

= Utah State Route 313 =

State Route 313 ( SR @-@ 313 ) is a Utah state highway in San Juan and Grand Counties . The highway has been designated the Dead Horse Point Mesa Scenic Byway . The highway is an access road for both the Island in the Sky district of Canyonlands National Park and Dead Horse Point State Park . The highway is a toll road in Dead Horse Point State Park . Westbound traffic is charged a state park entrance fee at the park boundary .

The route was assigned north of Moab in the 1975 in place of SR @-@ 278 , a proposed but never constructed access to Dead Horse Point . The original alignment of the highway featured steep grades and blind corners . The highway was completely rebuilt in the 1980s after sustaining damage while crews rebuilt the access road to Canyonlands National Park .

= = Route description = =

The highway begins at the overlook in Dead Horse Point State Park 's parking lot ( 22 miles south of Moab ) . Gaining its scenic byway designation , SR @-@ 313 heads northward , along the ridges of Dead Horse Point . The highway climbs in elevation , reaching a height of 6 @,@ 000 feet ( 1 @,@ 800 m ) . Soon after , all drivers exit the park and have to pay a toll . After the high peak at 6 @,@ 000 feet ( 1 @,@ 800 m ) , SR @-@ 313 heads slowly downward , continuing along the ridges in the park . There is an intersection with a local road , and the highway begins to turn to the northwest . The elevation along SR @-@ 313 fluctuates for several miles , until intersecting with Long Canyon Road . Long Canyon Road is a connector that heads through Long Canyon and intersects with SR @-@ 279 . The route continues in a stretch of area known as the Big Flat , where it intersects the entrance to Canyonlands National Park . Soon after the westward turn , SR @-@ 313 intersects with Island in the Sky Road , a local road that heads southward from the main highway .

The Knoll , a nearby mountain , is visible as the highway makes a turn to the north . The route has left Dead Horse Point State Park by now , and progresses northward through Grand County . At the intersection with Little Canyon Road , SR @-@ 313 turns to the northwest once again . However , this pattern straightens out to a northward one . At Gemini Bridges Road , the route turns to the opposite direction , heading to the northwest . The highway continues along in this direction for some time , passing Mineral Bottom Road , and drops down in elevation . The route makes a hairpin turn in the mountains , entering the South Fork of the Sevenmile Canyon . While traversing the canyon there are several view areas along the highway overlooking both Sevenmile canyon , Dead Horse Point , and two rock formations called the Monitor and the Merrimack , both named after warships in the American Civil War . Running along the canyon , SR @-@ 313 terminates at an intersection with U.S. Route 191 about 9 miles ( 14 km ) north of Moab .

= = History = =

With highways in and near Moab back in the 1960s limited to just two state @-@ maintained highways , there was no state route built to access Dead Horse Point . The only two highways in the area were U.S. Route 160 ( now U.S. Route 191 ) and State Route 128 . There were two routes assigned in the direction of Dead Horse Point in the 1960s , SR @-@ 278 and SR @-@ 279 . The route that SR @-@ 313 runs along was mapped by 1969 , stretching all the way to Dead Horse Point as an unmarked county highway . Though SR @-@ 279 was completed in 1962 , SR @-@ 278 was never constructed . In 1975 , the proposal for SR @-@ 278 was cancelled . In its place , the Utah Department of Transportation assigned SR @-@ 313 , assuming maintenance for what was local roads .

The original roadbed featured blind switchbacks and an 11 % grade on the descent into Seven Mile canyon . The access road to Canyonlands National Park was rebuilt 1988 , and the construction crews severely damaged SR @-@ 313 in the process . The highway was completely rebuilt , starting in 1989 , to its modern form . The reconstruction reduced the maximum grade from 11 % to

8 % and re @-@ graded the switchbacks to be on level ground to eliminate the blind corners .

= = Major intersections = =