



Town of Blue River

Talking Points

Where to Send Concerns:

- Director Colorado Department of Transportation
 - Director Shoshana Lew: 4201 E. Arkansas Ave, Denver, CO 80222
- Director Colorado Department of Transportation Region 2
 - Richard Zamora: PO Box 536, Pueblo, CO 81002
- Director Colorado Department of Transportation Region 3
 - Michael Goolsby: 222 South 6th St #317, Grand Junction, CO 81501-2769
- Colorado Department of Transportation Citizen Advocate
 - Gina Talmadge: 303-512-4500
- Colorado Department of Transportation Chief Engineer
 - Steve Harelson: 2829 W Howard Place, Denver, CO 80204
- Governor Jared Polis
 - 200 E Colfax Ave Rm. 136, Denver, CO 80203
 - Gov.onstituentservices@state.co.us
- Representative Joe Neguse
 - 1419 Longworth HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515
 - <https://neguse.house.gov/contact>
- Senator Julie McCluskie
 - <https://mccluskieforco.com/contact>
 - Julie.mccluskie.house@state.co.us
- Senator Michael Bennet
 - The Honorable Michael Bennet, 261 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510
 - www.benet.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/write-to-michael
- Senator John Hickenlooper
 - The Honorable John Hickenlooper, Russell Senate Office Building Ste. SR-B85, Washington, D.C. 20510
 - www.hickenlooper.senate.gov/contact
- Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources
 - Dan Gibbs 1313 Sherman Street, Room 718, Denver, CO 80203

Suggested Topics:

- Personal story/reason for letter.
- Town recognized topics of concern
 - **Incompatible with Residential Uses and Aesthetics**-The proposed station is to be constructed in similar fashion to other chain-up stations located along major interstate corridors including I-70 and I-25. Unlike these major interstate corridors, State Highway 9 is a narrow two-lane road that traverses through a residential community and over a narrow two-lane mountain pass. In the

presentation an illustration of the proposed area did not accurately reflect the actual size and negative aesthetic impact this project will have on the community of the Town of Blue River and its residents. The proposal showed few if any measures to reduce the aesthetic impact caused by placing what will essentially be an illuminated truck stop within the Town of Blue River. A commercial truck area within a neighborhood may negatively impact residential property values, quality of life and forever change the community of Blue River.

- The Town of Blue River is a residential community surrounded by national forest. The Blue River winds through the Town crossing the highway at several points. Homes and driveways line the highway. In the Town of Blue River Comprehensive Plan, the Town identified a desire to preserve the natural environment, the natural assets and wildlife habitat. The proposed area would negatively impact a large area of natural habitat for wildlife. In addition, one of the largest aspen groves in the county and area is located directly above the proposed station.
- There are existing pull-out areas along State Highway 9 that are currently and effectively used by the existing traffic.
- **Environmental Impacts-** The proposed chain-up station presents significant environmental concerns.
 - The area is primarily comprised of wetlands and is near the Blue River, a major tributary to the Goose Pasture Tarn, a source of water for the Town of Breckenridge and Dillon Dam, which is the water source for Denver Water.
 - The station would negatively impact wildlife and vegetation. This area is a corridor for moose, fox, deer, elk, and mountain lion. The station would result in significant and new sources of noise, lighting, truck and human presence, and pollution.
 - The wetlands provide crucial habitat for ermine, fox, coyotes, moose, waterfowl, and birds. The Blue River itself contains several aquatic species including cutthroat trout.
 - Although it was stated that lighting is necessary for truck operator safety and full lighting of the site will only be active during periods when the chain law is in effect, the lights will run continuously at some level. The Town of Blue River enacted an ordinance to reduce lighting impacts and create a more natural night sky. The proposed lighting would violate the ordinance and conflict with its intent.
- **Enforcement-** Enforcement of the chain station and parking would become the responsibility of the Town of Blue River Police Department. CDOT officials noted the enforcement as a revenue opportunity for the town. Blue River has only one officer on duty during each 24-hour period to enforce traffic laws, respond to emergencies and patrol the entire Town. It will be unlikely that citations for unlawful use of the chain-up station will take precedence or priority over the general enforcement obligations of the limited police staff. Colorado State Patrol dedicates only one officer to cover the segment from I-70 to Hoosier Pass. Summit County Sheriff's Office is limited in manpower due to staffing shortages and unable to provide additional staff to respond to issues at the chain-up station.
- **Unlawful or Extended Parking and Camping-** Trucks and unauthorized cars utilizing the station will result in trash, additional vehicle noise and headlight impacts, exhaust, and pollution to the community. The area selected will create the opportunity for trespassing on private land.
- **Increased in Large Region or Interstate Truck Traffic-** Large truck traffic has increased over Hoosier Pass utilizing State Highway 9 through Blue River in recent years. This concern

has been brought to the attention of CDOT, Region 3. Much of the increase is from the development of a gravel quarry in Park County and trucks hauling loads over Hoosier Pass. In addition, trucks making regional or interstate trips look to avoid I-70 traffic and closures and may seek to utilize Hoosier Pass as an alternative route. The availability of a chain-up station in Blue River, while perhaps of value to local trucks that have no alternative route for travel between locations will likely increase the use of this narrow, two lane mountain road. Large trucks should remain on I-70 due to the nature of their destinations and not be encouraged to utilize Hoosier Pass.

- **Hazardous Loads**-According to the CDOT Hazardous rout map, State Highway 9 over Hoosier Pass is not an approved route. The highway is narrow and abuts wetlands and the Blue River. The CDOT presentation touted increased safety for trucks that should not be utilizing the pass.
- **Traffic**-Due to continuing issues with I-70 and in cases where I-70 is closed, Hoosier Pass is promoted as an alternative route. In addition, with the increase of residents living in Park County and commuting to work in Summit County, there has been a significant increase in traffic over Hoosier Pass and State Highway 9 through Blue River. The highway is a narrow two-lane winding highway. Road conditions are often challenging due to adverse weather, wildlife presence, and vehicles entering and existing a significant number of access points from streets and driveways. There is little or no shoulder on State Highway 9 through Blue River. The State of Colorado set a speed limit of 50 mph through the residential area of the Town of Blue River. All these factors pose a concern currently with existing traffic. It should not be the goal of CDOT to encourage and increase the use of this route by additional truck traffic.
- **Lack of a “Chain-Down” Station or Other Area**-In the CDOT presentation, it was stated there are no plans, at this time, for a chain-down station to allow truck operators to remove chains after clearing Hoosier Pass. Trucks will therefore continue to I-70 with chains or will or chain-down “wherever” they can. However, it was the expressly stated the reason for the selection of the Blue River location for this chain-up station to reduce the running of chained trucks through Blue River which will cause noise impacts to residents and roadway damage. Without a chain-down, northbound chained trucks will continue to travel through Blue River thereby defeating the expressly stated reason for the location of this chain-up station. Worst case, large trucks may attempt to stop on the few tight shoulder areas along State Highway 9 in Blue River to chain-down, resulting in unsafe conditions and traffic conflicts.
- The Town of Blue River is asking for a review of the proposed project and a consideration of relocating the project to a more appropriate area. There are families, wildlife and environmental concerns that have not been addressed. The lack of communication from the beginning of the project necessitates a need for additional review and public input. The proposed project will have a significant negative impact on our serene mountain community and surrounding area. Recognizing the proposed timeline and need to address not only the issues and concerns identified by the Town but safety of those traveling over Hoosier Pass, we ask that a pause be placed on the project for further evaluation.