I-70 Mountain Corridor CSS
Decision Process Team Meeting
5-15-08

ATTENDEES: Art Ballah/Colorado Motor Carriers Association (CMCA)
Bill Macy/Project Support
Bill Scheuerman/CDOT
Carol Kruse/USFS
Chad Salli/Town of Vail
Cindy Neely/Town of Georgetown
Flo Raitano/I-70 Coalition
Gary Frey/ Colorado Trout Unlimited
Jill Carlson/Colorado Geological Survey
Mary Jane Loevlie/City of Idaho Springs
Mary Jo Vobejda/CH2M HILL
Megan Alderton/InterMountain Corporate Affairs
Melinda Urban/FHWA
Michelle Halstead/CDOT
Michelle Li/CODT
Pat Noyes/Pat Noyes & Associates
Tom Schilling/InterMountain Corporate Affairs

DATE: May 15, 2008
LOCATION: Red Rocks Residency

Introduction:
Mary Jo Vobejda chaired the meeting and began with an introduction and review
of outcomes:
- Design a collaborative decision process that will ensure future
decisions are made in a fair, open, equitable, and inclusive manner.
- Include in the process a method for amending the *CSS Guidance
Manual* with new ideas and best practices.
- Design the process to be scaleable based on project size and
adaptable for each of the 5 Life Cycle Phases.

Carol Kruse asked where she could find meeting minutes on the Web site.
Minutes can be found under the *CSS Corridor Team* tab on the home page.
Carol asked that meeting notes include discussion details for reference.

Review of the Decision Process:
It was noted that the process was introduced at the first Decision Process meeting.

It was explained that a project goes through a Life Cycle starting at the Systems Planning level. Once a project is identified, it moves to the Project Development phase.

The process is scaleable. For smaller projects, it may be very short. In fact, Steps 1-3 may be completed in just one meeting. For larger projects, it may take several years to complete.

Decision Process and Life Cycle Phases graphics were reviewed.

Decision Process and I-70 CSS:
The goal is to accomplish consistency of process.
- This way people will understand when and how they should be involved and how they can effectively work through the process.
- Consistency of process makes it very transparent.
- It should build understanding and, therefore, trust.
- A goal is that the process be trusted by stakeholders.
- In the CSS process, it is important that criteria are established before alternatives. Criteria can always be measured, and applied to all alternatives.

Discussion – *Dynamic Process*
Flo Raitano asked how it will be possible to keep the process dynamic.

The group discussed that dynamics lie in Step 1, where a group must take time to figure out what it needs to accomplish. Each time is unique to the decision to be made. Different people will be at the table each time, which makes it a dynamic process rather than a checklist or exercise.

Team representatives must also change in order to get new ideas and expectations. Age diversity is important on teams because different ages bring different dynamics to teams and situations.

It is likely that people in certain job positions will be appointed to teams. This may not be the best approach to keep a dynamic process going. Discussions of multi-disciplinary teams may need to be more prescriptive.

Flo Raitano suggested that dynamic process should be included as a key element of the Decision Process.

Discussion – *Inclusion of Monitoring*

Gary Frey noted that processes often change. Monitoring and reevaluation should be included in Phase 5 – Operations and Maintenance.

Phase 5 includes monitoring. A more thorough description of the phases and steps will be written.

County-Wide Coordination Meetings will address these issues as well. This will be the forum in which people can bring to the table conversations about lane closure consequences, etc.

Bill Scheuerman said that information is initially managed by maintenance and then goes back into the planning process. CDOT is currently moving toward an environmental management system.

Gary Frey said that he is concerned about what triggers a reevaluation. Hopefully, a cycle can be built into the SWEEP process for reevaluation. Specific data gathering is needed. It is necessary to monitor and reevaluate, and it is necessary to keep that process alive. He hopes that county-wide coordination can focus on the issue itself.

Cynthia Neely suggested that a formal process is needed for how environmental maintenance occurs.

Bill Scheuerman further explained that there is an emerging process. A pavement monitoring system exists, but it took a long time to get there. That is the goal for the environmental management system. The question is how to capture what was done and how well it's working.

Michelle Li said that maintenance staff is very much involved. Erosion control is a prime example.

It was decided that the existing process may only need to be enhanced by adding stakeholders to quarterly county-wide coordination meetings. Michelle Li said she would also welcome stakeholders to her meetings. CDOT often has things going on that others are unaware of. It may be helpful if CDOT processes were more accessible to stakeholders.

After much discussion regarding the title of Phase 5, and the inclusion of monitoring and reevaluation, it was decided that the title of Phase 5 will be changed to System Operations, maintenance, and monitoring. More explanation may be given in the phase description as well.

Teams Associated with Life Cycle Phases:

Discussion -- *County-Wide Coordination Meetings*

County-Wide Coordination Meetings expand on the current county-wide coordination system in order to make the teams more diverse and multi-disciplinary. The team is unsure how NGOs will fit into these meetings, but the meetings can operate to address agencies and NGOs.

County-Wide Meetings will be most heavily involved in Phases 1 and 5 of a project. They will appoint members to the Project Leadership Team (PLT) and will vision-check the process and ensure that it is being true to the goals that have been set. Phase 5 issues will be discussed at regular meetings.

Carol Kruse asked if County-Wide Coordination Meetings were specifically related to I-70. They are not; other CDOT projects and issues are discussed. She recommends including any federal and state agencies that will be affected by a project in the County-Wide Coordination Meetings.

After some discussion about meeting frequency and involvement of federal and state agencies in the County-Wide Coordination Meetings, it was decided that a formal agenda distributed to a large list of recipients in advance of the quarterly meetings would be most inclusive and would allow people and organizations to decide whether they need or want to attend based on agenda items.

Flo Raitano suggested that the Summit Leadership Forum – a group of elected officials, Forest Service representatives, ski resort CEOs, Chamber heads and school district leaders – needs to be involved. This is an inclusive and comprehensive group. This group also meets quarterly. The team should be looking into similar existing groups in other counties to engage.

Discussion – *Project Leadership Team*
The PLT is not a decision-making body, but a decision-enabling body. In the interest of consistency, a PLT is prescribed for every project. On smaller projects, the Project Staff (PS) may operate as the PLT; on larger projects, a separate PLT is necessary.

The group discussed the role of County-Wide Coordination Meetings in assigning members to the PLT. CDOT will decide whether, based on project size, if separate PLT and PS teams are needed. If a combined PLT and PS is appropriate for a project it will be called the PLT.   CDOT will go to the County-Wide Coordination meeting to ask for assigned members.

Cynthia Neely noted that the manner in which assignments will be made should be formally indicated.

The PLT needs to have a finite size. It will be consistent throughout the phases of a project. The County-Wide Coordination Meetings will be told how many seats they may assign, not who should be assigned to take those seats.

Gary Frey advised caution in setting limits on the number of members assigned to the PLT. He said teams naturally become smaller and functional. Size will find itself.

Discussion – *Institutional Memory*
Art Ballah asked how institutional memory will be maintained. There will be turnover and this issue should be addressed through *documentation and education* of successors. Verbal commitments must also be somehow captured to ensure that record of them is not lost.

Discussion – *Technical Teams*
Technical Teams (TT) are open to stakeholders and agency representatives, and size is unlimited. TTs are comprised of technical people to represent all disciplines. This is the team that creates criteria. Every environmental document will have a technical team.

The PS is also part of the TT. The PS leads the TT, and members of the PS are also part of the PLT. The PS is the connector.

Discussion – *Projects and Team Interaction*

Mary Jane asked how a project is determined to be a project. This comes out of Phase 1 Systems Planning. A project is identified as a project with a beginning and an end point. Then a PLT is formed. The PLT will decide whether the project needs further breakdown.

Carol Kruse noted that there are several layers involved, and perhaps some duplication.

Mary Jo Vobejda explained that CSS has many layers, and all is in an effort to make sure that all stakeholders are involved. This is an effort to make the process consistent. Stakeholders will be established on teams and a process will be built in which people can understand how decisions are made. In CSS, the idea is that you do not compromise, you create. This is getting away from the idea that there is one decision-making party.

The group discussed that when the process is truly followed, goals and criteria are clear up front. Outcomes are defined in Step 1.

Melinda Urban asked how the teams interact with each other. Bill Scheuerman explained that the thread is the PS. The PLT is no longer only CDOT. They are bringing external perspective in to break the log jam..

Collaboration is agreement that if you go through these steps openly, everyone can understand how a decision was made.

Mary Jo Vobejda drew a diagram on the white board to show how teams interact throughout the process.

Melinda asked for an example of a project without a TT. This would be a project with a very specific outcome, such as an incident management plan. The project would still go through the 6 Step Process, but if a project is focused on a defined problem, teams can be condensed.

If consensus cannot be achieved for any reason, the PLT's role is to figure out a process by which a decision can be made. The PLT will analyze the reason that consensus cannot be made and will come up with a process to move the project forward.

Gary Frey asked what happens when consensus is achieved. Everyone who participates makes the decision. In effect, the Collaborative Effort CE has made a decision.
Pat Noyes cautioned that the PLT will never be a tie breaker. That would undermine the process. The PLT simply endorses the decision that comes to them.

Gary Frey asked where the final decision then rests. The final decision rests in the consensus. Gary suggested that discussion and clarity regarding consensus as the decision and on the roles and responsibilities of the PLT in that would be helpful.

The process is effective, but layers do not appear to be efficient. It is better, though, to look at the big picture and spend time in the layers now. The key is a high level of transparency.

Discussion – *NEPA*
Carol Kruse asked where NEPA fits into the process timeline. NEPA fits into the Project Development Phase. CSS will customize terminology to align better with NEPA to avoid confusion.

NEPA and CSS are in sync. Outcomes and actions align with purpose and need. Like NEPA, in the planning process a full range of alternatives are considered. Documentation is also part of NEPA.

The big difference is at the level of looking at impacts to resources/categorical exclusions. NEPA environmental assessments would capture all the work done.

Step 6 during the Project Development phase is environmental documents. Deliverables will be outlined by phases in the *CSS Guidance Manual.* Work is being done currently to figure out what the manual will look like and how users will access information from it.

Discussion – *CSS Guidance Manual*
Art Ballah reiterated the importance of institutional knowledge and memory. He said there must be some responsibility at the CSS level to ensure this.
A searchable PDF document will be helpful, and will need to be ongoing.
Mary Jo Vobejda noted that the team is looking into a Web-based manual that will be searchable. Several references will also be included. The CSS team is working with an information architect on the manual. Links will also be provided to other people's work.

In addition, half-day training will be developed for PSs and PLTs to provide an overview of CSS, consensus, etc. The workshop will explain how creating makes compromise unnecessary.

Public Information Meetings and Format:
A menu may be better than prescriptive language.

Art Ballah suggested that public input into the process is important. A major function will be managing expectations. A critical point will be a vote for funding of the I-70 improvements.

Public dialogue will be important throughout. The public should be notified of mitigation efforts, and should be asked for ideas on how to further mitigate.

The public needs to feel a sense of ownership in outcomes and discussion.

The *CSS Guidance Manual* could include regional references such as newspapers, etc. in which advertisements and coverage for public meetings may be most effective.

Annual review of CE status fits easily into CSS.

Public meetings are not one-size-fits-all. A meeting should be designed around its purpose. Listening and feedback are important, as are preparation and an open mind.

The PS has a public process built in to communicate into multiple disciplines.

Principles should be outlined by steps so that there is an understanding of what public outreach is meant to achieve at each step.

All agreed that the CSS Decision Process is ready to roll out.

Documents will be sent via e-mail to the Decision Process Team to ensure comprehensive edits based on today's meeting.