Southern Mountain Loop Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

# Steering Committee Meeting No. 3







### Agenda



- Introductions
- Summary of Public Involvement Activities
- Status of Study Schedule and Progress
- Review of Alternatives
- Level 2 Screening of Alternatives
- Study Recommendations (Next Steps)
- Upcoming Events and Summary of Actions

# Summary of PI Activities



- Dec/Jan eNewsletter (Level 1 Findings)
- Dec Fact Sheet (Level 1 Findings)
- Jan Social Media (Coffee Chats)
- Jan Press Release
- Jan 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Coffee Chats
- Early 2020 Website updates
- Late 2019/Early 2020 Property Owner Discussions



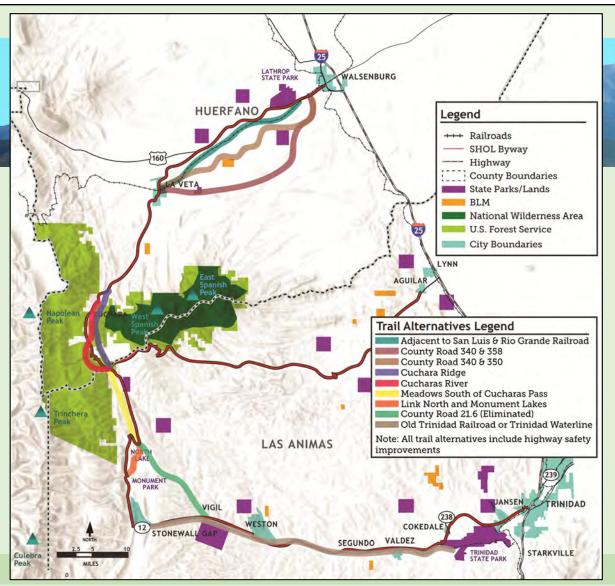
# Status of Study and Progress



Public Involvement Activities						2019						2020							
	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug
Steering Committee Mtgs					•			•							•		•		
General Public - Coordination and Open Houses																			
Technical Committee Meetings								•											
Stakeholder Committee Meetings					•			•									•		
Landowner Workshops/Meetings																			
Official Briefings (Materials)																			
General Communications (Media/Website/Newsletters)																			

#### **Steering and Stakeholder Committee Meetings**

- No. 1 (June 2019) Study Introduction and Goals
- No. 2 (September 2019) Preliminary Alternatives and Trail Guidelines
- No. 3 (Today) Recommended Alternatives
- No. 4 (June 2020) Implementation Recommendations





### **Preliminary Alternatives**

- Committee workshops
- All trail alternatives include highway safety improvements

### **Level 1 Screening**

- Based on Purpose and Need
- Alt P1 (No-Build Alternative) was carried forward for comparison purposes
- Alt P2 (Highway Safety Improvements) was eliminated as standalone alternative
- County Road 21.6 was eliminated

### **Review of Alternatives – Level 2**

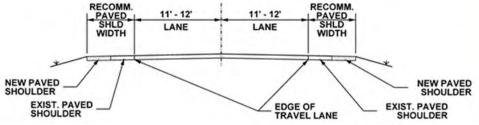


#### **Roadway Safety Improvements**

- Wildlife Crossings 4 Locations
- Lane Departure Crashes
  - Shoulder Widening
  - Roadway Configuration North Lake, Vigil and Segundo
- Transition Zones (Rear-end Crashes)
  - Walsenburg (RR Crossing)
  - Jansen
  - Santa Fe/Main St Intersection (Trinidad)
- Bicycle Safety Signage and Pavement Markings
- Pedestrian Safety
  - La Veta
  - Cuchara
  - Stonewall

US 160 / SH 12 TYPICAL SECTION WALSENBURG TO LA VETA Location Near MP 2 Shown (see table for shoulder dimensions)





# **Review of Alternatives – Level 2**

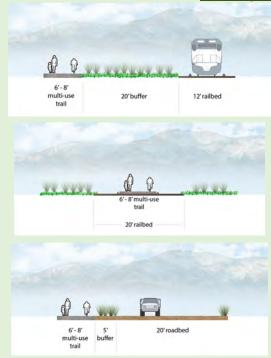


#### **On-highway Trail Improvements**



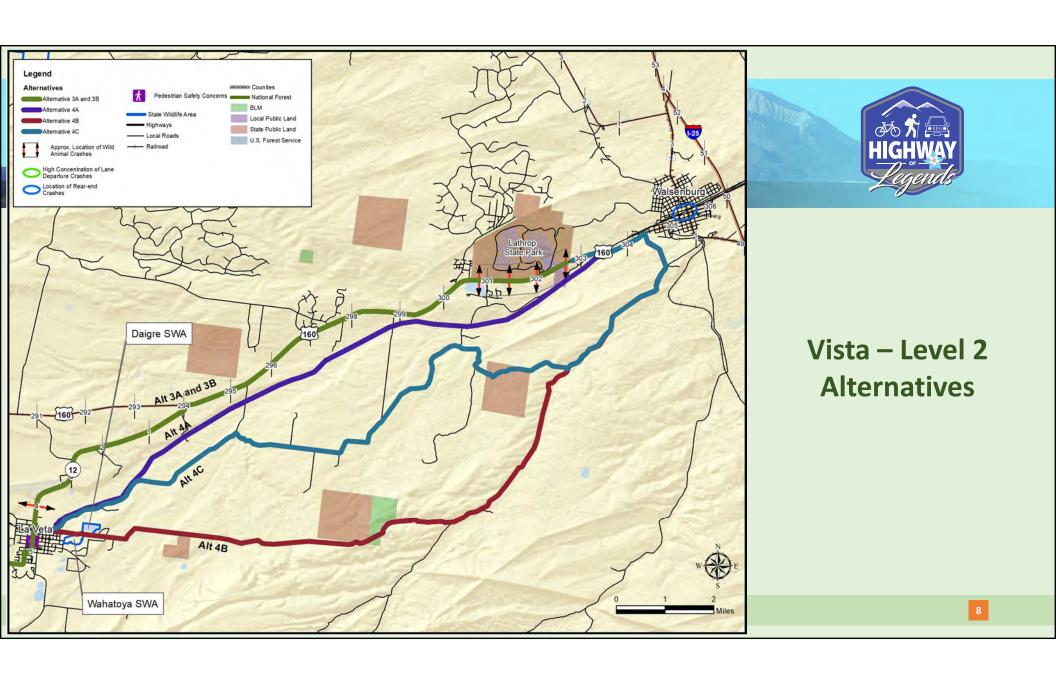


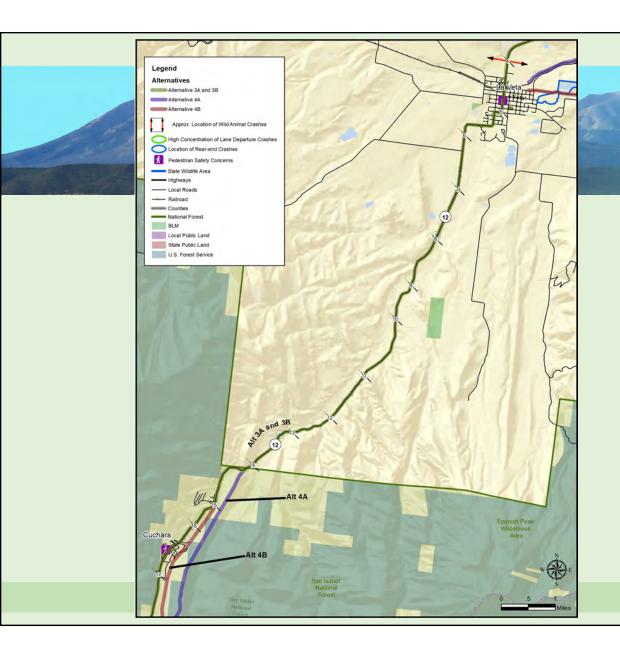
#### **Off-highway Trail Improvements**





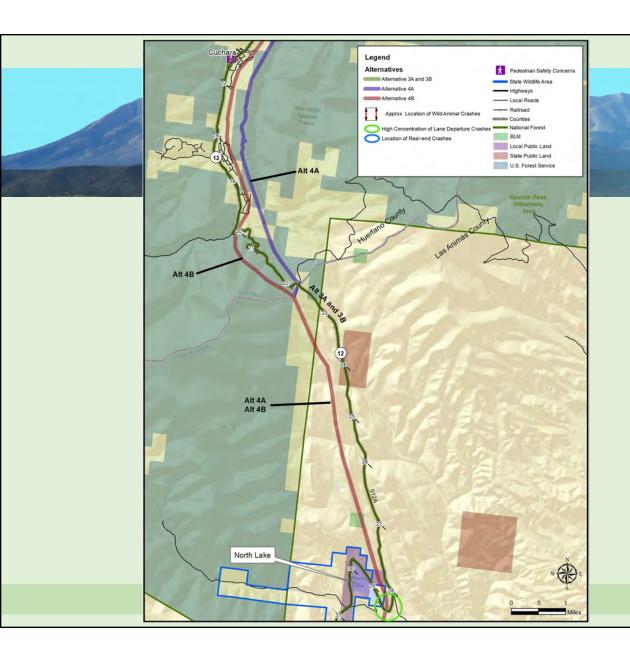






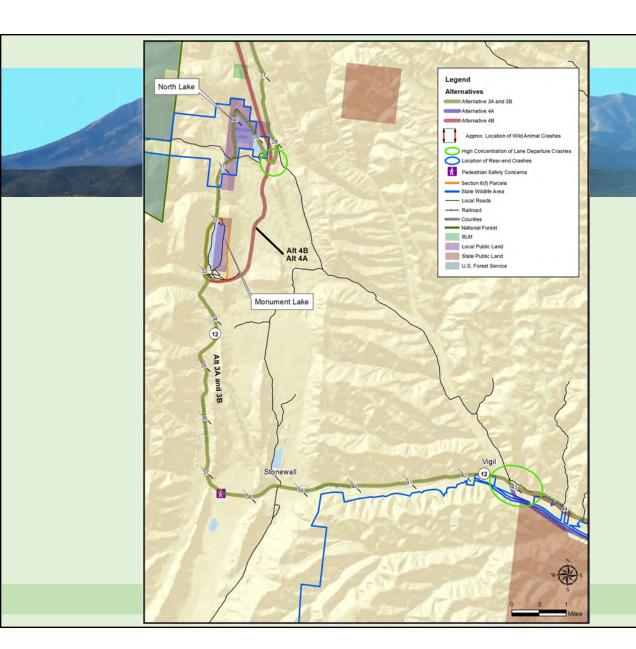


Alpine – Level 2
Alternatives
(Sheet 1 of 3)





Alpine – Level 2
Alternatives
(Sheet 2 of 3)

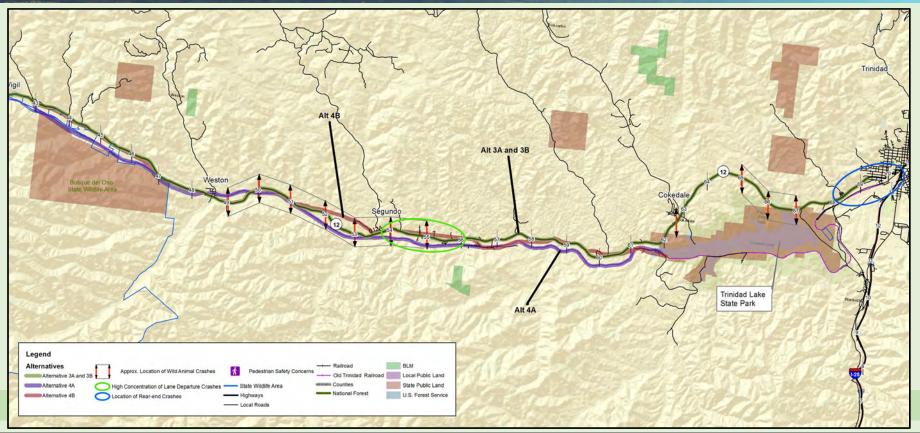




Alpine – Level 2
Alternatives
(Sheet 3 of 3)

# Mining – Level 2 Alternatives





# SHOL Byway – Improvements/Features



#### SHOL Renewed Vision

"Corridor of opportunities to traverse a National Forest (and National Natural Landmark) that offers outdoor recreation against a backdrop of stunning one-of—a kind geologic features."

- Federal Byway Designation
- Amenities Plan:
  - Geology
  - History/Community
  - Scenic Pull-offs
  - Gateways

#### Geology

- Spanish Peaks Vistas
- Radial Dikes/Formations Pull-offs
  - Profile Rock (New)
  - Devil's Staircase (Improved)
  - Dakota Wall (Stonewall Visitor Center)
- K-P Boundary Trinidad Lake SP
- Coal Mining Geology Cokedale Museum

#### **Scenic Pull-offs**

- US 160/CR 450 (Out of Study Area)
- Cucharas Pass
- North Lake
- Monument Lake (Incorporate into Park)
- Mining Town (TBD)

#### **History/Community**

- La Veta Francisco Fort Museum
- Cuchara
- Stonewall New Visitor Center
- Cokedale Mining Museum/Coke Ovens

#### **Gateways**

- Walsenburg
  - Lathrop State Park
- La Veta
- Trinidad
  - Colorado State Welcome Center
  - Trinidad Lake State Park

### **Alternatives Level 2 Evaluation**



- Level 2 Evaluation P&N, Environmental Impacts,
   Feasibility and Other
- Range of Alternatives (From Level 1 Screening)
  - No-Build
  - On-highway Trail (Attached or Separated)
  - Off-highway Trail
- Trail Alternatives Include Highway Safety Improvements
- Evaluation by Segment Vista, Alpine and Mining
- Comparative Analysis Based on Benefits and Impact



Green = Comparatively beneficial and/or low impacts



Black = Comparatively neutral benefits and/or moderate impacts



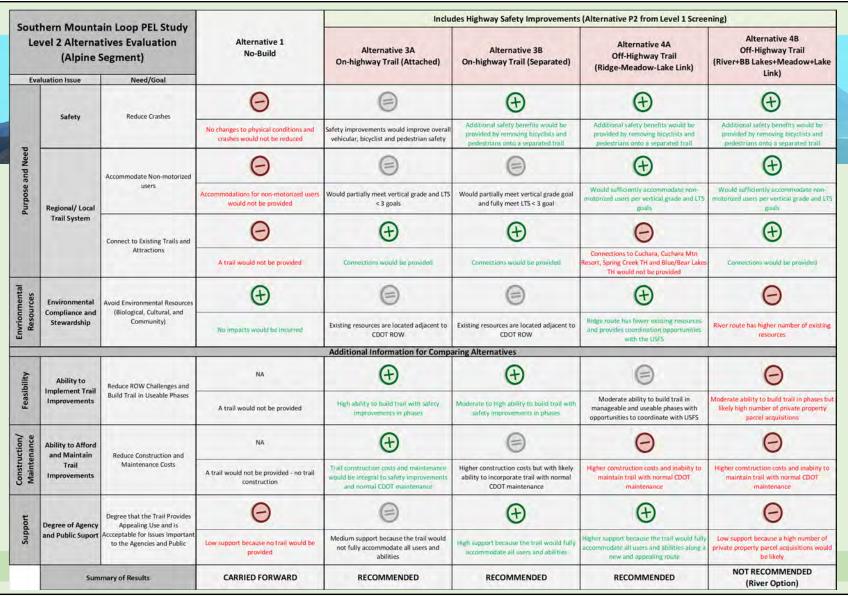
Red = Comparatively minor benefits and/or high impacts

#### **Findings**

RECOMMENDED – Alternative will advance into more detailed study after the PEL Study

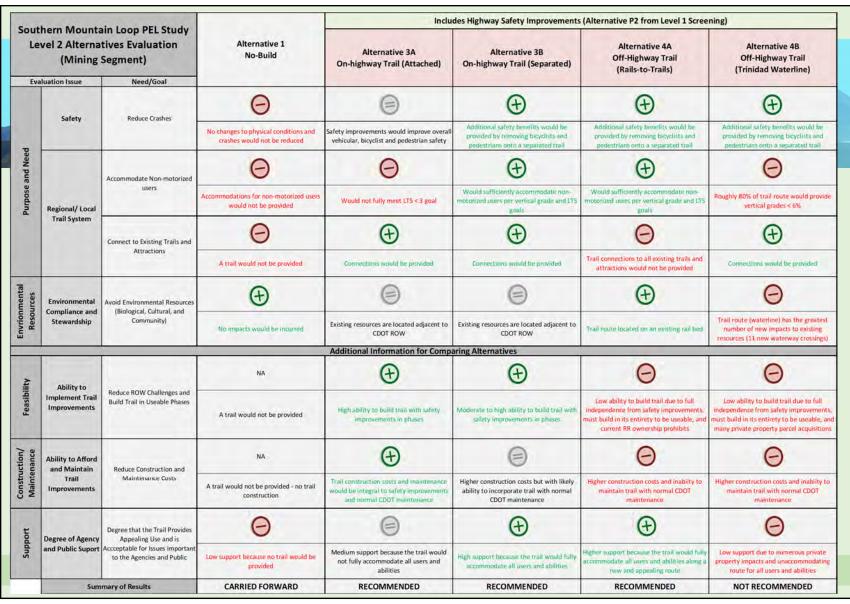
NOT RECOMMENDED – Alternative will not advance into more detailed study

Court	ham Maunta	sin Loon DEI Study		Includes Highway Safety Improvements (Alternative P2 from Level 1 Screening)									
	Southern Mountain Loop PEL Study Level 2 Alternatives Evaluation (Vista Segment)		Alternative 1 No-Build	Alternative 3A On-highway Trail (Attached)	Alternative 3B On-highway Trail (Separated)	Alternative 4A Off-Highway Trail (Rails-w-Trails)	Alternative 4B Off-Highway Trail (CR 340/358)	Alternative 4C Off-Highway Trail (CR 340/342)					
Eva	aluation Issue	Need/Goal					The state of the s						
	Safety	Reduce Crashes	Θ		<b>⊕</b>	<b>⊕</b>	<b>(</b>	<b>⊕</b>					
_			No changes to physical conditions and crashes would not be reduced	Safety improvements would improve overall vehicular, bicyclist and pedestrian safety	Additional safety benefits would be provided by removing bicyclists and pedestrians onto a separated trail	Additional safety benefits would be provided by removing bicyclists and pedestrians onto a separated trail	Additional safety benefits would be provided by removing bicyclists and pedestrians onto a separated trail	Additional safety benefits would be provided by removing bicyclists and pedestrians onto a separated trail					
and Need	Accommodate Non-motorized		Θ	Θ	<b>(</b>	0	<b>(+)</b>	<b>⊕</b>					
Purpose	Pure a sood and Regional/Local	users	Accommodations for non-motorized users would not be provided	Would not fully meet LTS < 3 goal	Would sufficiently accommodate non- motorized users per vertical grade and LTS goals	Would sufficiently accommodate non- motorized users per vertical grade and LTS goals	Would sufficiently accommodate non- motorized users per vertical grade and LTS goals	Would sufficiently accommodate non- motorized users per vertical grade and LTS goals					
	Trail System	Connect to Existing Trails and	Θ		0	0	<b>(</b>	0					
		Attractions	A trail would not be provided	Connections would be provided except for two State Wildlife Mgmt Areas	Connections would be provided except for two State Wildlife Mgmt Areas	Connections would be provided except for two State Wildlife Mgmt Areas	All connections would be provided	Connections would be provided except for two State Wildlife Mgmt Areas					
mental	Environmental	Avoid Environmental Resources	<b>(</b>	0		Θ	<b>(</b>	<b>(</b>					
Envrionmental Resources	Compliance and Stewardship	(Biological, Cultural, and Community)	No impacts would be incurred	Existing resources are located adjacent to CDOT ROW	Existing resources are located adjacent to CDOT ROW	Existing RR ROW is located within areas with greater welands resources	Existing County Road alignments are located in areas with fewer wetlands resources	Existing County Road alignments are located in areas with fewer wetlands resources					
				Additional Infor	mation for Comparing Alternatives								
oility	Ability to	Reduce ROW Challenges and	NA:	<b>⊕</b>	<b>⊕</b>	Θ	Θ	Θ					
Feasibility	Implement Trail Improvements	Build Trail in Useable Phases	A trail would not be provided	High ability to build trail with safety improvements in phases	Moderate to high ability to build trail with safety improvements in phases	Low ability to build trail due to full independence from safety improvements and must build in its entirety to be useable	Low ability to build trail due to full independence from safety improvements and must build in its entirety to be useable	Low ability to build trail due to full independence from safety improvements and must build in its entirety to be useable					
iction/	Ability to Afford and Maintain	Reduce Construction and	NA	<b>⊕</b>	9	Θ	Θ	Θ					
Construction/ Maintenance	Trail Improvements	Maintenance Costs	A trail would not be provided - no trail construction	Trail construction costs and maintenance would be integral to safety improvements and normal CDOT maintenance	Higher construction costs but with likely ability to incorporate trail with normal CDOT maintenance	Higher construction costs and inabity to maintain trail with normal CDOT maintenance	Higher construction costs and inability to maintain trail with normal CDOT maintenance	Higher construction costs and inability to maintain trail with normal CDOT maintenance					
oort	Degree of Agency	Degree that the Trail Provides Appealing Use and is	Θ	9	<b>⊕</b>	<b>(</b>	<b>(</b>	<b>(+)</b>					
Support		Accceptable for Issues Important to the Agencies and Public	Low support because no trail would be provided	Medium support because the trail would not fully accommodate all users and abilities	High support because the trail would fully accommodate all users and abilities			Higher support because the trail would fully accommodate all users and abilities along a new and appealing route					
	Sum	mary of Results	CARRIED FORWARD	RECOMMENDED	RECOMMENDED	RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED	NOT RECOMMENDED					





### Alpine – Level 2 Screening





### Mining – Level 2 Screening

# Level 2 Screening Summary



#### **Outstanding Issues**

- Analysis of On-Highway Trail (Separated is Priority)
- Vista Trail Connections to SWMAs Near La Veta
- Vista Alt 4A is contingent upon RR ownership changes
- Alpine Alt 4A needs to include trail connections to Cuchara and Cuchara Mtn Resort
- Alpine Alt 4A and 4B require USFS and landowner ROW arrangements
- Mining Alt 4A is contingent upon RR abandonment with STB and landowner ROW arrangements

		Col	nce	ots		
Level 2 Screening Recommended Alternative (1) (2)		Highway Safety	On-Hwy Trail (Attached)	On-Hwy Trail (Separated)	Off-Hwy Trail	Description
Vis	ta - V	Wals	enb	urg t	o La	. Veta
Alt 3A - On-Highway Trail (Attached)		1	4			Trail along highway shoulders
Alt 3B - On-Highway Trail (Separated)		1		1		Trail within CDOT right-of-way
Alt 4A - Off-Highway Trail (Rails-w-Trails)		1			1	Trail along SLRG Railroad
	Alpin	e - I	La V	eta 1	to V	igil
Alt 3A - On-Highway Trail (Attached)		V	1			Trail along highway shoulders
Alt 3B - On-Highway Trail (Separated)		1		>		Trail within CDOT right-of-way
Alt 4A - Off-Highway Trail (R-M-LL)		1		1	1	Trail along R-M-LL options
Alt 4B - Off-Highway Trail (BBL-LL)		1		1	1	Trail along BBL-LL options
	Minin	g - \	/igil	to T	rini	dad
Alt 3A - On-Highway Trail (Attached)		V	1			Trail along highway shoulders
Alt 3B - On-Highway Trail (Separated)		1		1		Trail within CDOT right-of-way
Alt 4A - Off-Highway Trail (Rails-to-Trails)		-			-	Trail along Old Trinidad Railroad

(2) All trail alternatives include Highway Safety Improvements

### Study Recommendations – Next Steps



### **Implementation Plan**

- Roadmap for Next Steps
- Repackaging Alternatives Discreet/Independent Projects
- Next Steps Based on Funding and Priorities
  - More Detailed Study of Trail Alternatives (NEPA, Alternatives Analysis, Permitting)
  - Highway Safety Improvements Can Advance Independently (Not Preclude Trail)
  - Byway Improvements Can Advance Independently
- Funding Menu of Options
- Trail Governance Administration and Oversight

#### **Repackaged Trail Alternatives**

- On-Highway Trail Alternatives (Separated is Priority)
- SLRG RR (Rails-w-Trails) Alternative
- Ridge Alternative
- Blue/Bear Lakes Alternative
- Meadows Alternative
- North/Monument Lakes Alternative
- Old Trinidad RR (Rails-to-Trails) Alternative

# Trail Studies - Project Identification



#### **Project (Study) Definition**

- Sections of Independent (SIU) Criteria
- Coordination with Sponsoring Agencies
- Type of Study
  - Sources of Funding
  - Regulatory and Permitting Requirements
- Criteria
  - Purpose and Need
  - Logical and Independent Utility
  - Range of Alternatives
  - Environmental Resource Impacts

			Trail Alternatives for Additional Study									
			Oı	n-Highway Tra	ail							
SIU	From	То	Alt 3A Attached	Senarated		Off-Highway Trail Routes	Combine					
1	Lathrop State Park	North Side of La Veta	х	Х	х	Alt 4A (Rails-with-Trails) (2)						
2	North Side of La Veta	South Side of La Veta	Х									
3	South Side of La Veta	MP 14 USFS Boundary	Х	Х	х							
4	MP 14 USFS Boundary	Cucharas Pass	х	Х	х	Alt 4A (Ridge) Alt 4B (Blue/Bear Lakes)	Х					
5	Cucharas Pass	North Lake	х	Х	х	Alt 4A/4B (Meadow)	Х					
6	North Lake	Monument Lake	х	Х	х	Alt 4A/4B (Lake Link)						
7	Monument Lake	Stonewall	х	Х	х							
8	Stonewall	Trinidad Lake SP	Х	Х	Х	Alt 4A (Rails-to-Trails) (2)						

Note: (1) Alt 3B priority

(2) Contingent upon change in RR ownership

# Trail Projects - Priorities



### **Priority Factors (Discussion)**

- Safety Provides trail accommodations in areas with high LTS
- <u>Bicycle/Pedestrian Use</u> Provides trail accommodations in areas with higher demand
- Connections Provides trail connections for communities and amenities
- <u>User Attractiveness</u> Provides an attractive and appealing user experience
- Byway Features Integrates trail with planned or existing Byway features
- Costs Trail has lower and potential more affordable construction costs
- ROW Requirements Trail has higher "acceptability" of potentially necessary ROW acquisition

# Highway Safety Projects – Priorities



#### **Project Priorities**

- Based on Weighted Accident Rates
- Coordinate with Trail Studies
- Depends on CDOT Funding and Overall Priorities
- Could be Implemented Differently - Flexibility

Project					Project Locat	ion	Highway	Trail	
Priority	SIU	General Description	Route	From (MP)	To (MP)	Length (Miles)	Const. Cost (\$M 2020)	Const. Cost (\$M 2020)	
1	8	Segundo Area	SH 12	52.8	56.8	4.0	\$2.5	\$7.4	
2	8	Vigil Area	SH 12	42.1	44.1	2.0	\$0.7	\$2.6	
3	5/6	Curve SE of North Lake	SH 12	27.0	29.0	2.0	\$1.7	\$4.1	
4	1	US 160 to La Veta (N)	SH 12	0.0	4.6	4.6	\$3.2	\$5.5	
5	8	Vigil (E) to Segundo (W)	SH 12	44.1	52.8	8.7	\$4.4	\$18.5	
6	3/4	La Veta (S) to Cuchara Mtn. Resort	SH 12	5.8	18.4	12.6	\$18.7	\$18.7	
7	8	Santa Fe/Main Street Intersection	SH 12	70.7	70.8	0.1	\$2.6	NA	
8	8	Segundo (E) to Cokedale (W)	SH 12	56.8	61.4	4.6	\$8.6	\$8.1	
9	7/8	Monument Park to Vigil (W)	SH 12	33.6	42.1	8.5	\$4.7	\$13.1	
10	6/7	North Lake to Monument Park	SH 12	29.0	33.6	4.6	\$3.8	\$7.0	
11	1	US 160 Railroad Crossing	US 160	304.8	305.2	0.4	\$0.1	NA	
12	8	Jansen Area	SH 12	68.1	69.1	1.0	\$3.4	NA	
13	2	City of La Veta	SH 12	4.6	5.8	1.2	\$0.7	NA	
14	4	Cuchara Mtn. Resort to North Lake	SH 12	18.4	27.0	8.6	\$7.1	\$9.2	





Site	Feature	Location and Description
		Vista – Walsenburg to La Veta
1	Trailhead	Lathrop State Park (Main Entrance) – Byway and CFRT maps and information
2	Wayside Park	US 160/CR 450 – Improve existing kiosk, add picnic tables with shade and prefab toilet
3	Scenic Pull-off	MP 3.2 (approx.) – Improve existing pull-off for safety; add parking and three-panel kiosk
		Alpine – La Veta to Vigil
4	Visitor Center	La Veta (Between Library/Museum) – Replace existing interpretive signage; install bike self-repair station
5	Scenic Pull-off	Profile Rock (MP 8.7 approx.) – new pull-off for views of geologic features
6	Scenic Pull-off	Devil's Staircase (MP 11.0 approx.) – improve existing pull-off with parking and new signage
7	Visitor Center	Cuchara – History of community and area; signage and restroom
8	Trailhead	Blue/Bear Lake Trailhead (Existing) – Add signage for SHOL and geology
9	Scenic Pull-off	Cucharas Pass – Add wayfinding signage and regional USFS information
10	Scenic Pull-off	North Lake (MP 29 approx.) – Refresh and improve existing kiosk; 3 new panels
11	Scenic Pull-off	Monument Lake (MP 33.0 approx.) – Add signage and public access to Park facilities
12	Visitor Center	Stonewall - Add Geological Education Center, restrooms, picnic area, and parking
		Mining – Vigil to Trinidad
13	Historic Markers	Weston/Segundo – Add historic markers (coalmining, Native American history)
14	Visitor Center	Cokedale – Expand museum with better directional signage from SHOL
15	Trailhead	Trinidad Lake State Park (Main Entrance) – Byway and CFRT maps and information
16	Rest Area	I-25 El Moro Rest Area (Existing) – Add SHOL and CFRT information and maps

Project
Priorities
(Discussion)

### What's Next



- Committee Meeting No. 4 June 2020
  - Trail and Byway Priorities
  - Funding
  - Governance
- Public Materials
  - eNewsletter Level 2 Findings
  - Press Release and Social Media
- Public Open House July 2020
- PEL Study Report June/July 2020