NM 68 Espanola to Taos Corridor Study
CN 5100710
Rio Arriba/Taos Counties, New Mexico
Public Information Meeting No. 1
December 4, 2013
Corridor Stakeholders

- Local Communities
- Daily commuters to Los Alamos and Santa Fe
- Tourists
- Bureau of Land Management
- Rio Arriba County
- Taos County
- Forest Service
- New Mexico Department of Transportation
- Federal Highway Administration
Purpose of this Presentation

- Inform the public of the corridor study
- Receive input from the public
Study Corridor Vicinity Map
Previous Safety Studies/Results

- Velarde to the Horseshoe Curve Safety Study (2008)
  - NM 68/75 intersection enhancements (completed)
  - Rumble strip projects (completed)
  - Speed limit sign beacons in Velarde (completed)
  - NM 68 lighting projects at various locations (under development)
NMDOT Process

Phase 1-A
• Existing Conditions Assessment
• Issues Scoping
• Initial Alternatives Identification and Screening

Phase 1-B
• Conceptual Design
• Detailed Engineering, Environmental, and Community Analyses

Phase 1-C
• Environmental Documentation
• Selection of Preferred Alternative Project Authorization

Preliminary Design
• SUE/Geotechnical Investigations
• Property Owner Interviews
• Survey
• Preliminary Design Plans – Grading, Drainage, Roadway, and Utilities

ROW Acquisition
• Work Permits, Temporary Construction Permits, and Right of Way Takes

Final Design
• Right of Way and Utility Certifications
• Final Design Plans – Grading, Drainage, Roadway, and Utilities

CONSTRUCTION
Purpose and Need for Study

• Existing roadway deficiencies
  – Roadway width
  – Steep roadway side slopes
  – Limited river access
  – Minimal roadside clearances (shoulders)
  – Rock falls and land slides
  – Limited sight distance
• Existing pavement condition
• Drainage concerns
• Feasibility of alternative route
Roadway Width Conditions

- Guardrail and steep cliff near MP 19
Maintenance Concerns

• Rock fall near MP 27
Drainage Concerns

• Drainage Structure 85 near MP 25
Pavement Concerns

- Pavement Condition near MP 17
Roadway Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Aug 2013 Traffic Volume (vpd)</th>
<th>2033 Traffic Volume (vpd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pilar</td>
<td>4,7388</td>
<td>5,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North of NM 75</td>
<td>4,920</td>
<td>6,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Velarde</td>
<td>5,896</td>
<td>7,194</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Combined Taos County & Rio Arriba County 1% growth rate

- Typical Capacity for a rural two-lane highway with population under 5000:
  - LOS B: 7,800 vehicles per day (vpd)
Safety

• 108 total accidents from 2009-2011
  – 19 (18%) involved boulders/rocks
  – 46 (43%) happened in dark (not lighted) conditions
  – 24 (22%) caused by excessive speed/following too close
Schedule

- Draft Phase 1A/B Report  
  September 2014

- Final Phase 1A/B Report  
  January 2015

- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding to design, bid, and build improvements  
  Fall 2015

- Potential improvements for NM 68 from Corridor Study  
  2015/2016
Natural Environment

- Water and wetlands
- Wild and Scenic River
- Geology
- Soils
- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Protected Species
Human Environment

- Cultural resources
- Land use
- Socioeconomics
- BLM land
- Recreation sites
- Environmental justice
- Noise
- Hazardous materials
Context Sensitive Solutions

- Uniqueness of Gorge historic character
- Visual character
- Community preferences
- Rafting and other recreational uses
- Local businesses
- Transportation modes
Your Comments & Opinions Count!

- Comment following the presentation
- Talk to a project team member
- Leave your written comments with a project team member or in comment box
- Mail, e-mail, or fax your written comments to Eric Johnson
Contact Information

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Phone: 505.898.8848

http://dot.state.nm.us/en/ProjectsD5.html
Questions?