

AGREN BLANDO COURT REPORTING & VIDEO INC

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARING
PUBLIC HEARING PRESENTATION, OCTOBER 2010

IN RE:
I-70 MOUNTAIN CORRIDOR - REVISED DRAFT
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PURSUANT TO NOTICE to all parties in interest, the above-entitled matter came on for public hearing on Thursday, October 21, 2010, commencing at 6:00 PM at 4201 East Arkansas Avenue, Denver, Colorado, before Martha Loomis, Certified Shorthand Reporter and Colorado Notary Public.

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1 WHEREUPON the following proceedings were had:

2 THE INTERPRETER: Good evening. My name is Janina
3 Calderon. I am the interpreter, Spanish interpreter for
4 tonight's public hearing.

5 If you need any assistance with the Spanish language
6 please let me know. I will be standing on my left, and I'll be
7 able to translate all the signs, or translate and interpret the
8 presentation, the comments, and anything that you might need in
9 Spanish.

10 Thank you.

11 I'm going to say it in Spanish as well.

12 (Untranslated.)

13 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you, Janina. Appreciate it.

14 Welcome, and thank you for coming to this fourth in a
15 series of CDOT public hearings. We appreciate your attendance
16 and your participation this evening.

17 I know that everybody should've received one of these
18 as you came in downstairs a little earlier. This gives you an
19 overview or agenda of what we will be doing this evening.

20 And inside -- if you haven't participated in the open
21 house -- and I hope you did -- this gives you a map of the
22 different displays so that you can learn more information. Of
23 course we have displays in this room too.

24 There will be a number of CDOT representatives that
25 will be on hand in the hallway and also in this room if you have

1 additional questions.

2 But remember, any questions that you ask of CDOT
3 representatives tonight are not, quote, formal comments until
4 those comments are captured either on line in our public comment
5 room, which is located just down the hall, room 262, or later
6 this evening after our general presentation here at the
7 microphone.

8 And by the way, if you have not signed up to speak at
9 the microphone and you'd like to, please do so in the next 10
10 minutes. And as well you can fill out comment forms and submit
11 those in boxes in the public comment room, also 262.

12 Or if you want to gather your thoughts and mail this
13 in by November 8 it needs to be received here at CDOT at the
14 address located on the back of the form. So you have a number
15 of ways to make comment.

16 Later for those that will be speaking at the
17 microphone remember that any questions that are asked will not
18 be responded to tonight during the forum, but will be addressed
19 in the final document that will come out at the end of this
20 process.

21 With that I'd like to introduce Kevin O'Malley. He is
22 a Clear Creek County commissioner. He would like to share a few
23 thoughts about the process.

24 Thank you, Kevin.

25 (Applause.)

1 COMMISSIONER O'MALLEY: Hello, everyone.

2 Before I get started with my comments I see my former
3 colleague, Harry Dale, who was a commissioner in Clear Creek
4 County for eight years. And he spent a great deal of those
5 eight years working on this very project. And we wouldn't be
6 anywhere near where we are today without all of the effort that
7 Harry put in.

8 I just want to publicly acknowledge that. You should
9 all give him a round of applause.

10 (Applause.)

11 COMMISSIONER O'MALLEY: Michelle's timing this, so I
12 have to hurry.

13 I would like to thank CDOT and FHWA for asking me to
14 address this public hearing about the revised draft of the I-70
15 PEIS. I'd also like to thank all of you for attending this
16 meeting and making your thoughts about the I-70 Corridor part of
17 the public record.

18 For the past six years I've been a Clear Creek County
19 commissioner. During that time I've had the opportunity to
20 serve on the I-70 coalition board of directors. I'm on Governor
21 Ritter's transportation finance panel, and on the I-70
22 collaborative effort, which developed the Preferred Alternative
23 representative of the Revised Draft PEIS.

24 My main role here tonight is to try and explain the
25 22-year history of the debate and discussion about the future of

1 transportation in the I-70 Corridor. With apologies to CDOT and
2 FHWA I'm going to go a little further than that.

3 These past 22 years can be divided into three
4 segments. From 1988 to '98 people representing various
5 stakeholders had long discussions that led to a consensus view
6 that the solution included both highway improvements and high
7 speed transit.

8 From 1999 until 2009 the discussion changed, and
9 highway-only improvements became the preferred choice of CDOT.
10 This led to the release of the first Draft PEIS and a stalemate
11 between stakeholders.

12 It was obviously the stalemate would lead to
13 continuing arguments, and most likely court battles.

14 In 2007 Russ George was appointed as the executive
15 director of CDOT. No matter what the final outcome of all our
16 transportation discussions turns out to be every one of us and
17 every citizen in Colorado owes a debt to Director Russ George.

18 (Applause.)

19 COMMISSIONER O'MALLEY: Those outcomes have been and
20 will continue to be better because of the leadership that Russ
21 has provided.

22 From 2007 until today the discussion about I-70 has
23 moved from stalemate back to consensus. The Preferred
24 Alternative identified in this Revised Draft represents the
25 consensus agreement reached by stakeholders along the Corridor.

1 The solution is not perfect. It's certainly not
2 perfect for Clear Creek County because we will suffer through
3 the overwhelming negative impacts of years of construction. And
4 we will see very few, if any, of the positive impacts of these
5 projects.

6 But we support this Revised Draft because we believe
7 we can trust our fellow citizens to protect the vital interests
8 of the people of Clear Creek County.

9 Trust is good. Trust with verification is better. So
10 Clear Creek will be diligent in making sure that essential
11 commitments are made and kept as we move forward.

12 The solution is also not perfect for the people along
13 the Front Range, nor for the resort communities across the
14 Continental Divide. But it is a solution we can all live with.
15 And if we work together we can build it.

16 Finally I would like to address a recent editorial by
17 the Denver Post opposing this Collaborative Effort. They
18 resurrect terms like "pie in the sky" to describe projects that
19 America's economic competitors are not only embracing but
20 building.

21 They seem to believe it makes more sense to spend a
22 lot of money building a highway that will be obsolete five years
23 after it's complete rather than spending twice as much to build
24 a transportation solution that will still be serving our great
25 great great grandchildren.

1 I asked the Post editorial board to let us know if
2 they represent the views of those people from our history who
3 thought James Watts' steam engine was folly. Or do they
4 represent those who believed it would help lead to the expansion
5 of the United States from the Mississippi River to the Pacific
6 Ocean.

7 Do you represent those who believe cars and trucks
8 would never replace the horse and buggy? Air travel would never
9 be used by the masses? Interstate highways were unnecessary and
10 a waste of money?

11 Or do you represent the views of those people who
12 believe that the 20th Century would become known as the American
13 century?

14 There's a debate going on in America today. What that
15 debate is really about is whether we choose to believe that we
16 are an old country that has achieved all it can and is ready to
17 go off into the sunset or are we still a young country that
18 intends to maintain its place in the world.

19 So for the Post and for anyone who might believe that
20 America's time of invention and innovation has passed I'll
21 paraphrase a well used quote. If you refuse to lead then
22 follow. If you can't follow then please just get out of the
23 way.

24 Thank you all very much.

25 (Applause.)

1 MR. MC DANIEL: Welcome everybody, and thank you,
2 Commissioner O'Malley, for those words.

3 You know, I just have to say we do take those words to
4 heart. And that's why we're here tonight because we have gone
5 through a very challenging project. And we've come to you here
6 tonight to present what we believe is the best solution.

7 It's not perfect, but it is what we feel to be the
8 best solution for the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

9 Also I want to thank everybody here tonight for taking
10 time out of their busy day to learn more about what we want to
11 do and what we're proposing for the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

12 I want to introduce myself. My name is Scott
13 McDaniel. I'm with the Colorado Department of Transportation.
14 I'm also the project manager for the I-70 Mountain Corridor
15 PEIS.

16 And I've also been informed that we have some young
17 engineering students here tonight. I just want to give you one
18 word of advice. Pay attention to your public speaking course.

19 So what we're here tonight to do is share with you
20 information about the I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic
21 Environmental Impact Statement, or what we call the PEIS.

22 We have a lot of information in the document here
23 tonight or at the boards. And we also have a lot of people here
24 who worked very hard on completing this document. And they are
25 here to answer any questions you might have.

1 And so that's the purpose of tonight's meeting, to
2 provide you with that information on the PEIS. And hopefully
3 get comments back from you. That's really the purpose of
4 tonight's meeting is to get those comments.

5 You know, we think we have a good solution, but we
6 want to hear what people have to say about it because it's
7 important that we get that information so we can go forward with
8 the best solution possible.

9 And later on -- Mary Ann talked about some of the ways
10 that you can provide those comments and she'll share that with
11 you more. But you have an opportunity to make public comments
12 at the microphone tonight, limited to three minutes roughly.

13 And you can also give us written comments. We have a
14 court reporter outside too if you would just like to make a
15 private statement with them. And you can also again give us
16 written comments.

17 You can submit them tonight, or if you want more time
18 to think about your comments and provide them to us later, you
19 can give them to us up until November 8.

20 Although we're not like the IRS. You can't post date
21 it. We need those comments by November 8 so we can keep our
22 schedule.

23 So I guess the big question is what is a PEIS? A PEIS
24 is a National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA document. NEPA
25 is a law that requires any agency that receives federal funds,

1 like CDOT, to consider all types of environment impacts on
2 projects and programs that we're proposing. In other words we
3 can't really build anything until we go through this
4 environmental process.

5 So this document that we're talking about tonight, the
6 PEIS document, is the first phase of the National Environment
7 Policy Act decision. And it also results in that broad Tier 1
8 level decision.

9 Again the PEIS is a tiered process. So tonight what
10 we really want is comments on the overall pictures of what we're
11 doing. We're studying a 144-mile-long corridor. Obviously we
12 can't build it in one 144-mile-long project so we're going to
13 have to build it in phases. That's where the next tier comes
14 in.

15 But what the I-70 Mountain Corridor PEIS does is
16 establishes a long-term corridor vision for I-70. It also
17 identifies a program of improvements for the corridor; it
18 defines a purpose and need. Obviously we need to know what
19 we're doing and why we're doing it.

20 In addition to that it defines travel mode, capacity,
21 and general location of the transportation solution that we have
22 proposed for tonight.

23 We need to keep in mind this Tier 1 document will not
24 result in any construction project or impacts to our community,
25 but it does consider those range of impacts that might occur at

1 that level.

2 And we also in this document we make commitments to
3 the mitigation strategies to help us overcome the impacts that
4 we might or will have during this project.

5 So as I mentioned we're in a Tier 1 document. That's
6 what we're here tonight to talk about, the PEIS. But it's
7 important to know what the next step is, and that is the Tier 2
8 process.

9 The Tier 2 process will look at those specific
10 projects that are in concert with the Tier 1 decision that we're
11 proposing here tonight. It's going to refine the alternatives
12 and the specific lineup and design of the projects, the
13 individual projects that are within the Tier 1 decision.

14 Each project will have their own specific purpose and
15 need, and they will result in a construction project. And those
16 projects will also identify project-specific mitigation for each
17 one of those projects as well.

18 Okay. It's probably time to give you a little bit of
19 history. Commissioner O'Malley already did that. He mentioned
20 that we have been working on this for a long time. And we have.

21 It's been a challenging project as you can imagine,
22 you know. It's that way because we have such an important
23 corridor for the state that we're working on.

24 And so really the PEIS started about 10 years ago in
25 December 2000. And we worked towards a Draft PEIS that was

1 released in 2004.

2 After release of the draft we got a lot of comments
3 from agencies and the public about what was contained within
4 that document. And frankly it wasn't very well received.

5 So because of that we took a step back. And we tried
6 to identify how we were going to move forward in a way that we
7 can get to a solution that everybody can be agreeable to. And
8 because of that we had developed what was called a Collaborative
9 Effort Team. And I will speak more to that in a little bit.

10 But again tonight what we're talking about is the
11 revised draft of the PEIS. So after the 2004 draft we decided
12 we needed to change some of the things that were looked at.

13 We got a lot of comments from stakeholders on, you
14 know, the lack of vision that the 2004 draft had. And there's
15 also some other funding limitations that were put on that draft
16 as well as just the process, the overall process that we took to
17 get us to that point.

18 So because of that there's been a lot of things that
19 have changed since 2004. So we worked with the Federal Highway
20 Administration to decide what was the best way to update the
21 2004 draft.

22 And in concert with the Federal Highway Administration
23 we decided on doing a Revised Draft PEIS. And in the revised
24 draft basically what we're going to do is we're going to update
25 all the analysis that was done in 2004.

1 We're going to address the comments that were received
2 in the 2004 draft. We're going to try to do our best to
3 anticipate the impacts of future construction. Again we're
4 going to identify mitigation strategies and planning for the
5 Tier 2 processes.

6 This is an intuitive question. Why is I-70 so
7 important? As you all know, it's the only east-west interstate
8 through Colorado. It connects our communities with the
9 recreational areas.

10 And important to everybody is also that it's important
11 to our quality of life, and it is the economic base for our
12 state for freight and tourism.

13 I think we can all determine what happens if we do
14 nothing. If we do nothing growth in the Front Range will lead
15 to more trips on the I-70. Travel conditions are already
16 congested now, and they're expected to be worse in the future.

17 A trip now that takes just a little over three hours
18 will in the near future take over five. And the congestion will
19 be unbearable. People no longer will be able to time their
20 trips by time of day to avoid congestion; it will be congested
21 all the time.

22 In the very near future we estimate that as many as
23 9 million people will choose not to visit places on the I-70
24 Corridor due to the congestion.

25 I talked earlier about involving the communities and

1 stakeholders on the Corridor. I want to give you a little more
2 background on that.

3 You know, it took thousands of people, literally
4 thousands of people for us to get here today. And we are truly
5 grateful for the countless hours that people have donated, their
6 own personal time towards this effort. It demonstrates the
7 passion people have for coming up with a good transportation
8 solution for the Corridor.

9 And so as I mentioned we developed the Collaborative
10 Effort Team. 2007 is when that team was formed. And that team
11 helped us craft what we now call the Preferred Alternative for
12 the Revised Draft PEIS.

13 One thing that we learned going through the
14 collaborative process to come up with the Preferred Alternative
15 is that it's important to get that early stakeholder input. And
16 so we want to duplicate that effort.

17 And so to do that we decided to develop a Context
18 Sensitive Solution program for the I-70 Mountain Corridor. A
19 Context Sensitive Solution is the Federal Highway Administration
20 concept that we use on all projects. But because I-70 has so
21 many challenges that we're faced with we decided to develop an
22 I-70 program for Context Sensitive Solutions.

23 And what this program does is seeks to develop a
24 transportation facility that fits the physical setting of the
25 Corridor. It's intended to preserve the scenic, aesthetic, and

1 historic environmental resources. That's a key point that we'll
2 talk more about later.

3 And just as important we also want to maintain safety
4 and mobility for the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

5 In addition to the Preferred Alternative we also
6 looked at numerous alternatives for this. There's literally
7 hundreds and hundreds of alternatives that were identified and
8 evaluated for this project.

9 But what we did is we broke it down into four major
10 categories besides the No-Action Alternative.

11 The No-Action Alternative, I'll just describe what
12 that is. It's as if we did nothing different than we're already
13 doing today. We would continue to do the maintenance type
14 projects that would just keep the road in the condition that it
15 is. There wouldn't be any capacity improvements for those No-
16 Action Alternatives.

17 We also have Minimal Action Alternatives. Those
18 include only minor infrastructure and noninfrastructure
19 improvements. But those, but all action alternatives for this
20 project include some or all of the minimal action improvements.

21 We also looked at highway alternatives and roadway
22 capacity improvements to fix the highway and to also improve
23 capacity and fix certain sections of the highway, such as sharp
24 curves.

25 And next the Transit Alternative introduces dedicated

1 transit services to the Corridor.

2 And last, the Combination Alternative is a combination
3 of highway alternatives and transit alternatives.

4 So why do we need a multimodal solution? As we went
5 through the alternative analysis process we realized that no
6 single alternative is going to solve our transportation problem.
7 And we found that through the alternative development,
8 screening, and evaluation process.

9 Along with our stakeholders we determined that we
10 needed more than just a single mode of operation. I want to
11 make the point that the relationship between capacity and
12 congestion is not direct. Just because you improve increased
13 capacity doesn't mean you're going to relieve congestion.

14 I want to point out, remember that 9 million people
15 who choose to not make that trip? If we do just capacity
16 increases many of those people will be making trips. As
17 Commissioner O'Malley indicated, the capacity improvements just
18 won't last very long.

19 Therefore we need a Transit Alternative. We need that
20 multimodal alternative that addresses both capacity and
21 congestion for the Corridor.

22 So what we're here tonight to do is describe to you
23 the Preferred Alternative. The Preferred Alternative for this
24 project is unique. It's unlike anything that CDOT's ever done
25 in the past. It consists of four primary parts. It consists of

1 a flexible program of highway improvements; it consists of an
2 Advanced Guideway System; and with the flexible program of
3 highway improvements that program of highway improvements
4 includes an adaptive nature to future needs.

5 What that means is we can adapt the needs of the
6 Corridor as we go along. As you can imagine this project isn't
7 going to get built overnight so we need to be able to adapt to
8 those changes.

9 Within the highway improvements we have what we call a
10 Minimum Program of Improvements and a Maximum Program of
11 Improvements. And I'll describe what those are to you a little
12 bit later.

13 Finally and I feel most importantly we have developed
14 a process that includes future stakeholder engagement on every
15 project that we do in the Corridor in the future. I will
16 describe each of those four components to you.

17 The first one is the noninfrastructure component.
18 What this is is strategies to encourage changes in travel
19 patterns without construction.

20 Some examples is providing travel information,
21 shifting passenger and freight travel times to different times
22 of the day and different days of the week. It could also be
23 things such as promoting high occupancy travel and public
24 transportation as well.

25 We can do some of these. But some of them are also

1 going to require action by local agencies and municipalities
2 such as land use development.

3 The next component of the Preferred Alternative is the
4 Advanced Guideway System. The Advanced Guideway System would be
5 an elevated train throughout the Corridor. It would extend from
6 C- 470 to Eagle County Airport and would connect to other
7 transit systems within the Corridor.

8 Some examples of potential technologies that it could
9 be are magnetic levitation monorail, or something else. We
10 haven't made a decision on that technology. Again, this is just
11 a high level view of what we want to do. We're going to do
12 future Tier 2 studies to make those determinations on what is
13 the best technology for the Corridor.

14 As we move forward with the Advanced Guideway System
15 obviously it's going to take a lot of effort to determine what's
16 going to be best for the Corridor. And the future studies that
17 we will be conducting for the Advanced Guideway System will
18 include studies on cost and benefit. It'll look at safety,
19 reliability, environmental impact, technology, ridership,
20 governance, and many other considerations as well.

21 The important thing about these studies to keep in
22 mind is these studies will involve stakeholder involvement and
23 Mountain Corridor CSS processes all along the way.

24 So as part of the highway improvements, the minimum
25 highway improvements is just the first part of the highway

1 improvement component of the Preferred Alternative. And this is
2 a very important term because we'll use it more in the future.
3 I'll describe to you how we know when and what we're going to
4 do.

5 But just to describe briefly what some of these
6 highway improvements are we've identified what we call specific
7 highway improvements or high priorities projects for the
8 Corridor. And that's going to include certain projects I'll
9 explain to you in a minute, but in addition to those specific
10 highway improvements we're going to do more than 20 interchange
11 improvement projects, and we're going to build 25 miles of
12 additional auxiliary lanes.

13 We'll have a new tunnel bore at the Twin Tunnels and
14 the Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnel. And we'll also be doing
15 more truck operation improvements such as chain-up stations.

16 I want to describe to you next what some of those
17 specific highway improvements are. The first one is six lanes
18 from Floyd Hill through the Twin Tunnels. That would also
19 include new bike trails and frontage roads along the Corridor.

20 The next high priority is the Empire Junction
21 interchange. We would also look at eastbound auxiliary lanes
22 from Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnel to Herman Gulch, and
23 also westbound auxiliary lanes from Bakerville to the
24 Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnels.

25 Those are all part of the minimum program. Again

1 we're going to talk a little bit more, and I'm going to explain
2 to you a little bit more how those are going to be determined
3 and when we can determine when those are going to occur.

4 I just described to you what the minimum program
5 improvements are. We also have what we call the Maximum Program
6 Improvements. So with the Maximum Program Improvements it would
7 be everything that I described in the Minimum Program, but in
8 addition to that it would also include six lane widening
9 extended from the west of the Twin Tunnels to the
10 Eisenhower-Johnson Memorial Tunnel.

11 It would also have several safety modifications at
12 Fall River Road. And we would also be reconstructing four
13 additional interchanges within Clear Creek County.

14 I want to talk to you a little about triggers. Again,
15 you know, I mentioned that the Preferred Alternative for this
16 project is unlike anything that CDOT's ever done before. It
17 allows us to have a flexible program of improvements.

18 We use these triggers to determine when we're going to
19 do some of these additional highway improvements, so what I'll
20 do is I'll read to you what those triggers are, and then I'll
21 try to give you a brief explanation how the triggers work.

22 The first trigger that we have here -- and again,
23 those will be for the Maximum Program -- and we would only
24 implement the Maximum Program if the specific highway
25 improvements in the Minimum Program are complete and the

1 Advanced Guideway System is functioning. Or the specific
2 highway improvements in the Minimum Program are complete and the
3 studies prove that the Advance Guideway System is not feasible.

4 And here's the last one. If local, regional,
5 national, or global trends or events have unexpectedly affected
6 travel on the Corridor.

7 So again, you know, this is a unique solution that we
8 have. It's actually very complicated. You know, we've been
9 working on this study for a long time, and still sometimes we
10 have a hard time wrapping our minds around how this works.

11 But the beauty of it is that it does allow us to
12 implement these highway improvements as they are needed, and to
13 also evaluate those improvements as we move along.

14 I think that's probably the most important thing to
15 take about these triggers is that we're not going to just build
16 things just because we had a decision to do that right off the
17 bat. We're going to have that continuous stakeholder
18 involvement that helps us determine and evaluate what we're
19 doing, and to keep us on track, and make sure we're still doing
20 the right things.

21 So the last part of the Preferred Alternative is
22 ongoing stakeholder engagement. Again, I can't emphasize enough
23 how important this is.

24 I don't believe we could be here talking to you today
25 without having the interaction with our stakeholders, not only

1 in the Corridor but everybody who's involved with the I-70
2 Corridor. It really is the key to success, and we believe it's
3 the key to success for all future projects as well.

4 So the ongoing stakeholder engagement has to include
5 the collaborative process that will follow the I-70 Mountain
6 Corridor CSS process on all future studies and projects.
7 Basically anything and everything we do on I-70 is going to go
8 through this specified CSS process.

9 The Collaborative Effort Team I described before, the
10 27 member Collaborative Effort Team, is going to review the
11 Corridor conditions and triggers each and every year.

12 We talked about that. It's important to make sure
13 we're still doing the right thing with this project. The team
14 will thoroughly review the purpose, need, and effectiveness of
15 improvement in the year 2020.

16 In the year 2020 we're going to look at everything
17 that's been done, and we're going to evaluate its impacts, and
18 we're going to make decisions in the year 2020 to determine are
19 we still on track? Is this still the right thing to do for the
20 I-70 Corridor?

21 Again, this flexible approach allows us to focus on
22 the immediate needs of the I-70 Mountain Corridor as well as
23 maintaining that long-term vision. That's the beauty of this
24 alternative is it helps the problems that we have today, but it
25 also gives us a target to aim for in the future.

1 As with any Environmental Impact Statement we went
2 through the process of evaluating what those impacts are. And
3 one of the goals of the PEIS is to take into account the needs
4 of the people and the natural resources in the Corridor, and to
5 preserve the best of Colorado.

6 It's difficult with a Programmatic EIS to look at
7 every possible site specific impact. But we did look at those
8 impacts on a broad, general basis.

9 We just don't have enough detail about the footprint
10 of the scope of our future actions. We don't have the future
11 projects designed. So we have to make the best assumptions to
12 make sure what we know that we can estimate what those impacts
13 to be in the future.

14 We also identified what those important resources are
15 in the Corridor, and what considerations we need to make as we
16 move forward.

17 We also looked at the Corridor bottlenecks, and we
18 tried to identify what resources are the most sensitive on the
19 Corridor as well.

20 And within the Revised Draft PEIS, as I said, we did
21 look at all the impacts of the resources. And if you look up
22 here you can see an example of some of the methods that we used
23 to evaluate those impacts. We have a lot of technical data and
24 a lot of information that's contained within the Revised Draft.

25 And what I guess what I'd like to suggest to everybody

1 is if you have concerns about what those are we have a number of
2 staff members and project team members that are stationed at the
3 information booths that can help you understand how we did this
4 evaluation process. There's a lot of work that went into
5 reviewing what the impacts are to our communities and our
6 environmental resources.

7 Again, you know, as we went through this process we
8 tried to identify what types of impacts are to be expected.
9 Obviously any construction that we do will disturb resources. I
10 wanted to reassure Commissioner O'Malley that we want to do
11 everything that we can, and we will do everything that we can to
12 minimize those impacts because we know they are a big concern,
13 and they are a challenge to both your quality of life and your
14 economy. And so we do want to emphasize the fact that we are
15 going to do our best to mitigate those impacts.

16 And even the minor impacts -- even the minor projects
17 will have impacts to the Corridor. And we want to keep that in
18 mind as we move forward.

19 And the range of impacts will vary in ridership to the
20 size and scope of those proposed projects, but again we're going
21 to do everything we can to minimize those impacts.

22 The Revised Draft looks at all the types of impacts
23 that will be incurred on this project. There's numerous types
24 of impacts.

25 The first one I'd like to talk about is direct

1 impacts. Direct impacts occur when transportation facilities
2 expand into areas next to corridors. Direct impacts could cause
3 loss of wildlife habitat, a loss of recreational areas or access
4 to recreational areas, or loss of historic buildings or other
5 remains. Those are just some examples of direct impacts.

6 Indirect impacts could be related to or are related to
7 changes on the Corridor conditions or character caused by new or
8 expanded transportation features.

9 Some examples of that are induced growth by the
10 transportation solutions that we implement, or it could be noise
11 or visual conditions are just some examples of indirect impacts.

12 We also looked at cumulative impacts. Cumulative
13 impacts occur when projects, our projects combine with the
14 impacts of other actions on the Corridor, such as ski area
15 expansion or development, occur together at the same location.
16 We did evaluate that. When we looked at the impacts of this
17 Preferred Alternative we looked at all of these components.

18 So what did we do with that? When we compared the
19 impacts of the Preferred Alternative to all the alternatives
20 that were identified in the PEIS we felt that the Preferred
21 Alternative is our best opportunity to meet the purpose and need
22 of this project, and it's the best alternative to meet that
23 50-years vision as well.

24 The beauty of it is it does provide for flexible,
25 adaptive approach to meeting all of our future needs. And

1 again, because it is a multimodal solution it meets both the
2 capacity and congestion demands for the Corridor.

3 As we went through and looked at what those impacts of
4 the Preferred Alternative were we did realize that in general
5 the impacts of the Preferred Alternative are higher than the
6 Minimal Action or any of the other single mode alternatives, but
7 it is generally less than the other Combination alternatives.
8 That's because of the flexible approach or adaptive approach to
9 the Preferred Alternative.

10 But one thing I want to point out is all the impacts
11 that we evaluated in the Revised Draft are presented before we
12 apply any mitigation strategies. Obviously as we move forward
13 we're going to try to do everything we can to minimize those
14 impacts, and develop good sound strategies to mitigate those
15 impacts.

16 One way that we can lessen the impacts is to minimize
17 the footprint of the Preferred Alternative. We will do that in
18 the Tier 2 process.

19 I know a lot of people are concerned how this project
20 is going to affect them. At this point we really can't say.
21 All we can do is move forward, and as we move forward we're
22 going to have to look at what the impacts are, and again we're
23 going to do our best to minimize the footprint of anything that
24 we do to our environment and communities.

25 And one mitigation strategy that's going to be very

1 important is we're going to try to avoid those impacts
2 everywhere we can.

3 For instance, in most of the locations, the Advanced
4 Guideway System would run in the highway median to minimize
5 those impacts to vegetation and wildlife. And beyond designing
6 solutions to minimize impacts we have committed to raise the
7 minimizing program and project level impacts on Tier 2. Those
8 are described better in Chapter 3 of the PEIS.

9 And then what I'm going to get into next is also one
10 of those unique characteristics of this Environment Impact
11 Statement that is unique, and we haven't done it anywhere else.
12 And I think it is also key to us being able to move forward
13 successfully.

14 And we have identified four agreements, or we have
15 developed four agreements that will help us move forward on all
16 future projects.

17 Obviously we've talked about this, but I can't say
18 enough about it. The first program that we developed, as I
19 said, is the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions.
20 This process provides the "how" on how we're going to move
21 forward on future projects.

22 We will be mindful of the Corridor context and
23 Corridor values. Again, the Corridor values are something
24 that's going to follow this, and they're going to be included on
25 every project that we do.

1 Those core values include commitment to environment,
2 commitment to community values, and safety. And again we're
3 going to use that six-step process that has been identified in
4 the I-70 Mountain Corridor Context Sensitive Solutions on every
5 process and every project that we do.

6 The next agreement that I'd like to talk about is the
7 I-70 Mountain Corridor Programmatic Agreement. And what this
8 agreement does is it establishes a process for evaluating
9 historic properties in the Tier 2 studies. It includes details
10 for all steps of historic property evaluation.

11 And one thing about this that I think we're all very
12 proud of is we can say this agreement has been signed by more
13 than 20 agencies and organizations. To get that many people to
14 agree on the approach of how we're going to handle these impacts
15 is a monumental feat in itself.

16 The next agreement is the Stream and Wetland
17 Ecological Enhancement Program, or what we like to call the
18 SWEEP program. The intent of that is to protect and enhance
19 water quality, stream, and repairing habitats of aquatic
20 wildlife.

21 It provides a process for complying with local, state,
22 and federal laws and regulations. It is watershed context
23 sensitive. We have a number of different watersheds on the
24 Corridor and it affects all the watersheds that will be within
25 the Corridor. And will be included on everything that we do.

1 This agreement focuses on sustainability. And this
2 also has 10 signatures. Well, actually, on this one we're still
3 working on finalizing this agreement. But we do have and we do
4 plan on having signatures from a number of different
5 organizations. And this agreement will be finalized before we
6 get into a Record of Decision, and hopefully before we get a
7 Final.

8 The last agreement I'd like to talk about is the
9 landscape level inventory value ecosystems, or what we like to
10 call the ALIVE agreement. What this does is provides for a long
11 term protection and restoration of wildlife linkage areas that
12 intersect the Corridor.

13 This agreement has identified 13 high priority
14 locations, but that's just the minimum. We expect and we plan
15 on looking at every project and looking at the impacts to
16 wildlife, and how to improve the movement of wildlife on
17 everything we do on I-70.

18 Again, we will revisit this agreement on every Tier 2
19 project. And if need be we will make enhancements at every
20 opportunity we can.

21 Again, this one has been signed by seven federal and
22 state agencies. I can't speak about how important these
23 agreements are. They are the assurances that we are going to
24 move forward in an environmentally sensitive and proactive way.

25 We're at the slide where we're talking about money.

1 This is I'm sure on everybody's mind. Commissioner O'Malley
2 alluded to the fact that some people believe that this
3 alternative is a pie-in-the-sky solution.

4 What I like to say to everybody is it allows us to do
5 anything and everything that we need to do. We want to be
6 prepared to handle and adjust for anything that we want to do in
7 the future, and that's what this Preferred Alternative does.

8 It allows us to be prepared for that, so it's not just
9 pie in the sky. It gives us a solid plan on how we're going to
10 move forward, whether we do some or all the highway
11 improvements, and whether we do the AGS systems.

12 One comment I want to make at this point is that we
13 believe that the AGS system at this point is feasible. We are
14 going to go through the evaluation process more in the future.
15 But that is the key to the success of this different
16 alternative.

17 So to talk about the dollars that we expect it to
18 cost, the range is between 16 billion and 20 billion. That's
19 going to depend on how much of the highway improvements that we
20 do between the minimum and maximum program. Or it can even be
21 less than the minimum.

22 Again we're going to go through that process and
23 evaluate the effectiveness of all the projects that we do on the
24 Corridor, and we're going to make those decisions as we go. So
25 that's why we have a range for this Preferred Alternative.

1 When you look at our current funding sources we know
2 we don't have enough to build this Preferred Alternative. So
3 we're going to have to do things and look at different ways of
4 funding our construction program.

5 The funding mechanisms that we have today aren't
6 enough to cover what we need. We're going to have to look at
7 innovative financing solutions such as public-private
8 partnerships, we're going to look at towing, we're going to look
9 at bonding and anything, any other program out there that will
10 help us fund this. The funding mechanisms that we have today
11 aren't enough to do what we want to do.

12 The beauty is, though, we do have the money to do some
13 of it. We know that we can work on the high priority projects
14 now, and work towards getting those complete while we work
15 towards getting more funding to do the whole program.

16 All right, we're getting close here.

17 What are the next steps? Right now we're in the
18 public comment period. The public comment period will continue
19 till November 8. What we're going to do is we're going to take
20 all the comments that we receive tonight and every other public
21 comment period plus any comment that we get from anybody that's
22 been submitted to us in the ways that we've identified. We're
23 going to incorporate those, and we're going to address those
24 comments in the final document that we do.

25 Our intentions are, and our schedule shows that we're

1 going to have a Final PEIS in the winter of -- that should be
2 2011. It's not -- that's going backwards. Ignore what we have
3 up there. It's going to be 2011. We missed a digit.

4 Then once we have a final document we're going to move
5 towards a Record of Decision. What does a Record of Decision
6 mean? That Record of Decision will outline how the Tier 1
7 decision will be carried out.

8 Again, that is identified as the high priority
9 projects for the Corridor. It will also define the relationship
10 of the Tier 1 document with the statewide planning process. And
11 it also will be a roadmap for how we go into the Tier 2 projects
12 moving forward.

13 Again this decision that we're looking for comments on
14 tonight will not result in any type of construction. And with
15 the Record of Decision we hope and expect to get the Record of
16 Decision by the spring of 2011. So we have a very aggressive
17 schedule that we're working under.

18 Once we get a Record of Decision our hopes are to move
19 into the Tier 2 process and start making some improvements on
20 the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

21 So with that I'd like to thank you all for your
22 participation. I hope that the information that I've shared
23 with you tonight is informative and thought-provoking.

24 Again we have a lot of our project team members
25 stationed throughout the room. They all have name badges on. I

1 took mine off. I didn't want anybody out in the general public
2 to be able to see who I am at all times.

3 But I encourage you if you have any questions, find
4 our staff and ask them any questions that you think is important
5 to help you comment on this project tonight.

6 And so what I'd like to do is turn it back over to
7 Mary Ann. She'll explain more to you how the oral comment
8 process will work and how to make any other comments you'd like
9 to make on the study.

10 Again, I want to thank you all for your time. It is
11 very important to us that we get your comments. And we are very
12 excited to present this to you tonight. We truly believe that
13 this is the best solution for the I-70 Mountain Corridor. But
14 we want your comments so that we know what that is.

15 So thank you for your time. And I'll turn it over to
16 Mary Ann.

17 (Applause.)

18 MS. STROMBITSKI: All right. That concludes our
19 general presentation.

20 We're about to begin the formal comments at the
21 microphone. I will give you one last call if you have not
22 signed up and would like to make a comment here. Please do so
23 quickly down at the front desk and we'll get your name added to
24 the list.

25 I believe we have 14 folks lined up so far. And if

1 you'll allow me I will brief you quickly on the rules of how we
2 accept public comment.

3 We adhere to federal guidelines so that it's fair to
4 everybody. There will be a three minute opportunity at this
5 microphone. You will have a visual for two and a half minutes
6 of a green screen, 30 seconds of yellow, and then it will go
7 red. That's when I step in and ask you to finish your sentence.

8 And if you have additional comment beyond that three
9 minutes we'll ask you to make that privately to our other court
10 reporter in the public comment room. This reporter is dedicated
11 to accepting your formal comments here.

12 So you will be able, if you need to run over, to go to
13 the other room to make additional comments. You can still make
14 comments on line. We have a computer set up in the public
15 comment room for that. You can make written comments and submit
16 them in the box tonight or you can mail them in.

17 So you've got any number of ways between now and
18 November 8 to make your voice heard. And we look forward to
19 that.

20 Again any questions that are asked at the microphone
21 we won't address tonight, but they will be addressed in the
22 final document. Okay.

23 The first person that steps up and each person that
24 follows I will ask you to state your name, spell your name, and
25 provide your address. This is so that we can capture those

1 comments and have it in the final document.

2 We'll also ask you to speak clearly and slowly so that
3 the reporter can get every word.

4 All right. And if there are no questions we will ask
5 Stephanie, and I'm not sure how to say the last name. You can
6 correct me.

7 MS. THOMAS: Stephanie Thomas. You want me to spell
8 it?

9 MS. STROMBITSKI: Yes, please.

10 MS. THOMAS: Stephanie, S-t-e-p-h-a-n-i-e, Thomas,
11 T-h-o-m-a-s.

12 I'm with the Colorado Environment Coalition. My
13 address is 537 Wyncoop Street, Denver 80202.

14 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

15 MS. THOMAS: The Colorado Environmental Coalition is a
16 statewide advocacy group. We have thousands of members across
17 the state. We will be submitting written comments that are much
18 more detailed.

19 I'm not going to preview those tonight. What I want
20 to do is report to you the results of two surveys we sent to our
21 e-mail list over the last two weeks.

22 We sent two surveys, both focused on seeing what
23 people thought about the AGS system that's such a key part of
24 the Preferred Alternative.

25 The surveys received a much higher response than our

1 typical e-mail campaigns. People really care about this issue.

2 Obviously our e-mail list is a select group of
3 citizens, but it is -- we did get a high response. These are
4 people who would want to use the system so I think it's
5 representative of that group.

6 I do think CDOT should, you know, consider this as it
7 undertakes feasibility studies for the AGS system going forward.

8 The first survey asks people how the traffic in the
9 mountains affects their behavior now. Fifty percent said they
10 traveled to the mountains less to recreate than they would if
11 traffic wasn't so bad.

12 Thirty percent said they just avoid the mountains
13 altogether on the weekends. Only 16 percent said they go anyway
14 and endure the traffic.

15 Next we asked them if they would ride a high speed
16 train to the mountains that could get them there at least as
17 fast as they could get there now. Ninety-seven percent said
18 yes.

19 The following week we sent our e-mail list another
20 survey with the more detailed questions to see how they would
21 react to the system actually proposed by CDOT and FHWA in this
22 document, and what they expect of that system.

23 We first asked them for what purposes they would take
24 the train to the mountains. They could pick as many from the
25 list as they wanted.

1 Eighty-seven percent said hiking, seventy-five percent
2 said skiing or snowboarding, seventy-five percent said cultural
3 events and festivals, sixty-eight percent said sight-seeing,
4 fifty-six percent said wildlife viewing, forty-nine percent said
5 cycling or mountain biking, and twenty-four percent listed other
6 reasons, which included visiting friends and family, other forms
7 of recreation, and work and visiting a second home.

8 We next asked them whether, if the only station on the
9 Front Range were at the junction of C-470 and I-70 as is assumed
10 in this document would they still ride the train. Eighty-seven
11 percent said they would.

12 We then asked them whether they'd be more likely to
13 drive to the station, park, or take RTD's planned fast track
14 system to connect to the system. Eighty-six percent said they
15 would drive and park.

16 This does suggest the agencies do need to think a lot
17 about the parking facilities that are going to be at that
18 station.

19 We next asked if they would take transit for a trip
20 how many transfers would they be willing to make. Twenty-one
21 percent said they would not be willing to make any transfers.
22 Fifty-three percent said they'd make one. Seventeen percent
23 said two.

24 This does suggest the agencies shouldn't expect people
25 will take bus or train and make more than one transfer. That

1 did fall in line with the scholarly research that shows that you
2 lose at least a third of your riders for each connection you
3 make.

4 We can stop there. Thanks.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you very much.

7 Next is Bill Worth. If you can step to the
8 microphone. Thank you, Bill. If you'll state your name and
9 spell it.

10 MR. WORTH: Bill Worth. I've lived here in the Denver
11 area, Rocky Mountain area --

12 MS. STROMBITSKI: Before you make your comment if you
13 would is your last name W-o-r-t-h?

14 MR. WORTH: Right.

15 MS. STROMBITSKI: And your address?

16 MR. WORTH: Address? 6164 South Ash Circle East,
17 Centennial, Colorado 80121.

18 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you. Now you can begin.

19 MR. WORTH: Now I can talk.

20 I hadn't planned to be the first or second on this
21 process. But the thing that I am working on is trying to get an
22 alternative to I-70. And I think that it's quite obvious that
23 it's needed.

24 And it is a matter of numbers, of course. Right now
25 they are looking at enlarging I-70 by what could be probably

1 another 50 percent compared to about a year ago so it's
2 something that's needed and it will continue to be needed.

3 But the point is they need to get a lot, probably
4 30, 40 percent of the traffic, and especially the heavy traffic,
5 large trucks and so on that have problems just getting out of
6 Denver going up the hill.

7 So to me it is a very practical thing that you do have
8 to fix up 70. But it will take a lot of pressure off of it if
9 they would put in -- we need at least one if not two or three
10 different ways of getting through the mountain states here in
11 Colorado.

12 We've got -- well, I think that it's quite obvious
13 that I-70 was the original road that went through here when the
14 miners were taking it. And it was an -- it's been built up
15 since then.

16 And I think they need to give a lot of consideration
17 to the thought of getting other ways of getting through the --
18 tunneling through the Continental Divide. There should be at
19 least two or three ways to do that.

20 And of course the Moffit Tunnel has been there for
21 100 years. And it's been operating recently very very heavy.

22 MS. STROMBITSKI: We're at your three minutes.

23 MR. WORTH: So that's about all I can suggest right
24 now.

25 MS. STROMBITSKI: If you have additional comment

1 remember room 262. And somebody can take you there if you would
2 like to share additional thoughts.

3 MR. WORTH: Okay.

4 MS. STROMBITSKI: All right. Thanks very much.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. STROMBITSKI: If you could state your name and
7 spell it, and give us your address.

8 MS. BRYAN: My name is Edie Bryan. And I am speaking
9 on behalf of Colorado Rail Passenger Association.

10 We have submitted our comments electronically --

11 MS. STROMBITSKI: Before you start, if you would
12 provide a spelling for your last name, and give us your address.

13 MS. BRYAN: Bryan, B-r-y-a-n. My address is
14 1661 South Kendall Street, Lakewood 80232.

15 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

16 MS. BRYAN: I speak on behalf of the Colorado Rail
17 Passenger Association and am our organization representation on
18 the study's Collaborative Effort Panel.

19 The draft appears to conform to the need to
20 continually reassess the project's development with changing
21 conditions. We have 10 specific comments. If I don't get to
22 ten you'll know that we have others.

23 No. 1, revive the ski train service into the TDM, the
24 transportation demand management ideas. This would remove
25 somewhere from 300 to 400 cars from the I-70 Corridor at

1 precisely the times that the Corridor is the most congested.

2 The ski train that we did have had a maximum capacity
3 of 750, and was frequently sold out. A double-decker coach
4 could carry more than that obviously. And adding a stop on the
5 western part of the metro area could increase ridership too.

6 No. 2, a dedicated bus service from various
7 park-and-ride lots in the metro areas to specific ski areas
8 should be established. And the cost could paid be by tacking on
9 a ski ticket surcharge for those who arrive in private
10 automobiles.

11 No. 3, the Denver Union Station Project Authority
12 should add an intercity bus facility for a true multimodal
13 facility instead of leaving the bus station where it is in
14 downtown Denver, which is nine blocks away.

15 No. 4, conventional steel wheel on steel rail
16 technology should be the preferred transit choice over some
17 other exotic or unproven system.

18 For one thing, again referencing the ski train, it
19 went 25 miles an hour. And yet people used it and loved it.

20 No. 4, conventional steel wheel should be the
21 preferred choice; however, the conventional rail cannot achieve
22 some of those advanced speeds, but do have other advantages.

23 It may be required that they go out of the exact study
24 Corridor boundaries in order to build new grades because trains
25 can only go up a maximum grade. But there are trains that exist

1 today that can go a lot faster than the conventional, ordinary
2 conventional trains, and can handle seven percent grade.

3 No. 6, studies must begin to determine how any of this
4 will connect to Denver Union Station and to Denver
5 International Airport.

6 I will mention No. 7, which is the FasTrack --

7 MS. STROMBITSKI: We're at the three minutes. So you
8 will need to do that with our other court reporter.

9 MS. BRYAN: All right. And that concludes my remarks.

10 Obviously I do have hard copies available for those
11 people in the audience who would like to have some.

12 MS. STROMBITSKI: Our next speaker is Betsy Hand.

13 Betsy, please state your name and spell it, and then
14 give an address.

15 MS. HAND: Betsy Hand, H-a-n-d. Address is 880 Sixth
16 Street, Golden, Colorado 80302.

17 I'm Betsy Hand representing the Rocky Mountain chapter
18 of the Sierra Club.

19 First I want to thank you for adding this public
20 hearing to the Denver metro area. The people of this area are
21 critical stakeholders for the I-70 Mountain Corridor.

22 Front Range folks traveling into the mountains are
23 both the primary cause of congestion in the Corridor and a key
24 to the economic viability of the Preferred Alternative described
25 in the Revised DPEIS.

1 Some concerns that we have: The VMT and GHG
2 reductions. It's not clear in the document yet I don't think
3 how the alternative will reduce the per person VMT and
4 greenhouse gas emissions. So I hope that will be more -- will
5 be modelled better.

6 The triggers for additional highway capacity
7 improvements. The Collaborative Effort Consensus outlined very
8 broadly the studies needed to determine the feasibility of AGS:
9 Cost, ridership, governance, and land use.

10 This particular document does nothing to describe,
11 advance, or elaborate criteria or the matrix that will be used
12 to abandon the AGS alternative and pull the trigger on the six
13 lane highway construction.

14 The Rocky Mountain Rail Authority process provides
15 guidance that should be included in the language of the DPEIS,
16 and that is develop scenarios that address issues and prepare
17 analysis reports on the properties of each scenario: Ridership,
18 cost effectiveness, community values, greenhouse gas emissions,
19 and systems energy use.

20 In terms of planning and connectivity the CE
21 recommendation included an efficient transit connectivity beyond
22 the study area, and local accessibility to such a system.

23 While we understand the historic autocentric reason
24 for the E-470 terminus the analysis of the Preferred Alternative
25 must include the wider ridership capture area.

1 The RMRA feasibility study area's an excellent place
2 to start, especially as the final report is very clear that the
3 economic viability of the I-70 Corridor depends on development
4 of the effective I-25 feeder system as well as direct DIA
5 connectivity.

6 Additionally we recommend that the state rail plan and
7 the highway connectivity study planned by Mark Imhoff, the new
8 director of the new CDOT position of rail and transit, be
9 closely coordinated with the work of the I-70 Mountain Corridor
10 team.

11 Thank you.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

14 Our next speaker is Ken Katt.

15 Ken, if you'll spell your last name.

16 MR. KATT: Ken Katt, K-a-t-t. I live at 2703 West
17 Long Drive, Littleton Colorado 80210.

18 I'm sorry that I don't see Mr. George in the crowd
19 tonight. I do see Peggy Gatlin. So Peggy, I hope you'll relay
20 this message to Mr. George.

21 The first thing I want to do is for the public record
22 I would like to officially challenge CDOT's executive director
23 Russell George to go on a local TV station to debate me on the
24 Mountain Corridor issue. I don't care if it's channel 6, or 12,
25 or 4, or 7, or 9, or 13, or even channel 8.

1 I think Colorado citizens have a right to know what's
2 going on, why is it taking so long, and how did this become a
3 \$20 billion alternative with no clue where the money's going to
4 come from.

5 Now, I notice some students in the crowd. I think
6 they're probably wondering what it is I've been promoting.

7 Well, if you watched the recent gubernatorial debates
8 John Hickenlooper, when he was asked specifically about the
9 I-70 Mountain Corridor he said, We need to address it
10 incrementally.

11 Tom Tancredo, when he was asked how we make our
12 transportation dollars go further he said, We need to make
13 better use of a dedicated busway.

14 In a nutshell that's exactly what I've been promoting
15 as the best solution for the I-70 Mountain Corridor. And we
16 take into consideration that the I-70 coalition said, We need to
17 address the problem areas first.

18 And the blue ribbon panel that CDOT put together which
19 included Clear Creek County commissioners Kevin O'Malley and
20 Harry Dale were a part of -- and they are both here tonight --
21 they said, We need to use an elevated fixed guideway.

22 I couldn't agree more. They must've been reading my
23 mind.

24 If you also consider the fact that -- and this is not
25 well-known among the public -- both the EPA and the Army Corps

1 of Engineers rated the bus alternative near the very top of
2 their list.

3 So I don't know what the issue is. It seems like
4 there's still people who don't believe in trains, they want to
5 build the road, the big highway project, and just shred through
6 Clear Creek County and absolutely destroy their quality of life,
7 yet they haven't come up with an answer to where all these extra
8 cars are going to park once they get to the ski resorts when
9 they want to go skiing. We already lack adequate parking at our
10 ski resorts.

11 If they're concerned about trailers and campers, where
12 are they going to come up with all the extra campsites? On the
13 busy weekends most of the campgrounds are already full.

14 I hope people, when they go home, do a little of your
15 own research on this. Look up the company Proterra,
16 P-r-o-t-e-r-r-a. It's a bus company based here in Golden,
17 Colorado.

18 They just recently announced plans to build a
19 manufacturing facility for clean-burning buses in South
20 Carolina. They're going to employ 1,000 people.

21 And they are going to export those buses then.
22 They're going to sell them to cities along the eastern coast and
23 the western coast.

24 They already have \$400 million -- my understanding is
25 they already have \$400 million of orders waiting for clean

1 burning buses. We lost those jobs -- we could have had them
2 here -- because somebody was afraid to make a decision.

3 MS. STROMBITSKI: We're at three minutes.

4 MR. KATT: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

7 Next speaker is Nick Dodich.

8 If you will, please state your name, spell it, and
9 provide your address.

10 MR. DODICH: Nick Dodich, D-o-d-i-c-h, 6370 Deframe
11 Way, Arvada 80004.

12 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

13 MR. DODICH: I've been following this I-70 Corridor
14 business quite diligently, I feel. And I am concerned if we
15 don't act pretty soon we will be in a position like China was
16 where they had 10-day traffic jams. Drivers didn't have money
17 for lunch, hotels; produce was ruined.

18 So it was a very very costly experience. And I'd like
19 to see that never happen in my country.

20 My biggest concern is that the Empire Junction, Floyd
21 Hill be started as soon as possible, because that traffic coming
22 east during the holidays ski season is just horrendous.

23 I've been there in the winter and in the summer, the
24 three holidays. It's just bad. It funnels right into the
25 Empire Junction. And that's the big bottleneck. And the Twin

1 Tunnels of Idaho Springs are the big bottlenecks.

2 And I think that one of the biggest things that we
3 have to conquer is the financing part of it. I think we have
4 the engineering technology and spirit and the know-how.

5 If other countries can have big tunnels going through
6 whatnot, and building great great roadways I think we also have
7 that capability.

8 And I used to do some lobbying in the past. There is
9 money in Washington; it's available. And you have to know where
10 to go and who to see. And we can get a lot of money that way I
11 feel.

12 My biggest concern right now is the Twin Tunnels.
13 They have excellent boring machines on the market now. All over
14 the country they are boring a lot of tunnels: New York, Jersey,
15 whatever.

16 And they are very good because they bore a clean
17 curvature. They don't use drill and dynamite to blow the rock
18 apart.

19 The bad part is it creates tremors. The Donner Pass
20 was started in 1871 and ended in 1881. The blast fractured the
21 rock, and the water came down, and 200 miners were killed.

22 With the boring machine you don't have those
23 vibrations. And it's clean. And you'll operate 24/7 with that.

24 The tunnel -- I used to work at a university --
25 uh-oh -- in Germany. I was going from Gurttingham to Milan. And

1 I went to the Gotard Pass, and that pass -- it was only
2 railroad.

3 MS. STROMBITSKI: We will need to stop now. I'm
4 sorry.

5 MR. DODICH: Can I finish the statement?

6 THE FLOOR: Let him finish.

7 MS. STROMBITSKI: We have to maintain fairness.

8 MR. DODICH: There was only railroad. Trucks, and
9 cars had to go on the railroad. And it cut down on the
10 pollution and traffic jams.

11 MS. STROMBITSKI: All right. Thank you, Nick.

12 (Applause.)

13 MS. STROMBITSKI: CA Lane.

14 MR. LANE: C.A. Lane, L-a-n-e. PO Box 36, Winter
15 Park, Colorado. I'm the assistant general manager and director
16 of resort operations for Winter Park Resorts.

17 An important existing noninfrastructure component
18 adjacent to I-70 Corridor is the ski train to Winter Park and
19 Grand County.

20 When considering noninfrastructure components of this
21 project that encourage change in travel patterns without
22 infrastructure construction, and specifically expanding use of
23 the existing infrastructure adjacent to the Corridor, please
24 consider support for modification of the current Amtrak
25 insurance requirements, which are a barrier to the

1 reintroduction of the ski train to Winter Park and Grand County.

2 The Amtrak classification of the ski train and an
3 onerous requirement for \$200 million of insurance currently
4 prohibits successful reintroduction of this operation.

5 Change in the insurance requirement will allow for the
6 successful operation of the ski train today and in the future,
7 successfully contributing to congestion reduction on I-70.

8 Thank you very much.

9 (Applause.)

10 MS. STROMBITSKI: Our next speaker is Ed Rapp.

11 Please state your name, spell it, and provide an
12 address.

13 MR. RAPP: Ed Rapp, R-a-p-p. I'm at Post Office Box
14 143, 3237 Mill Creek Road, DuMont, Colorado 80436.

15 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

16 MR. RAPP: Thank you. And particularly thanks to
17 Russell George for this collaborative effort to bring forward
18 the Revised Draft PEIS.

19 I endorse Clear Creek County Commissioner Kevin
20 O'Malley's statements, opening remarks, including his caveat.

21 My concern for this revised PEIS is that the executive
22 summary is not stated strongly enough to survive a 20 year
23 decision arising involving at least four future governor races
24 and their subsequent administrations.

25 The document needs to bring finality to the process in

1 the legal sense or we may be in a perpetual PEIS process.

2 My second concern is that the public currently
3 visualizes the two or three year highway widening and not the
4 14 year construction process that a six lane option would
5 require.

6 Little is being done in the executive summary or
7 through public outreach to dispel this misconception. The
8 document does not describe impacts during construction. Albeit
9 it is not required by law an extended construction period is
10 where most environment and social justice impacts would occur.

11 It is doubtful that any community can survive or any
12 traveling public would endure a 14-year construction delay or
13 closures.

14 Any at-grade construction through the mountains is
15 onerous. And an elevated guideway system off line yet in the
16 right of way requires a short construction period with very
17 little negative impact environmentally, economically, or
18 socially.

19 Fourteen years of at-grade construction in Clear Creek
20 County would essentially be a taking during which all
21 environmental law, including CERCLA and the Clean Water Act, and
22 all social justice law would be imposed.

23 Following that period the remnants of the community
24 fabric would be a ward of the state.

25 These construction impacts need to be addressed in the

1 body and in the executive summary of the reports such that they
2 will be very visible and clear to any future decision-making.

3 My concern is that also, relative to highways, CDOT is
4 not serious about Advanced Guideway Systems as a mission. A
5 former CDOT director stated flatly that, We don't do transit.

6 Institutional culture is slow to change. Nor does
7 CDOT appear to be all that serious in persuing public-private
8 partnerships for construction and operation of advanced systems.

9 MS. STROMBITSKI: We're at three minutes.

10 MR. RAPP: I'll finish the sentence.

11 In the six months following the Record of Decision are
12 you prepared to handle a delightful event of people coming
13 forward with an unsolicited proposal?

14 Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. STROMBITSKI: Our next speaker is Bob Vermillion.

17 Bob, if you'll spell your last name and provide your
18 address.

19 MR. VERMILLION: My name is Bob Vermillion,
20 V-e-r-m-i-l-l-i-o-n. I recently moved. My family recently
21 moved to Louisville. I'm a native. I have property directly on
22 I-70.

23 MS. STROMBITSKI: We'll need an address.

24 MR. VERMILLION: Address? Bellford, which is
25 1331 Hector Drive, Louisville.

1 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

2 MR. VERMILLION: I really support something to get
3 done on I-70. I have had a short experience in driving Donner
4 Pass to Sacramento and on to San Francisco, and moved just one
5 car length on a four lane, just one car length. And that's
6 where we're going if we don't get something done.

7 I support the lane construction and elevated lanes
8 like through Idaho Springs and CDOT had supported and proposed
9 three or four years ago.

10 I would like to see some real hard figures relative to
11 bus lanes only and the rail system. And the reason for that is
12 you can run one or several buses directly to Vail or directly to
13 Breckenridge through a number of different -- to ski areas.

14 You can run a number of buses to different
15 communities. You can run the direct ones that are full and the
16 ones that need to jump. But you can also have secretaries with
17 a bus lane only that work in downtown 17th Street.

18 You can't do that with a rail. I question the money
19 that's being spent relative to rail versus bus lanes only. I
20 would guess that we're talking about a third of the cost, more
21 convenient, certainly doing more for the person.

22 And when you think of what the young lady that spoke
23 first said, buses will handle that, giving them an opportunity
24 to camp and ski and fish and hunt.

25 I followed I-70 for a long long time. Back in the

1 early '80s Colorado was No. 2 in outdoor activities, No. 3 in
2 touring. This is on a national scale.

3 We're way up there now. And because we haven't kept
4 up and we won't with rail I really would like to see CDOT look
5 at bus lanes only, one going one way and one the other,
6 different types of access versus the rail system.

7 Thank you very much.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

10 Paige Singer. Spell your last name.

11 MS. SINGER: S-i-n-g-e-r. And I'm representing Center
12 for Native Ecosystems, 15 Wyncoop Street, Denver, Colorado
13 80202.

14 First I'd like to thank CDOT for including wildlife
15 crossings in the Preferred Alternative of the Tier 1 Revised
16 PEIS Alternative and as an important component of the Context
17 Sensitive Solution process and the Collaborative Effort Team.

18 We all know that animal-vehicle collisions are bad for
19 both wildlife populations and also for human safety.

20 I'd also like to thank CDOT for being a leader by
21 continuing the ALIVE process for the Revised PEIS. I encourage
22 CDOT to ensure that all Tier 2 processes implement the ALIVE MOU
23 and implementation matrix, and provide funding for wildlife
24 crossings.

25 I ask CDOT to ensure that in addition to utilizing the

1 good information out of the ALIVE process they also use the most
2 up to date information including that coming out of the current
3 ecological project that's under way to study wildlife movement
4 along I-70, and making several recommendations on wildlife
5 crossings.

6 This study is being completed by CDOT, Western
7 Transportation Institute, Center for Native Ecosystems,
8 Ecoresolutions, and the Colorado Watershed Assembly.

9 And I'd also encourage CDOT to consider connectivity
10 through the I-70 Mountain Corridor including areas outside of
11 the linkage interference zones that are identified through the
12 ALIVE process.

13 And that's it. Thank you.

14 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

15 (Applause.)

16 MS. STROMBITSKI: John Aldridge.

17 If you'll spell your last name, and provide an
18 address.

19 MR. ALDRIDGE: Yes. My name is John Aldridge. And
20 I'm here on behalf of the Independence Institute.

21 My name's spelled A-l-d-r-i-d-g-e. My office is at
22 1840 West Littleton Boulevard, Suite B, in Littleton.

23 Good evening. On behalf of the Independence Institute
24 we appreciate this opportunity to present our comments on the
25 Revised PEIS.

1 While the Preferred Alternative in the document
2 describes a combination of transit and highway improvements to
3 meet the 2035 and 2050 travel demands, it fails to provide a
4 interim program of significant improvements to relieve the
5 current congestion problems, particularly in critical sections
6 of the Corridor.

7 And these critical sections are from the Twin Tunnels
8 to Empire Junction and through, which is obviously through Idaho
9 Springs and the steep uphill section west of Georgetown.

10 In these sections I think in all these, these -- as
11 Scott reported, that minimum improvements would be allowed at
12 Twin Tunnels and Empire Junction, but nothing in between there,
13 okay? Only when, you know, the transit triggers are met would
14 those type of improvements be allowed. And this could be a very
15 very long time.

16 So essentially the Preferred Alternative and consensus
17 recommendation require that all I-70 improvements wait decades
18 for any improvement in the critical sections until sophisticated
19 Advanced Guideway Systems or magnetic levitation technology can
20 be developed and funded.

21 It is obvious through the DPEIS, the technical data
22 that's in it and other studies off AGS, including a recent
23 report from the Federal Transit Administration, that there are
24 massive economic and technological risks involved.

25 Funding \$20 billion for capital costs is not available

1 according to CDOT. The recommended maglev technology has not
2 been fully developed or tested for operation in a harsh mountain
3 environment. In fact neither the proposed propulsion system nor
4 the proposed track has advanced beyond the drawing board
5 according to the FDA.

6 The train has not been designed or tested to meet
7 federal safety and ADA standards, which will add considerable
8 weight and reduce performance significantly. There is no known
9 source of power for 118 miles of electrified track.

10 Finally, there's no guaranteed ridership. And the
11 chance of Colorado taxpayers subsidizing fares similar to Amtrak
12 and RTD is very high.

13 I'm getting the yellow light.

14 It all adds up to a very long wait for a train that
15 will probably never come.

16 MS. STROMBITSKI: One more sentence.

17 MR. ALDRIDGE: Okay. I think what we're recommending
18 is simply to put in some sort of system that is a platform that
19 will allow the bus transit systems that have been talked about
20 and, you know, any other type of mode of transportation to go up
21 in the most congested area of the Corridor, which is between
22 Floyd Hill and Empire Junction.

23 This should be implemented as soon as possible.

24 (Applause.)

25 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you very much.

1 Bert Melcher.

2 If you will state your name.

3 MR. MELCHER: My name is, full name is Albert G.
4 Melcher, M-e-l-c-h-e-r, 7504 East Jefferson Drive, Denver 80237.

5 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

6 MR. MELCHER: I'm here as an advisor to the Sierra
7 Club because I'm the former transportation chairman of the
8 Colorado state chapter. Okay.

9 MS. STROMBITSKI: Okay. You may begin.

10 MR. MELCHER: Good.

11 I've been on the I-70 Mountain Corridor advisory
12 committee from 2001 to 2007, and on the Corridor Collaborative
13 Effort Committee in 2007-8. I am a civil engineer, one of three
14 people to serve on both the CDOT commission, the predecessor to
15 the State Highway Commission, and the RTD board of directors.

16 The purpose of a Draft PEIS is to obtain, review,
17 comment, and guidance on desirable improvements before there is
18 a Final PEIS and a Record of Decision that has binding
19 requirements for the future.

20 The National Environmental Policy Act is our
21 environmental bill of rights, and we must avoid any abuse or
22 misuse of it.

23 Today I am focusing only on the most significant and
24 critical weakness in the EIS document and process, and I hope my
25 comments will be constructive.

1 This weakness or flaw is that, despite its name of
2 Mountain Corridor, it should deal with a entire integrated
3 transportation system, and it does not. It excludes the portion
4 of the system that is east of the junction of I-70 and C-470.
5 In short, it deals with a part of a system, a segment, but not
6 the complete system.

7 It does not deal with cause and effect. The effect
8 is the severe congestion of the Mountain Corridor. The major
9 cause is two and a half million metro Denver residents and
10 visitors to Colorado who are here in no small measure because of
11 our great mountains. They are stakeholders.

12 The C-470 boundary is artificial. At the level of
13 policy and program planning, i.e. the Tier 1 PEIS, it creates
14 very bad transportation planning and evades coming to grips with
15 the opportunities, constraints, and cost of movement from metro
16 origins to mountain destinations, and the reverse movement.

17 It is contrary to the laws and intent of the National
18 Environmental Policy Act, including provisions of full
19 disclosure of transparency as regards all of us who live east of
20 the foothills. This issue has been raised before; it's not a
21 new issue.

22 Just as with the mountain portion of the study,
23 details can and must be deferred to Tier 2 studies. But the
24 policy and possible procedures for this eastern situation must
25 be identified.

1 What are the alternatives for getting people from the
2 metro area to DIA to C-470 and hence to mountain destinations?
3 Can they be efficient, seamless, convenient, and fast? Or will
4 they be the opposite such that people will not leave their cars
5 for the entire trip?

6 What are the agencies involved? And will this Tier 1
7 help guide the forthcoming Colorado state rail plan for CDOT?
8 What are these agencies' mandates, planning, and capabilities?

9 Are the modeling and analysis tasks up to date and
10 comprehensive? Realistic? Or are there flawed, obsolete and
11 unrealistic inputs?

12 What metro area infrastructure can be used or added in
13 general? What general environmental and sustainability factors
14 are relevant? How do we best avoid foreclosing desirable
15 options for the future? What general guidance should emerge for
16 implementing the Tier 2 detailed studies?

17 EISes must have boundaries, but they can and must deal
18 with effects and impacts in related affected areas. To defer
19 these matters to a future Tier 2 study will result in a Tier 1
20 Final EIS that would be flawed, misleading, and producing an
21 unnecessary and undesirable delay.

22 MS. STROMBITSKI: We're now at three minutes. One
23 more sentence.

24 MR. MELCHER: Okay.

25 I'm not advocating any delays. This can be worked

1 into the present process. And in the long run it will expedite
2 implementation of the development.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MS. STROMBITSKI: Next is Helen Bushnell.

7 MS. BUSHNELL: Hello. My name is Helen Bushnell,
8 B-u-s-h-n-e-l-l. I live at 9925 West 20th Avenue, Lakewood,
9 Colorado.

10 MS. STROMBITSKI: Thank you.

11 MS. BUSHNELL: I am a native Coloradoan and a member
12 of the Colorado Rail Passenger Association. During -- I often
13 take the train.

14 During the last week in September I took the train
15 home from California. I was struck by a couple of things.
16 First how crowded the train was. Train ridership has really
17 massively gone up in the last five years throughout the United
18 States.

19 Even though that train is very slow it's starting to
20 get pretty crowded. Even though they're adding more cars it's
21 still crowded. Again, this was not during the summer and it was
22 still crowded.

23 In fact there were more people on the train than were
24 going on I-70 the entire time we were passing it. Now, this is
25 during a weekday. But I think there is a lot of people right

1 now who take the train even though it's once a day and there's a
2 real limited capacity.

3 Also it was interesting, this particular train was
4 interesting because there were a lot of people going from Grand
5 Junction to Fort Morgan. What I find on every train I take
6 there's different stops where there is a lot of people who get
7 on and off.

8 And there's a lot of people that go from these small
9 towns in Utah and go from the small towns in Colorado who live
10 there going between these small towns. I think getting those
11 people off the road during the peak times can help with
12 congestion.

13 I think also it's also important to realize that I
14 think we need to serve -- that CDOT should serve the needs of
15 the people who live in Colorado, and that includes people who
16 live in Grand Junction or in Jefferson County, and not just
17 necessarily people who are going to the mountains to recreate
18 but people who live there.

19 So one of the -- like I said, I'm a member of the
20 Colorado Rail Passenger Association. And in our comment we
21 notice that activity is very important. That's part of why.
22 You don't actually know why every single person is going, if
23 they're going from point A to point C to point X, you don't
24 actually know why everybody is on the road.

25 It's important to connect into a system so no matter

1 where somebody is going there's a bus or a train that can take
2 them so they don't have to drive.

3 So I really support that part of our comment that
4 really we need to lease buses to Denver Union Station, really
5 need to consider steel on rail because we already have rail
6 tracks there.

7 And I also wanted to comment that this crowd doesn't
8 look a lot like the people who take the train. There's a lot
9 more African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and Asian
10 Americans on the train than there are in this crowd. I think
11 those people need to be considered.

12 Thank you very much.

13 (Applause.)

14 MS. STROMBITSKI: We have one last speaker, Jeremy
15 Tamsen.

16 MR. TAMSEN: My name is Jeremy Tamsen, J-e-r-e-m-y
17 T-a-m-s-e-n. I live at 3520 East 17th Avenue, Apartment C,
18 Denver, Colorado 80206.

19 The priority sequence as I read the document as far as
20 construction triggers is something that I agree with. First we
21 need to improve the existing infrastructure and then focus on
22 building an Advanced Guideway System.

23 And as Stephanie Thomas from the Environment Colorado
24 said, or the Colorado Environmental Coalition said, it should be
25 carefully considered the survey results that she has gathered

1 as well as comments that my organization will be gathering as
2 well over the comment period.

3 The additional ridership that these comments represent
4 should be a key and integral part of the feasibility study for
5 the Advanced Guidance System.

6 There are a lot of young people that are tuned into
7 this project, and recognize its importance for the viability of
8 Colorado's future economy, and therefore its importance on our
9 adult careers, and their voices should be heard and listened to
10 as well.

11 I grew up in Eagle, Colorado, during the time when the
12 construction was being completed in the Glenwood Springs
13 Corridor through the canyon. And that demonstrated to me how
14 extremely important I-70 is to the state's operation.

15 And by emphasizing the Advanced Guideway System we can
16 ensure that the success of the future economy is maintained and
17 that minimal disruptions are made to the current flow of traffic
18 along the existing infrastructure, and the durability inherent
19 in an Advanced Guideway System will ultimately be a bargain to
20 the state of Colorado.

21 The initial cost may seem high to some, but in the
22 long term, maintaining such a system with such a high ridership
23 volume as is projected would be much less than maintaining a
24 road with similar baseline capacity.

25 And I believe that CDOT should seek aggressively

1 interdepartmental cooperation in innovative funding sources for
2 this project. As others in this room suggested solutions, I
3 believe that all of the solutions should be considered valid
4 alternatives to a bond election that may or may not see an
5 Advanced Guideway System through to construction.

6 Thank you.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. STROMBITSKI: Again, thank you very much for your
9 participation this evening. All of your comments will be
10 documented and included in the Final Draft.

11 If you would please enjoy the rest of the evening. We
12 do still have CDOT representatives available in the hallway,
13 near the displays, and in this room.

14 The comment area in room 262 is still open for a few
15 more minutes. Please take advantage of that.

16 Thanks so much.

17

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19 (Whereupon the within proceedings adjourned at
20 7:43 PM.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Martha Loomis, Certified Shorthand Reporter,
appointed to take the within proceedings hereby
certify that the proceedings was taken by me, and then reduced
to typewritten form by means of computer-aided transcription;
that the foregoing is a true transcript of the proceedings had
subject to my ability to hear and understand.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand.

Martha Loomis
Certified Shorthand Reporter

Proofread by D. Drake