



MEETING NOTES

PROJECT:	23982-23929 I-70 West Vail Pass Safety and Operations Improvements
PURPOSE:	Technical Team (TT) Meeting #27
DATE HELD:	May 16, 2022
LOCATION:	Online Google Meet Meeting
ATTENDING:	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 Joe Bajza, CDOT Maintenance Danielle Neumann, DNR Captain Jared Rapp, CSP Ben Gerdes, Eagle County Kevin Sharkey, Eagle County Marcus Dreux, US Forest Service Greg Hall, Town of Vail Pete Wadden, Town of Vail Dick Cleveland, Town of Vail Larissa Read, ERWSD Shannon Anderson, Bicycle Colorado Tracy Sakaguchi, Colorado Motor Carriers Mark Gutknecht, Kiewit Pete Remington, Kiewit Sam Stavish, CIG Randal Lapsley, R S & H Mark Talvitie, R S & H Mary Jo Vobejda, Jacobs Amy Hopkins, Jacobs Jim Clarke, Jacobs Loretta LaRiviere, Jacobs
COPIES:	Attendees

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

1. Introductions & Meeting Purpose

- a. Karen introduced the attendees at today's meeting.
- b. Mary Jo said today we will provide you updates on spoil locations for CP #2 and #3, future construction packages, SWEEP and ALIVE meeting debriefs, and construction and public involvement updates.

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

- SWEEP Meeting #8 on May 2nd
- ALIVE Meeting #6 on May 9th
- PLT Meeting #12 on May 13th

3. Update on Spoil Locations for CP 2, 3 & Future Packages

- a. Randal said the design plans for CP #2 have been completed and construction is underway. We have identified a few locations to take some of the excess material from CP #2 & #3. The rest area



project at the top of the pass will take a lot of earthwork from CP #2 so we will be working in collaboration with that project to transition our soil up to the top of the pass.

- b. There will still be excess soil from these two construction packages as well as future work so we have been looking at areas where we can create wins for our project as well as future projects. There are a couple of areas where we have identified that the EA showed that would need earthwork to widen. Another area that will take some soil is a berm near Vail that CDOT is constructing on a different project. A couple of the areas are adjacent to wetlands that were identified through the EA process, and we want to make sure we stay away from those. We will be doing some field work this summer to identify the boundaries to avoid impacts to any of the wetlands.

1. Mary Jo asked what will these look like when you put the soil down?

Randal said the intent is to take the existing topsoil seed bank and move them off to the side of the location we are putting the material. When the material has been compacted and is suitable for future use, we will bring the topsoil and seeding material and return to its natural state.

2. Greg asked if you have a more detailed map of the location and grading for the spoil areas.

Randal said we are working on that right now and hopefully at the next meeting we can come back with some more details.

4. SWEEP ITF Meeting #8

- a. Mary Jo said at the May 2nd SWEEP ITF Meeting we reviewed the Maintenance Manual comments and updates. Many of the comments were addressed one-on-one with the commentor so we could get a really good understanding of their issue and desires. The Maintenance Manual is being completed now.

We reviewed the status on the fen and wetlands progress. The fen restoration is a really exciting thing because it is unusual. Mary Jo said she has never worked on a project where a fen could be restored.

Karen also gave a very informative presentation and discussion about CDOT's Winter Maintenance procedures and protocols regarding the use of sand and mag chloride. It was a good overview of how CDOT conducts their maintenance and how the use of sand and mag chloride has changed over time and continues to be reviewed and the involvement with the Clear Roads organization.

5. ALIVE ITF Meeting #6

- a. John said the recent study completed that was a statistical analysis on wildlife successful underpasses: [A Literature Analysis to Determine Optimal Wildlife Crossing Structure Size.](#) Using that study and some other justification about the wildlife presence on Vail Pass, we had approached our project team about refining the sizes of the larger wildlife underpasses and the conclusion was to keep the wildlife crossing at the top of the pass the original size of 50' wide and then one a little further down the pass will be 40' wide. One of thoughts was that there are more mule deer lower and more elk up higher. We met us U.S. Fish and Wildlife and CPW and got their buy in and then presented the final recommendations to the ALIVE ITF.

6. Fen Restoration



- a. Jim said we have identified a fen behind the existing maintenance shed at the top of the pass. This particular fen provides a unique opportunity for restoration because it is technically a fen but not a highly functioning one. The hydrology has been affected by a ditch that was cut through it. The intent is to restore the original fen hydrology and in doing that over time with some of the other measures we are talking about, we will be restoring some of the vegetation that is in the fen. There are very few opportunities for restoration like this. It has been well received by our partners at the Forest Service, so we are moving ahead with it. It's a great opportunity.

In addition, there is also a non-fen mitigation site that we are working on in between the fen and the maintenance shed which would capture some of the extra hydrology and water. The rest area materials will be added mitigation here as well.

7. Construction Update

- a. Matt said construction resumed on the pass in early April that included CP #1 and preliminary prep work for CP #2 which is the rec path. We put in the Black Gore and Polk Creek temporary stream crossings ahead of the May 1st deadline we worked out with CPW for fish spawning season. We also laid a lot of temporary conduit for the Lumen fiber-optic line, which is impacted by the rec trail reconstruction. We continue to work on the I-70 closure system at the top of the pass at MP 190.
- b. We received Notice to Proceed for CP #2 last week and have started on that work as well. The first piece of that is setting up the trail detour. It is an 8' paved shoulder on I-70 with a pinned concrete barrier to separate the path from the highway. We have to add some detour paving to make sure we have the entire 8' as well as construction access points. This week the teams will be working on restriping I-70. We are narrowing up I-70 one foot on the drive lanes and reducing the shoulders. That work will start this week along with setting the barrier. The rec path in its current alignment is open and we are starting see some users. They can continue to use the path until we get the detour set up and then we will shift recreation traffic onto the detour before starting to demolish the existing trail. We have also started some pioneer work and initial excavation and will start to see a lot more work crews and equipment as things continue to dry out.

1. Shannon asked if the rec path has been cleaned and swept?

Matt said CDOT Maintenance has been out working on clearing snow but he's not sure if it has been swept yet.

2. Marcus asked if the Notice to Proceed comes from FHWA.

Matt said, no, it is a CDOT process that we receive when the contract is finished and signed.

3. Marcus asked when you are anticipating tree removal to start.

Matt said there is a walk-through scheduled for this Friday and he doesn't anticipate any tree removal ahead of that.

4. Marcus asked if the tree cutting will be done by Kiewit or another company.

Pete said the majority of the work will be done by a logging company subcontractor with the appropriate equipment.

Marcus said we can discuss the Forest Service's log decking expectations in more detail at the walk-through.



8. Construction Schedule

- a. Randal said CP #3 will include portions of the rec path that aren't in CP #2. Those are areas that are generally underneath the bridges at Polk Creek and up and around the area where we are deviating the trail from US 6. CP #3 will include the westbound bridge and widening of the westbound lanes by adding pavement to the outside of the existing lanes. That widening will be done at the end of this construction season to set us up for construction in 2023. We will be detouring traffic on I-70 onto the westbound lanes to allow us to build as much as we can in CP #4 in 2023.

There is a small section of the rec trail that is under the existing eastbound bridge at Polk Creek that will have a detour that will remain in place once CP #3 package is completed. There are a few hundred feet that we anticipate would go right through one of the bridge piers and obviously we can't build that part of the trail until the eastbound bridge is out of the way. It is a safe detour that people will be able to use in the meantime, but it won't be the permanent alignment.

9. Public Involvement Update

- a. Sam said we are up and running for the project's public information program. There are a lot of different ways for people to stay informed about the project. One of a few unique items is the interactive project map that is on the project website. You can click on various improvements for all phases of the project. There are photos and renderings and a voice over recording that describes the improvements.

We are still getting some mileage out of the virtual open house recording by pushing people to the video and specifically to certain sections of the video. The rec path is a big focus right now, so we are able to direct people right to the five-minute segment in the video about the rec path.

- b. Tools that we are using to continue to get the word out on construction and impacts are:

- Weekly email updates, hotline message, and lane closures posted to COtrip
- Ongoing media relations activities
- Meetings with key stakeholders
- Social media posts
- Distribution of fact sheets and flyers
- Website updates

Outreach for the Recreation Trail includes:

- Meetings and communication with major events and offering rec trail tours before their events
- Keeping an eye on the trail for start of summer path traffic
- Communication to recreation stakeholders and businesses
- Fact sheets and flyers
- Recreation trail signage will be posted at each end of the trail with QR code to website

1. Greg asked where the signs will be placed?

Matt said they will be at the each starting point of the detour locations. We have also discussed putting flyers which will include the QR code at the top and bottom of the pass where the gates are.

2. Shannon said another place that would be good to have the information is right when you get to the top of pass, near the cul-de-sac where the bike path takes off to the right as you're heading east. It is a natural place to stop, and people tend to congregate there and if the information was there people could decide if they want to continue.



3. Greg said with the narrow path ebikes are prohibited by the Forest Service and it may be worthwhile to put that on the signs and flyers.
4. Greg asked about the timing and getting information out for the closures of I-70 for blasting.

Matt said there will be closures for blasting Monday through Thursday from June through August from 6:00 to 8:00 pm for 30 minutes maximum. The time frame is less than 30 minutes but that gives us a buffer to do the blasting, to get the all-clear and clean up. There may be 10-20 blasts depending on the amount of rock that needs to be removed, but we are not planning for there to be multiple blasts in one day. We will give a week's notice and use the public information tools we are already using. We will also use VMS boards on site.

5. Marcus said there is a possibility during blasting timeframe, the Forest Service may have fire restrictions. Do you have any protocols in place for blasting or hot work? When we do go into fire restrictions, we send out a letter to folks who are doing this type of work which outlines the guidelines we expect.

Matt from Kiewit said there is a requirement for a fire protection plan that Kiewit has submitted.

10. Schedule

- a. Mary Jo briefly reviewed the schedule for construction.

1. Shannon inquired what the DBB acronym on CP #5 stands for

Randal said it is Design/Bid/Build (DBB). The construction work prior to CP #5 has been done through CMGC with Kiewit. With CP #5, this will be bid out and any contractor that qualifies can get on the project.

CDOT determined the original amount they had contracted with Kiewit under the CMGC process had a cap to it and then any work that is done above that amount needs to be bid out to other contractors using a different procurement process.

2. Greg said we've been going through the design and construction process with Kiewit, and he is concerned about switching to a different team for the last phase.

Karen said we are trying to find a balance right now. As everyone knows we selected Kiewit based on their qualifications. The challenge is when we initially advertised this project, we had defined a fixed limit of construction cost. We have added another bridge which added millions of dollars to the cost and prices have inflated in the last few years, so we are in a different ballpark now.

The contracting community has asked CDOT to really look at how it can be kept competitive and fair. It's not fair to just give this extra work to Kiewit. What we decided to do is keep the original dollar value that Kiewit was contracted for but go out for DBB for the remainder of the work.

Just like any CDOT project, we are able to control the work. Most likely what will end up happening is Kiewit will finish up their work at the end of 2023 and we will have the other contractor there in 2024/25. We are working very closely with Kiewit to try to make sure we define the best way to break up the project to reduce the risk to CDOT for the other project. We are going to make every effort to make it seamless for the traveling public.



The design team will stay with the project for CP #5 along with our construction manager so there will be a lot of consistency when the construction shifts to the new company. Also, a lot of the subcontractors might still continue to work on the project, there will just be a new prime.

- b. Mary Jo said at the last PLT meeting we agreed to combine the PLT and TT meetings starting in June because we have a lot of repetition and overlap in membership. We will keep the meetings on the TT monthly meeting schedule until the design is complete and then will move to quarterly meetings when the design is complete because the meetings will be strictly about the construction happening.

11. Next Steps

- CP #3 is scheduled to start in August
- CP #4 will be having a DOR. We've talked before about FIR and FOR, DORs happen in between FIR and DOR and are seen as 60%-70% of the design and it is a way to check in especially if there were changes in the original 30% design meeting that we want to make sure are coordinated.

1. Shannon asked what DOR stands for.

Randal said it is a Design Office Review Meeting.

Mary Jo will have one more SWEEP Meeting in August. It will be to review the Map Book from MP 185-190. We are waiting for the design to be completed so that the Map Book is accurate based on the design.