



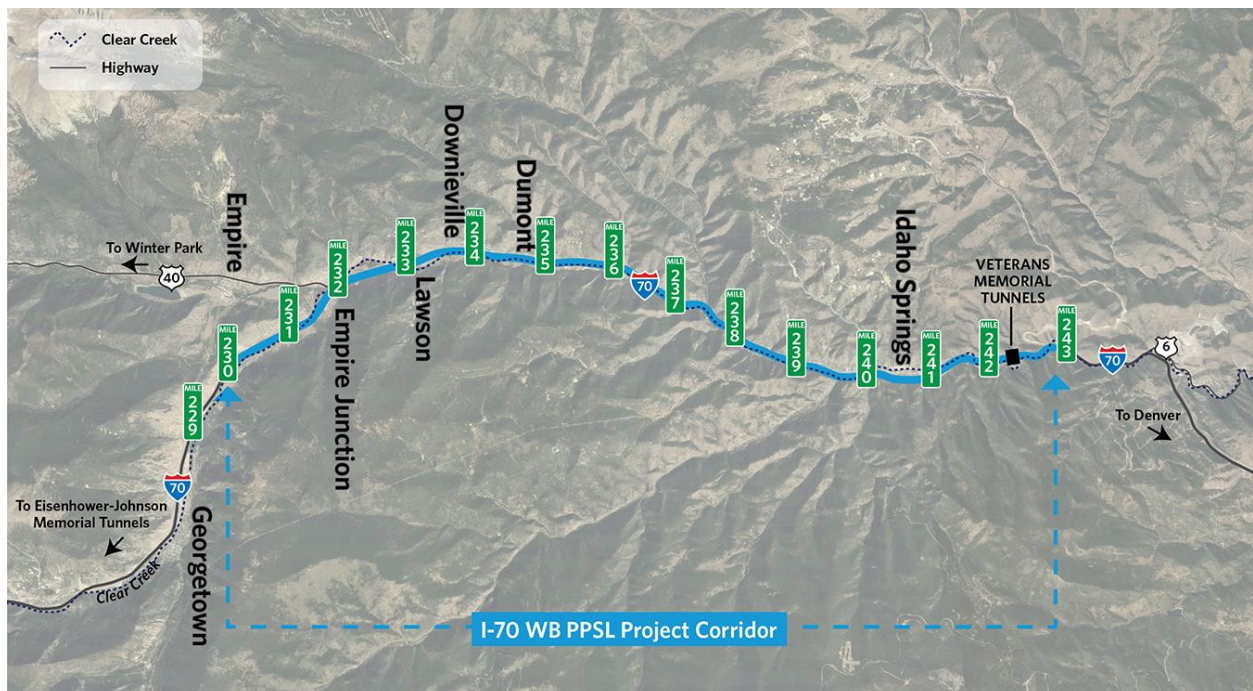
Summary

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), is preparing a Categorical Exclusion for proposed changes to the westbound (WB) lanes of Interstate 70 (I-70) between approximately milepost (MP) 230 and MP 243, in Clear Creek County, Colorado (Proposed Action). The Proposed Action includes the addition of a 12-mile tolled Peak Period Shoulder Lane (PPSL) between east Idaho Springs and the U.S. Highway 40 (US 40)/I-70 interchange in the WB direction and improvements to the State Highway (SH) 103 interchange. The Proposed Action includes the following improvements:

- I-70 resurfacing and widening in select areas
- Walls at acceleration lane locations and at rockfall locations
- SH 103 Interchange improvements
- Rockfall mitigation
- Active traffic management
- Fiber optic upgrades
- Guardrails and barriers
- Drainage infrastructure
- Safety pull-outs

The project corridor is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Project Corridor



Source: HDR 2018.

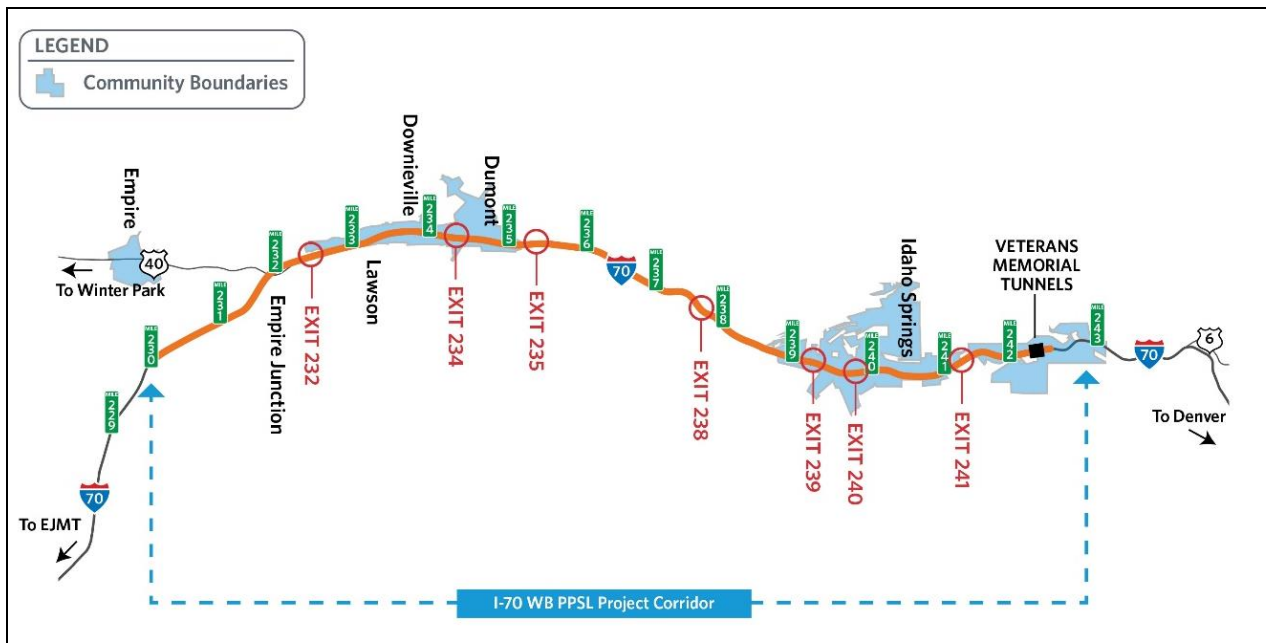
Study Area

The study area for the WB PPSL project encompasses CDOT right-of-way along I-70 in both directions from MP 243 to MP 230 and areas immediately adjacent to the right-of-way. This study area was used to evaluate the **direct** effects of the Proposed Action.

For transportation and socioeconomic impacts, the study area for **indirect** effects includes Clear Creek County and the communities of Idaho Springs, Downieville-Lawson-Dumont, and the town of Empire. This area is broadly defined and includes the communities and other areas that would be **indirectly** affected by the Proposed Action. The indirect effects study area includes the communities shown in **Figure 2**.

For the remaining resources, the study area for **indirect** effects generally includes a 0.25-mile buffer around the study area. This area encompasses the communities and other areas that would be indirectly affected by the Proposed Action.

Figure 2. Study Area Communities



Archaeological Resources

For the WB PPSL project, HDR requested a file search and literature review from the Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation on July 18, 2017. The file search identified 14 previous cultural resource surveys that either intersect or are wholly contained within the study area. This number includes survey number CC.CH.R17, Eastbound Peak Period Shoulder Lane survey (HDR 2014). Although this survey covers most of the study area, it was not included in the analysis of areas needing potential archaeological survey because the 2014 survey addressed only historical buildings and structures, and not archaeological resources.



With the exception of CC.CH.R17, the previous surveys covered approximately 92.23 acres (47 percent) of the study area. An additional 0.65 acre (less than 1 percent of the study area) has not been surveyed and is outside of the CDOT right-of-way. However, the ground surface in these areas has been either completely disturbed by development or is covered by pavement. Therefore, there is no possibility that historic properties are present in these areas. Any archaeological resources that could be present have been disturbed because of previous construction or other activities and are, therefore, unlikely to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. The remaining 80.06 acres (52 percent of the study area) are within the CDOT right-of-way. HDR archaeologists consulted with Dan Jepson, CDOT's Senior Staff Archaeologist, to determine if the areas within the right-of-way would need to be surveyed. Mr. Jepson stated that the entire I-70 right-of-way has been adequately surveyed for archaeological resources and no archaeological survey is required for the portions of the WB PPSL study area within the right-of-way.

Therefore, with regard to the WB PPSL study area, no archaeological survey is required to meet CDOT's Section 106 compliance obligations, and no impacts to archaeological resources listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places would occur as a result of the Proposed Action.

Should unidentified archaeological resources be discovered during construction, work will stop until the CDOT senior staff archaeologist is contacted and the resources have been evaluated to determine their significance.



Table 1. Mitigation Tracking

Mitigation Category	Impact from NEPA Document	Commitment From Mitigation Table In Source Document (Use Exact Wording from Table in Source Document)	Responsible Branch	Timing/Phase of Construction Mitigation to be Constructed
Archaeology	Potential discovery of archaeological resources during construction	Should unidentified archaeological resources be discovered during construction, work will stop until the CDOT senior staff archaeologist is contacted and the resources have been evaluated to determine their significance.	CDOT Environmental and Contractor	During Construction



References

Gantt, Erik M., Christian J. Zier and Kristin A. Gensmer. 2011. A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory Report for the Colorado Department Of Transportation I-70 Twin Tunnels Environmental Assessment, Clear Creek County, Colorado. Prepared for the Colorado Department of Transportation Environmental Programs Branch, Denver, Colorado. Prepared by Centennial Archaeology, Inc., Fort Collins, Colorado.

HDR. 2014. Architectural Survey and Evaluation for Interstate 70 Eastbound Peak Period Shoulder Lane Project (MP 229-243), Clear Creek County, Colorado. Written by Kathryn Plimpton and Chad Blackwell. HDR, Englewood, Colorado.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CDOT	Colorado Department of Transportation
EB	eastbound
I-70	Interstate 70
MP	Milepost
PPSL	Peak Period Shoulder Lane
SH	State Highway
US 40	U.S. Highway 40
WB	Westbound