



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT:	23982-23929 I-70 West Vail Pass Safety and Operations Improvements
PURPOSE:	Technical Team (TT) Meeting #26
DATE HELD:	April 18, 2022
LOCATION:	Online Google Meet Meeting
ATTENDING:	<p>Rob Beck, Program Engineer, CDOT Region 3 Karen Berdoulay, Resident Engineer, CDOT Region 3 John Kronholm, Project Manager, CDOT Region 3 Matt Figgs, Project Manager, CDOT Region 3 Patrick Chavez, CDOT I-70 Corridor Operations James Proctor, CDOT Bridge Lisa Schoch, CDOT Historian Stephanie Gibson, FHWA Jeff Bellen, FHWA Marcus Dreux, US Forest Service Melvin Woody, US Forest Service Mark Hane, US Forest Service Greg Hall, Town of Vail Dick Cleveland, Town of Vail Robert Jacobs, Summit County Kristin Salamack, USFWS CDOT Liaison Larissa Read, ERWSD Mark Gutknecht, Kiewit Sam Stavish, CIG Randal Lapsley, R S & H Dan Logsdon, R S & H Mark Talvitie, R S & H Brian Hearn, R S & H Clint Krajnik, R S & H Mary Jo Vobejda, Jacobs Amy Hopkins, Jacobs Jim Clarke, Jacobs Loretta LaRiviere, Jacobs</p>
COPIES:	Attendees

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

1. Introductions & Meeting Purpose

- a. Karen introduced the attendees at today’s meeting.
- b. Mary Jo said purpose of today’s meeting is to review construction updates for May-June, public outreach efforts, CP #3 FOR highlights, updates on the SWEEP and ALIVE Meetings and the schedule.

2. Review of Work Completed Since the Last Technical Team (TT) Meeting

- a. Addressed comments received for the Map Book from MP 180 – 185. There have been individual meetings to discuss the comments and they will be reviewed at the upcoming SWEEP Meeting.
- b. The Aesthetic Guidelines were submitted to the Consulting Parties and there were no comments received.

Jim noted that Diane Yates is reviewing the design packages to ensure the Aesthetic Guidelines are implemented.



Mary Jo said there are several ongoing reviews as the design continues. Every design package is reviewed against the permitting requirements and all the mitigation agreed to in the EA and FONSI and checked to make sure and document that all mitigation is being done.

- c. CP #3 FOR was submitted on March 23rd
- d. There was an I-70 Virtual Open House on March 31st
- e. The SWEEP Maintenance Manual was distributed to the ITF for their comments, and we'll be addressing those comments at the May 2nd meeting and will be scheduling at least one more SWEEP ITF meeting.

3. **May-June Construction Update**

- a. Matt said we have started work on our construction package started last year for the rec path and highway closure system.
- b. Mark said we started work on April 1st because we need to complete our work in the creek by May 1st. We are making an access down to the creek crossings and put in the crossings to be ready for when we start the CP #2 trail work on May 16th. We are also relocating the temporary conduit for Lumen that is currently under the existing trail so they can put in their temporary fiber to maintain their service across the pass. We needed to get these things done before we can really dive into the vast part of the CP #2 trail work.
- c. When the trail construction begins we will first construct the temporary detours for the trail along the highway. We will put barrier alongside eastbound I-70 and narrow up eastbound I-70 to the configuration of two 11' lanes with two 2' shoulders. We will set up a temporary barrier with a glare screen along the outside of I-70 and we will establish an 8' rec trail that will be used temporarily this summer while we are constructing the new rec trail. There will also be an additional barrier outside of the trail barrier to protect the rec trail from construction equipment on the south side of the temporary trail. Construction of the new permanent trail is expected from June-November, and we plan on opening that part of the trail to traffic before Thanksgiving.
- d. We will have flaggers along the rec trail in locations where we are going to have to cross construction equipment back and forth from I-70 to the rec trail construction. The flaggers will make sure we don't have any interaction between construction equipment and rec trail users.
- e. There could be some temporary closures of I-70 if we have to do some blasting to get through some of the rock we expect to encounter on the trail. The intent is to have as short a closure as possible and we would do the blasting sometime later in the day when it is still light out, and the bulk of the afternoon traffic has died down. For safety concerns I-70 would be closed to traffic for a short period while we do the blasting and then reopen when it is safe to do so.

- 1. Melvin asked if the creek crossings are already completed?

Mark said they are in process right now and will be done by May 1st. We are creating access down to Black Gore Creek and then coming across on the far side of Black Gore Creek to the upstream crossing location. We will put in some temporary pipes to convey the stream flow through these crossing locations. They are also going to work on the stream crossing of Polk Creek under the new westbound bridge location that we will be constructing in the end of 2022 and into 2023.

- 2. Stephanie asked: you said the rec trail will be open by Thanksgiving. When does it typically close due to snow? She assumes it will get done early enough there won't be any impacts on the snowmobilers.



Mark said we have to complete our work and reopen the trail by November 22nd.

Karen said as far as she knows the trail never officially closes, however CDOT only maintains it from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Greg said the Town of Vail stops plowing the road up to the trail in mid-November.

Marcus said it will close to bicycles from Vail Pass once they start running snowmobiles up there which is usually in mid-November.

John confirmed that we shouldn't have any interference with the snowmobilers for parking or using the recreation trail. Through coordination with the Forest Service, we agreed not to use the Black Lakes parking area for construction activities.

3. Larissa asked if you encounter a big problem like a spill or something that would have environmental or traffic impacts, how will you inform the Technical Team, ALIVE, SWEEP and other stakeholders?

Karen said our job is to be transparent with you. We will continue to have our monthly meetings and will provide construction updates. We have extensive contract documents and procedures in place to address any type of incident. If something big happens, it would be best if we didn't wait until the next meeting to share the information. Obviously, if something big happens, CDOT usually does a press release describing what happened and we could share that information with you all.

Matt said this is a good suggestion and he will follow up with Sam after today's call to make sure we have a specific distribution list for the TT for items like this.

Matt said from a safety or traffic incident management perspective, we have plans and procedures in place. If there was an incident that caused us to close I-70 for any amount of time we use our normal incident management tools such as COTrips, EC Alerts as well as our public information channels to get the information out. For safety or traffic incident management status, we will work with the partnerships we have on the Corridor.

4. **Virtual Public Meeting Recap and Public Outreach During Construction**

- a. Sam said over the last few months we've been busy getting the word out that construction is going to be starting for a second season.
- b. The project has gotten a great early round of media coverage both on the western slope in the Vail Daily and on the front range. Denver channels 4, 7 and 9 news all did video package stories about the improvements and construction resuming this year.
- c. On March 31st we held a virtual public meeting. In preparation for that we ran an ad to raise awareness about the open house. There was also direct door postcard mailing to more than 6,000 addresses in the Vail Valley which gave an overview of this season's improvements and promoting the open house. We were also on social media and sent emails to our stakeholder list.
- d. Even with the 6,000 postcard mailers and lots of publicity, we only had 17 people attend. We take that small number that everyone has been following the project and is feeling informed, so perhaps they felt that they didn't have much more to learn at this time. We did have a really good discussion with the attendees, and it led to some good Q&A at the end. We fielded 9 questions ranging from bike path impacts to the usual noise mitigation questions and overall traffic impacts. The recording of the meeting has been posted on the project website and can be watched here: [I-70 West Vail Pass Auxiliary Lanes Project — Virtual Public Engagement Open House - YouTube](#)



- e. Sam said they are back up and running public information updates for the construction season. We are sending out weekly emails and the project website has been updated with a new feature that we're excited about which is an interactive map that has some of the project highlights. You can click around to see photos, renderings, and audio tours of the project. We are working with CDOT Region 3 for ongoing media relations and a big focus will be working with the recreation and major event groups that use the pass. So far we've had meetings with the Forest Service and Bicycle Colorado. This week we will be working to distribute a major update about the bike path impacts to our targeted recreation list. If there are groups that are interested in learning more about the construction before their events, we will offer to do a site visit with them.
- f. We will have a fact sheet specific for the bike path which will be distributed to the recreation shops in Vail and event organizers, and we are also working on some signage that will go on the trail. We are encouraging people to use the project email and hotline to submit their feedback and questions.
- g. John said they just received an email that the Vail Pass Rest Area is going to close May 2nd for a major remodel and will not reopen until November 2023. This is not associated with our project, but we will likely get questions about it.
- h. Sam said they anticipate people will reach out to us asking questions about the Rest Area and we are considering putting information about that project in one of our project email updates to get the word out that it is a separate project and providing communication channels to get in touch with that project.
 - 1. Dick asked if cyclists will be able to transfer from West Vail Pass through the Rest Area to the Summit County side?

Matt said yes, they will be able to. We have been meeting with that project team and the Forest Service also had a meeting with that team to convey the same expectations we have for a temporary path through their construction site.

5. Upcoming SWEEP & ALIVE ITF Meetings

- a. Mary Jo said given the pace of the design work, we have decided to add an additional meeting. The next meeting will be on May 2nd, because we have the Maintenance Manual finished, and we want to wrap that up.

Karen thought it would be great to have a SWEEP meeting just to focus on the Maintenance Manual. CDOT Maintenance staff will be in attendance and can speak to existing maintenance practices as well as future maintenance practices once the new infrastructure is constructed.

Another part of that meeting is we have been asked by stakeholders to continue the conversation about how we select our mag chloride, how we apply it, and how we minimize the use of it. While it is not necessarily part of this project, we thought it would be a great opportunity to allocate some time at this meeting to share some information she has gathered from the maintenance team about the selection, use, and application of mag chloride. The maintenance team can answer questions about this due to the continued conversation about the use of mag chloride.

- 1. Marcus asked if there are any other documents that will be available for us to review, like a winter ops plan for what CDOT does in terms of what they are putting down for mag chloride? It was probably addressed in the EA but if there are any other documents out there that you can share, please let us know.

Karen said we were not planning to send out any additional documents. During the EA there may have been work done on this. There is no mitigation required related to mag chloride, however we



have heard from our stakeholders they would like to understand more about what we are doing, so that's why I'm talking about it with the SWEEP group, but it is not part of the project.

Karen said if you would like more information on how CDOT does maintenance with mag chloride, it would be best for her to connect Marcus with our maintenance teams, and he can have a one on one related to this.

2. Melvin said he reviewed the EA. He's reviewed the BA, BO, and EA and doesn't feel it was adequately addressed; and the USFS feels this is a connected action. USFS will have further comments on this.

Karen said that we'll follow up to address your concerns.

- b. We are not ready to share the remainder of the Map Book at this next meeting because we are going to a 60% level of design for the drainage for the top half of the pass this summer and it didn't make sense to develop a concept design for what we are going to be designing very soon. So, we will hold off on that portion of the Map Book until we know what the drainage will likely look like at the top half of the pass, and we anticipate it will be ready to have another meeting in July.
- c. We will be holding another ALIVE ITF Meeting to provide information on ideas and changes that are being looked at for the length of the wildlife crossings. Karen said we have some cool information to share at this next meeting. We have been able to shorten the length of the large wildlife crossings a little bit. John has led a research study defining more information and gathering past research on how wildlife crossings have worked in the past, how successful they have been, based on different sizes, and he has started to develop a formula for how we can select wildlife crossing sizes in the future based on past success rates from a lot of different projects. We are using his research to reevaluate at least one of the crossings to see if we have optimized the size on that one.

6. CP #3 FOR Submittal Highlights

- a. Randal said CP#3 plans were submitted on March 23rd. Comments received are being addressed and we are in the process of advancing the plans to have the final set delivered on May 11th.

Randal reviewed the elements in CP #3:

- I-70 Westbound Bridge
- Rec Trail - Bridge Area West
- Walls – MP 184.6 and MP 187. These walls help us set up the detour pavement that will be needed in order to complete CP #4 work which is scheduled for spring/summer of 2023.
- I-70 Westbound detour pavement. Putting the detour pavement in at the end of this season will allow us to move traffic earlier to allow us to complete in 2023.
- FEN (Wetland) restoration near CDOT sand shed

3. Mary Jo asked if elements have moved between construction packages or are they pretty much what we've said would be in each package?

Randal said the elements are still the same within each construction package. The detour pavement work needs to be installed this year for westbound I-70. We will bring the eastbound traffic onto the westbound lanes and move the westbound lanes a little closer to the side of the hill and that frees up existing eastbound lanes in 2023.



7. **Schedule**

Mary Jo said the schedule is basically the same as what we presented at our last meeting, however we will add the SWEEP and ALIVE ITF Meetings.

8. **Next Steps**

- SWEEP Meeting #8 – May 2nd
- ALIVE Meeting #6 – May 9th
- Rec Path and Highway Closure System Construction begins mid-May
- PLT Meeting #12 May 13th
- TT Meeting #27 – May 16th