

# SH 82 Wildlife Fence Construction Begins

September 2, 2009 - Northwestern Colorado/CDOT Region 3

GARFIELD COUNTY – The Colorado Department of Transportation will begin a project on Monday, September 14, to install wildlife fencing along a stretch of SH 82 that sees a high incidence of wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs). The project will include the installation of approximately 15,869 linear feet of 8-foot-high fence on the west side of SH 82, between mile markers 7 and 11, in the Aspen Glen area just south of Glenwood Springs. It will also complete the fencing on the east side of the highway along this stretch (approximately one mile).

The project will also involve construction of six wildlife escape ramps on the west side and two on the east side. The escape ramps provide deer and elk—trapped within the wildlife-fenced highway right of way—a better means to cross back over the fencing to escape the highway and vehicles. The earthen ramps are six feet high and constructed into a cut-out in the fence, on the highway side. Animals can run up the one-way ramp and jump back down to safety.

(The first of these escape ramps were built in 2006 along the wildlife fence on US 550 near Ridgway State Park. CDOT has been investigating the effectiveness of the ramps on reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs). Video and still camera images have shown that it is being used. WVC data are pending.)

Finally, the project will also construct deer guards (like cattle guards, but built longer) at several accesses along the west side of SH 82: two for 12-foot-wide accesses near mile point 9, one that is 18 feet wide near mile point 9.5, and one that is 72 feet wide for the entrance to Aspen Glen near mile point 9.75.

This stretch of SH 82 experienced 39 wildlife-vehicle collisions in 2005 (the most recent data available). Total accidents on this stretch in 2005 numbered 63, making the WVCs account for 63 percent of all accidents that year. In 2000, there were only seven WVCs in the four-mile section, out of a total 31 accidents (WVCs accounting for 32 percent of all accidents).

“The percentage of wildlife-vehicle collisions is certainly rising in this area, particularly with increases in traffic and development,” said CDOT Region 3 Traffic & Safety Engineer Pete Mertes. “We’re glad to be getting this project underway right before peak migration season; and we’ll work to obtain further funding for additional fencing along this corridor.”

The fencing project was contracted to Waterford Corporation for \$423,810, paid for with federal Hazard Elimination Funding secured by CDOT. Work begins on September 14 and is scheduled for completion by November 24th. There are no lane closures planned, but shoulder closures will be in effect as the project progresses. Motorists are encouraged to drive with caution and go “Slow for the Cone Zone” during the work.

For information about other CDOT projects, the public may log on to CDOT’s traveler information web site at [www.cotrip.org](http://www.cotrip.org) or call 511 from anywhere in the state.