Statewide Rest Area Study Final Recommendations

Prepared for

Region 1 – West Program
15285 South Golden Road, Building 47
Golden, CO 80401

December 17, 2016

9193 S. Jamaica Street
Englewood, CO 80112
Contents

Section                                                                                      Page

Acronyms and Abbreviations                                                                     v

1 Purpose ...................................................................................................................................... 1-1
   1.1 Goals and Objectives ......................................................................................................... 1-1
   1.1.1 Methodology ............................................................................................................... 1-2
   1.1.2 System Assessment ..................................................................................................... 1-3
   1.1.3 Features Common to Quality Rest Areas ..................................................................... 1-9

2 Recommendations ................................................................................................................... 2-1

3 Individual Site Assessments ..................................................................................................... 3-1
   3.1 Region 1 .......................................................................................................................... 3-1
   3.2 Region 2 Rest Areas ......................................................................................................... 3-1
      3.2.1 Cuerno Verde Rest Area .......................................................................................... 3-4
      3.2.2 El Morro Welcome Center ....................................................................................... 3-5
      3.2.3 Gobblers Knob Rest Area ......................................................................................... 3-6
      3.2.4 Holly Rest Area ...................................................................................................... 3-8
      3.2.5 Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area .............................................................................. 3-9
      3.2.6 Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area ............................................................................... 3-10
   3.3 Region 3 Rest Areas ........................................................................................................... 3-11
      3.3.1 Edwards Rest Area .................................................................................................. 3-15
      3.3.2 Elk Springs Rest Area ............................................................................................. 3-16
      3.3.3 Fruita Welcome Center ............................................................................................ 3-17
      3.3.4 Hayden Rest Area .................................................................................................. 3-18
      3.3.5 Meeker Rest Area ................................................................................................... 3-19
      3.3.6 Rifle Rest Area ........................................................................................................ 3-20
      3.3.7 Vail Pass Rest Area .................................................................................................. 3-21
   3.4 Region 4 Rest Areas ........................................................................................................... 3-22
      3.4.1 Arriba Rest Area ....................................................................................................... 3-25
      3.4.2 Burlington Rest Area and Colorado Welcome Center ........................................... 3-26
      3.4.3 Deer Trail Rest Area ............................................................................................... 3-27
      3.4.4 Julesburg Welcome Center ....................................................................................... 3-28
      3.4.5 Poudre Welcome Center ........................................................................................... 3-30
      3.4.6 Sterling Rest Area .................................................................................................. 3-31
      3.4.7 Virginia Dale Rest Area .......................................................................................... 3-32
      3.4.8 Wiggins Rest Area .................................................................................................. 3-33
   3.5 Region 5 Rest Areas ............................................................................................................ 3-34
      3.5.1 Cortez – Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area ............................................................ 3-37
      3.5.2 Shaw Creek Rest Area ............................................................................................... 3-38

4 Conclusion .................................................................................................................................. 4-1

5 References .................................................................................................................................. 5-1

Appendixes
A Research Summaries
B Individual Rest Area Maps
C Meeting Agendas and Notes
D Field Log Database
## CONTENTS

### Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1</td>
<td>Rest Area Feedback</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Criteria for System Assessment</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>Criteria for Improvement Decisions at Individual Rest Areas</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>Assessment: Safety</td>
<td>1-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Assessment: Usage</td>
<td>1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Assessment: Spacing of Services</td>
<td>1-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-1</td>
<td>Statewide Recommendations for Individual Rest Areas</td>
<td>2-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-1</td>
<td>Statewide Location Map</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-1</td>
<td>Region 2 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers</td>
<td>3-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-2</td>
<td>Cuerno Verde Rest Area</td>
<td>3-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-3</td>
<td>El Morro Rest Area</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Gobblers Knob Rest Area</td>
<td>3-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>Holly Rest Area</td>
<td>3-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-6</td>
<td>Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area</td>
<td>3-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-7</td>
<td>Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area</td>
<td>3-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-8</td>
<td>Region 3 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers</td>
<td>3-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9</td>
<td>Edwards Rest Area</td>
<td>3-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-10</td>
<td>Elk Springs Rest Area</td>
<td>3-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-11</td>
<td>Fruita Welcome Center</td>
<td>3-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-12</td>
<td>Hayden Rest Area</td>
<td>3-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-13</td>
<td>Meeker Rest Area</td>
<td>3-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-14</td>
<td>Rifle Rest Area</td>
<td>3-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-15</td>
<td>Region 4 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers</td>
<td>3-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-16</td>
<td>Arriba Rest Area</td>
<td>3-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-17</td>
<td>Burlington Rest Area and Colorado Welcome Center</td>
<td>3-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-18</td>
<td>Deer Trail Rest Area</td>
<td>3-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-19</td>
<td>Julesburg Rest Area</td>
<td>3-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-20</td>
<td>Poudre Rest Area</td>
<td>3-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-21</td>
<td>Sterling Rest Area</td>
<td>3-32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-22</td>
<td>Virginia Dale Rest Area</td>
<td>3-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-23</td>
<td>Wiggins Rest Area</td>
<td>3-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-24</td>
<td>Region 5 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers</td>
<td>3-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-25</td>
<td>Cortez-Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area</td>
<td>3-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-26</td>
<td>Shaw Creek Rest Area</td>
<td>3-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-1</td>
<td>Future Statewide Rest Areas and Welcome Center System</td>
<td>4-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CDOT</td>
<td>Colorado Department of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSP</td>
<td>Colorado State Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Colorado State University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-25</td>
<td>Interstate 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-70</td>
<td>Interstate 70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-76</td>
<td>Interstate 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>mile marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH 13</td>
<td>State Highway 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 160</td>
<td>U.S. Route 160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 287</td>
<td>U.S. Highway 287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 40</td>
<td>U.S. Route 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 50</td>
<td>U.S. Route 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USFS</td>
<td>U.S. Forest Service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 1

Purpose

This Statewide Rest Area Study was conducted to determine the adequacy of the number of rest areas located within the state of Colorado, which include Interstate 70 (I-70), Interstate 25 (I-25), and Interstate 76 (I-76). Additionally, review and recommendations for rest areas located on state highways were completed. This study considered the locations for both existing and potentially new rest areas as well as the adequacy of amenities at the existing rest areas. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Transportation Commission requested such a framework for assessing rest areas for improvements or closure.

There are currently 23 CDOT-maintained rest areas in the state of Colorado. Rest areas are a safety feature for long stretches of highway without services and they improve traveler comfort. Rest areas also provide no-cost truck parking areas designed for large tractor trailers. Truckers use these rest areas both for normal stopping situations and emergency conditions, such as the closure of the interstate highway due to weather events.

This study’s objective was to identify the needs and benefits of the following:

- Construction of new rest areas
- Relocation to optimum locations of any existing rest areas
- Closure of existing rest areas
- Upgrades and maintenance needs for existing rest areas

Additional recommendations developed through the study process include the following:

- Characteristics for a Colorado “best in class” sustainable rest area system
- Partnership needs, benefits, and opportunities
- Possible re-designation for some rest areas to “recreational destination areas”
- Possible re-use for rest areas recommended for closure
- Emergency truck parking considerations

Chain stations were not included in the study, as they are limited to 30 minutes of parking and offer no alternate services.

1.1 Goals and Objectives

The goal of the study is to promote the safety and comfort of Colorado travelers.

The objective of the study is to recommend a statewide system of rest areas that complement the existing privately owned services, thus ensuring travelers have amenities available within a reasonable travel distance as they traverse the state. Through the study process, additional elements the system should include are:

- Celebrating all that Colorado has to offer travelers
- Cost-effectively serving travelers
- Sustainably providing services

The system recommendation, based on an inventory of existing privately owned services, identifies needs for new facilities, unnecessary facilities within the system, relocation of existing facilities for optimum spacing, and then, specific recommendations for each remaining rest area.
1.1.1 Methodology

In response to the CDOT Transportation Commission’s request for a rest area framework plan, CDOT began by forming a Project Leadership Team to direct the project. The project leadership team included CDOT Planning leaders, CDOT Region staff, and a representative from U.S. Federal Highway Administration. A project team was also formed, and included the CDOT project manager, the consultant, and representatives from the following CDOT groups: maintenance, freight, facilities, and Transportation Systems Management & Operations (TSM&O). Stakeholders interviewed included Colorado Motor Carriers Association, regional maintenance supervisors, Colorado State Patrol (CSP) officers, and maintenance staff involved in day-to-day upkeep for each rest area.

The project completed research into national standards for rest areas, a search of literature for best practices employed in other states, and interviews with stakeholders to establish the expectations for truck parking and rest areas within Colorado.

The development of the guidance began with research into best practices used by other states, including California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Jersey, New York, South Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Washington. These states were selected because they all have recently published similar type studies in their state. Further, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Guide for Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways was used as a model for the assessment. A review of regulatory requirements and operational strategies has been inventoried. Lastly, the Statewide Plan, the Freight Plan and the Asset Management Plan were reviewed.

Input from stakeholder meetings is summarized in Table 1-1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Colorado Motor Carriers</th>
<th>CDOT Staff</th>
<th>CSP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Need more truck parking spaces</td>
<td>Spend more on existing rest areas</td>
<td>Need more truck parking spaces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exits and entrance ramps are adequate</td>
<td>Patrolled regularly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Install cameras for added security</td>
<td>Rest areas need to represent Colorado at its best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>Needed for truck driver safety and comfort. However, most drivers will use private truck stops for their long rest periods.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Needed for truck driver safety and comfort. Some rest areas are used for parking before early morning deliveries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Trucks will park anywhere if rest areas are closed</td>
<td>Rest areas need more investment in aging buildings</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After conducting a review of national research, hosting meetings with region staff and stakeholders, and completing field reviews and assessment work, the project team developed a list of recommendations. These recommendations address defining the characteristics of a Colorado “best in class” sustainable rest area system; partnership needs, benefits, and opportunities; possible re-designation for some rest areas to “recreational destination areas”; and possible re-use for rest areas recommended for closure.
1.1.2 System Assessment

To achieve recommendations, guidance was developed that allowed assessment from a statewide system perspective, as well as the individual needs for each existing rest areas. The recommendations for truck parking at rest areas were reached based on an assessment of the existing public and private truck parking spaces and amenities against national standards. Additionally, stakeholder insights played heavily into the recommendations for truck parking needs, particularly for emergency situations.

Collectively, the research and the stakeholder interviews highlighted the criteria shown below as appropriate measures of the goals of safety, comfort, and availability of services.

Table 1-2. Criteria for System Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Measurement/Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Closest services</td>
<td>60-mile maximum or 1-hour travel time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incident rate on adjacent highway</td>
<td>The same or less than state average for this highway type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crime data onsite</td>
<td>Crimes reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>Utilization</td>
<td>Consider user volume measured against national standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Direction of traffic served</td>
<td>Both or only one directional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Impacts to local entities/facilities (consider local parking, CSP concerns, local law enforcement concerns, emergency parking)</td>
<td>Record concerns, consider mitigations, balance with cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The system assessment was designed to review the individual truck parking and rest areas as they relate to available privately owned services, such as truck stops, gas stations, restrooms, restaurants, and hotels. Further, the system assessment reviewed crash data for the adjacent interstates to determine if a higher than average crash history was occurring because of fatigued drivers.

CDOT uses an extensive maintenance level of service (MLOS) rating system to evaluate all of the rest areas in the state. Each rest area has a rating between A–F, with A being the best, and F being the lowest rating given. These ratings have also been documented. Statewide, the annual objective for CDOT is to maintain a MLOS of C or better.

1.1.2.1 Individual Rest Area Field Reviews

Field review of each rest area were conducted along with an inventory of available services at each interchange over the length of the highways. This inventory provided an assessment of the distance a truck or car must travel between available services. This distance varies through the state for trucks versus cars, as all services are not accessible to large trucks. This presents a problem unique to Colorado for the I-70 Mountain Corridor where services are readily available to cars, but may not be accessible for large trucks.

Field reviews and the stakeholder interviews brought to light an additional consideration for the system assessment—the benefits and opportunities presented by partnerships. Several rest areas are currently operated in partnership with municipalities or chambers of commerce. These rest areas represent the “best in class” facilities because they are staffed, travelers can be provided information about local sites, restaurants, and points of interest, and issues regarding minor maintenance and cleanliness of the facility can be quickly addressed. They offer the municipalities a recreation area for local residents to use, a location for local memorials, and, in some cases, connections to local attractions.

Furthermore, rest areas that provide parking and access to recreation sites, such as trail heads, creek access, and snowmobiling areas. These areas are operated in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). This report recommends further discussions with USFS to design strategies that will service its
mission, maintain the rest areas, and provide visitor access to these locations that celebrate Colorado’s outdoor amenities.

All of the CDOT-owned rest areas and welcome centers in the state are shown on Figure 1-1. In addition to the CDOT rest areas that are included in this analysis, the USFS and Colorado Tourism Board-run rest areas and welcome centers are also shown for reference. The inventory logs for all services are included in Appendix D of this report.

### Table 1-3. Criteria for Improvement Decisions at Individual Rest Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Access from adjacent highway</td>
<td>Meets interstate design standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety issues</td>
<td>Crime statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flow of incoming and outgoing vehicles (internal area</td>
<td>Crashes at the entrances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>operations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Design of entrance and exit points on the highway</td>
<td>Meets design standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(access operations)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Separation between truck parking and passenger parking</td>
<td>Appropriate signage and easy to maneuver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort</td>
<td>General condition and required maintenance</td>
<td>Good condition to poor condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of truck parking spaces</td>
<td>Record the numbers, existence, and condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passenger parking spaces</td>
<td>of these elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Amenities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>Visitor information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(running water)</td>
<td>Maps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Other pedestrian areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vending</td>
<td>Overnight parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>machines</td>
<td>Cell service/Wi-Fi availability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Recreational components</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic area/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The individual area assessments provide an inventory of the rest areas and a basis for building improvement programs for each rest area.

This document provides for each rest area an inventory of the following:

- A map of all of the existing rest areas
- Distance to next like facility
- Number of parking stalls (vehicles and trucks)
- Safety of the area based on existing available safety data
- Sight lines from the highways and lighting conditions
- Quality of access
- Availability of utilities services
- Predicted usage
- Photographs
- Amenities
- Specialized maintenance needed
- Steps to be taken to close truck parking and/or rest areas, including the following:
  - Approvals needed
  - Closeout procedures
  - Communication needed
  - Stakeholders to involved
Figure 1-1. Statewide Location Map
Conclusion

✓ There is no consistent template or operating system statewide. Each rest area is unique in regards to funding, mapping and wayfinding, and maintenance.

✓ All of the rest areas do get used. Parking lots weren’t observed at capacity, but none of them were deserted, either.

1.1.2.2 Safety Assessment

The crash history for the interstates adjacent to the rest areas was analyzed looking for stretches of interstate where the number and type of crashes indicates fatigued drivers were continuing to drive because no designated rest area was available. The number and type of crashes were reviewed against statewide averages for interstate facilities. The full safety assessment is in Appendix C.

Table 1-4. Assessment: Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Measurement/Standard</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Crash rate on adjacent interstate highway</td>
<td>The same or less than state average (1.05) for this highway type</td>
<td>Arriba Rest Area – 0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Burlington Welcome Center – 0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cuerno Verde Rest Area – 0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deer Trail Rest Area – 0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edwards Rest Area – 1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El Morro Rest Area – 0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fruita Welcome Center – 0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Georgetown Welcome Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Julesburg Welcome Center – 0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poudre Welcome Center – 1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area – 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area – 0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rifle Rest Area – 0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sterling Rest Area – 0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vail Pass Rest Area – 1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wiggins Rest Area – 0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Crash rate on adjacent state/U.S. highway</td>
<td>The same or less than state average (varies) for this highway type</td>
<td>Cortez Rest Area – 1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elk Springs Rest Area – No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gobblers Knob Rest Area – 0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hayden Rest Area – 1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holly Rest Area – 0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeker Rest Area – No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shaw Creek Rest Area – 1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Virginia Dale Rest Area – 0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

✓ Data do not indicate locations where crash numbers and types indicate fatigued drivers.
   Therefore, no new rest areas are warranted based on safety criteria.

1.1.2.3 Usage Assessment

AASHTO (2001) provides a worksheet for estimating the needed facilities at a rest area, based mostly on the average daily traffic (ADT) of the adjacent roadway. Using this methodology, the usage a rest area should expect based on the traffic volumes on the adjacent roadway can be estimated.
Actual usages at two rest areas were estimated based on the number of “flushes” counted on any given day (Table 1-5). This anecdotal estimate has shown that the actual usage at these two rest areas was less than half of the predicted usage given using AASHTO’s guidance. Reasons for this could be attributed to the proximity to alternate amenities, or that there has been a bigger cultural shift in how drivers use rest areas statewide.

Table 1-5. Assessment: Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>ADT</th>
<th>Estimated Usage based on formulas recommended in national literature</th>
<th>Estimated Usage based on water consumption at individual rest areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arriba Rest Area</td>
<td>9,100</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vail Pass Rest Area</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

✓ Estimated usage based on water consumption at individual rest areas is less than expected usage calculated using nationally recognized formulas.

✓ The proximity of rest areas to each other does not decrease the usage.

1.1.2.4 Spacing Assessment

AASHTO (2001) provides guidance for the distribution of rest areas within a statewide system. The goal is to provide services, public or private, every 60 miles or 1 hour of drive time. Services within this spacing should include food, fuel, restrooms, overnight accommodations, and overnight truck parking.

All rest areas, truck parking facilities, and road amenities within 0.25-mile of the interstate, at each interchange were assessed throughout the state. This assessment is recorded in Appendix D and presents the amenities available to travelers along the interstates within Colorado. At each interchange along I-25, I-70, and I-76, the availability of food, fuel, restrooms, overnight accommodations, and overnight truck parking spaces was assessed. This provided an inventory and spacing of available amenities needed by all travelers. This inventory was used in the statewide system assessments, shown in Table 1-6, as well as the recommendations for individual rest areas. Along state highways, rest area alternatives within 60 miles of each rest area were located.

Using this information and the field work, Table 1-6 was developed to record the spacing of all services along the interstates.

Table 1-6. Assessment: Spacing of Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Measurement/Standard and Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I-70 East</td>
<td>Services are available, on average every 11 miles. If all rest areas were closed, private services would provide for all travel needs within a 1-hour drive time throughout this length of interstate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-70 West</td>
<td>Georgetown to Vail exceeds the 60-mile/1-hour travel time measurement for private services that can accommodate trucks, without the Vail Rest Area, no services would be available to truck drivers for approximately 9 miles. The Vail Rest Area should remain open so as not to exceed the recommended spacing criteria, in regards to trucks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-25 South</td>
<td>Services are available, on average every 5 miles. If all rest areas were closed, private services would provide for all travel needs within a 1-hour drive time throughout this length of interstate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-25 North</td>
<td>Services are available, on average, every 5 miles. The span from Loveland to Cheyenne exceeds the 60-mile/1-hour travel time (approximately 70 miles) between rest areas; however, private services are provided for all traveler needs, including trucks, within a 1-hour drive time throughout this length of interstate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-76</td>
<td>Services are available, on average every 10 miles. If all rest areas were closed, private services would provide for all travel needs within a 1-hour drive time throughout this length of interstate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

✓ Closing all interstate rest areas in the state would leave stretches of interstate in violation of the distance-between-services criteria.
✓ State highway rest areas are needed throughout the state to meet the minimum distance between services criteria.

1.1.3 Features Common to Quality Rest Areas

During the field work for this report, meetings were held with CSP officers, who patrol the rest areas, and CDOT maintenance personnel, who work at the rest areas. During these meetings, several common features were mentioned as related to “best in class” amenities. The following were common observations regarding such rest areas:

• Staffed on a full-time basis, thus more likely to be clean (restrooms, trash) and less likely to be inviting to criminal activities.
• Staff available to provide travelers with information about Colorado and the local sights or amenities.
• Used by adjacent municipalities, thus seen as an asset to the community.
• Present a positive impression of what is important in Colorado and the community surrounding the rest area.

Furthering this discussion, several commonalities emerged to help define a quality rest area:

• Rest areas that serve multiple purposes
• Rest areas that use partnerships for maintenance
• Welcome centers that are regularly staffed

Conclusion:

✓ Rest areas should have multiple purposes and be maintained in partnership with others who benefit from the rest area, such as municipalities, chambers of commerce, or USFS.
SECTION 2

Recommendations

After conducting a review of national research, hosting meetings with region staff and stakeholders, and completing field reviews and assessment work, the project team developed a list of recommendations. These recommendations support a system approach to maintaining rest areas throughout the state. Recommendations include the following:

- Provide a welcome center on the interstates at the state boundaries
- The most effective rest areas will offer multiple uses and be maintained through partnerships
- Develop a program for the transition of some rest areas considering the existing condition, maintenance staff recommendations, and possible reuse of the area.

Table 2-1 presents the statewide recommendation for each individual rest area:

Table 2-1. Statewide Recommendations for Individual Rest Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Welcome Center</th>
<th>Upgrade/Maintain</th>
<th>Alternate Use</th>
<th>Transition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arriba Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlington Welcome Center</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cortez Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuerno Verde Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer Trail Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Morro Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elk Springs Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruita Welcome Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown Welcome Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobblers Knob Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julesburg Welcome Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeker Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poudre Welcome Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rifle Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaw Creek Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sterling Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vail Pass Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Dale Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiggins Rest Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 3

Individual Site Assessments

All of the rest areas located on Colorado’s interstates are included in this study. These interstates have been divided into individual systems or segments as described below:

- I-70 East (E-470 to the Kansas Border)
- I-70 West (C-470 to the Utah Border)
- I-76 (E-470 to the Nebraska Border)
- I-25 North (E-470 to the Wyoming Border)
- I-25 South (E-470 to the New Mexico Border)

In addition to the interstates, the following major truck routes in the state were also inventoried:

- State Highway 13 (SH 13)
- U.S. Highway 40, 50, 160, and 287

3.1 Region 1

There are no CDOT-owned rest areas in Region 1; however, the Gateway Visitor Center in Georgetown and the Herman Gulch Rest Area provide similar services within the region.

CDOT and the Georgetown Trust cooperated to create a mutually beneficial facility, the Georgetown Gateway Visitor Center. The Trust had operated a small Visitor Center at this location since 1996 that provided information about, and interpretation of, the Georgetown Silver Plume National Historic Landmark District. Following the closure of restrooms at the Eisenhower/Johnson Tunnels in 2001, CDOT required a new location for those services. The Gateway Visitor Center, constructed in 2003, was jointly financed by the partners, both of which continue to support the project.

Herman Gulch Rest Area is currently maintained and operated by USFS. CDOT currently uses this rest area to park equipment when not in use. CDOT is currently in conversations with USFS to formalize agreements to upgrade this facility.

3.2 Region 2 Rest Areas

There are six CDOT-owned rest areas in Southeastern Colorado (CDOT Region 2):

- Cuerno Verde Rest Area
- El Morro Rest Area
- Gobblers Knob Rest Area
- Holly Rest Area
- Pueblo Northbound Rest Area
- Pueblo Southbound Rest Area

“In the past 11 years, the Center has welcomed 3,955,338 visitors on the I-70 Mountain Corridor. We are open 365 days a year and have not missed a single day in those years. Restroom hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily. Information services and gift shop are open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Visitor Center is staffed by paid staff and volunteers during all information service hours.”

Georgetown Heritage Center, 2016
Figure 3-1. Region 2 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers
3.2.1 Cuerno Verde Rest Area

The Cuerno Verde Rest Area is located at the junction of I-25 and Highway 165. The rest area has a maintained green space with walking paths, restrooms, picnic areas, visitor’s information, vending machines, pet areas, is handicap accessible, and is a local point of interest. Within a half mile of the rest area are four restaurants and a Diamond Shamrock gas station, providing alternative passenger and truck services.

3.2.1.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 320 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 6 of 36 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 2 of 21 truck spaces were in use.

3.2.1.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

The structures at this site received a grade “B” rating. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required at this location, although the maintained greenspace may be better used for truck parking. Region 2 has contracts for third-party maintenance and cleaning of this facility. If usage were to be limited, contracts may be eliminated and Region 2 may be able to handle the reduced maintenance requirements in-house.

3.2.1.3 Recommendation

Due to the proximity of alternative service locations for both trucks and visitors, the Cuerno Verde Rest Area is viewed as non-essential. CDOT Region 2 is comfortable with initial recommendations to explore selling the site in a 0- to 5-year timeframe. The good condition of the site may allow for rest area closure to require only a gate at the front and the site to be sold as-is without demolition of existing structures.
3.2.2 El Morro Welcome Center

The El Morro Welcome Center is located at the junction of I-25 and El Morro Road, 4.5 miles north of downtown Trinidad. There is a Colorado Welcome Center location in downtown Trinidad that provides public restrooms, free coffee, internet access, phone/fax, picnic sites, rest area, and a children’s play area but is not accessible for trucks. Ten miles south of the El Morro Welcome Center at Starkville there is a weigh station and chain-up area, Trinidad fuel stop, and 20 truck parking spaces.

3.2.2.1 Utilization

The El Morro Welcome Center has a predicted usage of 248 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, to the facility 5 of 35 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 3 of 20 truck spaces were in use. The Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways program has made improvements to the rest area, including adding telescopes and bike racks. If use changes are considered at this location, its relationship with the Santa Fe Trail Scenic and Historic Byway—Mountain Branch should be further investigated and considered.
3.2.2.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2000, the structures at this site are constructed from steel frames and received a grade B rating. To maintain the current level of service as a welcome center and rest area, the only necessary improvement would be upgraded picnic tables.

3.2.2.3 Recommendation

The primary purposes of this welcome center/rest area are already being met by the Colorado Welcome Center in Trinidad and surrounding facilities that provide truck access and parking options. CDOT Region 2 believes that there is value in retaining ownership of this facility but limiting its use to emergency truck parking. Reducing the use to emergency truck parking would allow Region 2 to drop the maintenance and cleaning contracts and minimize utilities, possibly eventually moving to pit toilets to further reduce costs. Possible local resistance to closing this facility should be considered.

3.2.3 Gobblers Knob Rest Area

Gobblers Knob Rest Area is located on the west side of U.S. Highway 287 (SH 287) between Lamar and Springfield. The closest truck and passenger services are 27 miles away. The only public amenity available at this location is restroom access. CDOT also has a maintenance barn in use on the property.
3.2.3.1 Utilization
This rest area has a predicted usage of 79 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 1 of 15 passenger spaces, 0 of 1 handicap spaces, and 2 of 6 truck spaces were in use.

3.2.3.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required
Built in 2000, the structures at this site are constructed from reinforced concrete and received a grade B rating. This facility is relatively low cost to maintain, with cleaning and operating costs estimated at $30,000 annually. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to continue operations at this location.

3.2.3.3 Recommendation
If this rest area were to be closed, federal service access guidelines would still be met. This rest area may serve some purpose as a restroom facility and storm shelter; however, it is likely that travelers and truckers are already stopping in the surrounding towns to get gas and food and may use the restrooms there. In the event of an unexpected storm, there is room to pull off along the shoulder. Because this facility is not strictly necessary as a rest area, CDOT Region 2 would prefer to keep the land operational as a maintenance facility, but in the next 0 to 5 years close the rest area by installing a gate past the maintenance barn access and demolishing the restroom building.

Figure 3-4. Gobblers Knob Rest Area
3.2.4 Holly Rest Area

The Holly Rest Area is located on the south side of U.S. Route 50 (US 50) and is approximately 5 miles from Holly and 20 miles from Lamar. The rest area has direct access from US 50 via an exclusive left-turn lane for westbound traffic and an exclusive right-turn lane for eastbound traffic. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, trailer dump, handicap access, and a point of interest. There are alternative passenger services 2 miles away in Kansas and alternative truck services 4 miles away near Holly.

3.2.4.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 37 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 2 of 13 passenger spaces, 0 of 5 handicap spots, and 2 of 6 truck spaces were in use.

3.2.4.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required at this location. Region 2 has contracts for third-party maintenance and cleaning of this facility. If usage were to be limited, contracts may be eliminated and Region 2 may be able to handle the reduced maintenance requirements in-house.

3.2.4.3 Recommendation

Due to its proximity to alternative services in Holly and Lamar, this rest area is determined to be non-essential. The facility has no alternative uses for CDOT operations. CDOT Region 2 would like to explore selling the property and has funding available to handle the demolition of structures, which may have asbestos and hazardous waste components in a 0- to 5-year timeframe.
3.2.5  Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area

The Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area is located off I-25 near Mile Marker (MM) 115. The rest area has direct access from the interstate; however, it is only accessible to drivers traveling in the northbound direction. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, vending machines, pet areas, and handicap access. The closest alternative passenger and truck services are 11 miles away.

3.2.5.1  Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 570 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 8 of 47 passenger spaces, 0 of 2 handicap spaces, and 5 of 20 truck spaces were in use.

3.2.5.2  Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2005, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade B rating. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to continue operations at this location. Region 2 has contracts for third-party maintenance and cleaning of this facility. If usage were to be limited, contracts may be eliminated and Region 2 may be able to handle the reduced maintenance requirements in-house.
3.2.5.3 Recommendation

This facility is fairly new and federal funds may have been used in construction. There does not appear to be significant benefits for continuing operations as a rest area. There are possible future rail opportunities in this location and potential use as emergency truck parking. CDOT Region 2 would like to maintain ownership and convert to emergency truck parking in the 0- to 5-year timeframe. Converting to emergency parking would most likely require minimal fencing, gates, and signage which would cost an estimated $50,000. Region 2 would be able to finance this cost in the 0- to 5-year timeframe.

![Image of Pueblo Rest Area](image)

Figure 3-6. Pueblo (Northbound) Rest Area

3.2.6 Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area

The Pueblo (Southbound) Rest Area is located off I-25 near MM 112. It is accessibly from southbound I-25 and the west Frontage Road. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, vending machines, pet areas, and handicap access. The closest alternative passenger and truck services are 8 miles away.

3.2.6.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 570 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 16 of 47 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 3 of 30 truck spaces were in use.
3.2.6.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2005, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and rebuilt in 2014 and received a grade “A” rating. The current waste composting system is not working and will require $200,000 to clean it out, this will need to be done regardless of the determined best course of action for the facility.

3.2.6.3 Recommendation

This rest area currently experiences a lot of use; however, it is not deemed necessary due to the proximity of alternative services. The facilities and restroom would last longer and have a lower maintenance cost if the facility was locked and use limited to emergency truck parking. Region 2 has contracts for third-party maintenance and cleaning of this facility. If usage were to be limited, contracts may be eliminated and Region 2 may be able to handle the reduced maintenance requirements in-house. CDOT Region 2 recommends spending the $250,000 required to clean out the facility, purchase gates, fencing, and signage to convert this rest area to emergency truck parking in the next 0 to 5 years.

3.3 Region 3 Rest Areas

There are 11 CDOT-maintained welcome centers/rest areas in Region 3 (northwest Colorado), which include:

- Bair Ranch Trailhead
- Edwards Rest Area
- Elk Springs Rest Area
- Fruita Welcome Center
- Grizzly Creek Trailhead
- Hanging Lake Trailhead
- Hayden Rest Area
- Meeker Rest Area
- No Name Trailhead
- Rifle Rest Area
- Vail Pass Rest Area

Of these 11, the four rest areas in Glenwood Canyon are not included in this analysis due to their inclusion as a measure to minimize harm and their unique role as recreational access. These rest areas are Bair Ranch, Grizzly Creek, Hanging Lake, and No Name.
Figure 3-8. Region 3 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers
3.3.1 Edwards Rest Area

The Edwards Rest Area is located on the north side of I-70 between Edwards and Wolcott. The rest area has direct access from the interstate; however, it is only accessible to drivers traveling in the westbound direction. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, trailer dump, handicap access, vending machines, pet areas, and recreation access. There are alternative passenger services less than a mile away and alternative truck services 16 miles away near Eagle.

3.3.1.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 429 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 13 of 44 passenger spaces, 0 of 2 handicap spaces, and 6 of 22 truck spaces were in use. This facility is used as an important emergency storage and parking facility in the event of Vail Pass closures. The community also uses the facility for recreation and river access. The site also serves as a city-run recycling facility.

3.3.1.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1985, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade “C” rating. To continue operating in its current role this site would require new lighting.

3.3.1.3 Recommendation

Due to its location within the city and off the interstate, this rest area is determined to be non-essential. The facility has no alternative uses for CDOT operations; however, the State Land Board has expressed interest in a land swap for property in Dowd Canyon.
3.3.2 Elk Springs Rest Area

The Edwards Rest Area is located off U.S. Route 40 (US 40) at MM 37. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger services 23 miles away and alternative truck services 33 miles away.

3.3.2.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 13 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, none of the available parking was in use. Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

This facility is relatively low cost to maintain because of the nature of the pit toilets. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to continue operations at this location.

3.3.2.2 Recommendation

If this rest area were to be closed, federal service access guidelines would still be met. This rest area may serve some purpose as a restroom facility and storm shelter. Because this facility is low cost to maintain, the rest area should be maintained.

Figure 3-9. Edwards Rest Area
3.3.3 Fruita Welcome Center

The Fruita Rest Area/Welcome Center is one of the Colorado Welcome Center locations and is operated in partnership with the Colorado Tourism Office. The welcome center is located near the junction of I-70 and Colorado State Highway 340 and is accessible from both eastbound and westbound I-70. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, trailer dump, handicap access, vending machines, pet areas, free coffee, internet access, maps and brochures, recreational vehicle parking, and a children’s play area. There are alternative passenger and truck services less than a mile away.

3.3.3.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 170 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 4 of 33 passenger spaces, 0 of 4 handicap spaces, and 0 of 6 truck spaces were in use.

3.3.3.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

There has been a recent addition of sidewalk to link this facility to adjacent restaurants. Additional desired improvements include removal of grass or addition of irrigation water systems.
3.3.3.3 Recommendation

Fruita Welcome Center is an example of the benefits of joint partnerships for operating and maintaining rest areas. Because this rest area is staffed, travelers can be provided information about local sites, restaurants, and points of interest, and issues regarding minor maintenance and cleanliness of the facility can be quickly addressed. This rest area provides a recreation area for local residents to use, a location for local memorials, and connections to local attractions. Located near the Utah border on I-70, it is recommended that this rest area be maintained.

3.3.4 Hayden Rest Area

The Hayden Rest Area is located on US 40 between Hayden and Craig. The facility can be accessed from both directions of US 40. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger and truck services 10 miles away. The only water available is non-potable water pulled from a collection box.

3.3.4.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 110 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, two passenger vehicles were observed at the facility. Hayden Rest Area is operational for seasonal usage only and gated when not operational.
3.3.4.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Desired improvements include repaving and addition of a non-potable well for water.

3.3.4.3 Recommendation

CDOT Region 3 does not believe there are truck facilities in Craig or Hayden, making this a useful facility for truckers. Region 3 has funding available for the desired improvements in the 0- to 5-year timeline.

Figure 3-12. Hayden Rest Area

3.3.5 Meeker Rest Area

The Meeker Rest Area is located on SH 13 at MM 27. The facility can be accessed from both directions on SH 13. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger and truck services 11 miles away.

3.3.5.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 37 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, one truck was observed at the facility.

Meeker Rest Area
- SH 13 MM: 27
- # of Passenger Vehicle Spaces: 0
- # of Truck Spaces: 0
- Access: Full
- Predicted Usage: 37 vehicles per hour
3.3.5.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

This rest area has a predicted usage of 37 vehicles per hour based on the average daily traffic on SH 13. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, none of the available parking was in use.

This facility is relatively low cost to maintain because of the nature of the pit toilets. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to continue operations at this location.

3.3.5.3 Recommendation

This rest area may serve some purpose as a restroom facility and storm shelter. Because this facility is low cost to maintain, the rest area should be maintained.

3.3.6 Rifle Rest Area

The Rifle Rest Area is located north of I-70 near the town of Rifle. The facility can be accessed by exiting I-70 from either direction. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, visitor information, trailer dump, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger services less than a mile away and alternative truck services 28 miles away.

Figure 3-13. Meeker Rest Area

Rifle Rest Area

- I-70 MM: 90
- # of Passenger Vehicle Spaces: 59
- # of Truck Spaces: 7
- Access: Full
- Predicted Usage: 266 vehicles per hour
3.3.6.1 Utilization
This rest area has a predicted usage of 266 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 1 of 53 passenger spaces, 0 of 6 handicap spaces, and 2 of 7 truck spaces were in use.

3.3.6.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required
Built in 1983, the structures at this site are constructed from steel frames and received a grade C rating. There are no immediate specialized maintenance needs or required improvements.

3.3.6.3 Recommendation
This facility is difficult to access; however, it is in interstate right-of-way limiting potential sale options. Region 3 would like to explore the sale/transfer options and close this rest area.

3.3.7 Vail Pass Rest Area
The Vail Pass Rest Area is located off I-70 and Shrine Pass Road. The facility can be accessed by exiting I-70 at Exit 190, Shrine Pass Road, from both eastbound and westbound directions. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, and trailhead access. There are alternative passenger services 1 mile away and alternative truck services 43 miles away.

Vail Pass Rest Area
- I-70 MM: 189
- # of Passenger Vehicle Spaces: 41
- # of Truck Spaces: 6
- Access: Full
- Predicted Usage: 434 vehicles per hour
3.3.7.1 Utilization
This rest area has a predicted usage of 434 vehicles per hour and actual usage of 300 vehicles per hour. It is heavily used year-round for recreational activities.

3.3.7.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required
Built in 1980, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade C rating. To continue operating in its current role, with frequent heavy use, the facilities at this location should be completely replaced.

3.3.7.3 Recommendation
This facility is heavily used and important for recreation in the area, it is also part of a nationally significant historic interstate segment. This rest area is needed to comply with the national spacing criteria and, therefore, should be kept open as a rest area. An Environmental Assessment process is being started from MM 180 to MM 190, which could encompass this facility. It may also be possible to receive revenue from USFS at this site as there is access to USFS land from this site. The cost to replace and upgrade the facilities at this rest area is estimated between $5 million and $8 million.

3.4 Region 4 Rest Areas
CDOT currently maintains three rest areas on I-70, north and east of the Denver Metro Area, which include:
- Deer Trail Rest Area
- Arriba Rest Area
- Burlington Rest Area and Welcome Center.

CDOT currently maintains three rest areas on I-76, which include:
- Julesburg Welcome Center
- Sterling Rest Area
- Wiggins Rest Area

CDOT currently maintains two rest areas outside of Fort Collins, which include:
- Poudre Welcome Center
- Virginia Dale Rest Area
Figure 3-15. Region 4 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers
3.4.1 Arriba Rest Area

The Arriba Rest Area is located off I-70 at MM 383.3. The facility can be accessed by exiting I-70 at Exit 383 from either direction. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, vending machines, and pet areas. There are alternative passenger and truck services 12 miles away in Flagler.

3.4.1.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 205 vehicles per hour and actual usage of 60 vehicles per hour. Upon a recent visit, 8 of 25 passenger spaces, 0 of 2 handicap spaces, and 3 of 9 truck spaces were in use. Buses often use this as a layover location for long trips.

3.4.1.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1995, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade C rating. To continue operating in its current role, the facility needs no immediate improvements; however, it is estimated that major improvements will be required in the 5- to 15-year timeframe.

3.4.1.3 Recommendation

Region 4 recommends maintaining this facility until major renovations or repairs are required and to explore demolition and sale of the property at that point.
3.4.2 Burlington Rest Area and Colorado Welcome Center

The Burlington Rest Area and Colorado Welcome Center is located off I-70 at MM 437.6. The rest area has direct access from the interstate; however, it is only accessible to drivers traveling in the westbound direction. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, trailer dump, visitor information, vending machines, pet areas, and a point of interest. There are alternative passenger and truck services less than a mile away.

3.4.2.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 209 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 6 of 50 passenger spaces, 0 of 8 handicap spaces, and 3 of 13 truck spaces were in use. This rest area operates under a 5-year contract with the City of Burlington for maintenance and capital improvements and serves the dual purposes of rest area and welcome center.

3.4.2.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1997, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received an interior finish upgrade in 2013. This facility received a grade A rating and requires no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to continue operating in its current capacity.

3.4.2.3 Recommendation

The partnership between CDOT and the City of Burlington to maintain and operate the Burlington Rest Area and Welcome Center has been very successful and could serve as a statewide model for welcome center partnerships. CDOT will continue operations at this rest area under the existing contracts and monitor success and cost to determine the viability of future contracts.
3.4.3 Deer Trail Rest Area

The Deer Trail Rest Area is located along I-70, near the town of Deer Trail. Specifically, the facility is approximately 70 miles east of Denver, at MM 332. The rest area has direct access from the interstate; however, it is only accessible to drivers traveling in the eastbound direction.

The developed site is triangular in shape on the east side of the interstate. Amenities at the deer trail rest area include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, pet areas, and phones.

3.4.3.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 214 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 20 of 44 passenger spaces, 0 of 4 handicap spaces, and 5 of 12 truck spaces were in use. It is currently closed due to adjacent construction.

3.4.3.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1972, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade C rating. To reopen the facility, rehabilitation of approximately $4 million would be needed to the water treatment
facilities, in addition to the ongoing pumping activities required to stay in compliance with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment discharge permit.

### 3.4.3.3 Recommendation

CDOT Region 4 recommends allowing this facility to remain closed permanently.

**Figure 3-18. Deer Trail Rest Area**

#### 3.4.4 Julesburg Welcome Center

The Julesburg Welcome Center is located just outside of Julesburg, south of the Nebraska-Colorado border at MM 180.5 of I-76. It can be accessed by taking Exit 180, U.S. Route 385, from both eastbound and westbound I-76. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, trailer dump, visitor information, free coffee, internet access, a children’s play area, vending machines, pet areas, and a point of interest. There are alternative passenger services less than a mile away and alternative truck services 15 miles away.

#### 3.4.4.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 144 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 8 of 40 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 2 of 10 truck spaces
were in use. This location serves as the welcome center and visitor information location along the Nebraska-Colorado border.

3.4.4.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

The structures at this site are wood frame structures built in 1995 and were repainted in 2012, they received a grade B rating. Recent sewer work has provided a temporary fix to the Cast Iron sewer, but additional work is required. Sewer improvements are estimated to cost between $30-40K. There is also a need for upcoming HVAC improvements estimated at $80K.

3.4.4.3 Recommendation

Due to its dual roles as a welcome center and rest area, this location is recommended to remain open and operational; however, there is limited funding available to meet the maintenance needs. Based on the success of other regional partnerships and interest expressed by Sedgwick County, Region 4 recommends exploring the terms of a partnership agreement with Sedgwick County for the operations and maintenance of this facility in the 0- to 5-year timeframe.

Figure 3-19. Julesburg Rest Area
### 3.4.5 Poudre Welcome Center

The Poudre Welcome Center is located on the west side on I-25, approximately 30 miles south of the Wyoming-Colorado state border. It can be accessed by both northbound and southbound I-25 via Exit 268 for Prospect Road. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, visitor information, free coffee, internet access, phone/fax, a children’s play area, vending machines, pet areas, a point of interest, and nature preserve access. There are alternative passenger services 1 mile away and alternative truck services 13 miles away.

#### 3.4.5.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 1,279 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 6 of 40 passenger spaces, 0 of 4 handicap spaces, and 8 of 34 truck spaces were in use. This location serves as the welcome center and visitor information location along the Wyoming-Colorado border.

#### 3.4.5.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2007, the structures at this site are constructed from steel frames and received a grade B rating. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required to for the Poudre Welcome Center to continue operating in its current role.

#### 3.4.5.3 Recommendation

The Poudre facility was relocated approximately 9 years ago due to the deterioration and one-way access issues at the previous facility. This location is currently sited near the Colorado State University (CSU) Environmental Learning Center, which functions much like a local welcome center. Currently, there is no shared maintenance or operations agreements between CDOT and CSU. Safety and security of the site continues to be a concern, and there is a potential for the use of the rest area by transient populations. In addition, because of the location, plowing of the facility diverts plows from the interstate to the rest area. Due to these circumstances, CDOT Region 4 recommends demolishing and closing this facility in a 5- to 15-year timeframe, leaving the CSU facility to provide the welcome center services.
3.4.6 Sterling Rest Area

The Sterling Rest Area is located on the west side of I-76 at MM 125. It can be accessed by taking Exit 125 from either direction of travel on I-76. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, trailer dump, vending machines, pet areas, a point of interest, trailhead access and river access. There are alternative passenger and truck services less than a mile away.

3.4.6.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 135 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 7 of 41 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 1 of 18 truck spaces were in use.

3.4.6.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2000, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade B rating. There are no specialized maintenance needs or improvements required at this location.

3.4.6.3 Recommendation

There may be interest from the City of Sterling to gain ownership of this facility. In the next 5 to 15 years, CDOT Region 4 would recommend initiating conversations with the city to determine if the
transfer of ownership is a viable option. If the city is not interested the possibility of selling the facility, as is, to another party may be explored.

Figure 3-21. Sterling Rest Area

3.4.7 Virginia Dale Rest Area

The Virginia Dale Rest Area is located about halfway between Laramie and Fort Collins, approximately 2 miles south of the Wyoming-Colorado border. The rest area has direct access from SH 287 and can be accessed from southbound 287 by an exclusive right-turn lane and from northbound 287 by a combined left through lane. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, pet areas, and a point of interest. There are alternative passenger services 19 miles away and alternative truck services 26 miles away.

3.4.7.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 68 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 4 of 21 passenger spaces, 0 of 2 handicap spaces, and 0 of 1 truck spaces were in use.
3.4.7.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required
Built in 1965, the structures at this site are constructed of steel frames and received a grade “F” rating. There a number of upgrades necessary to improve the functionality of this site, including paving and restriping.

3.4.7.3 Recommendation
To maintain the 60-mile minimum spacing between truck amenities, it is recommended to keep and maintain this rest area. Region 4 estimates that approximately $50,000 in upgrades are needed for this rest area.

Wiggins Rest Area
The Wiggins Rest Area is located on the south side of I-76 just outside of the town of Wiggins. It can be accessed by both eastbound and westbound I-76 via Exit 66A. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, handicap access, pet areas, and vending machines. There are alternative passenger and truck services available at Stub’s Gas and Oil directly next to the rest area.

Figure 3-22. Virginia Dale Rest Area
3.4.8.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 230 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 8 of 41 passenger spaces, 0 of 2 handicap spaces, and 3 of 20 truck spaces were in use.

3.4.8.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 2001, the structures at this site are built of steel frames and received a grade B rating. There are no specialized maintenance needs or required improvements at this time.

3.4.8.3 Recommendation

The Wiggins Rest Area is functioning well at this time. In the next 5 to 15 years when major improvements become needed, this site should be reevaluated for closure within the context of current needs and public attitudes.

3.5 Region 5 Rest Areas

CDOT currently maintains two rest areas in Region 5 (southwestern corner of the state):

- Cortez – Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area
- Shaw Creek Rest Area
Figure 3-24. Region 5 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers
3.5.1 Cortez – Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area

The Cortez – Sleeping Ute Mountain Rest Area is located 7 miles east of downtown Cortez off U.S. Route 160 (US 160). The rest area has direct access from the US 160 and can be accessed by an exclusive left-turn lane from US 160 eastbound and an exclusive right-turn lane from US 160 westbound. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger services 7 miles away in Cortez, and alternative truck services available 21 miles away.

3.5.1.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 135 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 5 of 38 passenger spaces, 0 of 4 handicap spaces, and 1 of 6 truck spaces were in use.

3.5.1.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1980, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade C rating. This facility has a small footprint that could benefit from additional truck parking in the next 5 to 15 years. Sanitary sewer upgrades from leech field may be required. Better signing could be used to help increase awareness and use, while upgraded computer systems could increase efficiency.

3.5.1.3 Recommendation

A trail system will likely connect through this area and may create the potential for partnerships, which should be further explored in the next 0 to 5 years.
3.5.2 Shaw Creek Rest Area

The Shaw Creek Rest Area is located along US 160 at MM 191. The facility can be accessed by an exclusive left-turn lane from US 160 eastbound and an exclusive right-turn lane from US 160 westbound. Available amenities include restrooms, picnic areas, visitor information, and handicap access. There are alternative passenger and truck services 39 miles away.

3.5.2.1 Utilization

This rest area has a predicted usage of 91 vehicles per hour. Actual usage statistics are unavailable; however, upon a recent visit, 7 of 22 passenger spaces, 0 of 3 handicap spaces, and 0 of 10 truck spaces were in use. There is an existing partnership with Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary to provide annual coffee, doughnuts, and maps over the July Fourth and Labor Day weekends during which there are typically 700 to 800 rest area users. There is limited parking available in the adjacent town of South Fork when Wolf Creek Pass closes, which forces trucks to wait until the pass reopens.

3.5.2.2 Specialized Maintenance Needed/Improvements Required

Built in 1979, the structures at this site are constructed of masonry and received a grade C rating. There are a variety of updates that could be made to improve this facility, including lighting upgrades, water pump upgrades, addressing septic issues, improving information center/kiosk, and modernizing the surveillance system.
3.5.2.3  Recommendation

This facility may be able to tie into the welcome center. In a 0- to 5-year timeline, facility improvements and emergency parking improvements should be considered.

Figure 3-26. Shaw Creek Rest Area
SECTION 4

Conclusion

Incorporating the recommendations outlined above will provide a healthier, more sustainable rest area system in the state of Colorado. For rest areas not meeting the above criteria, a program was developed to transition rest areas to another use.

- Welcome Centers on the interstates will greet travelers entering the state, providing them with information and an impression of Colorado’s offerings.
- Rest areas maintained through partnerships will be well-maintained and meet the minimum desired levels of service.
- Some rest areas will be transitioned out of the system. The existing condition, maintenance staff recommendations, and potential for reuse of the area will be considered.
  - Close each rest area only when major upgrades are required or existing staff are no longer available to maintain the rest area on a regular basis
  - Replace truck parking spaces lost through partnerships with private rest areas
  - Consider repurposing the rest area for emergency truck parking where needed
  - Consider repurposing the rest area for other uses (i.e., CDOT equipment storage, chain stations, or CSP offices)
  - Coordinate the Emergency Truck Parking Planning with the availability of rest area land
- Before closing a rest area, the following steps should be taken:
  - Embark on a public involvement plan to notify the public about the closure
  - Meet with stakeholders such as the planning regions and the CSP
  - Discuss intentions with departments internal to CDOT such as Freight and TSM&O
  - Review the signing plan and remove/relocate signage as necessary

Figure 4-1 presents the future statewide recommendation for each individual rest area.
Figure 4-1. Future Statewide Rest Areas and Welcome Center System
SECTION 5

References


Appendix A
Research Summaries
Appendix B
Individual Rest Area Maps
Appendix C
Meeting Agendas and Notes
Appendix D
Field Log Database