

Southwest Transportation Legislative Review Committee Update Sept. 24, 2015

About the Tracks across Borders Byway (TABB)

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

Regional Benefits

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

Route

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

Current Status

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

Regional Corridor Priorities for the TABB

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

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

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

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