

MEMORANDUM

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
REGION 3 TRAFFIC AND SAFETY



222 South 6th Street, Room 100
Grand Junction, Colorado 81501
Phone 970-683-6271
Fax 970-683-6290

DATE: September 19, 2011

TO: Users of the Region 3 Lane Closure Strategy (Second Edition)

FROM: Sean Yeates, Region 3 Traffic and Safety *Sean H. Yeates*

SUBJECT: Region 3 Lane Closure Strategy: I-70 West Vail Pass Lane Closure Restrictions

Due to the unique nature of the paving challenges associated with steep grades and high truck traffic on I-70 West Vail Pass, it has become necessary to look closely at allowable working hours with an increased sensitivity to traveler's delays.

It has come to our attention, based on recent paving project experience, that the excessive congestion associated with using a single lane capacity of 1100 VPHPL (vehicles per hour per lane) as a threshold to determine the allowable lane closure hours on West Vail Pass is unacceptable.

We have found, in discussions with neighboring CDOT Region 1 personnel, that during a past paving project in that region similar in nature to West Vail Pass (approaches to the Eisenhower Tunnels), that excessive traffic back-ups were experienced. An initial threshold of 1100 VPHPL was used to set lane closure restrictions on that project as well. As congestion rapidly built up, field personnel proactively adjusted lane closure hours to minimize congestion. The empirical congestion threshold in that case was somewhere between 800 VPHPL and 900 VPHPL.

Effective immediately, the allowable working hours for West Vail Pass construction lane closures will be determined using a threshold of 900 VPHPL for I-70 milepost 179.9 (East Vail Interchange) to milepost 190.0 (Vail Pass Summit). Traffic data from the continuous traffic recorder shall be used as the basis for analysis. Additionally, it is expected that Resident and Project Engineers continue to work closely with Region 3 Traffic to further adjust lane closure hours during construction to best address traveler delays, if needed.

As we work together to strike a balance between construction work zone mobility and other factors, such as temperatures for materials placement, environmental impacts, etc. we hope to be able to better serve the mobility needs of our citizens.

Please include this addendum to the second edition of the Region 3 Lane Closure Strategy.