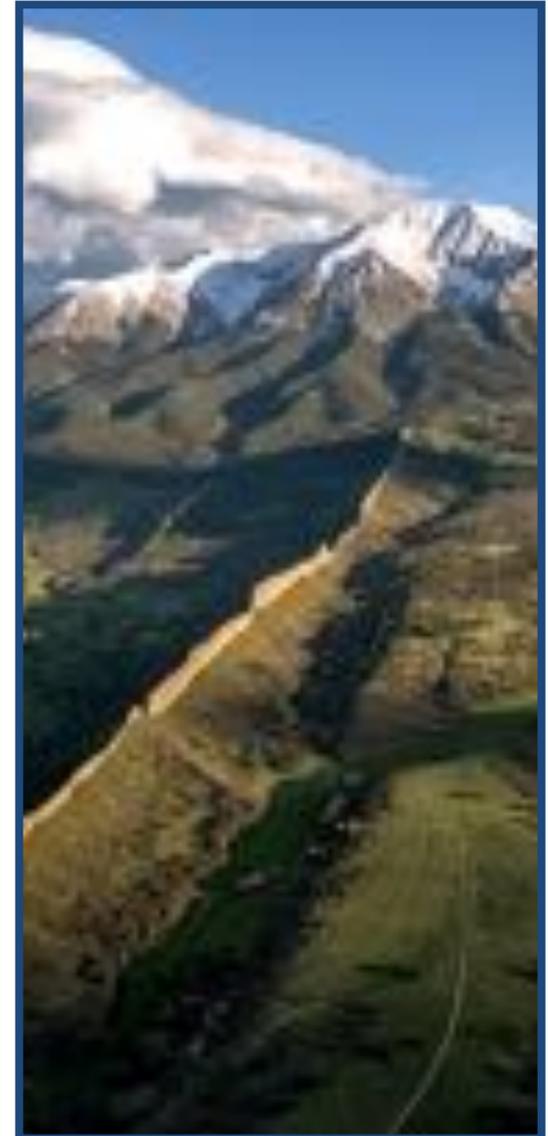
BACKGROUND

The Scenic Highway of Legends, Inc. (SHOL) was created in June 1987 as a grassroots effort of area businesses and residents to both promote tourism and protect the byway's extraordinary natural resources. Participants included two counties, cities and towns, chambers of commerce, economic development entities and agencies managing state and federal public lands. The route was officially named the Scenic Highway of Legends by Colorado State Congressional Resolution, a full two years before the launch of the state byways program. The SHOL was designated as one of the first five Colorado State Scenic and Historic Byways on September 22, 1989, then earned the additional designation as a National Forest Scenic Byway on February 2, 1990, from the United States Forest Service.

LOCATION AND ROUTE

The Scenic Highway of Legends is located in south central Colorado on Interstate 25 an easy 3-hour drive from Santa Fe and only a 2.5-hour drive from Denver.

Travelers can enter the byway from I-25 at Walsenburg, Trinidad and Aguilar, or from State Highway 160 at La Veta. They are quickly transported to a well maintained 2-lane state highway that winds through the mountainous terrain of the San Isabel Forest (A National Natural Landmark) and the twin Spanish Peaks that rise over 7,000 feet from the valley floor. The scenic drive is dominated by a visually stunning series of geological formations including the Devil's Stairsteps, Profile Rock, and Goemmer's Butte. From the panoramic view on Cucharas Pass, one can see the series of radial dikes that radiate in every direction from the base of the Spanish Peaks, and the Dakota Sandstone Wall spans the valley floor from north to south.



Radial Dike (Photo: John Wark)

BYWAY COMMUNITIES

The Scenic Highway of Legends has three gateway communities with Walsenburg on the north, La Veta to the east and Trinidad on the south. There are several smaller towns and villages situated in between.

Walsenburg: A Crossroad of Cultures

As the northern gateway, the City of Walsenburg, located on Interstate-25, provides standard visitor services with restaurants, bars, lodging, and antique shops. Anchored by an iconic courthouse, Walsenburg's Historic Downtown is coming alive with the reopening of the landmark Fox Theatre, a 1917 Art Deco movie and performing arts center, a new artesian brewery, 9-hole golf course, coffee shop, museums and murals. Recreational opportunities are found at the City's waterpark as well as the County's Lathrop State Park, just a few miles west of town.

La Veta: A Charming Mountain Town

Founded in 1862 by Colonel Francisco, La Veta started out as a four-sided adobe fort and plaza around which the quintessential rustic architecture of local stone and logs

emerged. Now an arts centered town, La Veta hosts a bevy of art galleries, live entertainment and year-round music festivals. The heartbeat of this pedestrian friendly downtown is its award-winning public library, legendary local market and regionally adored bakery.

Cuchara: Historic Village meets Mountain Retreat

Cuchara has three distinct zones: the historic community center and park, the compact business strip, and the Mountain Resort.

This historic village offers a variety of visitor services during travel season, including restaurants, lodging, miniature golf and souvenir shopping. For the more active adventurer, horseback riding and the Cuchara Mountain Park offer more adventurous opportunities. The newly reopened park has traditionally struggled as a ski resort due to inadequate precipitation, but with much community interest and support, the Cuchara Mountain Park is being revitalized to provide recreational opportunities in every season.



Main Street in Walsenburg at the intersection of US 160 and Business I-25.

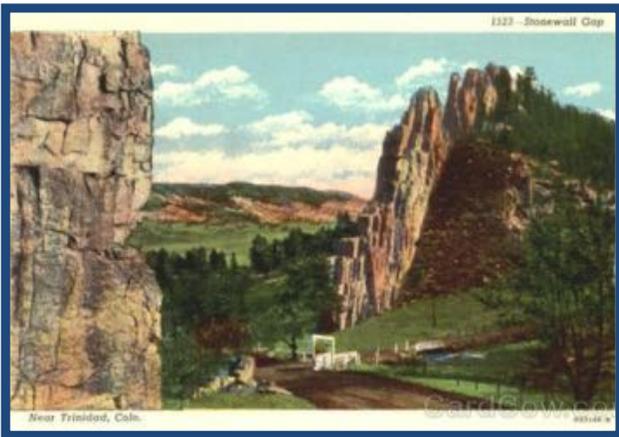


Ice Cream at Charlies' Market, La Veta



La Veta shops and galleries.

A vintage Stonewall Gap postcard illustrates the rich history of Stonewall.



Aguilar: The Old Trading Post

The Town of Aguilar was first settled in 1861, and was known as “San Antonio Plaza.” The settlement was mainly a trading post for Native and Spanish Americans that farmed and ranched in the surrounding area. In 1878, coal mining provided expanding opportunities for the ranches and farms and encouraged other businesses to move into the area.

Stonewall: Picture Perfect

A ranching and logging community nestled in the gap of the Dakota Wall, Stonewall offers traditional cabin style lodging and caters to outdoor recreation visitors. Many are so enamored with the area they return generation after generation. Originally built as a summer retreat for Trinidad’s affluent residents during the coal boom years, Stonewall enjoys a leisurely pace with picturesque views that have found their way onto postcards since the 1920s.

Cokedale: A Perfectly Preserved Colorado Coal Town

Once a model mining town for coal workers,

BYWAY COMMUNITIES

Cokedale today is considered the best preserved coal camp in Colorado, boasting an impressive 111 lovingly preserved residential and industrial buildings in its historic district. A fine museum documents the coal mining history of the region and offers visitors a walking tour of the Cokedale Historic District. This one of a kind community sits across SH 12 from the privately-owned historic site of 350 coke ovens used between 1906 and 1947.

Trinidad: Old Meets New Arts Meets the Outdoors

Finishing up a tour of the Scenic Highway of Legends lands you in the vibrant, arts-oriented City of Trinidad. The City has done extensive renovations in and around their downtown, and it shows. Full of restaurants, art galleries, antique shops, bars, museums and the like, a free trolley takes visitors through an astonishing collection of architectural styles. Over 100 buildings built between 1889 and 1923 stand as a tribute to Trinidad’s financial boom that spanned the eras of the Santa Fe Trail, sheep and cattle ranching, and coal mining. An abundance of

fine European craftsmanship can be seen both the stonework and brickwork that line the streets. Numerous annual festivals keep the energetic atmosphere alive, invigorating the local arts and entertainment industries. Just west of the city, Trinidad Lake State Park offers the standard recreation and visitor experience.

The City of Trinidad is once again growing, this time in the direction of the creative arts and outdoor recreation. The new Space to Create will give working artists both a place to live and work, and Colorado’s most recently designated state park, centered on the iconic and landscape defining Fisher’s Peak, will be a mecca for outdoor recreation.

To make the byway experience authentic and its legends resonate with visitors, the byway group needs to be able to embrace the new active adventurer while preserving the “old ways” and its own rhythm of life.

A commitment to a younger more adventurous population is a major new direction for the sustainability of the byway. We believe it is important to include the people and families that have lived along the byway and in the region for generations while also embracing the fresh perspectives of the ever-energetic youth that are discovering our area more and more.



Huajatolla Heritage Festival, La Veta



Huajatolla Heritage Festival, La Veta

SCENIC HIGHWAY OF LEGENDS PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Partners and Community Participation

This corridor management plan describes ambitious goals and new directions that have emerged from dramatically changing environmental conditions on the byway corridor, specifically persistent drought conditions and the ongoing threats of both fire and flood that resulted from the 2018 Spring Fire.

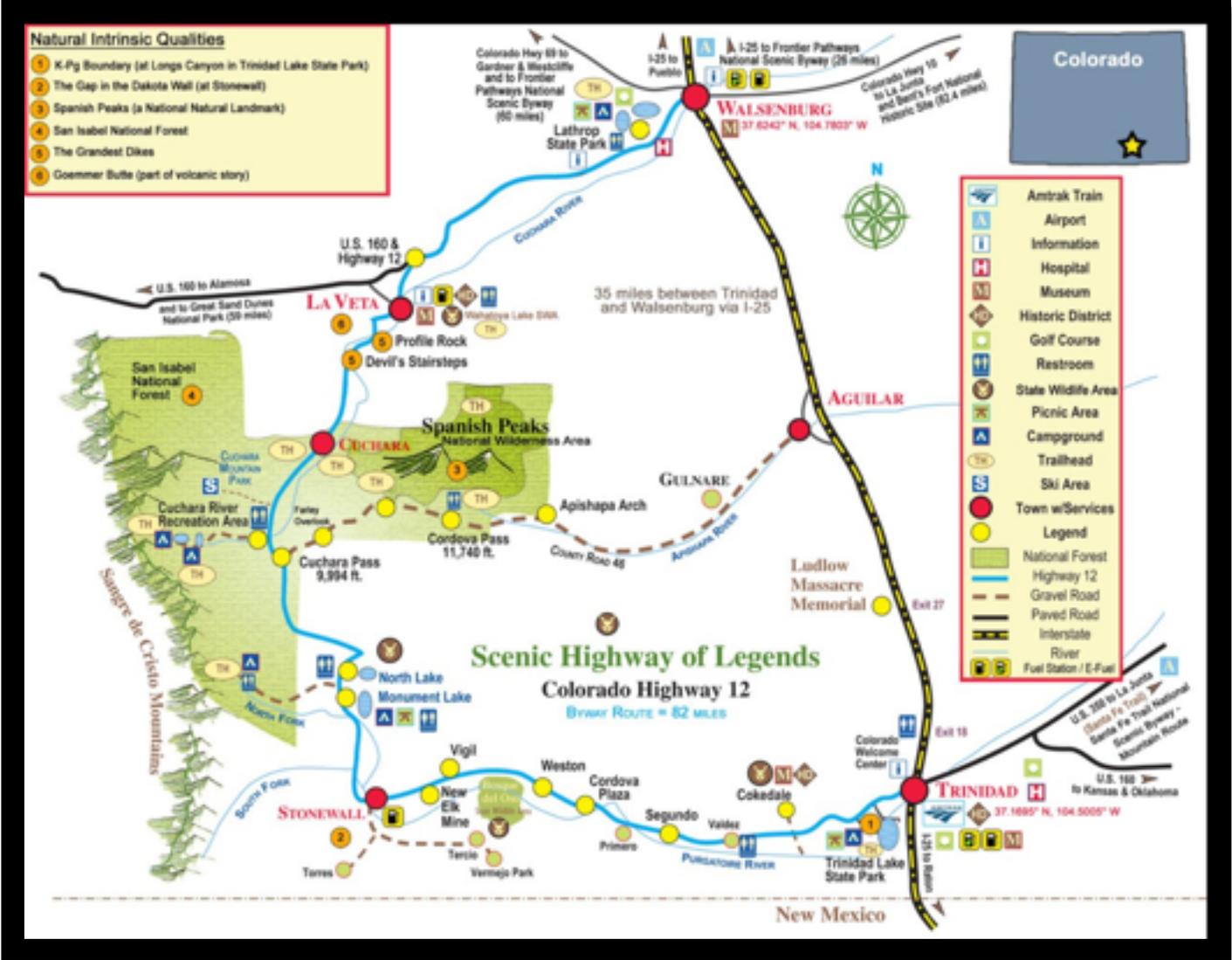
Byway leaders are now planning for ways to meet and manage the growing interest in active outdoor recreation which has started to shift the byway’s responsibility from serving visitors who came for the Scenic Drives, to building more infrastructure for current visitors who want to engage with the natural resources more interactively.

The new CMP has been adopted in January 2020. The Board will now bring together long-established organizational partners (beside) with new members to assign responsibilities. The timeline for this strategy session with organizational partners has been set for August 2020, immediately following the release of the final recommendations from the PEL Bike/Ped study.

Byway Partner Organizations	
Federal Government	
U.S. Forest Service	
U.S. Bureau of Land Management	
State Government	
Colorado Department of Transportation	
Colorado Parks and Wildlife	
Colorado State Forest Service	
County Government	
Huerfano County Board of County Commissioners	
Huerfano County Planning Department	
Huerfano County Economic Development and Tourism	
Huerfano County Public Works Departments	
Las Animas County Board of County Commissioners	
Las Animas County Public Works Departments	
Municipal Government	
City of Trinidad	
City of Walsenburg	
Town of La Veta	
Tourism Boards	
Huerfano County Tourism Board	
Trinidad Tourism Board	
Tourism Lodging Tax Boards	

SCENIC HIGHWAY OF LEGENDS MAP

Huerfano and Las Animas Counties



COLORADO'S HIGHWAY OF LEGENDS SCENIC BYWAY

Huerfano and Las Animas Counties

Mission:

The mission of the Byway Governing Board is to protect and promote the irreplaceable natural and historical resources of the Scenic Highway of Legends in a manner that keeps these resources intact to support the livability and economic vitality of the communities in the Spanish Peaks region, and to provide travelers the opportunities to explore and to discover ways to forge deep connections with nature.

Vision:

The Scenic Highway of Legends will become a National Scenic Byway that draws both national and international travelers to its distinctive geology, its rich collection of cultural legends and its unique opportunities for travelers to be active in the outdoors.

Goals

- To develop a world-class geological interpretive center that allows visitors to experience the fiery history that shaped the landscape of the Spanish Peaks.
- To inspire local citizens to build upon their deep pride in the byway through proactive participation and management of resources that express the essence of the byway.
- To develop a range of visitor experiences that will steadily develop tourism into a significant and sustainable economic sector for the two counties that host the byway.



The Spanish Peaks. (Photo: Aaron Spong)

THE TEN-YEAR WORK PLAN

(To achieve the Vision and Goals of the SHOL)

Year One

- Submit an application for designation as a National Scenic Byway
- Integrate and prioritize multi-modal recommendations from both the PEL (Planning and Environmental Linkages Study) and the Statewide Assessment of Colorado's 26 Scenic Byways.
- Secure funding and install a system of electric charging stations to support electric vehicles traveling the full length of the 82-mile byway.

Year Two

- Secure funding for a feasibility study for the development of a geology interpretive center.
- A marketing sub-committee will work with CDOT Region 2 Engineer to repair or replace highway directional signage.
- Develop a formal View Shed Protection Plan for the full 82-mile byway. Huerfano County Planning Department will coordinate in conjunction with the Las Animas County Planning Department. (Visual Intrusion Plan 9.a(9)) FHWA Policy 5.18.95

Year Five

- Complete critical amenities improvements - restrooms, interpretation, scenic overlooks and trailheads.
- Conduct a Visual Impact Overview in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service using CDOT Statewide Guidelines.
- Design preservation strategies for natural and historic intrinsic assets.
- Conduct a formal wayfinding assessment.
- Adopt design guidelines for a cohesive system of signage and interpretation.
- Prepare communities to be Bicycle Friendly Towns in anticipation of new multimodal trail developments.
- Build trail connectivity and stronger integration between the three State Parks (Lathrop State Park, Trinidad State Park, Fishers Peak State Park) and the Scenic Highway of Legends to expand opportunities for visitors.
- Expand opportunities for multimodal travel for locals and visitors alike.

Year Ten

- Preserve the byway's Sense of Place. Using principles of context sensitive design, address how to preserve the character, and the look-and-feel of this historic road.
- Integrate universal design and meet ADA requirements into every aspect of travel for both.
- Complete preservation of historic buildings on the byway in partnership with History Colorado.



A National Natural landmark.

(Photo: <http://southerncolorado.info>)

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

An examination of original documents produced by the founding Board of Directors confirms that the mission and goals of the Scenic Highway of Legends have not changed over the thirty-year history of the byway. The essence of the byway remains the same, as does the need to protect and preserve the corridor’s irreplaceable assets.

The byway, however, has experienced ongoing difficulties in both retaining board members and in securing year-to-year operational funds. The organization has never employed paid staff. Distances are great and human resources are limited in this sparsely populated area. Active community members feel overcommitted.

Byway leaders realize that that three essential elements must change to insure the sustainability of the organization: 1) the required time commitment must be reduced for officers the Board of Directors, and 2) administrative support must be found to give the byway a “home base,” and 3) operational funding needs to shift from members to established agencies within the two counties.

This 2020 update of the Corridor Management Plan, written together by both legacy and existing members of the Board of Directors, outlines the first steps to begin to incorporate those changes. The Huerfano County Planning Department has offered to support the administrative functions of the Board, a new model for funding will replicate the successful approach of Colorado’s West Elk Loop Scenic Byway, and a new structure of working subcommittees will reduce the time required by members of the Board of Directors.



Fourth of July in Spanish Peaks Country

INTRINSIC QUALITIES



NATURAL

Including:

1. Geology
2. Flora (forest & eco region)
3. Fauna (wildlife)

Natural quality applies to those features of the visual environment that are in a relatively undisturbed state. These features predate the arrival of human populations and may include geological formations, fossils, landform, water bodies, vegetation, and wildlife. There may be evidence of human activity but the natural features reveal minimal disturbances. (FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Flora (Forest & Eco region) Resources:

- Farley Flower Overlook Observation Site
- San Isabel National Forest hiking trails
- Spanish Peaks National Natural Landmark (1976), 7,000 vertical feet rise from valley floor
 - West Spanish Peak (13,626 feet elevation)
 - East Spanish Peak (12,683 feet elevation)
- Spanish Peaks Wilderness Study Area (19,226 acres)

Fauna (Wildlife) Resources:

- Bosque Del Oso State Wildlife Area (30,000 acres)
- Longs Canyon Watchable Wildlife Area
- Wahatoya State Wildlife Area Birdwatching (80 acres)

Geological Resources:

- Dakota Wall geologic formation
- Devil's Stairsteps geologic formation
- Farley Flower Overlook (panoramic view of geological formations)
- Goemmer's Butte geologic formation
- K-Pg Boundry Extinction Event (formerly K-T Boundry) – Trinidad Lake State Park
- Profile Rock geologic formation
- Spanish Peaks National Natural Landmark (1976), 7,000 vertical feet rise from valley floor
 - West Spanish Peak (13,626 feet elevation)
 - East Spanish Peak (12,683 feet elevation)
- Spanish Peaks volcanic dikes geologic formations
- Spanish Peaks Wilderness Study Area (19,226 acres)

Natural Quality Protection

1. Much of the land in the Scenic Highway of Legends corridor is owned, managed, and protected by federal and state government natural resource management agencies.
2. Extensive acreage in the corridor is designated and protected as a Wilderness Area, Natural Area or State Wildlife Area.
3. The Colorado Parks and Wildlife Department exercises jurisdiction over all wildlife in the state and has adopted special regulations to protect native trout in the corridor.
4. Several organizations and volunteer groups in the area are engaged in river restoration, fire mitigation and other natural resource-related projects.
5. This CMP was developed with the involvement of the U.S. Forest service, the primary public land management agency in the byway corridor.
6. We will work with GOCO on outdoor stewardship as we invest in projects that sustain and improve the Byway's natural resources.



SCENIC

Scenic quality is the heightened visual experience derived from the view of natural and man-made elements of the visual environment of the scenic byway corridor. The characteristics of the landscape are strikingly distinct and offer a pleasing and most memorable visual experience. All elements of the landscape – landform, water, vegetation, and man-made development – contribute to the quality of the corridor’s visual environment. Everything present is in harmony and shares in the intrinsic qualities.

(FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Scenic Resources:

- Apishapa River Valley west of Aguilar
- Cucharas River
- Farley Flower Overlook Observation Site
- Monument Lake
- North Lake
- Purgatoire River Valley
- The Twin Spanish Peaks
 - East Spanish Peak
 - West Spanish Peak
- View of the Culebra Range of the Sangre De Cristo Mountains (Culebra Peak – 14,169 feet elevation)

Scenic Quality Protection

1. The Colorado Department of Transportation adopted new Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines in November 2019. These guidelines create an aesthetic context for the corridor. The design philosophy captures how an over-all corridor will look and describes the approach to preserve unique places along the corridor.
2. Much of the land in the CLP/NPB corridor is owned, managed, and protected by federal and state government natural resource management agencies.
3. Extensive acreage in the corridor is designated and protected as a Wilderness Area, Natural Area or State Wildlife Area.
4. CDOT and the primary natural resource management agencies in the corridor have regulations and guidelines that protect sightlines and minimize visual intrusions on the byway. The Planning Departments of both Huerfano and Las Animas Counties are also working together on zone and land usage to eliminate the possibility of visual intrusions.
5. This CMP was developed with the involvement of the U.S. Forest service, the primary public land management agency in the byway corridor.



HISTORY

Historic quality encompasses legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape, whether natural or manmade, that are of such historic significance that they educate the viewer and stir an appreciation of the past. The historic elements reflect the actions of people and may include buildings, settlement patterns, and other examples of human activity. Historic features can be inventoried, mapped, and interpreted. They possess integrity of location, design, setting, material, workmanship, feeling, and association. (FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Historic Resources:

- A.R. Mitchel Museum
- A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art (Trinidad)
- Adobe Schoolhouse (1904)
- Blumenshine Mural in the Walsenburg Post Office
- Burro Canyon Bridge (1939)
- Carnegie Public Library
- City Hall
- Cokedale Mining Museum
- Cokedale National Historic District (1906 – 1947)
- 350 historic coke ovens
- Cordova Chapel (1871)
- Cordova Plaza (1861)
- Denver Hotel
- Fox Theatre, Trinidad
- Francisco Fort in La Veta (1862)
- Francisco Fort Museum (La Veta) original 1862 Plaza Building

Historical Quality Protection

1. In 1972 El Corazon de Trinidad National Historic District was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Corazon de Trinidad (“the heart of Trinidad”) National Historic District covers a particularly well-preserved portion of downtown Trinidad that includes many blocks of adobe and brick buildings. By 1962 the Colorado Historical Society (now History Colorado) had acquired the Old Baca House, Pioneer Museum House and Bloom Mansion, operating them as a regional museum complex.
2. Along the Byway, the Francisco Fort Museum in La Veta is operated by the Huerfano County Historical Society with a mission of preserving the history of the area.
3. Several sites on the byway have been listed on the Federal Register of Historic Places and the Colorado State register of Historic Places.
4. The La Veta Historic and Preservation Committee has various historic preservation measures in place. If anyone in the La Veta Historic Preservation District is planning on building, painting or doing any construction, they must go through the HPC to get approval first. Additional protections, funding and assistance for historic preservation may be available through the state of Colorado and various extension agencies, historic groups and patrons.
5. This CMP was developed with the involvement of local residents and community leaders involved with the history and heritage of the byway corridor.

Historic Resources (Cont.):

- Historic town site of Segundo (1860s – early 1900s)
- Historic town site of Stonewall (1870s)
- Historic town site of Valdez (1860s)
- Historic town site of Vigil (early 1860s)
 - House Built on a Bridge
- Historic town site of Weston (1880s)
- Huerfano Heritage Center and Archives
- Ludlow Monument (United Mine Workers of America) – Ludlow Massacre of April 20, 1914
- Madrid Plaza (1862)
- Medina Plaza
- Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail
- New Elk Mine (1946)
- Old Ute Trail
- Primero Community
- Purgatoire River and early valley settlement
- Schneider Brewery
- St. Ignatius Roman Catholic Church (1890)
- Temple Aaron
- The Huerfano County Courthouse
- Tijeras Plaza (1862)
- Trinidad History Museum – Baca House and Bloom House
- Walsenburg Mining Museum in the restored Huerfano County Jail Building
- Western and Victorian architecture of the Corazon de Trinidad (Historic District)



A.R. Mitchell painting displayed at the A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art in Trinidad
(Photo: www.armitchellmuseum.com)



The Historic Huerfano County Courthouse
(Photo: www.huerfano.us)



House Built on a Bridge
(Photo: www.bridgehunter.com)



Historic Bloom Mansion in Trinidad
(Photo: www.colorado.com)



CULTURAL

Cultural quality is evidence and expressions of the customs or traditions of a distinct group of people. Cultural features including, but not limited to, crafts, music, dance, rituals, festivals, speech, food, special events, and vernacular architecture are currently practiced. The cultural qualities of the corridor could highlight one or more significant communities and/or ethnic traditions.

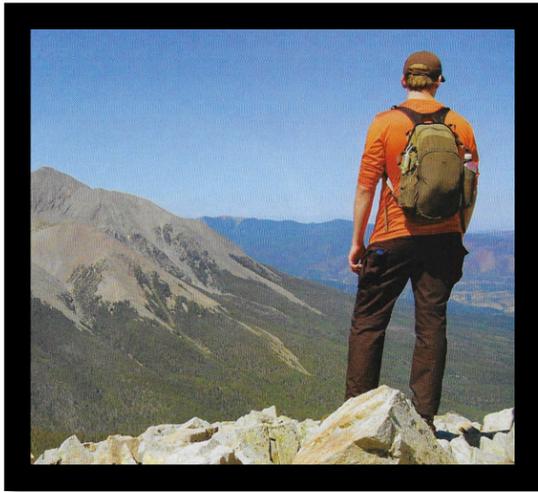
(FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Cultural Resources:

- Churches
- Community of Cuchara (1910)
- Creative District, Downtown Trinidad
- Gallery Museum
- Huajatolla Heritage Festival, La Veta (pictured above)
- La Veta 4-H Barn and Arena Festival (Ranching History)
- Legends from different groups of people (see next two pages)
- Museum of Friends (Arts)
- Performance Arts Theater
- Spanish Peaks Celtic Festival, La Veta

Cultural Quality Protection

1. Trinidad has been awarded the distinguished honor of being named a Colorado Creative District and they have embraced the arts as an economic stimulator in multiple ways.
2. La Veta has started the 2 year process to see if they also can become a Colorado Creative District. Once this is awarded, the Scenic Highway of Legends will be the bridge that brings these two unique arts communities together.
3. Plans are being discussed for a Plein Air Festival along the Byway.
4. Various, municipal and county policies and regulations protect the cultural landscape, agricultural heritage and rural lifestyle found in the byway corridor.
5. Byway communities value and maintain many local art and heritage celebrations and events.
6. Additional protections, funding and assistance may be available through the state of Colorado and various organizations that support the arts and culture.
7. This CMP was developed with the involvement of local residents and community leaders involved with the culture and heritage of the byway corridor.



RECREATIONAL

Recreational quality involves outdoor recreational activities directly associated with and dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of the corridor’s landscape. The recreational activities provide opportunities for active and passive recreational experiences. They include, but are not limited to, downhill skiing, rafting, boating, fishing, and hiking. Driving the road itself may qualify as a pleasurable recreational experience. The recreational activities may be seasonal, but the quality and importance of the recreational activities as seasonal operations must be well recognized.

(FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Recreational Resources:

- Bear Lake Campground with hiking (U.S.F.S.)
- Blue Lake Campground with hiking (U.S.F.S.)
- Bosque Del Oso State Wildlife Area (SWA) — hunting, fishing
- Cordova Pass Picnic Area and Campground (11,743 feet elevation, 1779 Indian Trail, 1883 mail route)
- Cuchara Hiking Trail System
- Cuchara Mountain Park, Cross Country Skiing/Snow Shoeing/Sledding
- Cuchara Pass Day Use Picnic Area (9,941’ elevation, 1779—Indian Trail; 1883—mail route)
- Horseback Riding, Cuchara
- Hunters can access Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) Game (1-800-244-5613)
- Management Units (GMUs) via the SHOL
- La Veta Hiking Trail System
- Lathrop State Park (fishing, picnicking, hiking, swimming, watchable wildlife)
- Martin and Horseshoe Lakes (Lathrop State Park)
- Monument Lake Resort (camping and hiking)
- North Lake State Wildlife Area (SWA)— fishing, picnicing, hiking, wildlife observation
- Purgatoire Campground (U.S.F.S.)
- Road Cycling – Century Ride
- Scenic drives
- Spanish Peaks State Wildlife Area (SWA) — hunting, camping, hiking, wildlife observation
- Spring Creek Picnic Ground (U.S.F.S.)
- Trinidad Lake State Recreation Area: fishing, hiking picnicking and camping, KT boundary, (2017 visitation 192,087)
- Wahatoya State Wildlife Area (SWA) (including Daigre Lake) (fishing, picnicking, hiking, wildlife observation)
- Wildlife viewing, including birding

Recreational Quality Protection

1. Much of the land in the byway corridor is owned, managed, and protected by public land/natural resource management agencies, assuring a basic level of infrastructure and support for outdoor recreation.
2. Several non-profit recreation-oriented groups, such as La Veta Trails are active in the corridor.
3. Several private recreation clubs/organizations, such as snowmobile clubs, are active in the corridor.
4. Recommendations related to outdoor recreation were developed with the involvement of the USFS.
5. We will work with GOCO on outdoor stewardship as we invest in projects that sustain and improve the Byway's recreational resources.



ARCHEOLOGICAL

Archeological quality involves those characteristics of the scenic byways corridor that are physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human life or activity that are visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted. The scenic byway corridor's archeological interest, as identified through ruins, artifacts, structural remains, and other physical evidence, have scientific significance that educate the viewer and stir an appreciation for the past.
(FHWA Policy 5.18.95)

Archeological Resource:

- Aultman Museum, and Louden-Heinritze Archeological Museum, Trinidad



Apishipa Arch, Aguilar Road

Archaeological Quality Protection

1. Much of the land in the CLP/NPB corridor is owned, managed, and protected by federal and state agencies, each of which affords agency-specific protections to archaeological sites and artifacts. The primary land owners in the corridor are the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Colorado State Forest Service, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
2. The Louden-Henritze Archaeology Museum offers visitors a unique look at millions of years of the area's history.
3. Many particularly important archaeological sites have been identified, excavated and documented.
4. The State of Colorado's Historic Preservation Income Tax Credit may apply to qualifying private property.
5. Sensitive archaeological sites are not listed on maps or included in byway brochures and materials.
6. This CMP was developed with the involvement of the USFS, Colorado Parks and Wildlife and others involved with the identification, storage, archiving and curating of the byway's archaeological treasures.

LEGENDS AS CULTURAL INHERITANCE

The Spanish Peaks mark the crossroads of diverse cultures and historical traditions, where the people have responded to the land's power and beauty by endowing its every element with legends and stories that illuminate their heritage and cultural values.

The following legends and their association with byway resources is sourced from the inventory of the Interpretive Plan (authors, 2004.)

Resource: The unique geology of the Spanish Peaks region—tumultuous forces of nature that move and blow off steam.

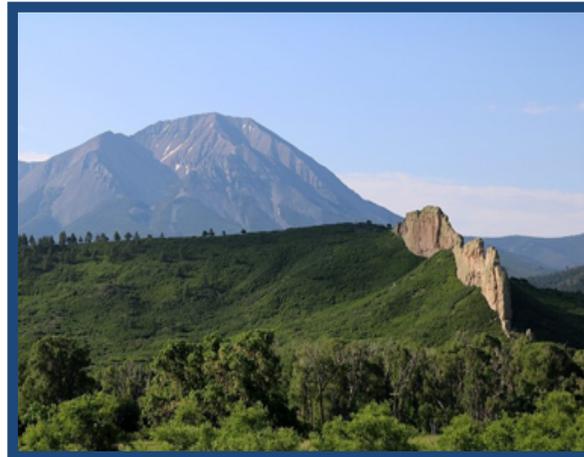
Legends: Devil's Stairsteps, Devil's Thumb, Dakota Wall, Monument Lake, Culebra—A Mountain of Snakes, Goemmer's Butte & the End of the Giants.

Resource: Ecological Zones—Flora, Fauna.

Legends: Three Rivers, Inside the Mountains, Spruce Trees, Dance of Brave Deeds, Bear Lake, Where Dinosaurs Ended.



Devil's Stairsteps is located adjacent to SH 12 between La Veta and Cuchara (Photo: <http://academic.emporia.edu>)



The Big Wall is one of the tallest, longest and most recognizable dikes in the region (Photo: <https://spanishpeakscountry.com/the-great-dikes>)

Resource: Early Human Habitation—Paleo- Indians and Mammoth Hunters, constantly moving between the plains and mountain valleys following good weather and good hunting and gathering.

Legends: Folsom Man and the Four Directions, The Great Flood.

Resource: Ute, Apache, Kiowa, Comanche, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe Peoples—harmony with the land, its spirits and resources, symbiotic relationships and the balance of life.

Legends: Home of the Rain Gods, Grandote and the Valley of Mexico, Ken Yat Che and the Pliedes, Cuerno Verde.

Resource: Exploration—Spanish Conquistadors. The search for gold, the establishment of missions.

Legends: Naming the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, Lost Souls in Purgatory, Arapahoe Princess, La Muneca Buried Treasure.

Resource: Mountain Men and Scouts.

Legends: Tobin's Reward, Kit Carson and the Settlement of Stonewall, Finding the Conquistador's Helmet; Black Jack Ketchum.

Resource: Spanish Settlement—opportunity for wealth and a place of one's own.

Legends: How Torres Survived, The Espinosa Brothers—Killers or Heroes?

Resource: Farming and ranching.

Legends: The Giant and the Spoon (Cuchara), Maid Marian, Stonewall War.

Resource: Francisco Fort—Ranching and farming; providing supplies for travel to the west.

Legends: -"This is Paradise enough for me." - Col. John Francisco.

Resource: Mining Settlement—to find work and a better life.

Legends: How the Apishpa River Got Its Name, Echo Canyon Gold and the Bull's Eye Mine.

Resource: Architecture.

Legends: La Llorona under the House on the Bridge; First Ghost Town.

Resource: Cultural Diversity in Material Culture—utility and unique expressions of culture

Legends: When Schools Weren't.

Resource: Mining, The Great Coal Wars.

Legends: Mother Jones.



SH 7 traverses through the gap in the Dakota Wall near the Village of Stonewall (Photo: <http://www.sangres.com>)



Landmark in 1976 as one of the best-known examples of igneous intrusions (Photo: <http://southerncolorado.info>)

Resource: Transportation—Prehistoric and historic Native American pathways—survival based on unfettered mobility.

Legends: Wahatoya as a Place of Peace and Healing, Legend of Hidden Indian Trails, Moccasin Hill.

Resource: Spanish Trails

Legend: Finding the gold where the mountains turn the color of blood.

Resource: Pony Express

Legends: Taos Lightning on Wooten's Toll Road, Walsen's Freeway

Resource: The Railroads.

Legend: A Light in the Dark.

Resource: Automobile Routes and Highways.

Legend: Potato Growers of Cuchara

Resource: Early recreation and wilderness planning.

Legend: The Naming of Bear Lake

Conservation of natural, scenic, historic and cultural assets will require new priorities and new partnerships. The following charts long-term partners (municipalities and counties, public land agencies, etc.) and new partners that will be key to accomplishing the 10-year work plan.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

Urgent Need to Maintain Visual Integrity

Corridor Protection Districts

Building a strategy to maintaining the visual integrity of the landscape is currently underway, and includes establishing a corridor protection district, designing a set of county design guidelines, publishing a handbook for building in a scenic area, tapping the expertise of CDOT landscape architects, and educating both visitors and new residents to the area.

The SHOL currently does not have any protective measures in place to preserve the views and development along the Scenic Highway of Legends. There was an overlay district in place, but that district was removed many years ago for reasons that are unknown.

The SHOL needs a corridor protection district. That will be one of the first steps taken by the Huerfano County Land Use Office to ensure that the near views remain as stunning as the far views. The County is also in the process of adopting a minimum maintenance code, so properties that have become dilapidated can be cleaned up. These two efforts will ensure that the foreground along the byway remains complementary to the stunning views provided in the background.

As part of the corridor protection district, staff plans to propose that the County adopt a set of

design guidelines for the corridor that will ensure that new development blends into the countryside, not stands out from it. (See the CDOT 2019 Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines: <https://www.codot.gov/programs/environmental/visual-resources/visual-impact-assessment>)

A successful program currently in force in Oregon will be used as a model. The model is called “Building in the Scenic Area – Scenic Resources Implementation Handbook.” (http://www.gorgecommission.org/images/uploads/amendments/Scenic_Handbook_-_FINAL_12-05.pdf). The handbook indicates what colors work best with the varied landscapes along the Columbia River and has been successfully used in Oregon since 2005. A similar handbook could be provided for all the distinct regions along the Scenic Highway of Legends.

Huerfano County planning staff will work with Las Animas County staff on the view protection corridor. The Huerfano County Planning Director will reach out to the Las Animas County planner to determine how to best work together to preserve the entire 82-mile route.

Education of Visitors

Visitors need to be educated to behave in a responsible manner regarding the byway resources. Brochures, signage, and active law enforcement are needed tools to accomplish this. Where possible, positive messages often are more effective than negative messages, for example “Please help us protect these valuable resources by staying on paths” instead of “Do Not Touch” or “Do not leave the trail.” The “Leave No Trace” or “Leave Only Footprints” ethic strongly needs to be promoted. People also need to know the breadth of protection needed, for example walking on the tundra destroys growth for decades. Visitors need to view the intrinsic qualities of the byway as nonrenewable.

Federal Land managing agencies need to stay in a proactive position with regard to what sites are acceptable to public visitation. Monitoring the preparation of interpretive materials, including brochures, and close communication and coordination with tour operators are needed so sites not ready for visitation are not prematurely promoted.

Monitoring and evaluation programs should be established for resource areas where visitor facilities will be constructed and increase visitation. Protection methods and techniques should be developed and tested.

INTERPRETATION

The byway has been guided by An Interpretive Plan for the Highway of Legends, published in 2004. Expanded interpretation on the SHOL will be essential as the organization works to build a richer cache of memorable experiences for visitors, and expanded information about the intrinsic values of this historic corridor. Interpretation identifies key themes and stories that can help connect visitors to places and builds multiple ways to make their visit meaningful. This byway has been steadily enhancing the richness of their interpretive system. In 2012, the byway designed and installed four interpretive signs in

gateway communities, all with historic themes, with funds from the National Scenic Byway competitive grants program. Those signs are still in excellent condition. The next phase of interpretive signs are scheduled for installation in the spring of 2020, with six 3-panel kiosks (eighteen panels in total) described in the chart below. These kiosks were developed through a federally funded 20/80 matching grants program managed by the Colorado Department of Transportation. Content was developed in collaboration with working groups in each community who were asked, “When a traveler first comes to this

community what would you like them to know?” The next step in developing relevant interpretive materials for this byway will focus on its tightened focus on geological resources. The Board has taken first steps and has met with local geologists to start visualizing the scope of information and experiences that could engage visitors in imagining the volcanic underpinnings of the corridor. Potential plans include not only a system of signage, but outdoor recreation opportunities to “walk the geology” and a new interactive interpretive center in Stonewall, home of the gap in the Dakota Sandstone Wall.

The Scenic Highway of Legends Byway Panels	
Location/Mile Marker/Highway	Three-Panel Kiosk Names
Walsenburg/Gardner, Mile Marker 17.5, On Highway 69 at <u>Badito*</u>	Agriculture Still the Core Where Stories Surround You (Map) A History of Welcoming New People
La Veta/Cuchara, Mile Marker 0.3, <u>Pulloff</u> at the junction of Highway 450 and 160	The Legends of Spanish Peaks Scenic Highway of Legends - Art, Music History (Map)
North Lake, Monument, Stonewall, Mile Marker 29.4, Highway 12	North Lake Monument Lake Stonewall
Cokedale, Coal Camp Stories, Mile Marker 62, Highway 12	Coke Ovens Cokedale, Waitlisted for Cokedale Cokedale Miners
Cokedale, Hispano Settlers, Mile Marker 62, Highway 12	Spanish Surnamed Settlers Hispano Settlements Devotional Art and Architecture
City of Trinidad, Mile Marker 1, I-25 Raton Pass*	Place to Explore and Discover Create and Recreate Innovate and Invent
*Located off the byway but addresses communities in the study area	



Cokedale 3-panel kiosk

MARKETING

Marketing Goal

Marketing investments will support economic growth for the communities along the Scenic Highway of Legends through the development of sustainable tourism offerings and a dedication to the responsible marketing and promotion of these attractions.

Guiding Principles

In the first year, the byway will establish a marketing subcommittee that will report to the Scenic Highway of Legends Board of Directors. This subcommittee will be made up of representatives from the tourism boards, chambers of commerce and economic development offices in both Huerfano and Las Animas counties. Members will serve a 2-year minimum term, meeting as often as necessary. Should a member resign, they must find a replacement representative who brings past experience in marketing tourism destinations.

The committee will capitalize on the findings of the 7-member CDOT planning team that is conducting a PEL (Planning and Environmental Linkages) study for a multi-modal Bike/Ped Trail for the 82 miles of SH 12 and US160 which comprise the designated Scenic Highway of Legends. A statewide committee has proposed that this same corridor be additionally designated as the Southern Loop of the Colorado Front Range Bicycle Trail.

As their top priority, the Marketing Subcommittee will develop marketing materials to educate outdoor recreationists about the fragile natural resources that are accessible to the traveling public, and about the expectation that outdoor recreationists will proactively help protect these assets for future generations.

First Year Marketing Objectives

1. To establish an active subcommittee that will be responsible for the management of the Byway's marketing plan.
2. To increase lodging occupancy by adding one night to the average length-of-stay, and to expand the season for summer travel by extending offerings one additional month in the spring, and one additional month in the fall (shoulder seasons).

Established Marketing Strategies

The two rural counties that host the SHOL work with very limited financial resources, however an impressive number of joint marketing programs have been accomplished through ongoing partnerships with local and state tourism boards, local and county governments, and byways in neighboring counties. They include:

1. **A regional map of 5 Southern Colorado Byways** produced and distributed at the state's official Colorado Welcome Centers. These four-color maps displayed the routes of 5 byways which are proximate or connecting, and include the major attractions and events found within byway communities. Countless volunteer hours and shared production costs enabled the partnership to produce and print 100,000 maps which have proven to be vital tools for navigation and for the cross-marketing of regional businesses.
2. **The Byways to Birding Program** The same 5-county partnership was also responsible for the creation of a mailer and website program called "Byways to Birding." The mailer was sent to qualified leads that were generated through an ad placement in Audubon Magazine. The cost for the ad was paid for in part through a matching marketing co-op grant from the Colorado Tourism Office.

3. The last grant the SHOL received from the National Scenic Byways Program in 2012 allowed the byway to produce a **14-minute video**; to design and erect **byway interpretive signs in 4 gateway communities**; and to create 100,00 copies of a **20-page booklet with map** that serves both as a guided tour and souvenir of the visitor time on the Byway.

The booklet continues to be reprinted thanks to financial support from county commissioners and county tourism boards in both counties. The marketing booklet is available at the Colorado Welcome Centers throughout the state and multiple museums, chambers of commerce and businesses located on the byway corridor.

4. As part of the Byway's ongoing relationship with the Colorado Department of Transportation and the 5 -county tourism marketing cooperative, a system of **Information Kiosks** displaying 60 wayfinding panels will be installed throughout this Southern Colorado region in the spring of 2020. These panels will help visitors navigate their way across the region, and point out opportunities for visitors to experience the area. Byways are prominently featured. Tourism partners on the Scenic Highway of Legends together raised enough match money for eighteen of these panels.
5. The Huerfano County Tourism Board has been a very good friend to the Byway. The County's new tourism brand is "**Where the Legends Roam.**" They have included the Byway on their website, in their online itineraries, and in numerous other marketing efforts.

6. One of the largest contributions the Huerfano County Tourism Board has made is the **TRAVEL STORYS mobile phone application**. This audio app is marketed by the Huerfano Tourism Board on their website and in all their marketing campaigns. The traveler downloads this free app before they travel through the Scenic Highway of Legends. Authentic stories and local histories are narrated by locally-sourced audio narrators. No internet connection is needed once the app is downloaded; via GPS it recognizes twenty-two points of interest . Music and narration and starts playing automatically when the vehicle is approaching each site.
7. Also by Spring 2020 the Colorado Tourism Office will **launch a micro website** that will reside within www.colorado.com, the State's powerful tourism portal. This up-to-date web presence for Colorado's 26 byways has been accomplished through a partnership between two state agencies, the Colorado Byways Program and the Colorado Tourism Office. The Scenic Highway of Legends will enjoy equal exposure with Colorado's other Scenic and Historic Byways. It will be the responsibility of the Board of Directors to keep the SHOL pages on this statewide site up to date with new and interesting photos. The Board is also responsible for regularly updating event listings and creating free travel-related business listings for Colorado.com



Goemmer's Butte

8. **The Stonewall Century Ride** is a challenging 100-mile bicycle ride along one of Colorado's most beautiful scenic highways. Participants come to enjoy some of the best high altitude road riding in Southern Colorado. 2020 will be the 17th year of this well-established race that brings much attention to the SHOL from serious bicyclists.
9. **Marketing Festivals and Special Events** is an anchor for the byway, as they solidify the feeling of community for locals, and communicate local distinctiveness and authenticity of place for visitors.

Future Marketing Opportunities - Colorado Tourism Office

The Byways will continue to take full advantage of all the opportunities being offered by the Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) that include but are not limited to the following:

- Encouraging Good Stewardship: Adopting and promoting Care for Colorado (Leave No Trace) which encourages visitors to be good stewards of the places they visit.
- Promoting biking, walking and horseback riding: Monitor, update and promote trails information found on COTREX, Colorado's Official Trails App.

Annual Events along the Scenic Highway of Legends		
Event Name	Description	Date/ Location
First Day Hike	Visitor start the New Year by choosing a favorite trail at Trinidad State lake Park and Lathrop State Park.	January/New Year Day/ Walsenburg & Trinidad
Trinidad Trolley Ride	A free trolley ride that provides a one hour "crash course" on the architecture and local history of this historic city	June-Labor Day/ Colorado Welcome Center, Trinidad
Artocade Parade and Cardango Dance Party	Award winning Art/Car Festival	September/Trinidad
Santa Fe Trail Days	Celebrate the History of the Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail	June/Trinidad
Labor Day Rodeo and Round-up Activities	Traditional Ranch Entertainment for families	September/Trinidad
Trinidad Blues Fest	World Class Blues Festival	August/Trinidad
Summer Concert Series at the Colorado History Museum	Live music is performed on the Bloom Lawn every other Friday starting in June and continuing through August.	Summer/Trinidad
Mt. Carmel Festival	3 day celebration of Italian Heritage	July/Trinidad
CRCC Water Festival	Visit the TSJC campus to celebrate water in all its many forms with speakers from all over coming to share their knowledge of conservation and all the many ways water is life!	May/Trinidad State Junior College
SCRT Repertoire Theatre Productions	Professional Theater Productions	Year Round/Trinidad
Francisco Center/Performing Arts Summer Theater	Historic Presbyterian Church built on land donated by Col. John Francisco See LaVetaTheaterWeb.org for performance schedule	Year Round/La Veta
Stonewall Century Ride (Bicycle)	Ride along the beautiful Scenic Highway of Legends from La Veta to Segundo and back	August/ Starts & Ends in La Veta
Huerfano County Fair	4 days of Agricultural Events and Exhibits	August/La Veta
Spanish Peaks International Celtic Music Festival	World-renowned Celtic artists and scholars keeps participants singing, dancing, and enjoying music day and night in various locations throughout Spanish Peaks Country	September/ Walsenburg, La Veta & Cuchara

Event Name	Description	Date/ Location
Spanish Peaks Music Festival	The Spanish Peaks Music Festival comes to La Veta for two days each July and features a solid lineup of impressive country music.	July /La Veta
4th of July Parade and Art in the Park	An exhibit of handmade arts including crafts, jewelry, apparel, paintings, ceramics, glass, and wood	Closest weekend to the 4th of July/ La Veta Park
4th Friday Art Walks	Visitors stroll the streets of La Veta to visit the many art galleries	Summer months/ La Veta
Walk or Wheel Wednesdays	La Veta's Elementary School joins schools around the country to celebrate walking and biking to school in May	May/La Veta
Octoberfest Street Fair ½ Marathon & 5k fun run	A live German band, dancing in the street all day long, over 60 arts, crafts, and food vendors, a veteran's tribute, vintage cars and a German Biergarten	1st Sat. in October/ La Veta
Huajonilla Heritage Festival	In honor of the area's Hispano and Native American Cultures. 2 day event	June/Francisco Fort Museum, La Veta
Francisco Fort Days Francisco Fort Museum	The Fort celebrates La Veta's origins. Saturday begins with a pancake breakfast, followed by music, performances, presentations and family fun	July/ La Veta
Lathrop State Park Educational Programs	Naturalist led programs on astronomy, geology , history of the area	Memorial Day-Labor Day/Walsenburg
Yellow Pine Guest Ranch	Thursday Barbecues and Music	Summer/Cuchara
Cuchara 4th of July	Everyone is welcome to participate in the Parade, street dance, barbecue, and kids games	July 4th/Cuchara
Winter Full Moon Howl and Growl	A gathering at the Day Lodge for moon lore, story telling, conversation, and food. Family oriented and free	Winter/Cuchara Mt.Park
Dog Days of Cuchara	Big Dog and Little Dog races. Music, family parade, kids games, face painting, photo booth, corn hole tournament. Fund raiser for fire-fighters	August/Cuchara
Historic Fox Theatre	Nonprofit, Independent Cinema & Events Space foxtheatrewalsenburg.org	Year Round/Walsenburg

- Building Vacation Planning Itineraries: Seasonally the CTO solicits itineraries to the *Colo-Road Trips* with 2-10 day itineraries on Colorado.com. Every itinerary describes a driving vacation with overnight stays, and gives enough details to make it easy for visitors to plan an amazing trip to somewhere they've never been. The CTO created *Colorado-Road Trip* in 2017 to help visitors find their way to our state's less-visited destinations and enjoy famous places during off-peak times and seasons. This online collection of itineraries is promoted in the CTO's nationwide marketing campaigns, in their visitor guides and on their Visit Colorado Facebook page, which sparks nearly twice the engagement of other content platforms.
- Crisis Recovery Communications and Training: The Colorado Tourism Office (CTO) offers a variety of trainings for preparedness and recovery of assets. We have used these over the past two years of wildfire management.
- Marketing Grants: The CTO's Marketing Matching Grant Program provides funding to not-for-profit organizations in the State of Colorado for the purpose of promoting the state or a region as a tourism destination. Travel regions throughout the state are eligible for these grant dollars, as well as statewide associations, organizations and other nonprofit entities that engage in promoting travel throughout the entire state. These grants are competitive and are awarded annually.
- Social Media: The CTO offers the Paid Social Media Co-op Advertising program to leverage the power of the State Tourism Office's social channels to provide more widespread distribution of partner content. The program's strategy is to promote industry partner content on the CTO's social media channels and push consumers to content on partner pages/ sites. In addition, the CTO offers the opportunity not only to increase partner reach into the marketplace, but also to insure that the promoted content goes to the partner's specified target audiences.

New Target Markets for the Scenic Highway of Legends

Most visitors come to the Scenic Highway of Legends for scenic drives, primarily taking day tours by car, motorcycle, or RVs, and do not stay overnight. We are ready to expand our marketing reach to new types of travelers who will plan to stay overnight and who are eager to connect with our local resources in more specific ways.

Amateur and Professional Geologists

The unique geology surrounding the Spanish Peaks has organically attracted amateur and professional geologists for many years. We can target this specialty market by hosting educational programs through one-on-one contact with universities departments and geology clubs.

Outdoor Recreation Participants

Currently those visitors who come to the Scenic Highway of Legends for outdoor recreational activities come to enjoy the traditional activities of fishing, hunting and camping. Hiking and biking trails are currently only lightly used, however recent announcements regarding trail development on Fishers Peak State Park area (above Trinidad) has roused interest in bicyclists from all over the state.

Creative Districts and Lovers of the Arts

The State of Colorado has designated Trinidad as a Creative District, and the city is engaged in renovating three buildings on Main Street for a Space to Create program for working artists. The La Veta Chamber is currently applying for this same Colorado Creative District, designating, capitalizing on the fact that La Veta has more art galleries than any other Colorado town of its size, and has been compared favorably by some travelers as similar to the art environment of Santa Fe.

Partnering with Neighboring Byways

Five-day itineraries on multiple byways

Most people discover the Scenic Highway of Legends via travel on Interstate 25 and US Highway 160. Many others find us on their way to the **Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve** (65 miles). The SHOL is currently working with three other byways in the region to promote a 3-5 day “roads less traveled” itinerary. The Program Director of the Colorado Byway Program is encouraging us to expand this promising program.

We are fortunate to be located in a cluster of spectacular state and National Scenic Byways. The Mountain Branch of the Santa Fe Trail National Scenic Byway meets the Scenic Highway of Legends in Trinidad, Colorado. Los Caminos Antiguos Scenic and Historic Byway is 47 miles to the west of in the San Luis Valley. Frontier Pathways and Gold Belt Tour, both National Scenic Byways, are 24 and 94 miles respectively to the north.

Marketing Challenges

Securing funding to maintain a vibrant marketing program for this Southern Colorado rural byway has been a continuous challenge. Our spectacular mountain region is sparsely populated, economically impoverished, and has not yet enjoyed the full benefits of Colorado’s reputation as a world-class tourism destination. Road conditions along this two-lane byway are maintained at a very high standard and the byway is open year round, yet few businesses along the byway can afford to stay open for more than six months a year.

The closing of the Cuchara Mountain Ski Resort, once a thriving tourism asset, has negatively impacted many of our mountain byway communities. A large population of second-homeowners once supported a wide range of local tourism related businesses, and helped support local businesses on a year-round basis. The recent closing of the LaVeta Golf Course has been another financial blow.

The most intense publicity the area has received in the past 10 years has been press overage coverage during the 2018 Spring Wildfire, the second largest wild fire ever recorded in Colorado. Both the town of La Veta and the Mountain Village of Cuchara were completely closed for the days surrounding the 4th of July, the one weekend when byway communities traditionally do the majority of their summer business. It been difficult to make up that loss and educate regional visitors that the legendary Scenic Highway of Legends is still a safe and spectacular scenic drive.

As documented above, the Scenic Highway of Legends has operated a marketing program using a strategy of maintaining multiple partnerships and perpetual pursuit of grant opportunities. In truth, primary strength has been maintained through support from the leadership of the Colorado Byways Program, through opportunities offered through the competitive grants program of the FHWA's National Byways Program, and through the ongoing advocacy of Scenic America.

This audio tour for the Scenic Highway of Legends received more visits the first month of its launch than two of the 2 national parks in the area, making for a pleasing visitor experience. It has peaked the interest of other byways as well.

Jan Carrola, Wisconsin Scenic Byway Coordinator writes: "The Byways and the County did a really nice job with the pacing of the tour by interspersing the route's history and legends with the geology or scenic/recreational assets. Often with History Geology, a traveler may not know what they are looking at and this tour helped with that. The tour also did a nice job of tackling some difficult matters, especially as it related to the coal mines"

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

Signage Plan

The State Scenic Byway has completed wayfinding assessments on all of Colorado's 26 byways. Ours was completed early in tin 2008. At that time, the study found that our direction signage from CDOT was excellent, and the repetitive route signs (blue Columbine) that appear every ten miles excellent. Since that study, the byway has added signage in four communities, and has another dozen interpretive signs scheduled to be installed in the Spring of 2020. The byway has steadily built its interpretive signage, with the next step being the expansion of the information system with interpretation specifically addressing Geology, our strongest intrinsic value.

Columbine/Scenic Byway Signage

Regarding Columbine/Scenic Byway Signage on the SHOL, the new BOD will assign a team to take an inventory of current condition of the Columbine signage along the byway to find out what is missing as well as what needs repair.



Photo: Cuchara Foundation (Facebook)

They will then make a plan the takes full advantage of the columbine signage guidelines set by CDOT (see below) and include GPS locations for each. That document will be sent to CDOT's District Engineer's office in Pueblo for review and concurrence. There are several opportunities with this program for the SHOL.

General Columbine Signage Guidelines for Scenic Byway on State Highway

A. Signs on Route

- Scenic Byway marker at begin and end of route. Assembly to include "Begin" and "End" plaque as appropriate.
- Scenic Byway marker with directional arrow at right angle turns of the route.
- Scenic Byway marker with directional arrow at all irregular turns of the route
- Scenic Byway reassurance marker after major intersections and county roads. Maximum distance between reassurance markers should be approximately 5 miles - maximum distance of 10
- The name of the scenic byway will be included on all sign.

B. Signs on approach roads to scenic Byway

- Scenic Byway marker with directional arrow(s) at all State Highway intersections.
- Scenic Byway Marker with directional arrow*(s) at major county road intersections where tourist traffic is likely to be entering the State Highway.

C. Interpretative signing shall only be installed in rest areas or over looks and agreed upon by the District Engineer.

Other signage not requiring a Permit from CDOT

A. On-premise Signs

B. Directional Signs that are:

- No larger than 8 square feet and the advertise farms, ranches, nonprofit educational, veterans, religious, charitable or civil organizations.
- No larger than 32 square feet, the sole purpose of which is to provide direction to individual farms or ranches by way of individual Signs that are no larger than 8 square feet
- A Sign indicating public utility and not advertising a product, including informational Signs, notices, or markers, erected and maintained by a public or private public utility company.

C. Official Signs

Tourist Oriented Directional Signs

(TODS) Under state and federal law, CDOT issues permits approving specific information signs (LOGO) on interstates, freeways and expressways, and tourist-oriented directional signs (TODS) on non-interstate highways. Both types of guide signs must meet specific state and federal requirements, and—in the case of TODS—local requirements.

LOGO signs provide identification and directional information to the traveling public for eligible businesses offering gas, food, lodging, camping, 24-hour pharmacies and tourist attractions near interstates, freeways and expressways. TODS provide business identification and directional information for tourist-oriented activities along non-interstate highways.

Rules have been established to govern the sign programs pursuant to statute.

An eligible business must apply for a permit to display a LOGO or TODS plaque on a CDOT sign structure. CDOT reviews the application and determines eligibility under the FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and under 2 CCR 601-7, "Rules Governing Specific Information Signs (LOGO) and Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) On State Highways." Program fees are based on average daily traffic in both sign programs.

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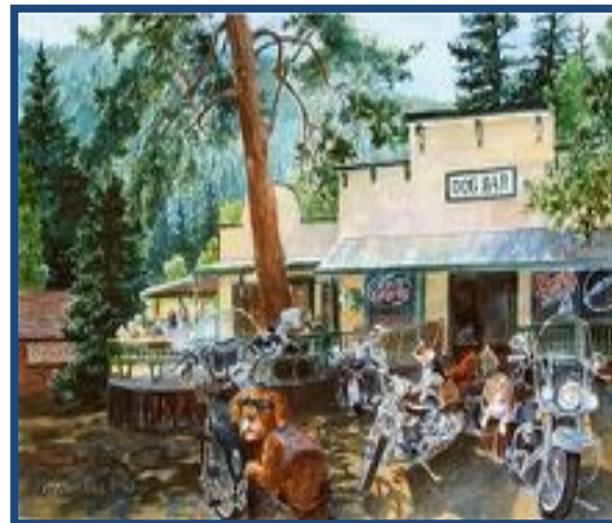
All other nonconforming Advertising Devices would require a CDOT Permit and are likely to not be permitted on the SH.



Dog Days of Cuchara



Lathrop State Park



A painting by Kathy Hill illustrates the quaintness of Cuchara.

ROADWAY SAFETY AND MAINTENANCE OVERSIGHT

The Scenic Highway of Legends Byway is located along US 160 and SH 12 between Walsenburg and Trinidad – a distance of roughly 82 miles, providing a loop route between these gateway communities. Included in the byway designation is a spur route extending from SH 12 at Cucharas Pass (elevation 9,941 feet) over Cordova Pass (elevation 11,743 feet) along unimproved County Road 46 connecting with Aguilar at I-25, a distance of roughly 35 miles.

Operations and maintenance of the byway is as follows:

Highway Segment (US 160 and SH 12) – This segment of the byway is operated and maintained by CDOT as part of the state’s highway system. The section of the byway along US 160, extending from Walsenburg to the SH 12 intersection, is also part of the federal-aid National Highway System. CDOT maintains the byway year round.

Off-Highway Segment (County Road 46) – This segment of the byway is operated and maintained by Las Animas County. The roadway is unimproved, suitable for off-road vehicles and is closed in the winter.

General Description of the Roadway

The highway segment of the byway is generally characterized as a two-lane rural highway through rolling to mountainous terrain. Extending westerly from Walsenburg along US 160, the roadway alignment generally follows the Cucharas River floodplain. At the US 160 and SH 12 intersection, the byway turns south along SH 12 following the Cucharas River valley, with multiple crossings of the river, up to Cucharas Pass. Near the pass, the alignment includes multiple switchbacks with steeper vertical grades. South of the pass, the alignment crosses multiple drainages and descends into the Purgatoire River Valley near Stonewall. At Stonewall, the alignment turns easterly, following the valley, to its terminus at Trinidad.

Throughout the byway’s length, the roadway section, posted speed, and right-of-way width are highly variable. The following provides a general description of the roadway:

Posted Speed – As shown in the figure, the posted speeds along the byway range from 25 mph to 65 mph. Slower speed limits are

posted within the various communities, with higher limits along the rural and rolling sections. Within the mountainous section of the byway, posted speed limits reflect the more meandering alignment, ranging from 35 mph to 50 mph with advanced warning signage for sharper curves.

Lane Widths – Typical lane widths along US 160 are 12 feet and along SH 12 vary from 10 to 12 feet. The 10 foot lane widths occur for a short stretch near Weston. Traveled lane widths of 10 feet may be used if the average daily traffic (ADT) is less than 1,500 vehicles per day and the design speed is less than 35 mph.

Shoulder Widths – Existing shoulder widths vary throughout the byway. As shown on the figure, paved shoulder widths range from zero to two feet along the mountainous section of the byway, with lower traffic volumes and posted speeds, to six to ten feet along portions of US 160 and more recently improved sections of SH 12 near Trinidad.

Right-of-Way – The right-of-way along the byway is owned and maintained by CDOT. Existing right-of-way widths vary

considerably throughout the byway. Existing widths along US 160 range between 100 and 200 feet. Along SH 12, the right-of-way is narrower, ranging between 30 and 70 feet near Cuchara and generally 60 to 200 feet elsewhere.

General Condition of the Roadway and Bridges

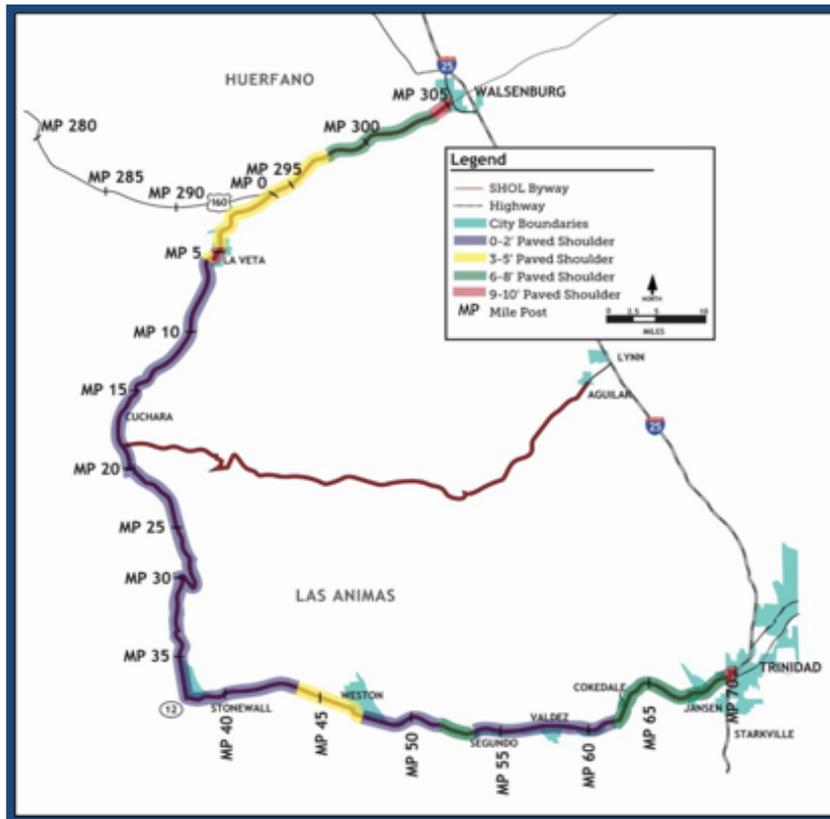
CDOT maintains the byway’s roadway surface and bridges in a general state of good repair. US 160 and SH 12 have an asphalt pavement surface throughout. CDOT’s Online Transportation Information System (OTIS) indicates the remaining life of the asphalt pavement varies from 0 years to 12 years. A drivability life of zero was noted for a short one-mile section near Walsenburg with the rest of the byway having a drivability life of five years or greater. In the future, as sections of the existing pavement reach the end of their service life, CDOT will provide pavement rehabilitation to maintain the roadway’s driving surface.

Existing bridges along the byway were identified using the unique bridge identifier assigned by CDOT. CDOT regularly inspects bridges to review their current conditions. Upon inspection, bridges are assigned a

condition rating ranging from “Good” to “Poor” and a sufficiency rating from zero to 100 per- cent. Sufficiency ratings are an overall rating of a bridge’s ability to remain in service based on the bridge field inspection and evaluation. One hundred percent represents an entirely sufficient bridge and zero percent a deficient or entirely insufficient bridge.

Bridge elements assigned a rating include

the riding surface, the superstructure, and the substructure. Condition ratings and sufficiency ratings were obtained from OTIS. All bridges along the byway currently have a condition rating of “Good”. As shown in the following table, current sufficiency ratings range from 64.3% to 99.1%. Over time, as these bridges deteriorate, CDOT will rehabilitate or replace the structure to maintain the bridge crossing.



Roadway Design Resources:
 2019 CDOT Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) Guide
 2014 CDOT Landscape Architecture Manual

BYWAY BRIDGES

Route	MP	Bridge ID	Suf. Rating	Condition	Location
160	296.097	N-17-I	80	Good	1.9 MILES EAST OF JCT SH 12
160	299.377	N-17-BR	88.1	Good	5 MILES W OF WALSENBURG
160	303.412	N-17-BQ	89.4	Good	2 MILES W OF WALSENBURG
12	3.979	N-16-O	67.1	Good	4 MILES S OF JCT US 160
12	5.677	O-16-H	98.5	Good	4 MILES S OF LA VETA
12	8.801	O-16-G	80	Good	4.2 MILES S OF LA VETA
12	12.953	O-16-C	78	Good	8 MILES S OF LA VETA
12	33.489	P-16-B	98.9	Good	0.5 MILES SE OF MONUMENT PARK
12	38.818	P-16-D	80.9	Good	0.2 MILES E OF STONEWALL
12	39.384	P-16-A	79.5	Good	6.3 MILES SE OF MONUMENT PARK
12	42.759	P-17-F	64.3	Good	4.2 MILES E OF STONEWALL
12	44.118	P-17-AF	89	Good	10.7 MILES SE OF MONUMENT PARK
12	46.658	P-17-AG	79	Good	1.9 MILES NW WESTON
12	48.698	P-17-J	89	Good	AT WESTON
12	49.666	P-17-AE	83.8	Good	1 MILES E OF WESTON
12	51.144	P-17-K	77.1	Good	2.5 MILES E OF WESTON
12	51.466	P-17-L	83.1	Good	2.9 MILES E OF WESTON
12	53.727	P-17-A	71.7	Good	5.2 MILES E OF WESTON
12	55.713	P-18-CC	83.9	Good	AT SEGUNDO
12	58.178	P-18-CD	80	Good	2.4 MILES E OF SEGUNDO
12	60.406	P-18-L	70.5	Good	4.7 MILES E OF SEGUNDO
12	62.749	P-18-AD	79	Good	COKEDALE
12	67.864	P-18-CB	99.1	Good	2.5 MILES W OF I-25 IN TRINIDAD
12	70.437	P-18-CL	97.7	Good	IN TRINIDAD
12	70.601	P-18-AX	93.6	Good	JUST E OF I-25 IN TRINIDAD

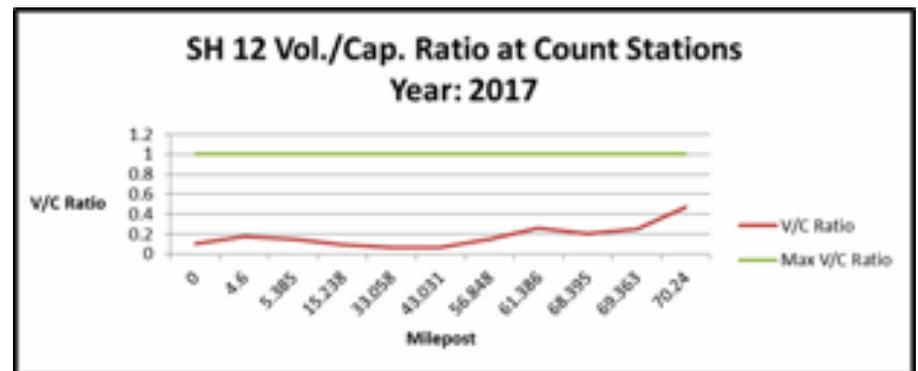
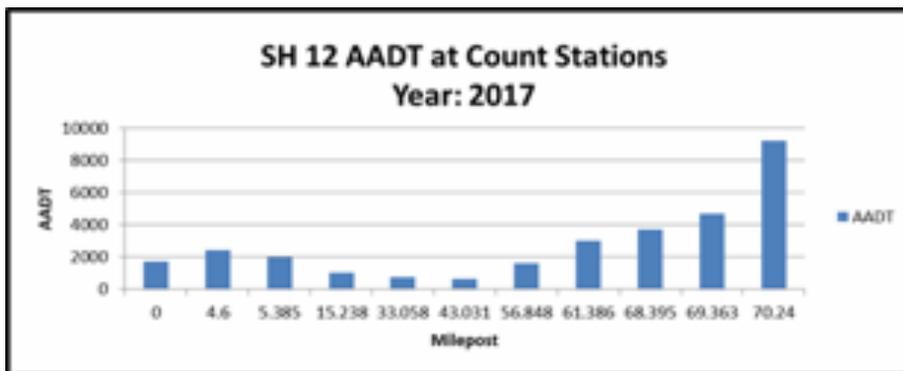
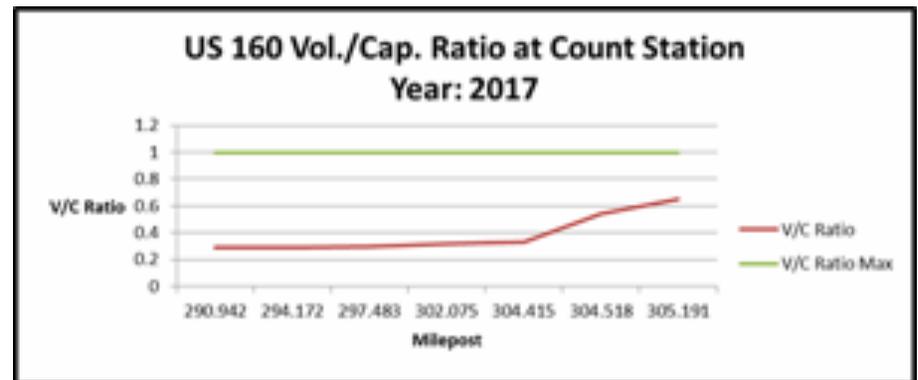
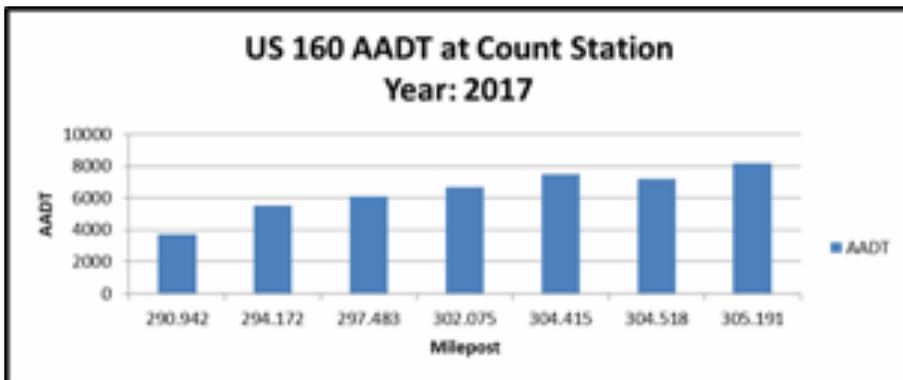
TRAFFIC CHARACTERISTICS

As shown in the following figures, along US 160, 2017 daily traffic volumes vary from 3,700 average annual daily traffic (AADT) on the west end to 8,300 AADT on the east end in Walsenburg.

These volumes represent Volume to Capacity (V/C) ratios (a measure of the volume of traffic relative to the capacity of the highway at an acceptable level of service) of 0.29 to 0.65, respectively, with the vast majority of the section represented by the lower V/C

ratio. Also shown, daily traffic volumes along SH 12 vary from 630 AADT to 9,200 AADT at the southern end of the byway in Trinidad. These volumes represent V/C ratios ranging from 0.07 to 0.47, with the vast majority of the byway having a V/C ratio less than 0.2. As shown, the capacities of both US 160 and SH 12 are more than sufficient for current traffic volumes. It is anticipated that future traffic growth would not measurably change the byway's traffic operations.

There are passing zones at regular intervals throughout the byway. There are also slow vehicle pull outs at various locations. Along US 160 are several passing lanes, but none exist along SH12. As a percentage of the total vehicular traffic volume, the percentage of trucks ranges from 3 to 19 percent with an average of approximately eight percent. US 160 is designated a national truck route and carries more trucks and generally a higher percentage of trucks than SH 12.



SAFETY ON THE SCENIC HIGHWAY OF LEGENDS

The crash history along the byway for the five- year period from January 1st, 2013 through December 31st, 2017, was collected and analyzed. The purpose of the examination was to locate crash clusters and identify crash causes.

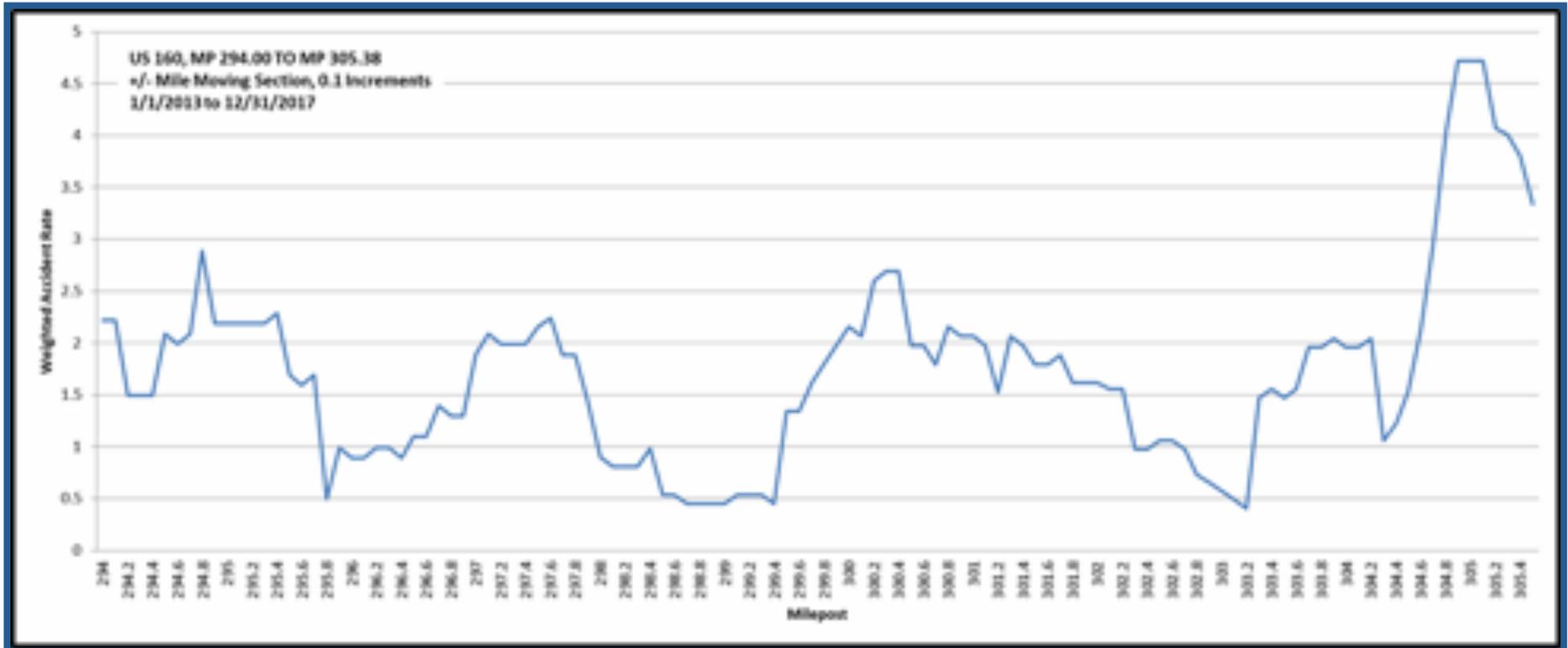
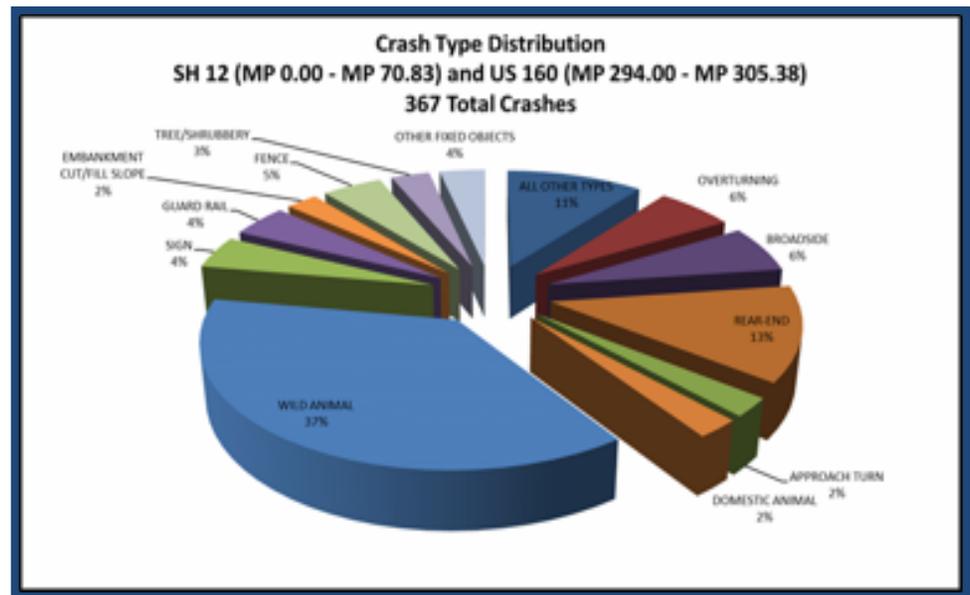
A total of 367 crashes were reported along these sections of US 160 and SH 12 during the five-year period – 78 crashes resulted in 105 injuries, four crashes resulted in four fatalities, and the remaining 285 crashes resulted in property damage only. The following table summarizes the number and severity of crashes over the five-year

study period. As shown, the number and severity of crashes have remained relatively constant from year to year during the study period. An increase in total crashes occurred in 2014, but subsequent years returned to levels similar to 2013. The increase in 2014 was due to a higher number of property damage only type crashes.

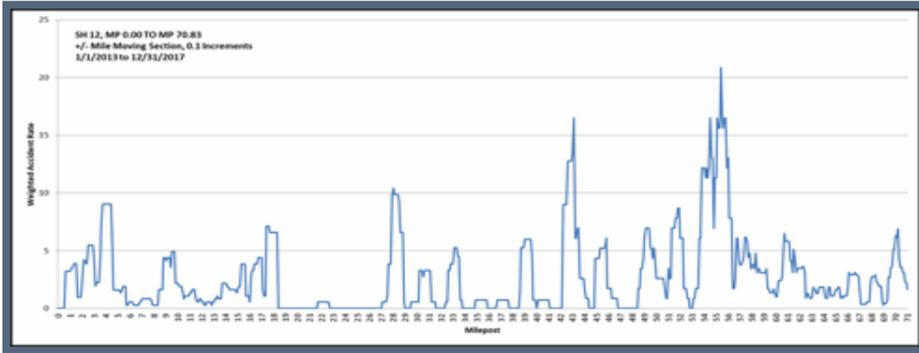
Year	Number of Crashes			
	Fatality	Injury	PDO ¹	Total
January 2013 - December 2013	1	10	58	69
January 2014 - December 2014	1	16	69	86
January 2015 - December 2015	-	18	55	73
January 2016 - December 2016	2	18	48	68
January 2017 - December 2017	-	16	55	71
Total	4	78	285	367

There were four fatal crashes along the byway during the five-year study period. The locations of the crashes were dispersed. Three of the fatalities occurred along a curve. Two fatalities involved motorcycles. Alcohol was a contributing factor in two fatalities. All four fatalities occurred under dry conditions and were not in the vicinity of an intersection. Crash types and lighting conditions varied in all four.

The following graphs show the change in Weighted Crash Rate, the change in Total Number of Crashes, and the change in the Number of Wild Animal Crashes along US 160 and SH 12. The Weighted Crash Rate takes into account the severity of the crash and the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) at the locations of the crashes. The graphs reveal locations of crash concentration and severity along the byway.

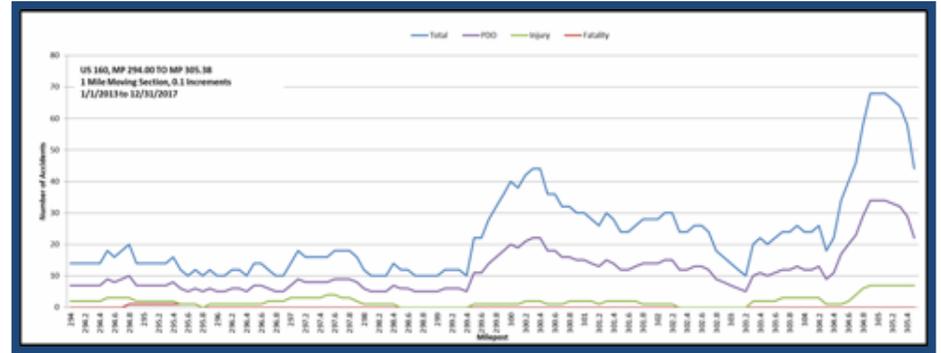


WEIGHTED ACCIDENT RATE



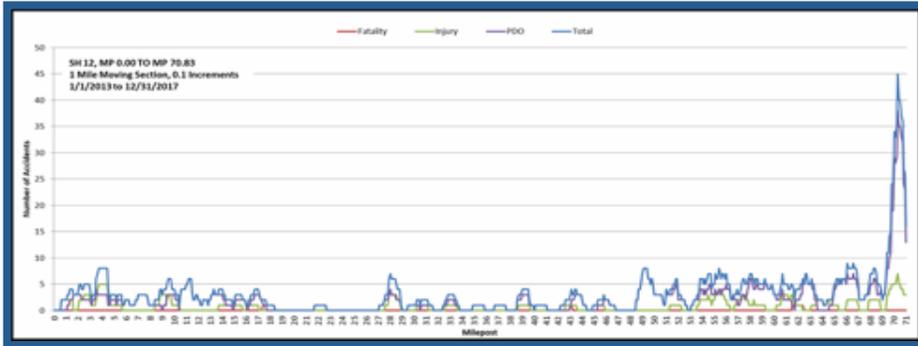
**SH 12, MP 0.00 to MP 70.83; 1 Mile Moving Section, 0.1 Increments
1/1/2013 to 12/31/2017**

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS



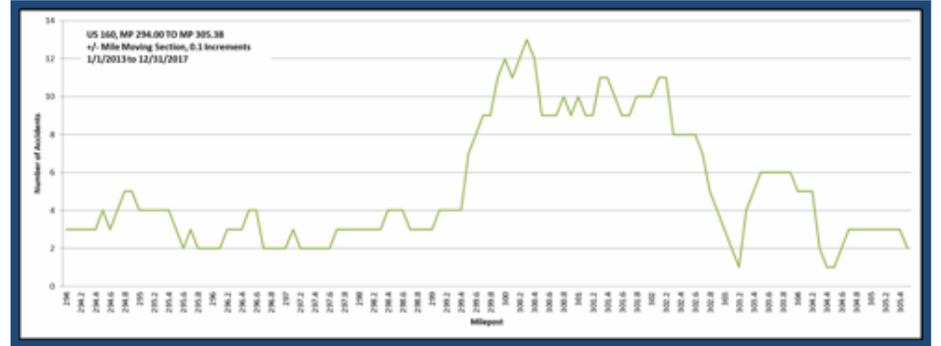
**US 160, MP 294.00 to MP 305.38; +/- Mile Moving Section, 0.1 Increments
1/1/2013 to 12/31/2017**

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS



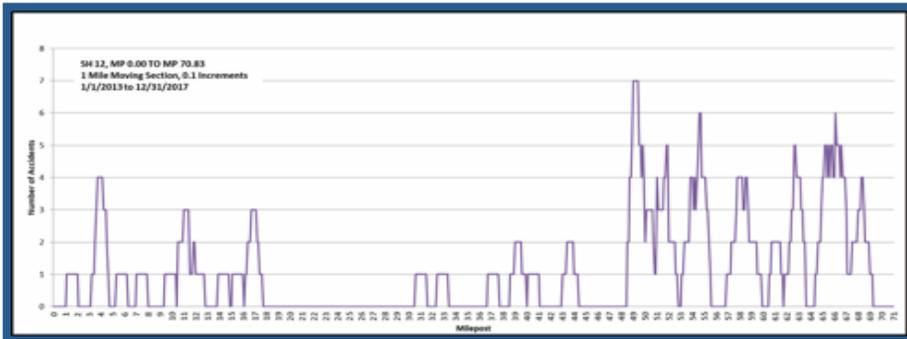
**SH 12, MP 0.00 to MP 70.83; 1 Mile Moving Section, 0.1 Increments
1/1/2013 to 12/31/2017**

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS



**US 160, MP 294.00 to MP 305.38; +/- Mile Moving Section, 0.1 Increments
1/1/2013 to 12/31/2017**

NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS



**SH 12, MP 0.00 to MP 70.83; 1 Mile Moving Section, 0.1 Increments
1/1/2013 to 12/31/2017**

Peaks in the weighted crash rate along US 160 occurred at MP 294.8, MP 300.3, and MP 305, as follows:

- ◆ MP 294.8 is a little over a half-mile northeast of the SH 12 intersection. This area experienced an alcohol related fatality, two injury crashes under adverse weather conditions, and seven PDO crashes of which five were wild animal type crashes.
- ◆ The MP 300.3 area is near County Road 504 and the Walsenburg Reservoir. Fourteen of the 26 crashes in this area, from MP 299.7 to MP 301, were wild animal type crashes. Of those 14, ten were under dark or unlighted conditions.
- ◆ MP 305 encompasses the byway in Walsenburg. Thirty-four total crashes occurred in this area of which 16 were rear-end type crashes and six were broadside crashes. These type crashes are consistent with the increase in access points and the more urban nature of this section.

Peaks in the weighted crash rate along SH 12 occurred at MP 4, MP 28, MP 43.1, and MP 55.4, as follows:

- ◆ MP 4 is located near the Cucharas River just north of La Veta and had a concentration of wild animal type crashes.
- ◆ MP 28 is located in a sharp curve near North Lake. The location experienced 7 total crashes (3 injury and 4 PDO) of which four were guardrail type crashes. Two of the seven injury crashes involved motorcycles.
- ◆ MP 43.1 is near County Road 21.6. This is a low ADT location with an S-curve which experienced four total crashes, but one was a fatality and another was an injury, both of which involved motorcycles.
- ◆ MP 55.4 had the highest peak in weighted crash rate along SH 12. It encompasses approximately a 2.3-mile stretch from MP 53.8 to MP 56.1. Saracillo Canyon, Penitente Canyon, Smith Canyon, and Primero Canyon are located along this stretch. It had 13 total crashes of which seven were wild animal type crashes.

An analysis of the byway's five-year crash history was performed in comparison to

other similar rural two-lane highways within Colorado. While there are some locations of higher crash concentrations, as summarized above, overall, the byway has a crash history not unlike or better than the average history of other similar routes. Safety is not a systematic problem along the byway. However, though the safety history is similar to other routes, improvements to the byway at the identified areas of higher crash concentrations could reduce the crash risks and hazards for travelers along the byway.

Safety and Highway Improvements

CDOT and the South Central Council of Governments, in coordination with the byway's board and local stakeholders, are conducting a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study of the corridor along the byway. The purpose of the study is to improve highway safety and provide a regional and local multi-use trail along the byway between Walsenburg and Trinidad. The intent of the trail improvements is to complete the missing link between Walsenburg and Trinidad for the Colorado Front Range Trail (CFRT). The PEL Study is expected to be completed in August 2020.

In 2003, Colorado State Parks, with the support of the citizens of Colorado and stakeholders, initiated the CFRT to promote and connect the Front Range communities and recreational assets. Upon completion, the CFRT will be an 876-mile shared-use trail that stretches from Wyoming to New Mexico along Colorado’s Front Range, providing a continuous connection between population centers and existing and planned trail systems. It will serve as a key non-motorized linkage between communities, landscapes, parks and open space, recreation attractions, and other points of interest along the Front Range. As such, it will be an important recreational and transportation resource and will support Colorado’s tourism, heritage, health and economy, including the by-way. The CFRT Master Plan and Implementation Plan were completed by Colorado State Parks in 2007. To date, over 270 miles of the trail have been completed. A preferred route for the trail has been planned, including the designation of the byway as the preferred route; however, the CFRT does not currently exist within this segment. The purpose of the PEL Study, therefore, in addition to safety improvements, is to identify the location of

the CFRT along the byway entailing a location either directly along the byway within CDOT right-of-way or on a route separate from but near the byway. While not yet completed, the PEL Study will

identify recommended highway safety and trail improvements for CDOT and local agencies to implement over time as funding is available. These anticipated improvements include:

Route	Location	Existing Paved Shoulder Width (ft)	Recommended Paved Shoulder Width (ft)	Widen Paved Shoulder (ft)
Vista Segment (Walsenburg to La Veta)				
US 160	Walsenburg to US 160/SH 12 Intersection	8' – 10'	8'	0'
SH 12	US 160/SH 12 Intersection to La Veta	3'	6'	3'
Alpine Segment (La Veta to Vigil)				
SH 12	Moore Ave to Oak St/Grand Ave Intersection	10'	8'	0'
SH 12	Oak St/Grand Ave Intersection to MP 5.8	5'	8'	3'
SH 12	MP 5.8 to Cuchara	0' – 2'	8'	6' – 8'
SH 12	Cuchara to Monument Lake	2'	6'	4'
SH 12	Monument Lake to Vigil	2'	4'	2'
Mining Segment (Vigil to Trinidad)				
SH 12	Vigil to MP 47.4	3' - 5'	4'	0' – 1'
SH 12	MP 47.4 to MP 52.0	0' – 2'	4'	2' – 4'
SH 12	MP 52.0 to Co Rd 41.6 (MP 53.7)	6'	4'	0'
SH 12	Co Rd 41.6 (MP 53.7) to Co Rd 47.7 (Valdez)	2'	4'	2'
SH 12	Co Rd 47.7 (Valdez) to Co Rd 55.7 (MP 61.4)	2'	8'	6'
SH 12	Co Rd 55.7 (MP 61.4) to Co Rd 65.4 (MP 68.1)	8'	8'	0'
SH 12	Co Rd 65.4 (MP 68.1) to Trinidad (Nickerson Ave)	2'	8'	6'
SH 12	Nickerson Ave to I-25	10'	8'	0'

GENERAL CORRIDOR-WIDE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ Centerline rumble strips have been installed throughout most of the byway. Consider installing edge line rumble strips along the byway to reduce run off the road crashes per CDOT Roadway Design Guide Ch 14.
- ◆ Renew striping and check retro reflectivity of all existing signs.
- ◆ Consider replacing rigid delineators with flexible delineators.
- ◆ Review and correct, as necessary, advanced curve warning signs and chevrons.
- ◆ Conduct a spot speed study to evaluate appropriateness of existing posted speed limits.

Wild Animal Crashes

The highest incidence of crash type was wild animal type crashes, which accounted for 37% of all crashes along the byway and far exceeded other crash types. Peaks in wild animal crash frequency were noted in the vicinity of water sources such as canyons, rivers, and lakes that were in close proximity

to the highway. The following locations were noted in particular:

- ◆ Martin Lake to Walsenburg Reservoir
- ◆ Cucharas River north of La Veta
- ◆ Purgatoire River east of Weston
- ◆ Reilly Canyon and Carpios Canyon near Trinidad Lake

Further study of these locations is recommended to mitigate the higher incidence of wild animal crashes. In these locations, consideration should be given to constructing design features or other measures that will accommodate wildlife migration patterns. Consider conducting a study to understand wildlife migration along the byway and determine the most cost-effective measures to reduce wild animal collisions.

Roadway Configurations (Lane Departure Crashes) - The lack of sufficient shoulder widths can be a primary contributor to lane departure type crashes. In order to provide vehicles more room for correction if they

leave the traveled way, it is recommended that improved shoulders be provided as follows:

Improve the roadway configuration, potentially including additional roadside improvements and/or signage, at locations of higher concentrations of lane departure crashes including:

- ◆ Sharp curve just southeast of North Lake
- ◆ A roughly one-mile section near the intersection with County Road 21.6 near Vigil
- ◆ A roughly two-mile section between Mile Post (MP) 53.8 and 56.1 near Segundo

Transition Zones (Rear-end Crashes) –

Improve the roadway at locations with higher concentrations of rear-end crashes including:

- ◆ Near and west of Walsenburg (around MP 305)
- ◆ Within the Community of Jansen (MP 67.9 to MP 69.1)
- ◆ Within the City of Trinidad at the Santa Fe and Main Street intersection

Bicycling Safety

There are no designated bicycle facilities along the byway. To improve bicycling safety, in addition to shoulder widening for lane departure crashes, improvements would include:

- ◆ Widen existing bridge shoulder widths to eliminate localized narrowing of shoulders for bicyclists according to adjoining roadway shoulder width recommendations.
- ◆ Provide additional provisions for bicyclists such as signs: 1) Bicyclist on Road next 10 Miles, 2) 3 Ft to Pass, and 3) Bicyclist take lane and/or pavement treatments, such as painted buffers and/or pavement markings.

Pedestrian Crossing Safety

Evaluate and consider pedestrian SH 12 crossing safety improvements in La Veta, Cuchara and Stonewall. Utilize guidance from Colorado Downtown Streets Guide.

Multi-use Trail Improvement Recommendations

Provide an eight-foot wide multi-use trail along the byway corridor connecting with Lathrop State Park to the north and Trinidad

Lake State Park to the south. The alignment of the trail would be either along the byway corridor, within the CDOT right-of-way, either integrated into the roadway shoulders or as a separated trail, or along an independent alignment separate from but near the byway, such as a National Recreation Trail.

Highway Visitor Information

There are a number of sources where travelers can find out more about the Highway of Legends and the surrounding area. If traveling in the area, the best choice would be the visitor centers at the gateway cities. These two visitor centers are open year round:

- The Spanish Peaks Country Visitor Center, 401 Main St, Walsenburg, Colorado
- Colorado Visitor Center in Trinidad, 309 Nevada Ave., Trinidad Colorado

Other Online Sources

- Request a FREE Spanish Peaks Country Visitor's Guide from www.SpanishPeaksCountry.com
- Download the TRAVELSTORYS audio App for a full GPS activated tour of the Byway <http://travelstorys.com/tours/105/Highway%20of%20Legends>

- Visit www.Visittrinidadcolorado.com
- Visit <https://www.lavetacucharachamber.com>
- Search <https://thecucharamountainpark.org/colorado.com>
- Find an itinerary www.colorado.com/colo-road-trips
- Search a Guide to all of Colorado's Scenic Byways <https://www.colorado.com/articles/quick-guide-colorados-scenic-historic-byways>

Information on OTIS

Online Transportation Information System (OTIS) provides valuable information for the management and oversight of the byway. Information provided includes current and projected traffic volumes, state highway attributes, summary roadway statistics, and geographic data. These data provide insights on the general operating and physical conditions of the byway for transportation planning and project development activities. In general, this repository and portal is helpful for managing the byway and is not a primary source of information for visitors to the byway.

A NEW ERA

Launching the New Era: Organizational Changes

The PEL Bike/Ped Study and the opportunity for the SHOL to apply for designation as a National Scenic Byway is generating interest from local stakeholders who want to be a part of these fresh local initiatives. This eagerness to participate is a new dynamic, one which gives pause to a leadership team that knows how long the organization has struggled to sustain lasting commitments from Board Members, and failed to raise operational funds from memberships from businesses stakeholders on the byway.

Going forward, Board members will keep the byway front and center in the minds and hearts of the community. They will oversee the subcommittees and maintain an ongoing public involvement program that will ceaselessly attract new interest from individuals who are willing to share their talents. All members of the Board will be expected to help seek funding that will insure the long-term sustainability of the byway and help spearhead emerging new initiatives.

The Board is currently studying a funding model that has been used successfully by the West Elk Loop Byway (WELB). They have identified and developed partnerships with those who have the most to gain from the byway and its visitors - the county and city governments, tourism boards and chambers of commerce. Together they have determined a fair and manageable amount that each agency can pay annually and they are invoice for the amount each January.

We believe that this approach could generate \$5,000 annually for the use for operating costs, and some matching funds. The Board Corporate “Champion” donor will also be considered.

OTHER MODELS BEING CONSIDERED

A Tourism Business Improvement District: This public/private approach has been used successfully by Fremont Adventure Recreation (FAR) in Fremont County. Businesses around Fremont County elect to add a 1% donation onto their customer's bill. (Customers, in turn, have the option to opt out of the donation.)

Contributions are then distributed directly to FAR. All monies collected from these 1% donations are collectively used to fund trails and outdoor recreation in the Royal Gorge Region.

The 1% For Trails initiative funds all things trails and outdoor recreation: matching funds for grants, grant writing, trail building, trail design, and more. FAR also contributes to local efforts to market to and encourage users of single-track trails.

County Governments

Both Huerfano and Trinidad’s Tourism Boards have helped in the past with grant matches on a case-by-case. We will continue to nurture these relationships.

A Tourism Improvement District (TID) is an industry-led funding model in which tourism businesses contribute towards a common fund. Funds are generated with a self-assessed fee that is collected by a private body, typically a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO).

A TID differs from a Tourism Occupancy Tax (TOT) or bed tax, in that it uses an assessment (not a tax) and the collected funds are required to be allocated to a specific purpose. TIDs vary in structure. Most include a self-assessed hotel fee, but many TIDs also include other sectors like rental car, attractions and food service sectors. Participation in these TIDs can be compulsory or non-compulsory for local industry members.

Go Fund Me Accounts

Our Sister State Byway in Sapporo, Japan has used this form of funding and are most enthusiastic about their successes. It has given users a chance to pay for the pleasure of using a specific byway. It requires a very well managed active social media program.



El Fandango dancer, member of one of Colorado's oldest Folklorico group