



# US 34 Big Thompson Canyon

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What traffic impacts will there be this summer?**

Between mile points 77 and 80 (just east of Drake to the Cedar Cove area) there will be single-lane closures requiring flagging operations for general construction activities and short-term traffic stops for rock blasting work. Drivers should plan for 20 to 30 minute delays when driving through this area.

- **How much rock blasting needs to be done?**

In the initial work to be done between Drake and Cedar Cove, there are two blasting locations that will require removing about 200,000 cubic yards of rocks. This amount is roughly 20,000 dump trucks full of material - enough to fill up half of Coors Field. Beyond these locations we are still determining how much blasting and rock removal needs to be done in other parts of the canyon.

- **Why can't you blast at night when traffic volumes are lower?**

Federal safety regulations prohibit doing rock blasting work at night because it is too difficult for the workers to see what they are doing and the shadows cast on the rock face wall when light plants are used make it harder to identify potential rockslide areas following a blast.

- **Why can't you accommodate people who use US 34 to get to work or people who work hours other than 9-to-5?**

Full closure travel restrictions won't begin until October; however, in establishing the 6 to 8:30 a.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. travel windows for canyon residents, we knew these times wouldn't meet every single resident's needs and would force everyone living in Estes Park, Loveland and other communities outside the canyon to take the detour. Even so, however, we needed to try to strike some type of balance between the need for canyon residents to travel back and forth and the need to get the majority of the highest-impact rock blasting work done with as little impact as possible to summer travelers.

- **Is there any opportunity for people to come through at hours other than 6 to 8:30 a.m. and 4 to 7 p.m.?**

When we start this work in October, we are going to be very strict about these travel restrictions knowing that if we make concessions for a couple people we are going to have to make them for everyone. As the work progresses, if we find that the traffic volumes through the canyon are light enough to loosen the restrictions a little bit without impacting the schedule, we will look at what these opportunities might be. We won't know how the travel restrictions are going to work until we have them in place for a few weeks so it's premature to speculate on what, if anything, we might be able to do to accommodate other schedules. One thing we don't want to do is be too lax at the outset and then have to start turning people away.

- **What if I live in the canyon but don't own property. Can I get a permit?**

Yes. The travel permits are intended to accommodate the people who live in the canyon and need to travel back and forth. If you live in the canyon but rent property we will work through the property owner to get you the permit you need to travel at the established times.

- **If I live in the canyon when can I get a permit to travel at the established times?**

We will have more information on the permitting process, including how and where to get them, before work begins in October. As part of the permit distribution process we will be asking residents to provide proof of property ownership (or in the case of renters some type of document like a utility bill that links you to a property owned by others). This fall we will host an informational meeting for residents to help guide you through the permitting process.

- **What if I need to have a contractor perform service on my home, get propane delivered, receive a FedEx package or have someone else get to my home in the canyon?**

We are contacting various companies and providers that do work in the canyon and letting them know they can come down the canyon from Estes Park or access the Cedar Cove area from Loveland with no impact.

- **Will high school students and parents of kindergarten students be able to pass through with permits at times other than the established windows?**

Right now there is no plan to allow people through the canyon at times other than the two established timeframes. That means anyone picking up children mid-day would need to detour around the canyon. If there is any opportunity to revisit these restrictions later this year or in early 2017 without affecting the construction schedule we will do so, but right now we can't speculate on what adjustments could be made.

- **What happens when the schools are only open for a half-day?**

We are working with school officials to get buses through the canyon including on days of scheduled early releases.

- **When will CDOT begin work between Drake and Estes Park and will there be closures in this part of the canyon?**

We won't start work in the upper part of the canyon until next year and there will be closures between Drake and Estes Park that will require periodically routing traffic onto County Road 43. The work between Estes Park and Drake will not begin until LCR 43 is complete. As we get closer to starting this phase of work we will let the public know so everyone can plan their travels accordingly.

- **Will all the traffic impacts be done when the first package/phase of work is finished?**

There will still be traffic impacts associated with future work phases through 2019, but since design is not completed we do not have specific information.

- **Other than complete closures of the canyon what type of traffic impacts can we expect?**

Other than full roadway closures, the other primary traffic impact will involve reducing the roadway to one lane of travel in various locations and controlling traffic flow with either flaggers or temporary traffic signals.

- **Once work begins will it be done in one specific area at a time or all through the canyon?**

Although the initial work will be focused between Drake and Loveland, there will eventually come a time when there will be several active work zones with construction activities occurring at the same time up and down the corridor.

- **Will crews be working at night and during the weekend?**

To expedite the work and finish the project as soon as possible, work will be done at night. We also anticipate working at least some weekends starting in late fall while balancing this with the need to provide rest for the crews.

- **Will we be allowed to drive through the east end of the canyon at times when crews aren't working and if not, why?**

To expedite this first phase of work, the plan is to work around-the-clock so there will really be very few times when crews and equipment aren't on the roadway. For the limited times when workers aren't on the roadway, to maintain public safety, this 3-mile section on the east end of the canyon will remain closed. Once rock blasting and heavy construction work gets under way we anticipate commuters will need to follow pilot car drivers to safely navigate the ever-changing driving conditions through this section of the canyon.

- **How long will it take to finish the project?**

We are estimating it will take three years to make all the permanent repairs between Estes Park and Loveland. This is the first phase of a three-year project.

- **Will there be more public meeting before construction starts in the fall or before other phases?**

Yes, CDOT and Kiewit will host another public meeting before the start of construction in October 2016. CDOT will host additional public meetings for each phase of the project. Information will also be regularly posted on the website and distributed through email and newsletters.

- **How can I get up-to-date project information?**

\*PLEASE NOTE NEW CONTACT INFORMATION\*

Information hotline number: [970-667-1005](tel:970-667-1005)

Email address: [infous34@kiewit.com](mailto:infous34@kiewit.com)

Website: [us34canyon.codot.gov](http://us34canyon.codot.gov)

Sign-up for real-time email alerts from CDOT: <https://www.codot.gov/travel/get-connected.html>