

GOALS	CORRIDOR CHARACTERISTICS	
Energy Development	Serves growing energy industries of Gillette and Wright	Joint BNSF and UPRR rail line
Safety		
System Preservation	Shortcut between I-90 and I-25	Thunder Basin National Grasslands
Trucks		
Commuting	Powder River Basin coal country	Blowing and drifting snow affects winter travel

PRIMARY INVESTMENT TYPE: SAFETY

The primary need for the corridor is to improve safety, especially on the segment from Wright to Gillette. Due to the relatively high truck volumes, maintaining the existing system in terms of roadway pavement conditions and deficient bridges is also of major concern. In specific spot locations throughout the corridor, additional passing or through lanes may need to be added to accommodate the combination of increasing truck traffic, commuter traffic, and recreational travel.

CORRIDOR CHARACTERISTICS

Corridor Description

State Significant Corridor (SSC) 14 follows WYO 59 for 112 miles from Douglas to Gillette, passing through Campbell County and Converse County. SSC 14 also crosses through the Thunder Basin National Grasslands in the Powder River Basin between the Big Horn Mountains and the Black Hills. The Basin is semi-arid and home to recreation, hunting, and fishing at Douglas. It has extensive mineral resources, which have become more important in the last two decades, including coal, oil, and coal bed methane gas. Several mines and power facilities are located along the corridor, including the North Rochelle Antelope Mine, Peabody Coal Mine, Black Thunder Mine, and other new mines that will open soon. Mining affects the entire region, including impacts to traffic and other conditions.

Douglas is located on the south end of SSC 14 at the intersection of WYO 59 and I-25. The city had a 2008 population of approximately 6,000 and is known as home of the Wyoming State Fair and the famed Jackalope. Thirty-five miles to the north, the highway passes through the small town of Bill, a layover spot for the BNSF Railway Company (BNSF) and the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UP) lines. The rail line runs north/south and connects an east/west shared line near Douglas to an east/west BNSF line in Gillette.

Wright, near Reno Junction (WYO 59 and WYO 387) and approximately 40 miles south of Gillette, is one of Wyoming's newest cities. It was established in the 1970s to provide housing for the coal industry workforce and their families and has a 2008 estimated population of 1,500. At the north end of SSC 14 is Gillette, a city of approximately 27,000 in 2008. It is Campbell County's county seat and the fourth largest city in Wyoming. With the proposed Two Elk Energy Park under construction, both Gillette and Wright will likely continue to grow.



Environmental Context

The North Platte River passes through Douglas and offers recreation, hunting, and fishing opportunities. Douglas was officially founded in 1886 and the city grew after it was designated a stop on the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad. The former railroad passenger depot is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

WYO 59 north of Douglas passes through the Thunder Basin National Grasslands in the Powder River Basin between the Big Horn Mountains and the Black Hills.

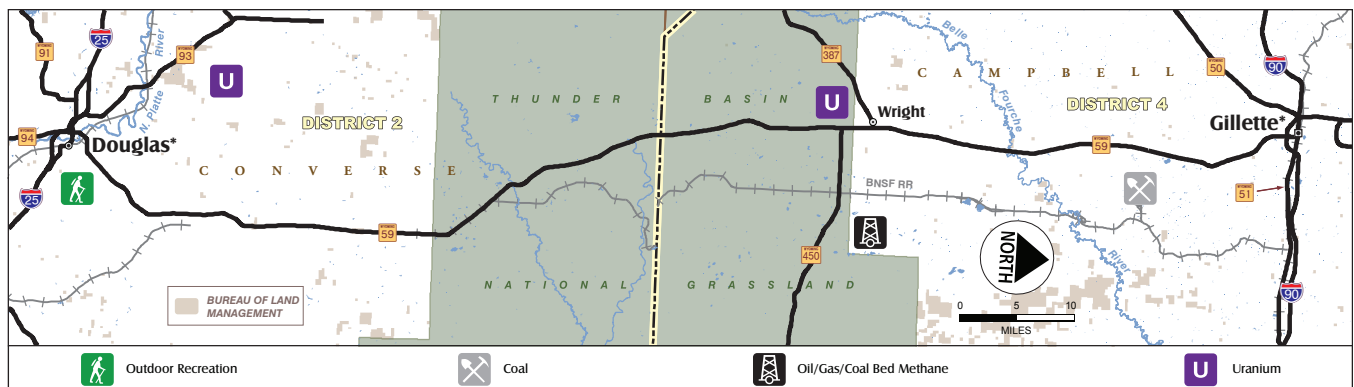
The Powder River Basin, as a region, has exceeded the national PM_{10} standard. The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality has classified these PM_{10} incidents as “high-wind events”, arguing that dust is often kicked-up by exceptionally high winds, and not considered as a violation of national air quality standards. This issue will continue to be monitored since Wyoming continues to be the nation’s leading coal producer. WYO 450 travels east through the National Grasslands on the way to Newcastle.

Corridor Interests:

- Cultural, Paleontological, and Historic Resources
- Visual Resources
- Recreation Management
- Travel Management
- Wildlife Connectivity, Habitat Fragmentation, & Fish Passage
- Wetlands, Fens
- Invasive Species

Source: U.S. Forest Service

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT



The above map identifies issues and environmental constraints that form the basis for environmental review. Future projects in the corridor will take these and other issues under consideration prior to final design.

WYO 59 crosses the Belle Fourche River which flows north to South Dakota. Keyhole Reservoir is situated on this river, which flows through the lowest point in the state at an elevation of 3,100 feet.

Major Traffic Generators

- Energy industry – Gillette
- Power plants; gas/oil/ – Powder River Basin
- Coal mines - North Rochelle Antelope Mine, Peabody Coal Mine, Black Thunder Mine
- Dispersed recreational traffic –Thunder Basin National Grassland
- Two Elk Energy Park - Gillette (under construction)

Key Issues and Emerging Trends

- Supporting the increasing demand on SSC 14 from growing mining and power industries, especially the traffic and heavy loads associated with construction and service of these facilities.
- Maintaining and improving surface conditions on the roadway should be a priority, especially in sections south of Gillette.
- There is crash-prone stretch of roadway just south of Gillette.
- Many commuters travel from Douglas, Wright, and Gillette to the gas and coal mining areas.
- Recreational activities are associated with the Thunder Basin National Grassland.
 - Emerging wind power industry and facilities.



Goals & Strategies

Goals for the corridor represent issues communicated by participants in the planning process. These goals lay groundwork for the development of a financially feasible multi-modal transportation plan designed to support the planning, engineering, construction, operation, and maintenance of the State's transportation system.

The goals and strategies for SSC 14 focus on improving traffic flow and safety while accommodating mining and power facility needs along the route. These industries contribute significantly to the tax base of Wyoming, offer employment, and provide much needed energy to Wyoming and the nation. The main goal, therefore, is to collaborate with these industries and to meet their needs and accommodate their growth. Likewise, the corridor must be preserved and enhanced to provide safe travel for commuting and recreational users.

GOALS	STRATEGIES
Reduce fatalities, injuries, and property damage crash rates	Safety - general improvements
Preserve the existing transportation system	Surface treatment/overlays
	Reconstruction
Plan for continuing energy industry impacts to road system	Develop impact agreements
Accommodate growth in truck freight transport	Intermodal freight planning
	Truck passing lanes
Support commuter travel	Auxiliary lanes if warranted (passing, turn, accel/decel)
	Blowing and drifting snow mitigation
	ITS/VMS
	TDM strategies in major traffic generators

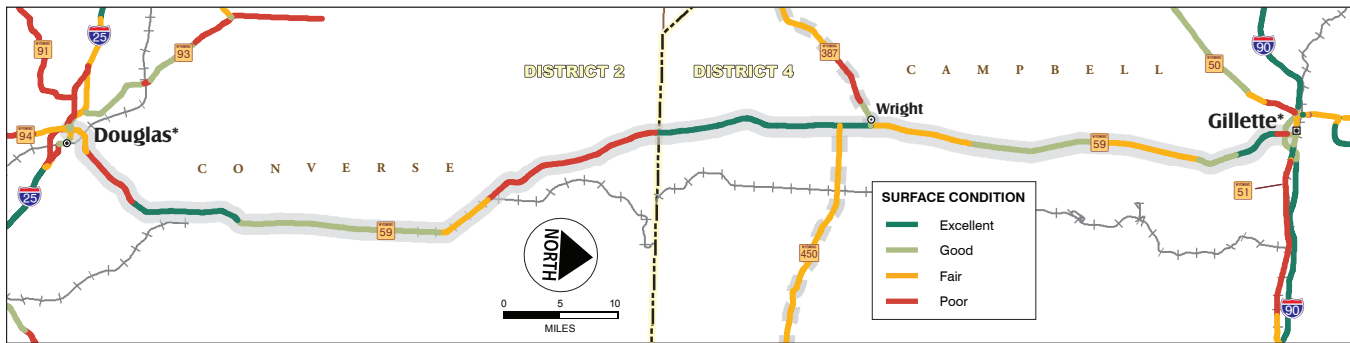
Primary Investment Type

SAFETY – The primary need for the corridor is to improve safety, especially on the segment from Wright to Gillette. Due to the relatively high truck volumes, maintaining the existing system in terms of roadway pavement conditions and deficient bridges is also of major concern. In specific spot locations throughout the corridor, additional passing or through lanes may need to be added to accommodate the combination of increasing truck traffic, commuter traffic, and recreational travel.

Roadway Characteristics

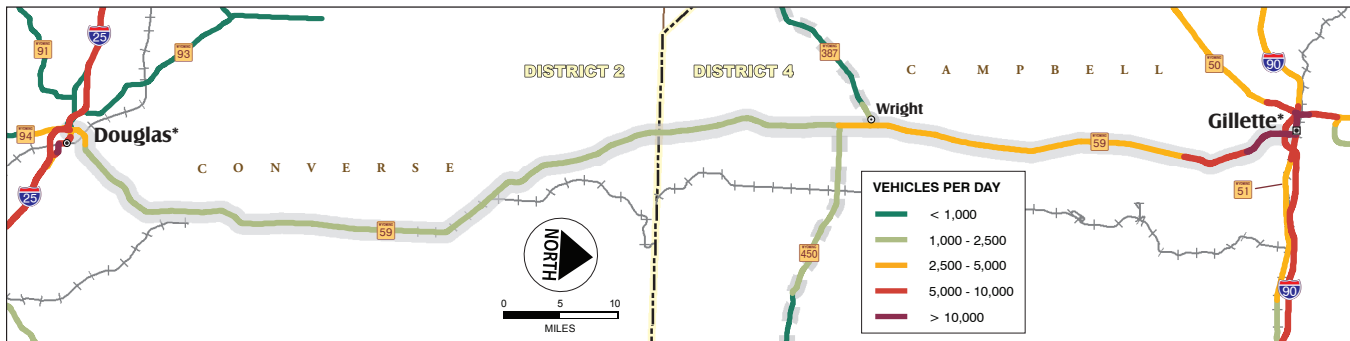
The following maps identify conditions on the corridor with respect to surface condition, total traffic, truck traffic, safety, and bridges. The data represent the most recent available and are subject to change over time as projects are completed or other factors affect existing conditions. The system data play a big part in determining current operating characteristics, the type of need, and the extent of improvements necessary to achieve corridor goals.

PAVEMENT SURFACE CONDITION



WYO 59 is rated good/excellent surface condition for 57 percent of the corridor. There are intermittent areas where the surface conditions are rated as Fair or Poor.

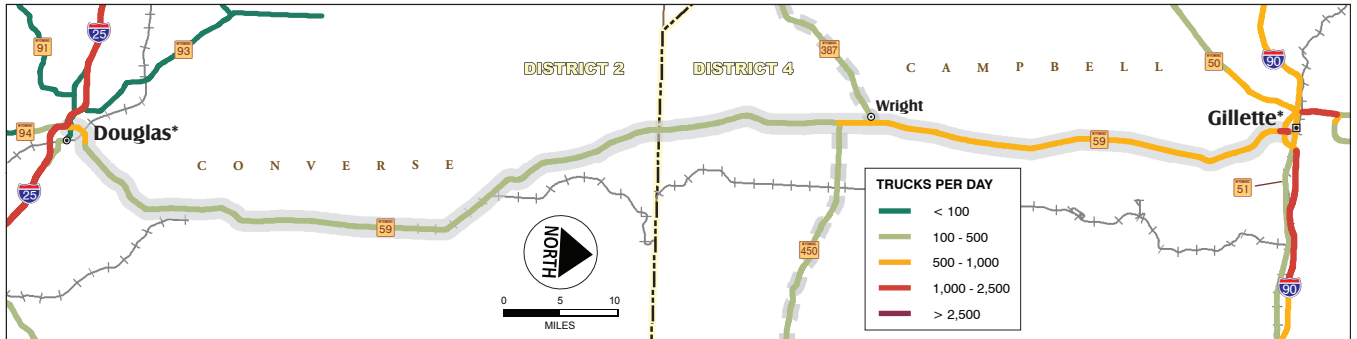
AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)



The AADT for the majority of WYO 59, from Douglas north to the junction of WYO 450, averages 1,000 to 2,500 vehicles per day. The AADT, on WYO 59 north of WYO 450, averages 2,500 to 5,000 vpd and increases to 5,000 to 10,000 vpd approaching Gillette.

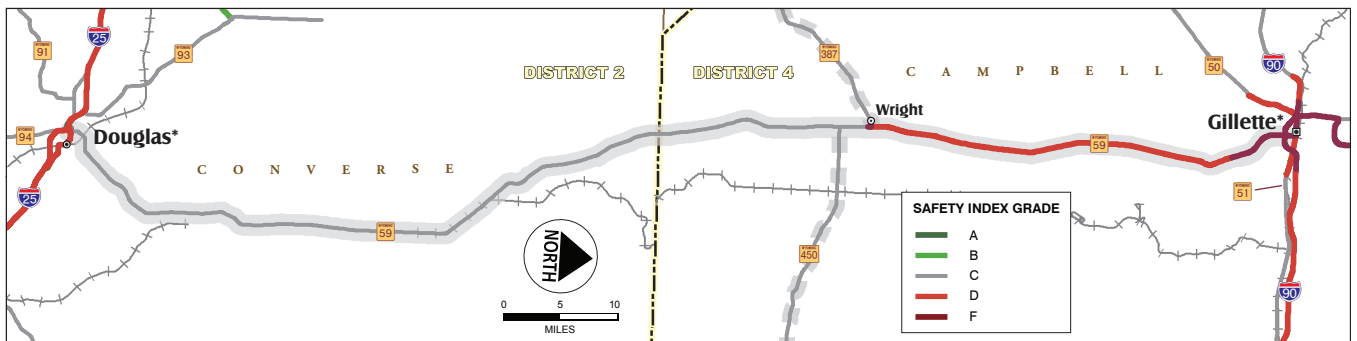


AVERAGE ANNUAL DAILY TRUCK TRAFFIC (AADTT)



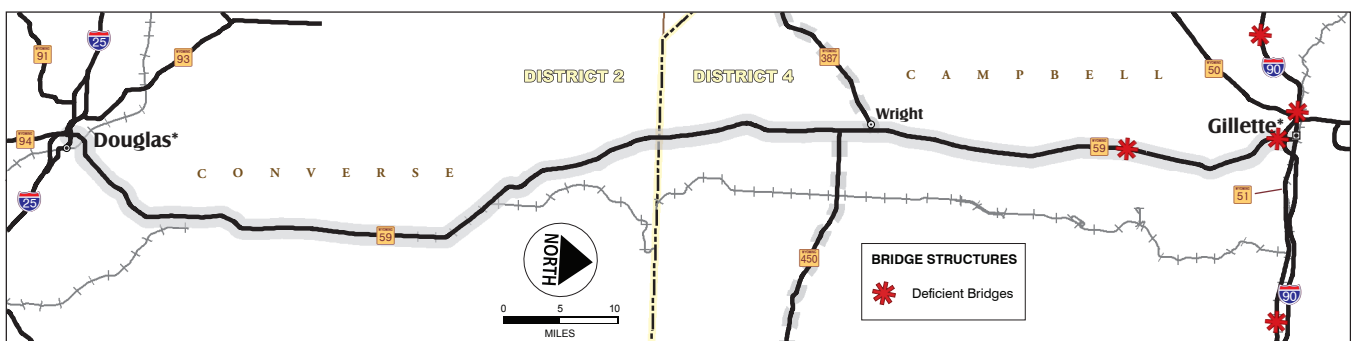
The truck traffic, along WYO 59 from Douglas to the junction of WYO 450, averages 100 to 500 trucks per day. From WYO 450 to Gillette the truck traffic averages 500 to 1,000 trucks per day.

SAFETY INDEX



Thirty-seven miles, 33 percent of the corridor, from Wright to Gillette, have a below average Safety Index grade of D or F.

DEFICIENT BRIDGES



There are two deficient bridges located on WYO 59 south of Gillette. All deficient bridges visible in the map window are displayed, regardless of designation as SSC, Regional, or Local Routes.

REGIONAL REFERENCE INFORMATION

REGIONAL ROUTES

There are two regional routes connecting to SSC 14. WYO 387 goes west from Reno Junction, through Wright, and then connects to I-25 six miles west of Edgerton at Midwest.

Three miles south of Reno Junction, WYO 450 travels east from SSC 14 to Newcastle, 66 miles toward the eastern Wyoming border.

LOCAL ROUTES

There are no local routes connecting to SSC 14.

URBAN AREAS

At the southern end of SSC 14 is Douglas, a city of approximately 6,000. At the northern end of SSC 14 is Gillette, a city of approximately 27,000. Urban areas are discussed in detail in the Urban Corridors section later in the document.

INTERMODAL FACILITIES

Intercity Bus Routes

Jefferson Bus Lines operates intercity bus service. Greyhound operates intercity bus stations in Douglas and Gillette where tickets may be purchased.

Class 1 Railroads

A shared BNSF and UP line runs in the corridor from approximately 10 miles north of the I-25/WYO 59 intersection northward to Gillette.

Public Transportation Agencies

PROVIDER AGENCY NAME	LOCATION	TYPE OF SERVICE	SIZE OF FLEET	ANNUAL PASSENGER TRIPS FY08
RENEW	Sheridan, Gillette and Newcastle	Non-Profit - Demand Response	15 Vehicles	57,364
Jefferson Bus Lines	Rapid City, SD to Billings, MT through Gillette	For Profit; Fixed Route Intercity Bus	N/A	N/A
Douglas Senior Citizens	Douglas	Non-Profit - Demand Response	6 Vehicles	38,287
Campbell County Senior Citizens Association	Gillette	Non-Profit - Demand Response	11 Vehicles	25,877

Source: WYDOT



DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

SSC 14 passes through two counties: Campbell County to the north and Converse County to the south. Douglas, at the south end of the corridor in Converse County, has a population of approximately 6,000. The major employment for Converse County is Education & Health at 18 percent. Mining is second at 14 percent, and Agriculture accounts for six percent. Douglas is also a retail and ranching center with nine percent of its employment in Retail. Like Campbell County, Converse County has nine percent of its jobs in Arts & Recreation. Eleven percent of employment is in the Transportation & Utilities field.

Gillette and Wright are in Campbell County. Twenty-two percent of Gillette's workers are employed in Mining, followed closely by Education & Health, which employs 17 percent. It is a regional retail center employing 11 percent and has a healthy Arts & Recreation community employing nine percent of its total employment. Construction accounts for 10 percent of the employment largely due to the growing mining and energy industries. Agriculture accounts for only 2 percent of employment in Campbell County.

POPULATION: 2000-2008					
COUNTY	CITY	2000	2008	% GROWTH	% STATE TOTAL (2008)
Campbell County		33,698	41,473	23.1	7.8
	Gillette	19,646	26,871	32.4	
	Wright	1,347	1,462	8.5	
Converse County		12,052	13,267	10.1	2.7
	Douglas	5,288	5,971	12.7	
	Glenrock	2,231	2,423	8.0	
	Lost Springs	1	1	0.0	
	Rolling Hills	449	505	12.5	

Source: Population Division, US Census Bureau, July 1, 2009

Airport Information

AIRPORT NAME (Associated City)	NPIAS ROLE & HUB TYPE ¹	NPIAS	WYDOT CLASSIFICATION (2008)	WYDOT CLASSIFICATION (FUTURE)	TOTAL AIRPORT OPERATIONS	BASED AIRCRAFT	TOTAL PASSENGERS (2006)
Campbell County Airport (Gillette)	P - N	NPIAS	Commercial	Commercial	19,105	53	55,167
Converse County Airport (Douglas)	GA	NPIAS	Business	Business	5,585	37	

Notes: P - Primary Commercial Service, N - Non-hub Facility, GA - General Aviation

¹NPIAS (National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems) Role and Hub Type are same for both existing (2007) and 5-year federal forecast

Source: WYDOT and FAA