January 15, 2014

Fatal crash on I-70 near Deer Trail

The Denver Post staff

POSTED: 01/15/2014 06:13:56 AM MST UPDATED: 01/15/2014 06:15:17 AM MST

The Colorado State Patrol says it is investigating a single-vehicle crash on westbound Interstate 70 near Deer Trail that killed the driver of a semi truck Wednesday morning.

Troopers said the semi truck rolled over near mile marker 323, according to a tweet from an official state patrol Twitter account.

The driver of the semi truck, who was not immediately identified, was pronounced dead at the scene.

The Colorado Department of Transportation said the left lane was open on westbound I-70 near Deer Trail, but to expect slowing in the area, according to a tweet on its official Twitter account.

No other details on the crash were immediately available.

CDOT Announces Mitigation Work/ Closures For Rock Fall

By Kristina Kuestner, News Channel 5 Created: Tue, 14 Jan 2014 10:41:00 MST Updated: Tue, 14 Jan 2014 11:13:57 MST

WESTERN SLOPE, Colo.- The Colorado Department of Transportation announces a road closure as well as delays expected for drivers traveling through two portions of Western Colorado due to possible rock fall activity.

CDOT will perform rock fall mitigation work on Wednesday, Jan. 15, in Glenwood Canyon, between mile marker 120 and mile marker 121, on Interstate 70.

Drivers can expect delays to be about 15 minutes from 9 a.m. to noon.

The speed limit will be reduced through the area, and flaggers will direct traffic through the closures.

CDOT Officials have also closed Highway 550, 2 miles south of Ouray, because of a long lasting rock slide until Jan. 20.

The extended closure is due to continued rock falls in that area.

U.S. 550 May Remain Closed Through Weekend, at Least

by Samantha Wright, The Watch Jan 14, 2014

OURAY – U.S. 550 Red Mountain Pass will be closed "at least through the weekend," due to extensive rockfall and unsafe conditions, according to Colorado Department of Transportation spokeswoman Nancy Shanks.

Previous reports via the Ouray County Sheriff's Office that the highway would reopen at least temporarily on Tuesday evening were incorrect, Shanks said.

"When there is rockfall, avalanche or a snowstorm, it's our final word" whether conditions are safe enough to reopen a highway, she explained. "We are not certain that it is safe; right now the risk looks too great."

The highway closure is due to a significant rockfall incident that began on Sunday evening, Jan. 12 and continued throughout the afternoon of Monday, Jan. 13, when a steady stream of rubble "rained down" from about 900 feet above the roadway, blocking a 200-foot stretch of the highway.

The highway has been continuously closed since Monday afternoon.

In addition to burying the highway, the rockfall took out a power line maintained by San Miguel Power Association, wiping out CDOT's power supply to the Riverside Slide snow shed and Monument weather station.

The damaged power line also provides a backup power supply to the Ouray and Ridgway region. SMPA spokeswoman Becky Mashburn sent out an email alert on Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 14, warning that "if an outage occurs on the main power line bringing power into the Ouray and Ridgway region, [the damage to the backup line] could result in a longer outage time. Events like this can disrupt our system and could potentially inconvenience our members."

Shanks reported that SMPA crews will conduct work to remove the damaged power structures on Wednesday, and if possible, begin to make repairs.

"Meanwhile, CDOT will continue to work with rockfall contractor Yenter Companies, to begin to mobilize to the area tomorrow or Thursday," she said. "At this point the highway looks to stay closed through weekend, if not beyond."

US 550 Red Mountain Pass connects the towns of Ouray and Silverton via a windy, mountainous 23-mile stretch of highway. Until the route reopens, travelers are advised to take a 200-mile detour via CO 62 over Dallas Divide and CO 145 over Lizard Head Pass.

Highway 550 to Reopen at 5 p.m. Tuesday

PUBLISHED AT 3:48 P.M on TUESDAY, JAN. 14

OURAY – The Ouray County Sheriff's Office reports that US 550 Red Mountain Pass will reopen on Tuesday evening at 5 p.m., then close again on Wednesday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., following a significant rockfall incident at mile marker 90, two miles south of Ouray, in a sheer cliffy area known as the Ruby Walls.

The highway has been closed continuously since 12:40 p.m. on Monday afternoon, Jan. 13, when a steady stream of rubble "rained down" from about 900 feet above the roadway, blocking a 200-foot stretch of the highway.

CDOT crews have been working throughout the day to assess the situation and clear the road for travel.

The public should continue to rely onwww.cotrip.org for updates.

Massive Rockfall Shuts Down Red Mountain Pass

PUBLISHED at 10:53 A.M. ON TUESDAY, JAN. 14

OURAY – U.S. 550 Red Mountain Pass remains closed this morning following a significant rockfall incident that began on Sunday evening and continued on Monday afternoon at mile marker 90, two miles south of Ouray, in a sheer, cliff area known as the Ruby Walls.

The first road closure came on Sunday evening, Jan. 12, from 7:30 to 9:11 p.m. after "a great deal of rubble came down from about 900 feet above the highway," Colorado Department of Transportation spokeswoman Nancy Shanks reported.

CDOT officials closed the pass again on Monday afternoon, Jan. 13, when a steady stream of rubble "rained down" from about 900 feet above the roadway, starting at about midday and continuing throughout the afternoon and evening. Shanks reported that rocks up to two feet in diameter covered the road for about 200 feet, with piles of rubble in some places up to eight feet deep.

The rockfall took out a power line, wiping out CDOT's power supply to the Riverside Slide snow shed and Monument weather station.

According to Shanks, nobody has been injured in the rockfall incident, but "there were two folks with broken windshields and at least one flat tire," she said. "That's what we deal with here in Colorado. We are very fortunate that no one was more severely impacted, including our CDOT guys."

CDOT conducted extensive rockfall mitigation work along the Ruby Walls stretch of Red Mountain Pass a dozen or so years ago, "but in a much lower area, about 100 feet up above the highway," Shanks said. About five to six years ago, there was another major rock fall incident at the same site.

"There are always smaller rocks that come down in that area," Shanks said, "but nothing in the historical record that shows rock coming from that high above. This could be a lengthy closure."

CDOT rockfall contractor Yenter Companies is on the scene this morning to provide further assessment via land and helicopter. There is no reopen estimate at this time. The public should continue to rely on www.cotrip.org for roadway messages.

Red Mountain shut down for days

Loose-rock mitigation to keep highway closed 'at least through weekend'

By Shane Benjamin Durango Herald staff writer Article Last Updated: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 11:39pm

Mountain Pass will remain closed "at least through the weekend" while road crews work to mitigate a rockslide south of Ouray, the Colorado Department of Transportation announced Tuesday.



Courtesy of the Colorado Department of Transportation

A vehicle (extreme lower left) travels on U.S. Highway 550 south of Ouray below a massive rockslide that has forced closure of the highway for the next several days. Workers will scale the mountainside to dislodge any remaining loose rocks.

Alternate route

Those wanting to travel north on U.S. Highway 550 from Durango to Ouray and points beyond must take an alternate route until mitigation work is completed by Colorado Department of Transportation crews.

The best route is over Lizard Head Pass on Colorado Highway 145: Go west on U.S. Highway 160 to Mancos (27 miles), turn north on Colorado Highway 184 toward Dolores (17 miles), take Colorado Highway 145 over Lizard Head Pass to just past Placerville (75 miles), and take Colorado Highway 62 east to Ridgway, where it intersects with U.S. Highway 550 (23 miles). The 143-mile route will take about 3 hours under decent driving conditions.

"There is currently no estimate for reopening of the pass beyond this weekend, though more will be known by Friday as mitigation work gets underway," the agency said Tuesday night in a news release.

The slide was first reported about 7:30 p.m. Sunday, closing the pass for about two hours while crews removed debris. But more rubble came down about 12:40 p.m. Monday, which has closed the pass ever since.

Loose rocks continue to trickle down sporadically, creating traffic hazards for motorists, said Nancy Shanks, spokeswoman for CDOT.

Two drivers reported broken windshields and at least one driver experienced a flat tire after the pass opened for a brief time Monday, she said.

"The risk is too great, and the risk is unknown," Shanks said. "Because we can't be sure when this is going to move again, it's not safe to have motorists underneath."

CDOT crews and a contract company spent the day Tuesday assessing the situation from land and by helicopter. A downed power pole in a "precarious position" will be removed today, along with loose wires on the mountainside.

Equipment also will be moved into place that will allow workers to be placed at the top of the rockslide and propel downward while dislodging loose rocks, Shanks said. That process is expected to get started Thursday or Friday and likely will continue through the weekend, she said.

"The bottom line is, any of the rockfall mitigation is to reduce the risk; it's certainly not to prevent it completely," Shanks said. "We'll do whatever we can within our power to reduce risk."

The slide occurred 900 feet above the highway in an area known as Ruby Falls, along a curvy section of road just south of Bear Creek Falls, two miles south of Ouray.

Loose rocks covered a 200-foot stretch of U.S. Highway 550 up to 8 feet deep in some places Monday. Some rocks were up to 6 feet in diameter, Shanks said.

"It's just a great deal of loose rock," she said. "We have had rock fall in this area, (but) nothing like this from this high above at this magnitude.

"Anyone who drives the corridor knows there's always rock coming down," she said.

Rockslides typically occur during the spring in what is called the freeze-thaw cycle. At night, water freezes between the rocks and expands. When the ice melts, rocks come lose and the water seeps into new crevasses.

A similar pattern has been occurring this winter along the pass, Shanks said.

"It's common all throughout the Rocky Mountain region," she said.

About a 12-mile section of Highway 550 was closed from just south of Ouray to the top of Red Mountain Pass.

It will be the longest closure of Red Mountain Pass in recent memory. The pass closed for about four days during the winter of 2007-08 because of heavy snow, she said. An average of 2,200 vehicles travel the pass daily.

The closure makes for a long detour for drivers going from Ouray to Durango, who now must drive to Ridgway, over the Dallas Divide, over Lizard Head Pass, through Dolores, then take U.S. Highway 160 east. It is normally a 70-mile trip over Red Mountain Pass that now is a 168-mile trip (or a 98-mile detour).

"It's not pretty," Shanks said.

Motorists traveling from Ouray to Silverton, or vice versa, have the longest detour. It usually is a 22-mile trip over Red Mountain Pass that is now a 201-mile trip, Shanks said.

"Obviously, we want to get this open as quickly as possible, for everyone's sake," she said.

Cleaning up state highways

By: Andrew Reid , KKCO11

Updated: Wed 7:07 AM, Jan 15, 2014



GRAND JUNCTION, Colo. During the winter months our highways become more cluttered with trash. The Colorado Department of Transportation is encouraging community members to join them for springtime cleaning through the "adopt a highway" program.

C-DOT provides volunteers with litter bags, safety vests, and safety instructions before a group goes out. Volunteers with Roman Family Chiropractic have been involved with the program the last seven years.

"We have volunteers come in the summer time and we get together and go and make the world a better place by keep the highway clean. I'll tell you when you clean a stretch of highway, you drive that highway a little differently because you want to keep it clean," says Dr. Randy Roman, of Roman Family Chiropractic. Dr. Roman says he enjoys volunteering and donating his time.

The program has seen a lot of success in Grand Junction, with 340 groups participating in the program.

CDOT To Make Another Round To Pick Up Flood-Related Debris

January 13, 2014 3:54 PM CBS4



Crews work on a highway damaged by flooding (credit: CBS)

BOULDER, Colo. (CBS4) – The Colorado Department of Transportation is continuing to collect flood debris from flood-impacted state highways in Boulder, Jefferson, Larimer, and Weld counties.

"Residents who live on the highways impacted by the flood are urged to bring their flood-related debris to just off the pavement next to the highway," Ashley Mohr with CDOT said in a statement. "Residents are urged to have flood-generated debris ready for pick up prior to the date of pickup."

Mohr emphasized that only "flood-related" debris should be placed out for pickup.

"Due to the heavy amount of non-flood related debris being left at collection sites (including paint cans, household garbage, etc.), CDOT will implement stringent drop-off restrictions and law enforcement assistance for the third pass of debris pick-up," Mohr said.

Additional Information From CDOT

Effective immediately, again due to the large amount of non-flood related debris being left on State Highway (SH) 72, no further dumping is permitted on SH 72 from this point forward. CDOT will pick up the existing debris along the right-of-way on Tuesday, January 14, but until details are available for the third and final pass (scheduled for the last two weeks in February), no debris of any kind should be brought to the right-of-way.

CDOT is completing the second pass of debris removal this week from the following highways:

US 34 – Completed as of Saturday, January 11

US 36 – Monday, January 13 through Wednesday, January 15

SH 72 – Starting Tuesday, January 14

During cleanup, crews will be working in CDOT right-of-way as well as under bridges and near streams. The continued debris removal will help better prepare the highways for spring runoff.

Guidelines

Debris piles should be three feet from the side of the highway to allow for any snow removal operations.

Do not block the roadway, waterways or any culverts with debris.

Please have all eligible flood-related debris to the roadside by mid-February 2014

Debris crews will not access private property or city/county roads to pick up debris, so residents will need to place any flood-related debris right along the edge of the highway to have it removed.

The following is a guideline of the materials that will be removed from CDOT right-of-way:

Flood-related debris that will be picked up:

Vegetation waste: Branches, plants, trees and grass

o CDOT requests that vegetative materials be separated from other materials in piles of six feet in length or less for easier pickup.

Construction & demolition waste: Wood framing from houses, furniture, carpet, clothes, concrete, etc.

White waste: Appliances such as refrigerators, stoves, washers & dryers, hot water heaters, dishwashers and microwave ovens

Electronic waste: Computers, televisions, DVD players, telephones, and microwave ovens

What will not be picked up:

Regular household garbage. This should be disposed of in your dumpsters and removed by your waste management provider.

Once collected, debris is taken directly to local landfills for final disposal or to CDOT properties to be reduced and eventually used for construction or slope stabilization. Any vehicle materials found in debris piles will be searched for a VIN number, and if a VIN is found, CDOT will keep it on record. Citizens still searching for their vehicles post-flood can contact CDOT to see if their vehicle has been recovered.

For questions about the debris removal process, please visit the CDOT flood information website at www.coloradodot.info/travel/floodinfoupdates. Members of the public can also emaildot_flood@state.co.us, or speak to someone directly at 720-263-1589. For toll-free call 1-800-999-4997.

Gusts of 40 mph hit Salida – CDOT reports 100 at Kenosha

Mountain Mail

Posted: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 9:53 am | Updated: 9:58 am, Tue Jan 14, 2014. J.D. Thomas, Mail Staff Writer



Courtesy photo by Katie McClelland - As wind swept across the Upper Arkansas Valley, an archway in front of Katie and Paul McClelland's house blew over and snapped Monday afternoon. Wind gusts of more than 40 mph were recorded in Salida, according to the National Weather Service.

Gusts exceeding 40 mph swept across Chaffee County Monday due to a strong jet stream moving across the area.

At 11:55 a.m., a gust of 46 mph was recorded at Harriet Alexander Field in Salida, said Pamela Evenson, meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

In Buena Vista the highest gust of the day was recorded at 12:55 p.m. The 45-mph blast occurred at Central Colorado Regional Airport, said Evenson.

Cottonwood Pass had a 78-mph gust at 12:32 p.m. A 29-mph gust registered at 1:48 a.m. at Monarch Mountain

"The gusts are from a strong upper jet moving across the area," Evenson said. "Sometimes that translates downward."

Gusts of up to 100 mph at Kenosha Pass closed U.S. 285 for several hours Monday, the Colorado Department of Transportation reported.

Expect delays on I-70 in Glenwood Canyon on Wednesday

Glenwood Springs PostIndependent January 14, 2014

The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will be performing rock fall mitigation work Wednesday on Interstate 70 in Glenwood Canyon about four to five miles east of Glenwood Springs.

Crews will be working from about 9 a.m. to about noon. Traffic delays should be about 15 minutes in both directions, according to CDOT, and no commercial vehicle restrictions are expected.

The speed limit will be reduced through the work area, and flaggers will direct traffic through the closures.

To receive real-time updates about road conditions, visit www.coloradodot.info and click on the green cell phone icon in the upper right hand corner of the page.

After years of waiting, Superior Town Center under way at McCaslin and U.S. 36

Grading at 157-acre site will go on until spring

By John Aguilar, Boulder Daily Camera Staff Writer POSTED: 01/14/2014 09:56:59 PM MST | UPDATED: 86 MIN. AGO



Earthmovers are seen preparing the future site of Superior Town Center at the corner of McCaslin Boulevard and U.S. 36 last week. (Cliff Grassmick / Daily Camera)

SUPERIOR — — There was public meeting after public meeting to discuss various aspects of Superior Town Center, more meetings to get the town's blessing for the 157-acre mixed-use project, yet more meetings to finalize a financing scheme and then meetings yet again to get approval for the first building on site.

Now after nine months of back and forth between the town and the developer, a prominent parcel at the intersection of U.S. 36 and McCaslin Boulevard that has been positioned for development for nearly two decades is finally crawling with earthmovers.

Randy Goodson, director of real estate for Superior Town Center developer Ranch Capital LLC, said grading at the site will go on for the next four months or so before sidewalks and streets begin to appear.

He said the process to get to this point was rigorous and exhaustive — with plenty of long nights and outspoken opponents decrying it — but well worth it.

"It's great," Goodson said. "We all have to spend time on the details, but it's great to see construction activity."

The work, which began last month, is the start of what could be years of construction activity on the sweeping expanse of prairie hemmed in by U.S. 36, McCaslin Boulevard and the northernmost homes of Rock Creek. Bisected by Coal Creek, the parcel represents Superior's last significant piece of developable real estate.

"I feel excited and proud," Superior Mayor Andrew Muckle said of the \$700 million project. "It's been a long time coming and to see something on the site we can be proud of years into the future is exciting."

Much to come

Ranch Capital plans to build up to 1,400 homes — each smaller and with a more urban sensibility than the average house in Superior — along with a main street, a 1.2-acre town square with restaurants and boutique shops, a hotel and up to half a million square feet of commercial space.

On Dec. 20, the Board of Trustees approved a sports and medical complex, dubbed Boulder Valley Ice and Indoor Sports at Superior, for Superior Town Center.

The 160,000-square-foot sports complex, with an attached 60,000-square-foot medical building, will be one of the larger structures in this town of 13,000. It is expected to draw up to 1.6 million people a year and serve as a regional draw for hockey and soccer teams.

The developer of the complex, which will be open for nearly 21 hours a day 360 days a year, hopes to start construction on the building as early as late January and have one out of the planned 2½ sheets of ice open by September.

While the entire town center will take years — if not decades — to build out entirely, Goodson said progress on the initial northern 30 acres of the site will be noticeable in 2014.

Aside from the sports and medical building, Goodson said his team is in negotiations with several tenants, including a veterinary hospital and a large tech company. He also hopes to have the first model homes built and occupied by the end of the year.

Complementing developments

Superior Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Heather Cracraft said Superior Town Center is going to be a "marquee development" for the entire U.S. 36 corridor.

"What we can do to add vibrancy to the community without taking away from our current businesses is a positive thing," she said.

Cracraft said she's confident that the future shops and restaurants in Superior Town Center won't cannibalize business from nearby Superior Marketplace because the size and type of stores between each location will differ.

Superior Marketplace long has been besieged by numerous vacant storefronts, especially in its interior buildings that are off the main thoroughfares and at a distance from large anchor stores. Ross Dress for Less is the latest casualty there, with a sign on its front door informing customers its last day of business will be Sunday.

Muckle said Superior Town Center is offering something entirely different than Superior Marketplace and the two shopping centers should complement, rather than compete with, one another.

Progress is taking shape along U.S. 36 and for the Northwest Rail Line

By Chuck Sisk, RTD Board Chairman POSTED: 01/15/2014 01:00:00 AM MST

I would like to thank so many of you for your support of the Regional Transportation District (RTD). I am very appreciative of the opportunity to serve as the Director for District O and now the chair of the board as well. One of the reasons I wanted to be appointed and will stand for election this year are challenges to transit expansion in the northwest area. We are presently an underserved area and need to continue to advocate for our services which were part of the 2004 FasTracks voter approved ballot measure However, I'm pleased to report that we are beginning to see significant progress for our area, which gives me optimism and a perspective from others on our Board citing the need to finish the ballot initiative.

Please allow me to cite some examples:

Northwest Rail Progress

One of the misconceptions that I would like to clear up is the type of train service, which the voters approved in 2004 for the Northwest Rail. After much study and public meetings, it was determined the most feasible service for the 41corridor miles between Denver Union Station and Longmont would be commuter rail, which is intended to have less stops and attain greater speeds than the light rail, which you see in other Denver metropolitan areas.

The RTD currently is conducting the Northwest Area Mobility Study. In June, we held two live telephone town hall meetings to explain the tasks of the study. More than 10,000 northwest area residents participated at some level by listening in and also by asking questions.

The study is evaluating more than 40 criteria related to transit alternatives that could bring commuter rail and/or other transit choices to the area much sooner than current projections. The study's goal is to develop consensus among RTD and northwest area stakeholders, organizations with transit or business interests, and government officials.

Furthermore, RTD is committed to finding solutions to our transit needs and is exploring a number of options—both traditional and out-of-the-box. Some of these include building Northwest Rail in segments, as funding allows; negotiating with BNSF Railroad, which owns the rail infrastructure, for ways to move forward with our commuter rail; and looking at numerous funding opportunities to expand transit alternatives in the area.

Also under consideration and not as a substitute for commuter rail service is bus rapid transit (BRT) on arterial roads, such as Colorado Highways 7 and 119 and South Boulder and Arapahoe roads, until rail construction can be funded and built. These arterial BRT corridors have the potential to move more passengers and improve mobility and access to transit in the area.

As you can see, many options are being evaluated that, when settled, could result in bringing transit to the area sooner rather than later. It's important to remember the Northwest Rail Line remains in the FasTracks plan, but if the final study indicates there's a more economical or efficient way to provide transit to the area, that change may require approval by district voters.

Also, you may recall that the Northwest Rail Line is the longest line in the FasTracks plan—41 miles from Denver to Longmont. The first 6.2 miles, from Denver Union Station to approximately 71st Avenue and Lowell Boulevard in Westminster, is currently under construction and will open in 2016.

This month, public meetings will be held to share with you the mobility options being studied. I encourage you to attend and learn more: Westminster, today, Wednesday, January 15, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at Westminster City Park Rec Center; Boulder, Thursday, January 16, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at Rembrandt Yard; and Longmont, Monday, January 27, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Longmont Civic Center.

U.S. 36 Corridor Progress

Meanwhile, as part of the FasTracks plan for BRT in the U.S. 36 corridor, construction is moving along on the first phase of the joint Colorado Department of Transportation/RTD U.S. 36 express lanes extension from Federal Boulevard to 88th Street in Louisville and Superior. This section is more than 50 percent complete and construction on the second phase has begun from 88th to Table Mesa.

Even though RTD buses will share the express lanes with HOVs (high occupancy vehicles) and SOVs (single occupant vehicles), it will increase on-time reliability. The BRT express bus, after leaving Boulder, will stop only at Table Mesa and McCaslin and then motor straight into Union Station. The all-stop BRT service will pick up passengers at Table Mesa, McCaslin, Flatiron/96th Avenue, Broomfield/116th Avenue and Westminster. And, in the event of heavy traffic on U.S. 36, these all-stop buses will be able to drive on the highway shoulder — again offering faster and more reliable service.

It is critical for these projects to be delivered in a robust manner, so 2014 will be a very exciting and challenging time.

Chuck Sisk is the newly elected chair of the RTD Board. He represents District O, which includes Boulder, Lyons, Jamestown, Nederland and Ward, and parts of Boulder County. He welcomes comments at Chuck.Sisk@rtd-denver.com.

Dreaming of a calmer, quieter downtown

Mike Bennett From the Publisher, Glenwood Springs PostIndependent January 14, 2014

Located in the heart of downtown Glenwood Springs, we are always trying to provide access to different views. The Grand Avenue bridge controversy is a hot button for many. Wondering out loud, how many people really care?

Coming across the bridge with an 18-wheeler next to you can be a harrowing experience. My guess is that the vast majority of drivers just want to get through our town as quickly as possible. What a shame those people don't have a bypass.

This week, Drew Munro and I met with John Haines, Hal Sundin and Tony Rossa to discuss their concerns about the bridge. As many of the folks who live or own businesses downtown, they question the quality of the state's due diligence. From their perspective, if we are going to invest \$60 million or more of our tax dollars to replace this bridge, why not look at bypass alternatives that all agree will be necessary in the short-term future? On the other hand, many government officials believe they've done their job informing the public and made the correct decision to move on with the project.

Face it, our downtown just isn't pedestrian friendly. Talking to Floyd Diemoz, we had the opportunity 40 years ago to create a bypass. It is something that has been discussed for years. Unfortunately there have been far too many wasted words.

Working on the east side of Grand Avenue, crossing the street can be a real pain, especially on a cold, wintry day. I haven't timed the light but I swear my hair grows a quarter inch and a shade grayer as I wait to get my green light. And when I do, I best sprint across before the light changes.

I've watched these poor people press the walk button repeatedly to no avail. Those walk buttons are placebos. They make you feel good although the light takes the same time to change. I did notice you get the walk signal only if you push the button, so I guess it does serve a purpose. I wonder if we could have a pedestrian bridge over Grand Avenue?

Have you ever tried to enjoy a quiet cup of coffee in front of Sacred Grounds on a beautiful summer morning? Only a bypass would help keep down the truck noise.

From my perspective we have a wonderful downtown. Visitors, residents and businesses alike deserve a more tranquil traffic environment to better enjoy our amenities.

I'm all for traffic calming and rerouting trucks and other vehicles that are unwittingly ruining the downtown Glenwood Springs experience. I'm sure they mean no harm. From talking to government officials and concerned residents I'm not sure if anything can be done. I hope I'm wrong.

Police officers trained to spot stoned drivers

9:50 AM, Jan 15, 2014 Josh Hubbard 9 News



In this Oct. 22, 2009 file photo, a bud of legally grown marijuana is held by a cancer patient, in Portland, Maine. Advocates of recreational marijuana use are looking to an upcoming vote in Maine as an indicator of whether the East Coast is ready to follow in the footsteps of Colorado and Washington by legalizing cannabis. Voters in Portland are being asked whether they want to make it legal for adults 21 and over to possess up to 2.5 ounces of marijuana. (AP/Photo/Robert F. Bukaty)

KUSA- The Colorado Department of Transportation is allocating new funds to help police identify stoned drivers.

The funds are a portion of a \$2 million grant from the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration. CDOT will dedicate \$400,000 to stopping people from driving high.

The effort will include an aggressive media campaign. Billboards, flyers and ads will warn drivers of the dangers and consequences of driving high.

The campaign will also include increased efforts to train police officers into Drug Recognition Experts.

"Drug Recognition Experts are highly trained law enforcement officers," said CDOT Highway Safety Manager Glenn Davis. "It's a 56-hour course. And we get law enforcement officers from around the state... They're trained to detect impaired drivers by substances other than alcohol. How to process people like that and testify that in court."

Right now, there are 184 Drug Recognition Experts in the state. The goal is to have 300 in Colorado within the next two years.

Past holiday season saw dropoff in DUIs

BY RYAN SEVERANCE THE PUEBLO CHIEFTAIN

Published: January 15, 2014; Last modified: January 15, 2014 05:00AM

Twenty-eight driving under the influence arrests were made throughout Pueblo over the holiday season.

Eighteen people were arrested for DUI by the Pueblo Police Department and 10 were arrested by the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office from Dec. 13 to Jan. 2.

The DUI arrest numbers are slightly lower than in previous years.

Capt. David Lucero with the PCSO said during the same period last year, there were 19 DUI arrests in Pueblo County.

He said the lower number of arrests this year can be attributed to a few different factors.

"Last year, in 2012, we ran a DUI checkpoint on Dec. 15 to discourage holiday party drinkers and drunk driving," he said. "While we had holiday patrols, we didn't do the checkpoint this year and we might've gotten more arrests when we did do the checkpoint."

Lucero said better education and awareness might also be a factor.

"We had sign boards up that advised people we had DUI patrols in effect," he said. "I also think some people were probably anticipating checkpoints and chose not to drive drunk. We'd like to think people are more educated now about this. They know our officers are out and about. Us, the Colorado State Patrol and the Pueblo Police Department have collectively worked to reduce these things."

Sgt. Eric Gonzales with the PPD said the lower DUI arrest numbers have to do with having fewer officers to patrol.

"We have fewer officers in our traffic unit. Some have been taken from traffic due to our shortage of officers," Gonzales said. "There's a current process of trying to get more in."

Statewide DUI arrest numbers were lower, too.

From Dec. 27 to Jan. 2, 431 were arrested statewide during the Colorado Department of Transportation's "Heat Is On" campaign.

Arrests totaled 501 statewide during the same period in 2012.

"It's comforting to know that CSP and many other top-notch Colorado law enforcement agencies are doing their part to keep impaired drivers off Colorado roads," Darrell Lingk, director of the office of transportation safety at CDOT, said. "Each year we strive for zero fatalities; 2014 is no exception."

Mayor Hancock appointed to FAA management advisory council

By Ryan Parker The Denver Post

POSTED: 01/14/2014 04:53:58 PM MST | UPDATED: ABOUT 17 HOURS AGO



Denver Mayor Michael Hancock (THE DENVER POST | John Leyba)

Denver Mayor Michael Hancock was appointed to the Federal Aviation Administration's Management Advisory Council on Tuesday.

Hancock was appointed, along with nine others, by U.S. Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx and administrator Michael Huerta, according to a news release from the mayor's office.

Hancock is the first-ever mayor to be appoint to the council, according to the release.

"I am truly honored to be joining these venerated aviation leaders to help guide a safe, more sustainable future for the FAA," Hancock said in the release. "I look forward to bringing Denver's ingenuity to the table as we work to advance major issues on behalf of DIA, other airports and the aviation industry."

Adams County pumps millions into struggling Front Range Airport

By Yesenia Robles, The Denver Post

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The view from Front Range Airport in Watkins, with Denver International Airport in the background, in a March, 2012 Denver Post file photo. (Hyoung Chang, The Denver Post)

In the past three years, Adams County has pumped more than \$3.6 million into its money-losing Front Range Airport, despite a huge drop in traffic and a nearly 44 percent decline in economic output.

Problems at the airport, which is losing traffic at a faster rate than its neighbors, prompted the termination of its director and elimination of its governing board last year. The county is now in search of an airport manager who will report to the county manager and commissioners instead of an independent authority board.

County officials say the airport remains a good investment, both in terms of its immediate impact on the economy and its future prospect as a site for a statewide spaceport.

"The value is in the economic impact and jobs it creates. Not just primary jobs but also the businesses that have to serve those businesses," says Adams County commissioner Erik Hansen. "The economic impact well exceeds the millions we've spent."

Front Range Airport sits on nearly 4,000 acres in rural Watkins just east of Denver International Airport, about 19 miles east of Denver.

Nationwide, general aviation airports have seen a decline in traffic and economic output, but some of Front Range's closest neighbors have found success — thanks to nearby business hubs. They include Centennial Airport near the Denver Tech Center and Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport just off of Interlocken Loop.

"Front Range Airport is kind of unique," said interim director Ken Lawson. "It was built many years ago and got its jump-start around the time DIA opened, but since then it has struggled to have its own existence. Front Range Airport just hasn't grown up yet."

The airport has suffered from the lack of development that Adams County officials had expected, Lawson said.

Centennial Airport's director, Robert Olislagers, credits development for his airport's success. Centennial Airport no longer takes any funds from Arapahoe County.

From 2003 through 2012, Centennial Airport's traffic dropped about 15 percent. That includes a current uptick, attributed to increased corporate or jet traffic, which started in 2010.

"The south Denver metro area has done really well," Olislagers said. "We are great complements of each other. We also have a much more diversified economy than we did 15 years ago."

Olislagers describes a symbiotic relationship between the developing community — including the Denver Tech Center and Inverness — and the airport. Twenty-three business parks in the area house more than 6,000 companies, including transportation, communication and aerospace firms.

"I can guarantee if this airport weren't here, some of these businesses and corporations wouldn't be here either," Olislagers said.



An aviator buys gas at Front Range Airport in Watkins, on Wednesday, March 28, 2012. (Hyoung Chang, The Denver Post)

A 2008 economic study published by the state's Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics said the state's general aviation industry generated \$1.9 billion in economic output.

A similar study in 2013 showed an increase to \$2.4 billion, despite a change in formulas that officials said made the numbers more conservative.

Centennial Airport's economic impact in 2013 grew to \$1.3 billion — a 47 percent increase from 2008.

Even Garfield County Regional Airport, where traffic declined 41 percent from 2003 to 2012 — similar to the 43 percent traffic decline at Front Range Airport — economic impact still went up to \$56.9 million, an almost 25 percent increase from 2008 to 2013.

Front Range generated \$75.5 million in economic output, according to the 2013 figures — a nearly 44 percent drop from the \$134.4 million estimated in 2008.

In 2012, Adams County provided about \$1.2 million to the airport, which also sought to trim expenses, but the airport still ended the year with a deficit of \$749,545.

Compounding problems, an audit in late 2013 found the airport wasn't fully accounting operating costs and had contracts that weren't adequately benefiting the airport.

Despite the costs, experts and county officials say general aviation airports provide many benefits for the counties that run them, including jobs, economic activity and better access for medical flights. In Colorado, officials also noted their role during the fight against wildfires.

David Ulane, northwest mountain regional manager for the national Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, said general aviation airports have been struggling, especially since 2008. He largely blames the increased cost of flying.

Ulane said there are reasons to be hopeful.

"When people hear private aviation, the first thing they think of are the executives, but in actuality most of general aviation flying is flight instruction, small businesses using small planes, and medical transports," Ulane said.

Small businesses increasingly depend on the efficiencies of air travel — especially in places like Colorado's mountains, where a one-hour flight might be replacing a six-hour drive, he said.

Also, airports are bracing for an expected shortage of pilots, which might prompt a surge in business for their flight schools, Ulane said.

"One thing that is key is looking at ways to diversify revenue streams," Ulane said. "That can be everything from something as simple as agriculture or farming or, as Greeley has taken advantage of, the oil and gas development."

Lawson said Front Range Airport already has a partnership with a neighboring farmer to allow farming on 2,000 acres of airport property, and is exploring other options, including solar-energy fields.

"I believe all airports are going to have to look outside the box," Lawson said. "It's a changing world."

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Airport trafficAirport (county)20032012Centenial Airport (Arapahoe)361,459308,173Front Range Airport (Adams)86,91249,520Boulder Municipal Airport (Boulder)47,432 (2004)*41,154Garfield County Regional Airport (Garfield)13,5917,953Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport (Jefferson)165,066121,780Economic impact 20082013Centenial Airport \$897.1 million\$1.3 billionFront Range Airport 134.4 million75.5 millionBoulder Municipal Airport60.1 million69.9 millionGarfield County Regional Airport 45.6 million56.9 millionRocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport 363.2 million460.5 millionAirport

*Boulder airport officials said traffic numbers go back only to 2004. Source: each airport

Source: 2008 and 2013 Economic Impact Study for Colorado Airports by CDOT's Division of Aeronautics

Beyond Colorado

Transit debate roils infrastructure funding hearing http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/public-transit/195431-transit-debate-roils-infrastructure-funding

The Next Transpo Bill: Can Congress Solve the Funding Problem? http://dc.streetsblog.org/2014/01/14/the-next-transpo-bill-can-congress-solve-the-funding-problem/

Transportation Sec'y Upbeat About Infrastructure http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/transportation-secy-upbeat-infrastructure-21537735

Transportation secretary optimistic the US may be ready to tackle its infrastructure deficit http://www.newser.com/article/55b09f19493d40dab7355d46ecbe8120/transportation-secretary-optimistic-the-us-may-be-ready-to-tackle-its-infrastructure-deficit.html

TIGER Funding Gets 20 Percent Boost in Final 2014 Spending Bill http://dc.streetsblog.org/2014/01/14/tiger-funding-gets-a-20-percent-boost-in-final-2014-spending-bill/

Senators announce funding for increased rail inspections http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/local/article/Senators-announce-funding-for-increased-rail-5143098.php

<u>DOT: Tunnel builders in breach of contract for low minority ...</u>The Olympian Crew members adjust the State Route 99 tunneling machine's segment feeder, which moves into place the curved concrete segments that form the ...

CDOT briefs

CDOT Under Way With U.S. 36 Realignment and Widening Project

Highway crews are widening and reconstructing the permanent eastbound lanes of U.S. 36 as part of the highway's Express Lanes project, a \$312-million, multi-modal project that will build an express lane in each direction on U.S. 36 from Federal Boulevard to 88th-Street in Louisville/Superior. The lanes will accommodate high-occupancy vehicles, bus rapid transit and tolled single-occupancy vehicles.

In addition, the project will replace several bridges, build a commuter bikeway, add bus rapid transit improvements and install intelligent transportation systems for tolling, transit and

traveler information, and incident mana ement.

The Ames-Granite joint venture team is the design-build contractor for the project, which began last summer and will open to the public in January 2015.

Appeals court ruling paves the way for Northwest Parkway

By RAMSEY SCOTT

Staff writer

A controversial deal between Jeffco, Boulder and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service involving 640 acres of the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant was finalized Dec. 31.

The deal transfers ownership of the land to the federal government to be used as a wildlife refuge. In exchange, Boulder has ended its longstanding opposition to a 3-mile, 300-foot transportation corridor being granted to the Jefferson Parkway Public Highway Authority east of the refuge.

That corridor is a key acquisition for the proposed Jefferson Parkway, the final segment of the metro Denver beltway, said Jeffco Commissioner Don Rosier.

"There are a lot of next steps," Rosier said. "This will allow us to move forward."

With the land deal now moving forward thanks to a ruling by a federal appeals court, it will be easier to find private partners to invest in the proposed toll road, Rosier said.

Jeffco's purchase of the 640-acre parcel, known as Section 16, with \$5 million of Open Space funds in December 2011 came under fire from several environmental groups, as well as the cities of Superior and Golden, which sued to stop the land deal.

"We believe using the lawsuit was one tool we had to promote an appropriate regional transportation solution," said Joe Behm, a member of the Golden City Council. "We're not opposed to transportation solutions that include Golden, but we want it to be cooperative and reflect our local needs."

Some saw the county's use of Open Space money to fund a purchase that would lead to development as counter to the intent of the taxpayer-approved fund.

Behm said Golden's City Council must now decide how to move forward, including whether or not to appeal the court's ruling.

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RTD tests train on new west corridor light-rail line

ervice to Golden et to begin April 26

BY RAMSEY SCOTT
Staff Writer 1/5/13

RTD started its new year with a w train set.

As with many new toys, a tch or two was inevitable in e assembly process and that oved true with RTD's new west rridor light-rail line.

RTD began testing the soonopen line on Jan. 3, marking e first time a train had run the tire length from downtown enver to Johnson Road in Golden ider its own power.

"The 'sweep train' went very ell," said Jim Starling, RTD's oject manager for the west line. Ve took the train out to the



Photo by GABRIEL CHRISTUS | The Courier

RTD OPERATED A "SWEEP" TRAIN from the Decatur Station to the Jeffco government center in Golden on Jan. 3.

west end of the project. Although this wasn't a specific test, it demonstrated that we are ready to proceed with specific testing." The 12.1-mile west line is scheduled to open April 26, eight months ahead of schedule. The new line will be the first in RTD's Fastracks program, a \$6.4 billion, voter-approved expansion of commuter and light-rail lines in the Denver area.

The Fastracks project, approved in 2004, will add 122 miles of expanded rail service and connect Wheat Ridge, Golden, Denver International Airport to downtown Denver.

Construction on the west corridor line began in 2007, and in 2009 a federal grant provided the remaining \$300 million needed to finish the \$709 million project.

When the line is up and running, the ride from Denver's Union Station to Golden should take about 30 minutes. Yet for the initial run, the trip took about two hours, as engineers carefully checked all systems.

That extended trip down the line was extended even further when the initial sweep was delayed more than an hour.

"There was an issue that was discovered when the train entered

the limits of the west rail line, Starling said.

"There was signal equipment that incorrectly configured and caused grade crossing gates to come down along the alignment. The issue was identified and corrected, and the 'sweep' train proceeded less than an hour and a half late. Issues like this are routine and the reason why we do this detailed testing."

RTD will continue testing at crossings, making sure the signal system is functioning properly and that all of the power substations are operating as they should, Starling said.

The tests should be completed by March 1, when conductor training will begin.

Each city along the line will throw station parties to celebrate the initial opening on April 26.

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