

- VAIL DAILY**
- News
- Sports
- Classifieds
- Service Directory
- Real Estate
- Arts & Entertainment
- Business
- Columnists
- Commentary
- Blog
- Education
- Town Talk
- Events Calendar
- Letters to the Editor
- Autos
- Obituaries
- Our World
- Photo Galleries
- Special Sections
- SERVICES**
- Submit News
- Archives
- Business Directory
- News Feeds
- Podcasts
- Email Headlines
- Vail Daily Store
- Email Newsletter
- Road Conditions
- Mountain Cams
- Video Headlines
- AROUND VAIL**
- Dining
- Shopping
- Spas
- Bars & Nightclubs
- Performing Arts
- Live Music
- Arts & Culture
- RECREATION**
- Ski & Snowboard
- Golf
- Fishing
- Mountain Biking
- Hiking
- Rafting & Paddling
- And More...
- TRAVEL INFO**

Search:

[Classifieds](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

July 10, 2007

I-70's expensive traffic jams

Report says congestion costs nearly \$1 billion a year

Bob Berwyn
Vail, CO Colorado
 April 26, 2007

[Comments](#) [Print](#) [Email](#)

SUMMIT COUNTY — Sitting in traffic on I-70 is not only frustrating, but also very costly.

The personal time alone lost to congestion on the main east-west highway through the state is valued at \$85 billion annually, according to an economic impact study released Wednesday.

Altogether, congestion is likely costing the state of Colorado about \$839 million per year, according to the report issued by the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce.

“Summit County and the coalition have been saying this for a long, long time. If we don’t fix it, it’s going to be a significant economic detriment,” said Flo Raitano, I-70 Mountain Corridor Coalition director.

Chain law awaits governor's signature

DENVER — The once-troubled Colorado chain law bill has inched along to its final stopping point.

House Bill 1229 passed out of the Senate on Wednesday by a 33-1 vote, and is on the way to Gov. Bill Ritter's desk, awaiting his signature.

The bill would increase the penalty from \$100 to \$500 for commercial truck drivers who are caught without chains when the chain law is in effect, and from \$500 to \$1,000 for truck drivers who don't chain up and block a lane of traffic as a result.

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Dan Gibbs, Eagle County's state representative.
 — Nicole Formosa

Based on the annual economic impacts of almost \$1 billion, it would only take about 10 years to recoup the investment needed to reduce I-70's traffic jams, Raitano said.

The study also outlines the direct costs to

the mountain region's tourism economy. A small 1 percent decline in tourism means an annual loss of \$35 million to the mountain region, including Eagle, Summit, Clear Creek, Gilpin and Pitkin counties, according to the report.

That could mean a \$1.2 million decline in state, county and city sales tax revenue, the report concludes.

Traffic jams on the highway could cause tourists to vacation in other states, according to the study.

I-70 congestion will also raise government costs for emergency services, as well as personnel costs associated

Nine-year-old twins Kelsey, left, and Parker Herd walk around their car while stopped on westbound Interstate 70 between Frisco and Copper Mountain. A new report has calculated the economic losses caused by freeway traffic jams.



[Click to Enlarge](#)

[Browse Vail Daily Photos](#)

Kristin Anderson/Summit Daily file photo

WEB EXTRAS

[I-70 economic impact study](#)



UNIQUE SPA. EXCEPTIONAL TREATMENTS.
 THE SPA AT VAIL MOUNTAIN LODGE
 Located within the Vail Mountain Lodge, Vail Village
 970-476-7721

Get News Feeds

- Lodging
- Short Term Rentals
- Transportation
- Weather
- Road Conditions
- Maps
- MOUNTAIN LIVING**
- Real Estate
- Wedding Ideas
- Community
- Gardening
- NEWSPAPERS**
- Aspen Times
- Citizen Telegram
- Grand Junction Free Press
- Eagle Valley Enterprise
- Leadville Chronicle
- Post Independent
- Snowmass Sun
- Summit Daily
- The Vail Trail
- Valley Journal

with hiring and retaining employees.

Delaying the start of construction on improvements is also expensive. The cost for improving the road is expected to climb by 24.9 percent in 2010, from estimates generated in 2004. By 2015, costs would be 53.4 percent higher than the 2004 estimates.

Based on the analysis, the problems will likely get worse before they get better, with traffic on I-70 in Grand Junction expected to grow by 71.3 percent in the next 20 years — an average annual increase of 2.9 percent.

At the Eisenhower Tunnel, Idaho Springs and Glenwood Springs, traffic will grow by about 45 percent during that same span.

“It’s costing Colorado a lot of money not to do anything,” said Breckenridge Mayor Ernie Blake. “It’s time to make some serious improvements to the situation.”

Latest Comments [Post Your Comment](#) [Discussion](#)

LATEST COMMENTS

RELATED ARTICLES

- May 26, 2007 - [Inspections detect many dangerous vehicles](#)
- May 18, 2007 - [I-70 may get more than extra lanes](#)
- May 8, 2007 - [Can troopers keep up with truckers?](#)
- April 25, 2007 - [Aspen airport also after Frontier](#)
- April 19, 2007 - [Trucker fines move to Senate floor](#)
- April 16, 2007 - [The dirty side of Vail’s snowless streets](#)
- April 15, 2007 - [A two-hour walk home from Wal-Mart](#)
- April 11, 2007 - [Which train works in the mountains?](#)
- April 2, 2007 - [Chain law bill moves to the Senate](#)
- April 2, 2007 - [Fired plow driver worried about safety](#)
- April 1, 2007 - [High-speed train in Vail Valley by 2015?](#)
- March 30, 2007 - [Super-powered vacuum headed to Vail](#)
- March 28, 2007 - [You may get more room to pass truckers](#)
- March 24, 2007 - [Money for roads sought downvalley](#)
- March 21, 2007 - [Alternate routes required in canyon](#)
- March 15, 2007 - [Unchained truckers face higher fines](#)
- March 12, 2007 - [Fines higher in re-written chain law](#)
- February 28, 2007 - [Truckers will get room to put chains on](#)
- February 20, 2007 - [Higher fines for truckers fail](#)
- February 13, 2007 - [No special treatment for Rockies’ roads](#)
- January 31, 2007 - [Unchained truckers may face more fines](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Archives](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Subscribe](#) | [Site Map](#) | [RSS Feeds](#)  

Visit our other [news and portal sites](#).

All contents © Copyright 2007 vaildaily.com
Vail Daily - 40780 US Hwy 6 & 24 - Avon, CO 81620