

6.6.5 Special Interest Group Meetings

Special interest group meetings were held to represent recreation, tourism, homeowners, and transportation interests in the Corridor. The dates and organizations represented for each meeting are listed in Appendix P under Coordination and Planning Meetings. These meetings introduced the PEIS process to the groups and solicited comments specific to the special interests represented.

In addition, a tour was held in Clear Creek County on August 18, 2000, with representatives from FHWA, CDOT, and the county, and with local officials and citizens. The purpose of this tour was to gain insight into Clear Creek County's specific concerns and issues related to the Corridor. Comments and issues focused on environmental and geologic hazards, noise, safety, parking, and alternate routes.

6.6.6 Coordination and Planning Meetings

In addition to the aforementioned meetings, approximately 89 internal coordination and planning meetings were held with interested stakeholders and federal, local, and state agencies to help facilitate and provide NEPA guidance and coordination during the PEIS development. Meetings were held with the local communities and special interest groups to discuss issues and concerns and to provide additional opportunity for input into the process. Organizations that held these coordination and planning meetings included:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus Operators • Canyon Area Residents for the Environment • Clear Creek County • Colorado Department of Local Affairs • Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment • Colorado Intermountain Fixed Guideway Authority • Colorado Motor Carriers Association • Colorado State Economist • Denver Regional Council of Governments • Lawson, Dumont, and Downieville • Eagle County • Environmental Protection Agency • Fall River Homeowners Association • Federal Railroad Administration • Federal Transit Administration • Floyd Hill/Beaver Brook Subregion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floyd Hill Homeowners Association • Georgetown • Idaho Springs • Independence Institute • Jefferson County • National Park Service • Northwest Colorado Council of Governments • Regional Transportation District • Ski Association/Tourism Special Interest Group • State Historic Preservation Officer • Summit County • Transit Special Interest Group • Upper Clear Creek Watershed Association • US Army Corps of Engineers • US Department of Agriculture Forest Service • US Fish and Wildlife Service |
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Appendix P provides a summary of dates and discussion topics for these meetings.

Internal coordination meetings between the Corridor PEIS, SH 119 Gaming EIS, and SH 9 EA project team members also were held to assist in ensuring that data, resource information, and project updates were shared between project team members.

6.7 Scoping, Issues, and Comments

Scoping was conducted at the early stages of the project to inform and educate the public and agencies about the PEIS and to solicit their input and perspectives on the issues that should be addressed in the PEIS. A total of 1,251 comments were received during the four public scoping meetings and four open houses that began in January 2000 and ended in June 2000. Although the official scoping phase ended in June 2000, the solicitation of public and agency input and comment occurred throughout the PEIS process.

The comments were reviewed, organized by topic, and entered into a computer-assisted database to facilitate retrieval and tracking through the environmental analysis. The following pie charts, Chart 6-1 through Chart 6-3, illustrate the overall comments, as well as comments relating to environmental resources and alternative families. Appendix P provides a summary of the comments received during the scoping process. Table 6-2 summarizes the issues that are addressed in this PEIS related to scoping.

Chart 6-1. Overall Comments

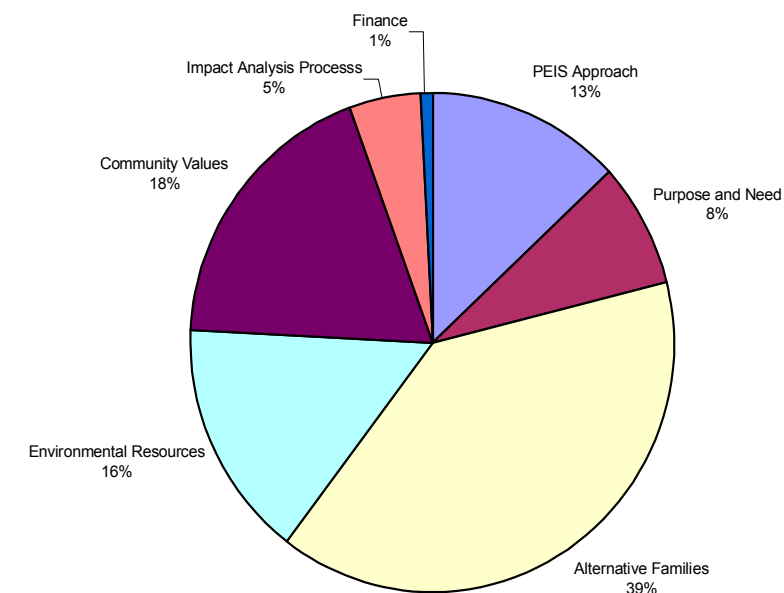
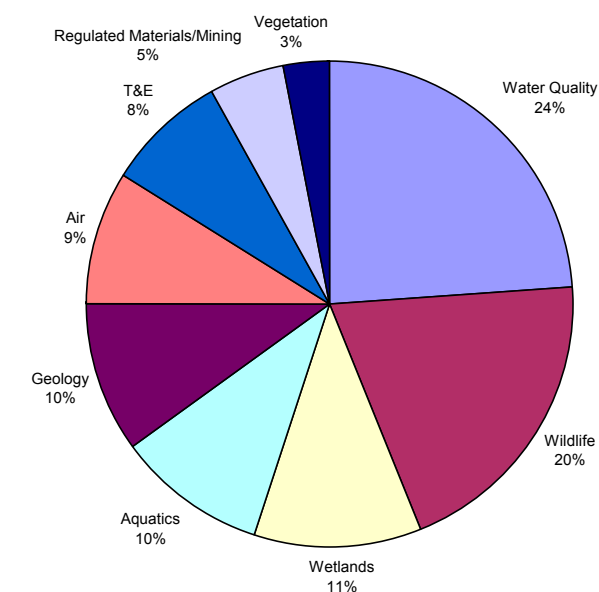


Chart 6-2. Environmental Comments



Chapter 6. Public and Agency Involvement

Chart 6-3. Alternative Families Comments

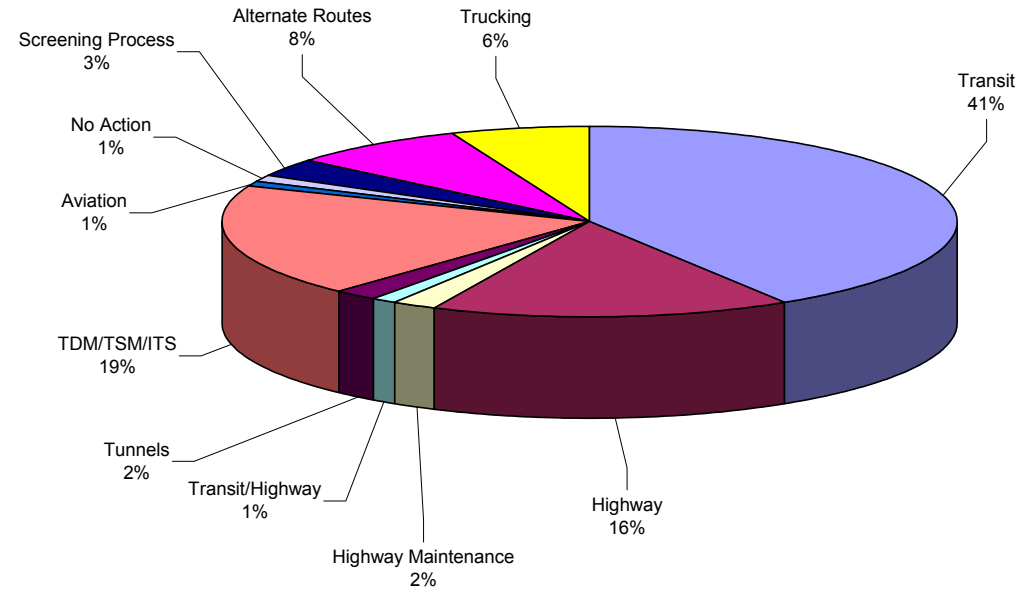


Table 6-2. Issues Summary

Resource Topic	Issues
Climate and Air Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor vehicle emissions Motor vehicle direct particulate matter emissions, including re-entrained dust from highway and street sanding and unpaved roads Visibility in and near Class I and II Wilderness Areas
Biological Resources	<p>Vegetation issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of vegetative cover Loss of sensitive and rare plant communities Effect of winter maintenance Introduction and spread of noxious weeds <p>Wildlife issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barriers to wildlife movement and mortality from animal-vehicle collisions Direct habitat loss and fragmentation Intensified impacts on adjacent habitats (road effect zone) Indirect effects of increased population growth and land use change on habitats
Threatened, Endangered, and Other Special Status Animal and Plant Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Species that are federally listed as threatened or endangered, and those that are proposed or are candidates for listing as such, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act Species listed by the Colorado Division of Wildlife as threatened, endangered, or species of concern Species included on sensitive species lists developed by Region 2 of the USFS or by the BLM Species identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as rare or endangered
Water Resources	<p>Direct impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of highway runoff and winter roadway maintenance activities on water quality Disturbance of historic mine waste materials due to highway construction activities that might cause the release of contaminants (such as heavy metals) to streams Potential additional impacts on water quality impaired streams and streams with classifications and standards requiring special consideration Effect on stream stability, hydrologic function, system health, and riparian system <p>Indirect impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spills and hazardous materials transport possibly releasing contaminants into nearby waterways Development and urbanization possibly resulting in impacts on water quality and streams Channelization and other changes to stream morphology

Resource Topic	Issues
Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effect on Gold Medal fisheries and "high-value" fisheries as identified by Colorado Division of Wildlife Effect on fish and benthic invertebrate habitat, including impact on stream structure, seasonal and spawning habitat, and organic material supply Impact of water quality and quantity to riparian areas, aquatic habitat, and fisheries Impacts of sedimentation to aquatic organisms' reproductive success, biodiversity, and biomass Effects of altered water temperature from construction and operation of roadway modifications on sensitive coldwater species
Wetlands, Other Waters of the US, and Riparian Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of wetlands, springs/fens, other waters of the US, and riparian areas Reduced function of wetlands, springs/fens, other waters of the US, and riparian areas Changes in hydrology and water quality (for example, inflows, sedimentation, winter maintenance) that result in loss of either area or function
Geologic Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to exacerbate existing geologic hazards and adversely affect safety, service, and mobility due to rockfalls, debris flows, mudflows, avalanches, landslides, and other hazards Potential to intersect areas of geologic instability (adverse jointing fracture patterns and/or bedding) and create geologic hazards Engineering constraints due to limitations on stability of slope angles Soil erosion, erosion control, and reclamation potential
Regulated Materials and Historic Mining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties contaminated by hazardous waste or petroleum products Acquired land possibly containing hazardous material that must be cleaned up before construction activities begin Highway accidents potentially releasing environmental contaminants into adjacent land and streams Potential for contamination from mine tailings and wastes from historic mines in the Corridor
Social and Economic Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projected doubling in population growth and buildout in housing in Corridor counties and towns Correlation between population growth and growth in I-70 traffic Employment and commuting: resort counties in the tourism-driven Corridor communities importing workers from adjacent counties Economics and tourism: existing and projected I-70 congestion levels adversely affecting Corridor economic conditions
Land Use	<p>Direct impacts: Effects of alternatives on communities, related to alternative footprint and construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property encroachment (alternative would require use of a portion of property) Structure loss (a structure is required to be removed to accommodate the alternative) Effect on property function Change in property access Effects on federal lands <p>Indirect impacts: Effects of alternatives on communities, related to growth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth and development in Corridor counties and towns Effects on land use and patterns of development Induced growth effects on environmental quality Effects on federal lands
Environmental Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential displacement/relocation of low-income and minority residents Availability of affordable housing and low-income housing Impact to local commute times and availability of public transportation Increase in noise levels Potential for separating or bisecting low-income and/or minority communities and neighborhoods
Noise	<p>Direct impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases in Corridor noise levels from project alternatives due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased traffic volumes Addition of buses and rail systems Construction <p>Indirect impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased traffic on major access routes to highway interchanges and transit stations Noise from growth in general
Visual Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to landscape setting and scenery Change within sensitivity viewsheds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjacent to the interstate (views from communities and recreation areas) From the interstate itself (views from I-70) Compliance with USFS and BLM visual resource management prescriptions

Resource Topic	Issues
Recreation Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation sites within the Corridor are important destination areas for the state of Colorado and the nation • Several areas of national significance (Aspen, Vail, Eagles Nest and Ptarmigan Wilderness Areas, Continental Divide National Scenic Trail) are accessed by the Corridor • Fifteen major ski areas and resorts are accessed from the Corridor (out of 26 ski resorts statewide) • WRNF and ARNF are among the top 10 most highly visited forests in the nation • Direct access to the Corridor area from Denver International and Eagle County airports contributes to the Corridor-area recreation sites being major destinations of travelers around the US and abroad • "Increasing demands for unconfined recreation have exceeded the agency's (Forest Service) ability to manage for high quality recreation opportunities within the capabilities of land and budget." (USDA 2004)
Historic Sites and Native American Consultation	<p>Direct and indirect impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places • National Historic Landmarks • Properties on or eligible for the State Register of Historic Places • Local landmarks and sites of local interest • Traditional cultural properties of concern to Native Americans
Section 4(f) and 6(f) Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoiding and minimizing harm to significant public parks, recreation areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges, or public or private historic properties • Identifying and mitigating impacts on properties for which Land and Water Conservation funds were used
Paleontological Resources	<p>Direct and indirect impacts on significant nonrenewable paleontological resources, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fossil remains of vertebrates, invertebrates, and plants • Fossil footprints and trace fossils • Significant paleontological sites • Taphonomic (conditions and processes of fossilization) context • Stratigraphic record
Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy used during construction of transportation facilities, including manufacture and transport of materials and equipment, and operations of construction equipment • Energy used during facility operation: fuel and electricity used to power vehicles using the transportation facility

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