

Final
STAFF SUMMARY OF MEETING

TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Date: 09/24/2015

ATTENDANCE

Time: **05:38 PM to 07:15 PM**

Place: Field Hearing - Durango

This Meeting was called to order by
Representative Tyler

This Report was prepared by
Matt Kiszka

Becker J.	E
Buck	E
Carver	E
Cooke	X
Coram	X
Esgar	X
Garcia	E
Kraft-Tharp	X
Melton	X
Mitsch Bush	X
Moreno	X
Neville P.	E
Nordberg	E
Scott	X
Todd	E
Winter	E
Baumgardner	X
Tyler	X

X = Present, E = Excused, A = Absent, * = Present after roll call

Bills Addressed:	Action Taken:
Call to Order	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from the Transportation Commission	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from the Southwest Transportation Planning Region	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from the City of Durango	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from Montezuma County	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from La Plata County	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from Southern Ute Community Action Programs, Inc (SUCAP)	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing on the Tracks Across Borders Byway	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Briefing from the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only
Public Comment and Committee Discussion	Witness Testimony and/or Committee Discussion Only

05:38 PM -- Call to Order

Representative Max Tyler, Chair, called the committee to order. He asked members of the committee, Legislative Council Staff, and Office of Legislative Legal Services staff to introduce themselves. Senator Ellen Roberts and Representative J. Paul Brown were also in attendance.

05:43 PM

Amber Blake, Director of Transportation and Sustainability for the City of Durango, provided welcoming remarks for the field hearing.

05:45 PM -- Briefing from the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Michael Lewis, Deputy Director, CDOT, addressed the committee and discussed the various infrastructure projects the committee had visited during the day. He spoke to how the safety of transportation projects can affect the citizens of Colorado, how a culture of collaboration can positively impact the various levels of government, and said that things are more efficient when agencies and local governments works together.

Kerrie Neet, Region 5 Transportation Director, CDOT, presented to the committee, discussing the 6,500 square miles of southwest Colorado and the various counties that make up Region 5. Ms. Neet discussed the importance of the Durango-La Plata airport to the region's economy. She detailed how public lands make up about 65 percent of the region, and how partnerships between communities and local governments are important for projects such as the U.S. 160-550 interchange. Ms. Neet also spoke to Durango's continuous flow intersection (CFI) that had recently been completed, which cost roughly \$6 million, versus an anticipated \$60-80 million for a new interchange, and how the decision to use the CFI design reduced numerous impacts to the surrounding community.

05:53 PM -- Briefing from the Transportation Commission

Sidny Zink, Transportation Commissioner, District 8, spoke to the committee on the importance of thinking in terms of the entire state of Colorado, versus focusing solely on a regional level. She discussed how crucial it is for local governments to bring up the issues that are important in their region and for the General Assembly to hear those needs.

05:55 PM -- Briefing from the Southwest Transportation Planning Region (SWTPR)

Kevin Hall, Chair, SWTPR, and Assistant Director of Community Development, City of Durango presented to the committee. Mr. Hall said that the SWTPR has a high level of participation from its members, and noted that he also serves on the Statewide Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC). He said that both the SWTPR and the STAC frequently discuss issues that are important to local communities and the state as a whole. He discussed the importance of planning and partnership with CDOT, being smart with the funds that are available, and thinking outside the box. Mr. Hall spoke to the funding issues that the state has and the future ways that this issue can be remedied. He spoke to CDOT's goal of becoming the best Department of Transportation in the nation, and how collaboration with local governments could allow it to do this.

06:00 PM -- Briefing from the City of Durango

Ms. Blake discussed how public transit is a large economic driver for the state, noting that Colorado provides more rural transit trips than any other state in the nation. She said that these trips provide residents access to work and shopping, promote tourism, and allow communities to thrive. She noted that local governments need access to funding to continue to provide local transit services. She discussed the importance of sustainable and multi-modal transportation options within communities, and how agriculture is a stronghold of our communities that also relies on the state's transportation network.

06:05 PM -- Briefing from Montezuma County

James Dietrich, Natural Resources Planning and Public Lands Coordinator, Montezuma County, presented to the committee. He provided an overview of Montezuma County roads to the committee (Attachment A). Mr. Dietrich discussed the transportation challenges of Montezuma County, which is four hours from an interstate road, and spoke to how critical county roads are for county residents. He discussed the geographic features of the county, the importance of energy production to the region, and how the energy industry impacts local roads. He told the committee that the maintenance of these roads is critical, and said that the county had only been able to afford to perform maintenance on 5 miles of road in 2015, at a cost of \$423,000, with contributions from the Department of Local Affairs and Montezuma County. Mr. Dietrich told the committee that Montezuma County is interested in developing multi-modal transportation options, such as non-motorized trails that would stretch to Durango and beyond.

Larry Don Suckla, Montezuma County Commissioner, addressed the committee, and requested for the General Assembly to implement some kind of leniency for energy costs in Montezuma County due to Tri-State Energy's monopoly over energy provision in the region. Commissioner Suckla responded to questions from the committee on the increasing costs of energy in Montezuma County, and whether the county had considered various forms of renewable energy. Committee discussion ensued.

06:30 PM -- Briefing from La Plata County

Brad Blake, La Plata County Commissioner, presented to the committee on the collaboration involved in intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) to try to make the best use of available funds. He discussed how delaying maintenance leads to serious problems with existing infrastructure down the road. He thanked the committee for visiting the Durango-La Plata Airport and discussed how important it is in helping the area serve as a regional hub.

Commissioner Blake told the committee that he had seen the CDOT paperwork process in recent years become cumbersome and onerous for contractors, and noted how this has led to a reduced number of bidders on projects that involve CDOT. He responded to questions from the committee on the transportation funds that are distributed to cities and counties through state and federal gas taxes, how Montezuma County has approached its citizens with property tax increases to fund regional projects, how much additional revenue these property tax increases would result in, and the current mill levy in La Plata County.

Mr. Hall came to the table to respond to a question on the increased costs of a portion of US-160 near Durango. Mr. Lewis approached the committee to discuss the administrative requirements that CDOT must comply with at the state and federal level, and how this results in increased paperwork for state contractors. He also discussed the challenges involved in not having a predictable funding stream, such as a hesitancy to hire additional staff and purchase needed construction equipment.

Committee discussion ensued on the severance taxes collected from the oil and gas industry in Colorado counties. Commissioner Suckla spoke to the criticality of severance taxes for Montezuma County, and the shoestring budgets of the National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management in the county, despite \$30 million that is collected by the federal government in severance taxes each year. He responded to a question on the payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) that the county receives. Committee discussion ensued.

06:40 PM -- Briefing from Southern Ute Community Action Programs, Inc (SUCAP)

Peter Tregillus, Programs Developer, SUCAP, explained that SUCAP is a nonprofit organization that partners with the Southern Ute Tribe to offer regional transit services. He distributed a handout to the committee (Attachment B), and said that SUCAP operates some transit systems within the southwest region of Colorado. He spoke to a service that SUCAP provides through a partnership with the city of Durango, which is known as the Road Runner Stage Lines Coach. He explained that the service stops in many communities in the region, and has been in operation for 16 months as of September 2015. He responded to questions on the ridership of the service and the capacity of the buses used for the service.

06:50 PM -- Briefing on the Tracks Across Borders Byway

Muriel Eason, Commissioner, Tracks Across Borders Byway (TABB) Commission, presented to the committee. Ms. Eason distributed a handout to the committee (Attachment C), and explained that the byway is the first to be approved in Colorado in 10 years. She discussed the theme of the byway, which is the history of the Rio Grande Railroad, and the importance of the railroad. Ms. Eason explained the geographical route and topography of the byway, how the byway was approved in May 2015 by the New Mexico DOT, and how the commission is exploring various funding opportunities to assist in the build out of the road. She responded to questions from the committee on what constitutes a byway, how byways are signposted, and whether a route for the scenic byway can be input into smart phone navigational applications.

07:00 PM -- Briefing from the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

Regina Whiteskunk, Councilwoman, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, presented to the committee. She distributed a handout to the committee (Attachment D). She discussed how the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe has enjoyed a successful government-to-government relationship with CDOT. She said that the tribe is dedicated to providing a safe and functional corridor through Ute Mountain Ute lands, but several roads are in serious need of maintenance. She discussed the projects in the region the tribe would like to see addressed and partially funded by the state; the imperious need for continued communication between the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, CDOT, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; and other regional needs that the state could help address. Ms. Whiteskunk discussed the success enjoyed in the region through Responsible Acceleration of Maintenance and Partnerships (RAMP) projects, and the need for future funding to secure the safety and accessibility of Colorado's transportation infrastructure. She responded to questions from the committee on erosion prevention measures taken in the region. Ed Archuleta, CDOT Program Manager, came to the table to speak to flooding issues in the Mancos Creek Ditch on tribal lands.

07:10 PM -- Public Comment and Committee Discussion

The committee discussed the core needs of transportation in the southwest region of the state. Senator Ellen Roberts commented on the importance of highway funding in the region due to the nature of the highways that run over mountain passes and other transportation issues faced by the local communities of the region.

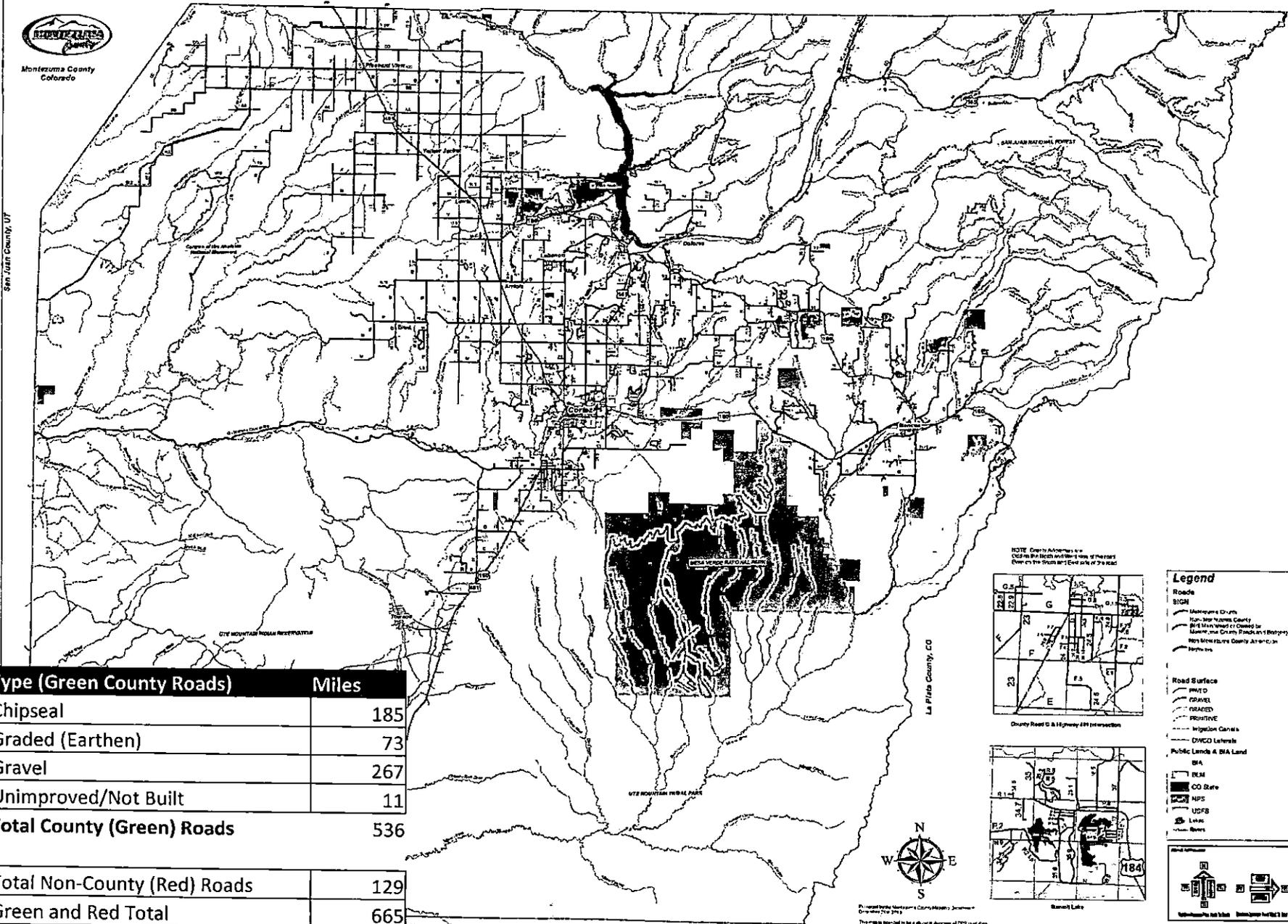
07:15 PM

The committee adjourned.

Montezuma County Roads Overview



Montezuma County
Colorado

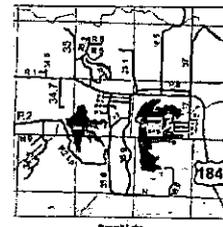
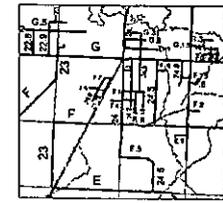


Type (Green County Roads)	Miles
Chipseal	185
Graded (Earthen)	73
Gravel	267
Unimproved/Not Built	11
Total County (Green) Roads	536

Total Non-County (Red) Roads	129
Green and Red Total	665
Highways	172

20 Miles

NOTE: County Advertisers are
Old on the North and New on the East
Over on the South and East side of the Road



Legend

Roads

ROAD SIGN

- Montezuma County
- San Juan County
- La Plata County
- San Miguel County
- Archuleta County
- Kit Carson County
- Ouray County
- Huerfano County
- Chaves County
- Doña Ana County
- Grant County
- Hidalgo County
- Lincoln County
- McGuire County
- McIntosh County
- Medina County
- Roberts County
- Seward County
- Teller County
- Weld County
- Yuma County

Road Surface

- PAVED
- GRAVEL
- DIRT
- UNIMPROVED
- IRIGATION CANALS
- DIVERTED LATERALS
- PUBLIC LANDS A, B, & A Land
- BLA
- BLM
- CO State
- NPS
- USFS
- Lease
- Other

Other Symbols

- City
- Town
- Village
- Unincorporated Area
- Water
- Wetland
- Forest
- Open Space
- Other

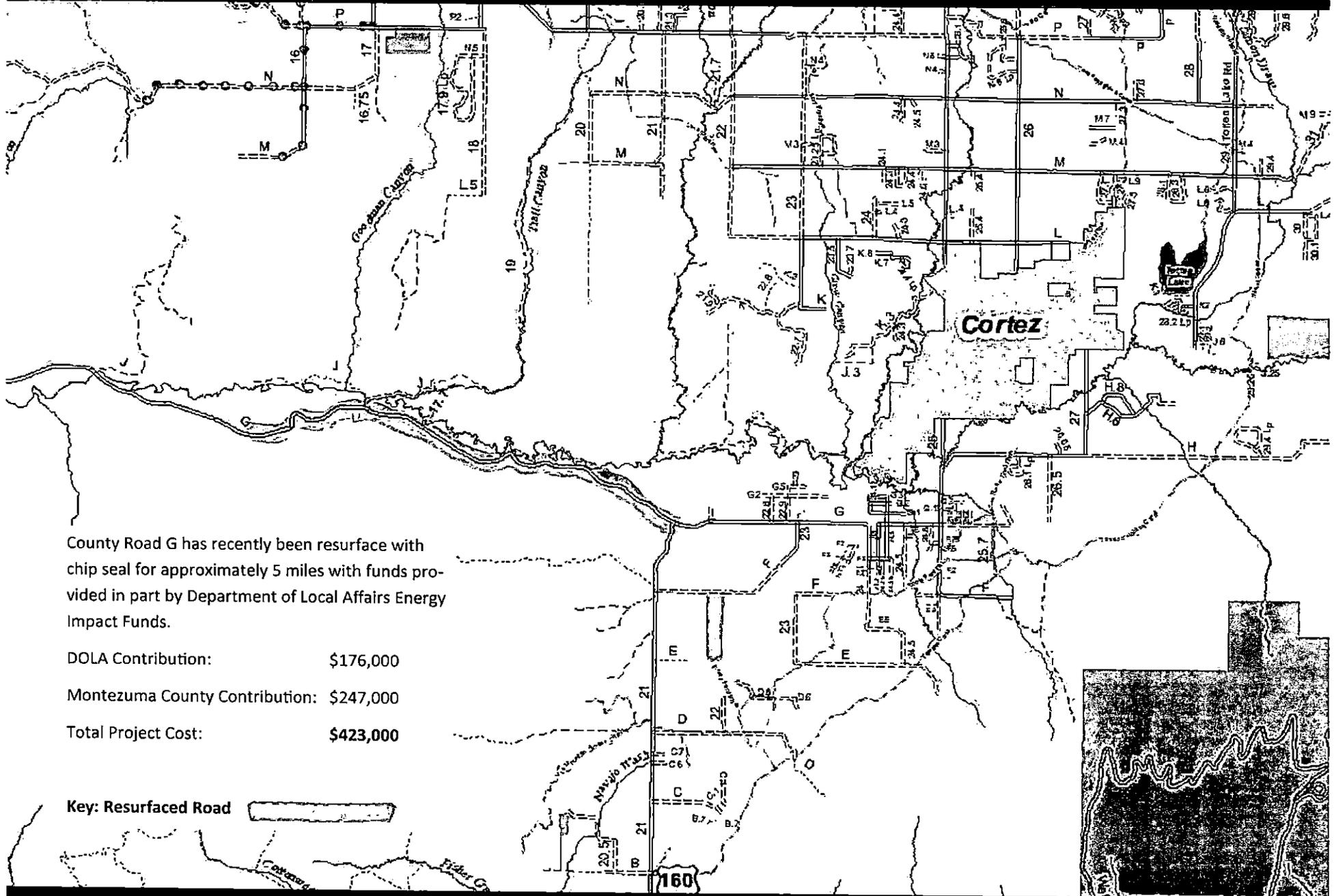
Prepared by Montezuma County Advisory Committee
Copyright 2014

This map is prepared by the Montezuma County Advisory Committee. It is not a legal document. It is for informational purposes only. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is for informational purposes only. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is for informational purposes only.

2014 Edition of map. It is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is for informational purposes only. The map is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is for informational purposes only.

Energy Impacted Roads

2015 Completed Projects

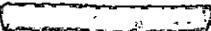


County Road G has recently been resurface with chip seal for approximately 5 miles with funds provided in part by Department of Local Affairs Energy Impact Funds.

DOLA Contribution: \$176,000

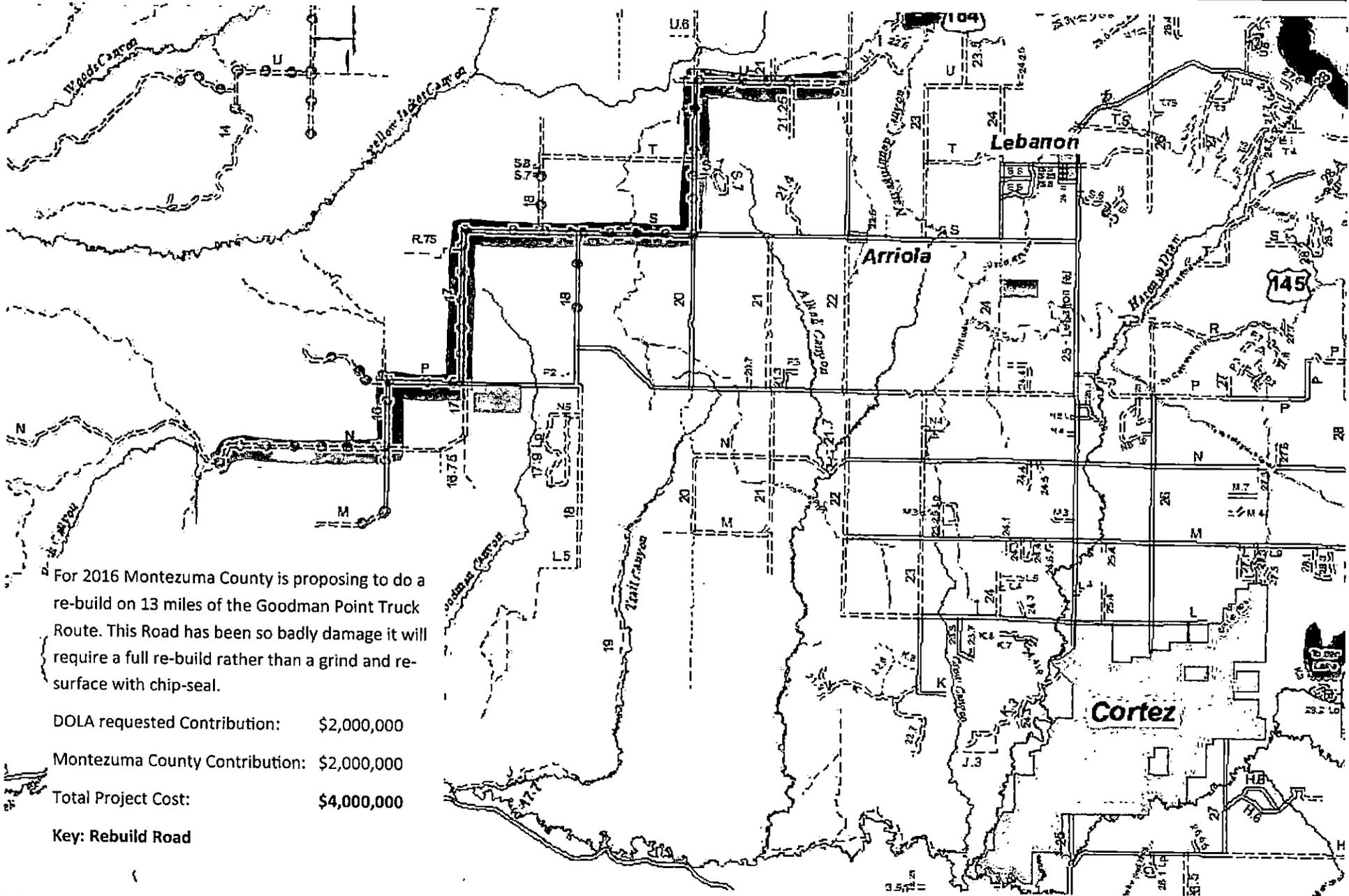
Montezuma County Contribution: \$247,000

Total Project Cost: \$423,000

Key: Resurfaced Road 

Energy Impacted Roads

2016 Proposed Projects



For 2016 Montezuma County is proposing to do a re-build on 13 miles of the Goodman Point Truck Route. This Road has been so badly damage it will require a full re-build rather than a grind and re-surface with chip-seal.

DOLA requested Contribution: \$2,000,000
Montezuma County Contribution: \$2,000,000
Total Project Cost: \$4,000,000

Key: Rebuild Road



Montezuma County Truck Routes

September 24th 2015



TRUCKS MUST USE TRUCK ROUTES ONLY

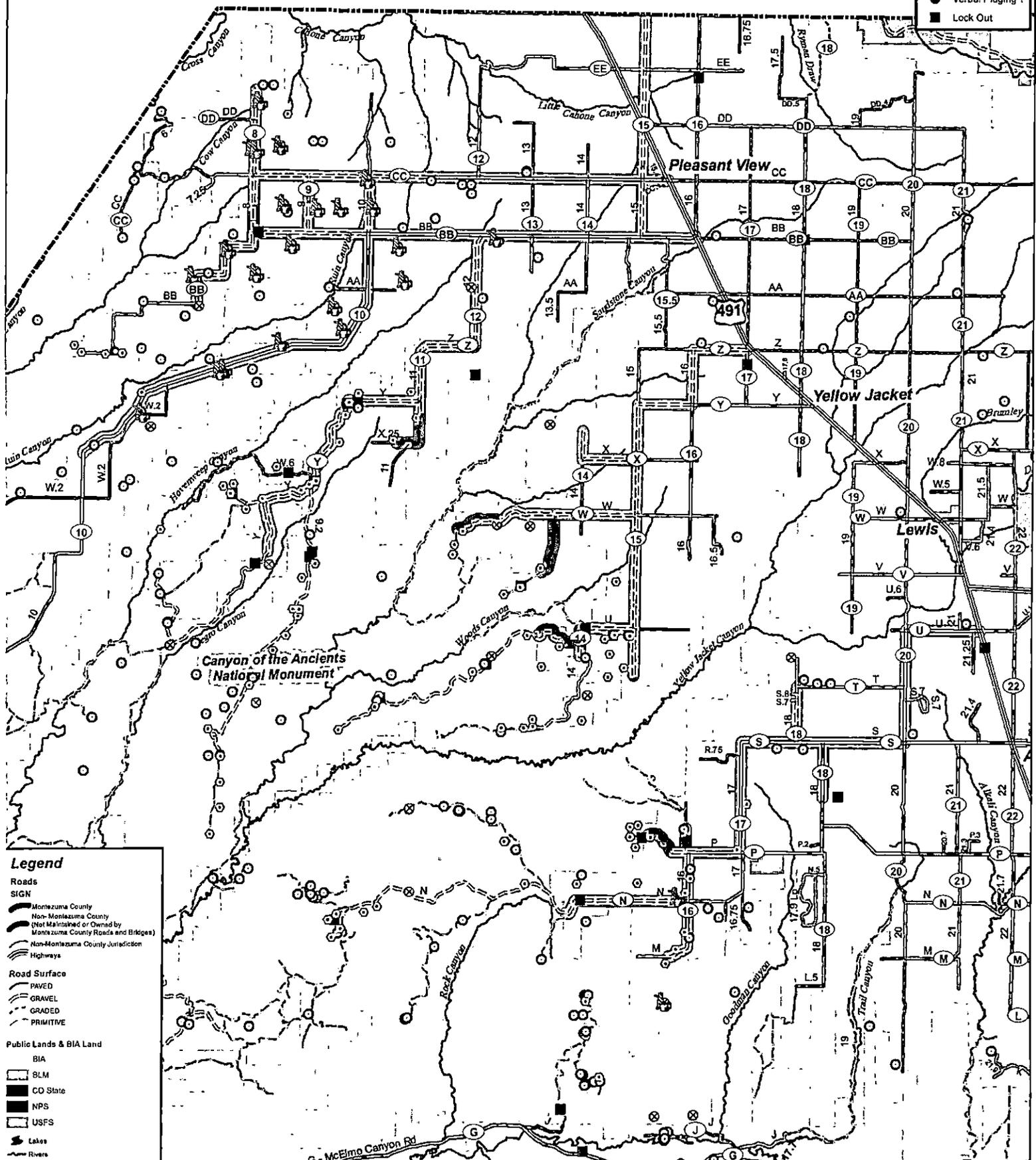
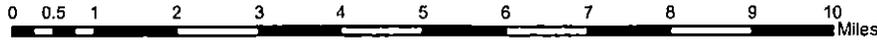


Truck Routes by Surface Type:

- Chipseal: 30 Miles
- Gravel: 47 Miles
- Earthen: 2 Miles

Wells

- New Wells
- Other
- Producing
- Other Status
- Verbal Plugging ?
- Lock Out



Legend

Roads

SIGN

- Montezuma County
- Non-Montezuma County (Not Maintained or Owned by Montezuma County Roads and Bridges)
- Non-Montezuma County Jurisdiction
- Highways

Road Surface

- PAVED
- GRAVEL
- GRADED
- PRIMITIVE

Public Lands & BIA Land

- BIA
- BLM
- CO State
- NPS
- USFS

Lakes

Rivers

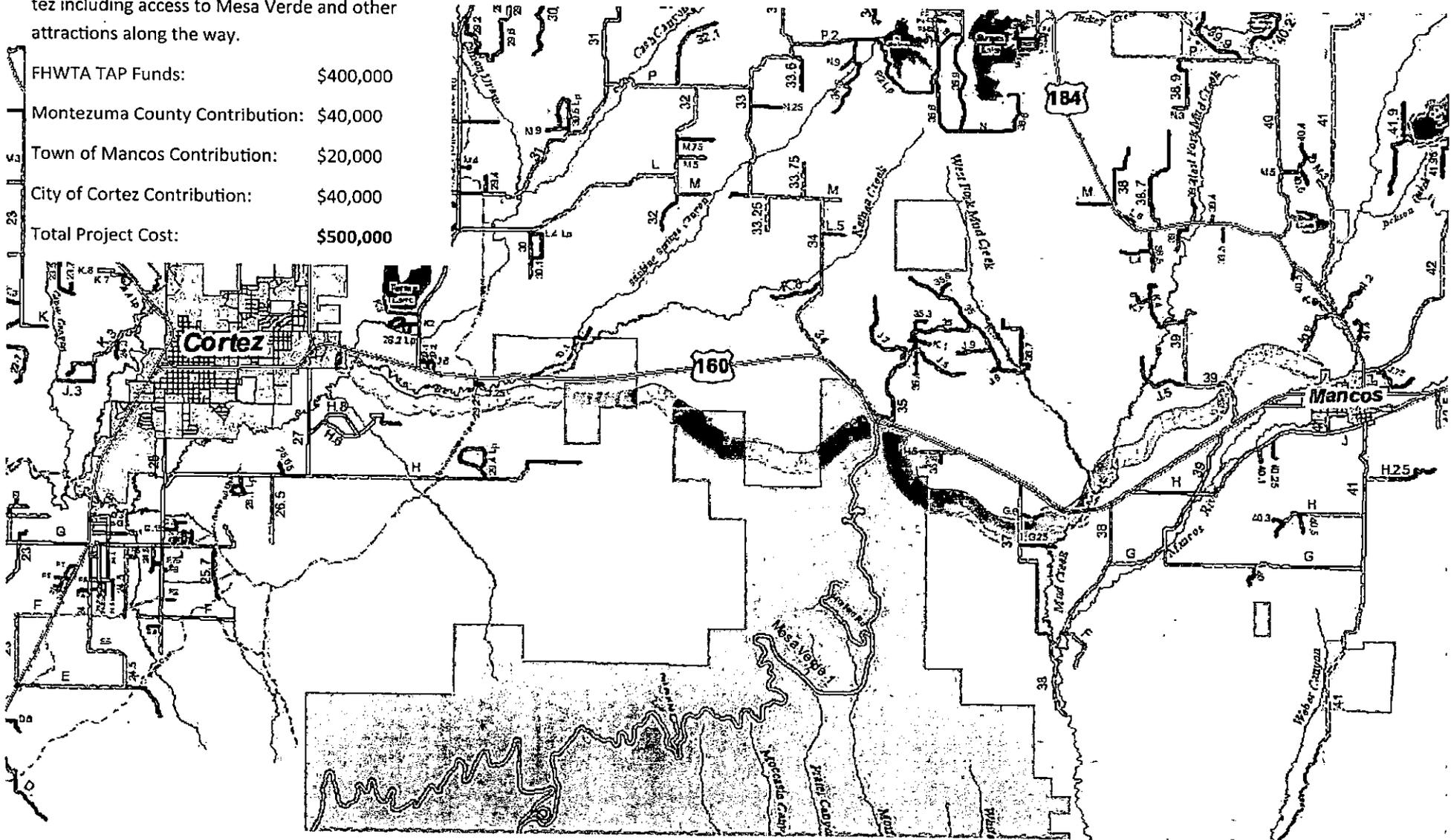
Alternative Transportation Projects

2016 Planning Projects

For 2016 Montezuma County will commission a Planning Effort to select and design an off Highway non-motorized pathway between Mancos and Cortez including access to Mesa Verde and other attractions along the way.

Map Key: Conceptual Trail Route

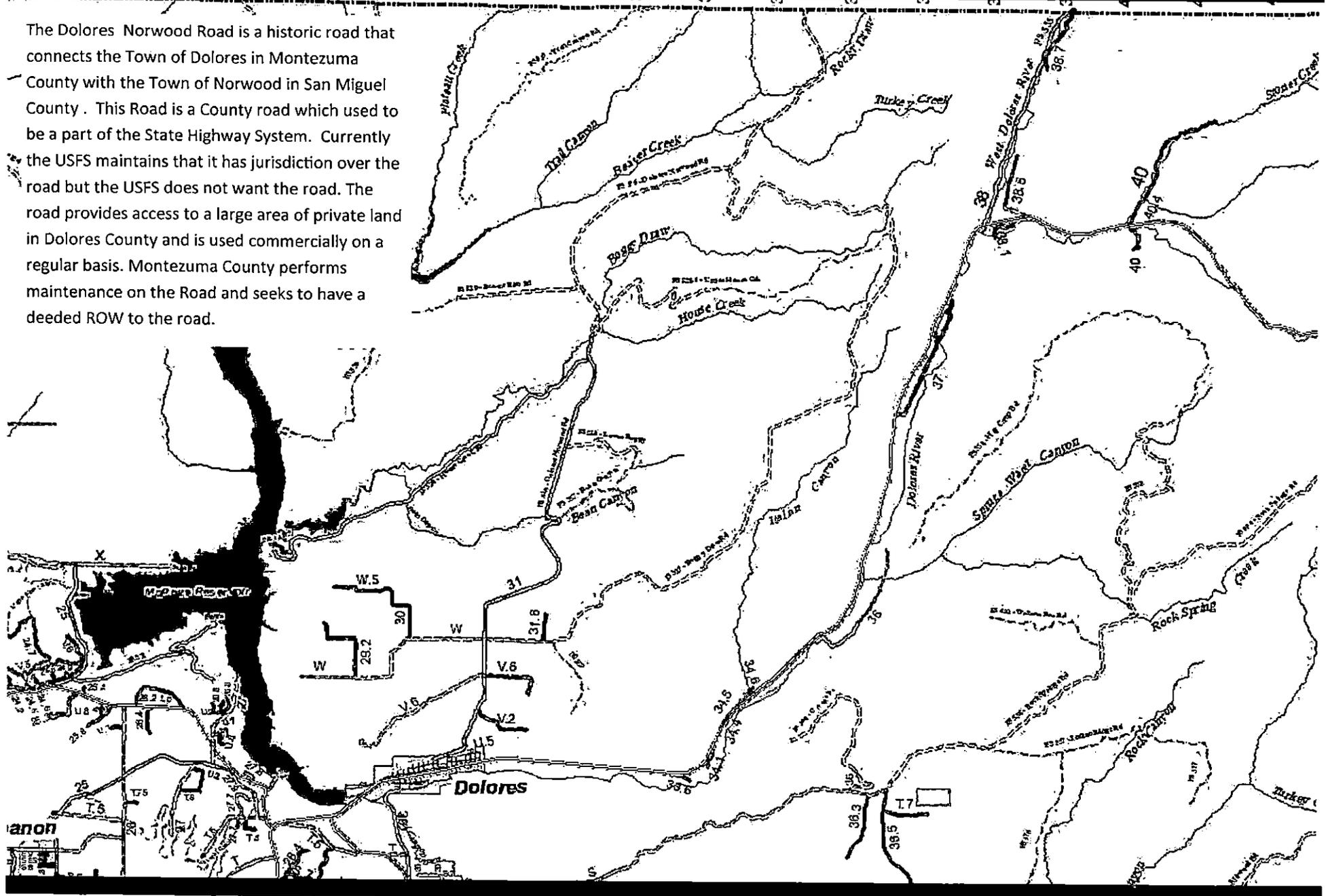
FHWA TAP Funds:	\$400,000
Montezuma County Contribution:	\$40,000
Town of Mancos Contribution:	\$20,000
City of Cortez Contribution:	\$40,000
Total Project Cost:	\$500,000

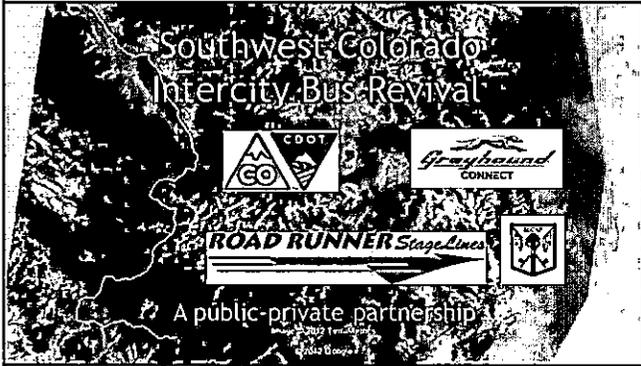


Dolores Norwood Road

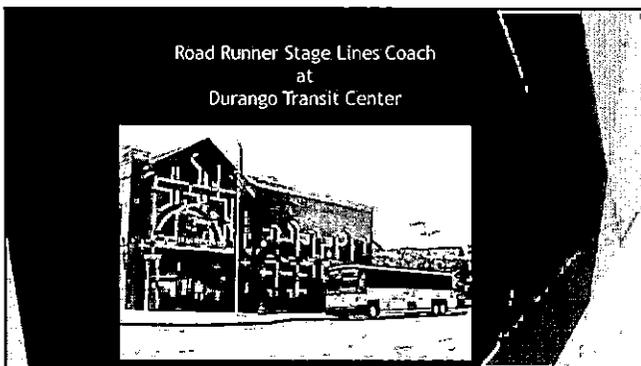
County Roads across Federal Lands

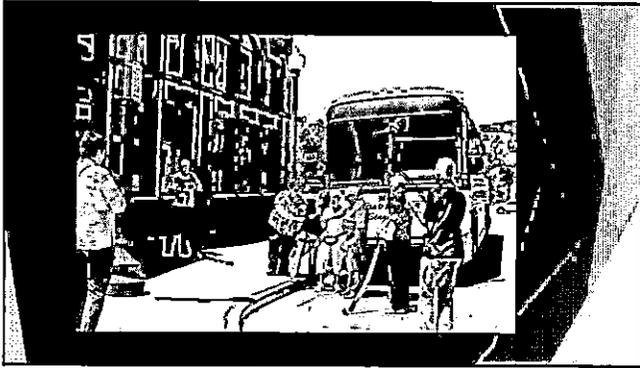
The Dolores Norwood Road is a historic road that connects the Town of Dolores in Montezuma County with the Town of Norwood in San Miguel County. This Road is a County road which used to be a part of the State Highway System. Currently the USFS maintains that it has jurisdiction over the road but the USFS does not want the road. The road provides access to a large area of private land in Dolores County and is used commercially on a regular basis. Montezuma County performs maintenance on the Road and seeks to have a deeded ROW to the road.

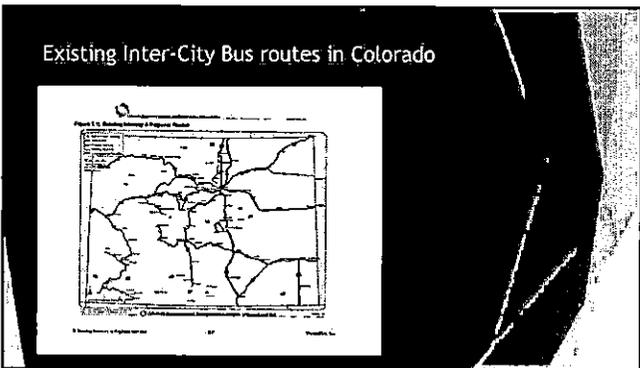






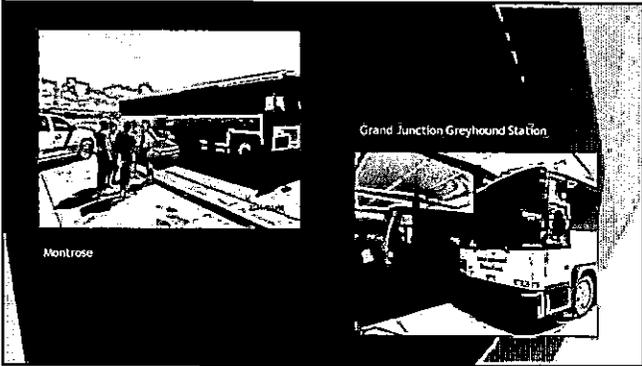






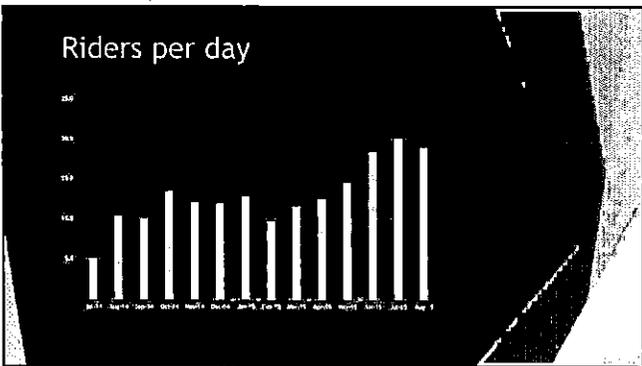
Route and Schedule

Leave Durango	7:00 AM
Arrive Grand Junction	12:43 PM
Leave Grand Junction	1:45 PM
Arrive Durango	7:44 PM



Sample fares, one-way

Durango-Grand Junction	\$40
Dolores-Telluride	\$19
Telluride-Montrose	\$11
Montrose-Grand Junction	\$10
Durango-Denver, RRSL-Greyhound	\$73-90
Durango-Denver by air	\$361-591

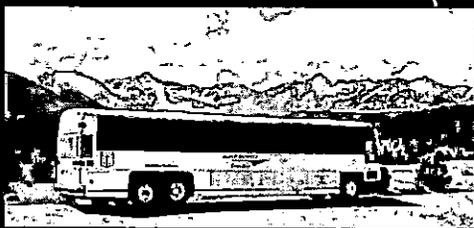


Challenges

- ▶ Working with new systems (credit cards, interlining with Greyhound)
- ▶ Maintaining older equipment with safety as a priority
- ▶ Getting the word out
- ▶ Hiring drivers

What's next

- ▶ New vehicles
AC, wi-fi, USB charging
- ▶ Internet and TV marketing
- ▶ Online Road Runner Stage Lines e-commerce



Southwest Transportation Legislative Review Committee Update Sept. 24, 2015

About the Tracks across Borders Byway (TABB)

With the recent byway designation in April 2015 in CO and May in NM, the TABB joins an illustrious and varied collection of byways, each with unique charm and history. The theme of the TABB is one of Colorado's greatest stories - the creation and development of the state's first, and ultimately the nation's largest, narrow gauge railroad system - the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG). The byway follows the historic route D&RG, and connects the Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad with the Durango & Silverton Railroad, the last two surviving segments of the original narrow gauge rail route that tapped the mining, logging and ranching industries of the San Juan Mountains. Both railroads are National Historic Landmarks. The route travels the pathways of the past, stepping back through history to link two states (NM & CO), two native American Tribes (Jicarilla & Southern Ute) and three counties (La Plata and Archuleta in CO and Rio Arriba in NM). The automobile byway will use existing public roads that people can drive today.

Regional Benefits

The TABB will bring additional tourism to Durango, Ignacio, Navajo Lake State Park, Chimney Rock National Monument and more remote rural locations along the byway, strengthening the service sector—the purchase of food, lodging, supplies, fuel and amenities. The local economy relies heavily on entrepreneurial small scale businesses for both jobs and tax revenues.

Route

Travel from Durango, to the NM border via US160, SH172, SH151, to Chimney Rock National Monument, then back to Archuleta CR500 to CR551. In NM, continue on to Chama (we are working with NMDOT and the BIA/Jicarilla Apache on the NM portion of the byway).

Current Status

CDOT has ordered byway wayfinding signage which should be installed later this year. The byway is being managed by the TABB Commission which is forming a tax exempt non-profit and completing a Corridor Management Plan. The TABB's byway designation did not come with funding, so acquiring funds will be key to byway activation.

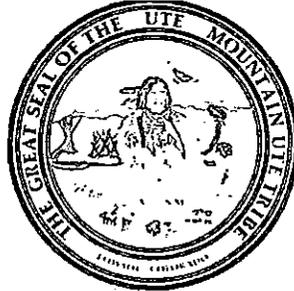
Regional Corridor Priorities for the TABB

- SH 151 - Ignacio to US 160 west of Pagosa Springs – TPR (Map ID 8) priority “Medium”
- SH 172 - New Mexico line north to U.S. 160 – TPR (Map ID 10) priority “High”
- US 160 - Four Corners to Archuleta/Mineral County line - TPR (Map ID 9) priority “High”

Archuleta County/Southern Ute/BIA Corridor Priorities for the TABB

- CR 500 (Trujillo Rd) – Arboles to Pagosa Springs for those who want tourist amenities and/or to bypass the rough, narrow, seasonal section to the NM border on CR 551.
- CR 551 (Juanita Rd) – from CR 500 to the NM border – primitive, narrow and only seasonably passable.

For more information contact: Muriel Eason, TABB Commissioner, 970-946-1133, meason@centurytel.net



Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Towaoc, Colorado

**September 24, 2015
Durango, Colorado**

Field Hearing

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribe has enjoyed the ongoing and continual relationship with Colorado Department of Transportation. As we move along into the future we have areas we would like continued conversation and efforts in providing a safe and functional corridor in and out of our beautiful state.

The following items are identified as priorities:

- Road improvements on US Hwy. 160 leading to the Four Corners Colorado boundary line leading to the intersection of US Hwy. 41
- Road improvements on US Hwy. 41 to the state line
- Continued discussions and negotiations in developing the MOU with the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, CDOT and BIA Road Maintenance
 - Identifying who is responsible for fence maintenance
 - Updated cattle guard inventory
 - Mowing and Weed Controls annual plan
 - Continued discussions and negotiations regarding current and future ROWs
 - Developing improved communication between CDOT, BIA and the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe
 - Regular traffic count and other data/statistics
- Mancos Creek Ditch on south US Hwy 491, north of New Mexico state boundary
 - Breach of current storm water way
 - Erosion may compromise current road work and provides unsafe segment for traffic
- Status of US Hwy 491 Ramp project
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