

**Jackson-Wilson Snake River Bridge
Stakeholders Meeting
12/18/2018 Minutes – Draft**

ATTENDEES:

Members:

Bob Hammond - WYDOT Resident Engineer, Jackson bob.hammond@wyo.gov
Bill Schreiber – Teton Village Association, Jackson bill.schreiber@jacksonhole.com
Lynn Whalen – Resident (Teton Pass), Jackson lmwhalen@bresnan.net
Jack Koehler – Friends of Pathways, Jackson jack@friendsofpathways.org
Amy Ramage – Teton County Engineering, Jackson aramage@tetoncountywy.gov
Melissa Turley – Teton Village Association, Jackson mturley@tetonvillagewy.org
Darin Brugmann – START Director, Jackson dbrugmann@jacksonwy.gov
Chris Colligan – Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Jackson ccolligan@greateryellowstone.org
Ross MacIntyre – Resident (River Hollow), Jackson rmacintyre174@gmail.com
Gary Fralick – WGFD Wildlife Biologist, Jackson gary.fralick@wyo.gov
Alyson Courtemanch – WGFD Wildlife Biologist, Jackson alyson.courtemanch@wyo.gov
David Hardie – Resident (River Hollow), Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, Jackson hardie@wyoming.com

Absent:

Sean O'Malley – Teton County Engineering, Jackson somalley@tetoncountywy.gov

Facilitator:

Nick Hines - WYDOT NEPA Management and Project Delivery Supervisor, Cheyenne nick.hines@wyo.gov

Non members:

Keith Compton – WYDOT District 3 Engineer, Rock Springs keith.compton@wyo.gov
Ted Wells - WYDOT District 3 Construction Engineer, Rock Springs leroy.wells@wyo.gov
Stephanie Harsha – WYDOT District 3 Public Involvement Specialist, Rock Springs stephanie.harsha@wyo.gov
Jeff Brown - WYDOT State Highway Development Engineer, Cheyenne jeff.brown@wyo.gov
Hank Doering - WYDOT Design Squad Leader, Cheyenne hank.doering@wyo.gov
Kelly Rounds - WYDOT Project Development Engineer, Cheyenne kelly.rounds@wyo.gov
Joel Meena - WYDOT State Traffic Engineer, Cheyenne joel.meena@wyo.gov
Ryan Shields - WYDOT Traffic Geometrics Engineer, Cheyenne ryan.shields@wyo.gov
Marshall Newlin – WYDOT Principal Bridge Engineer, Cheyenne marshall.newlin@wyo.gov
Donald Lawless – WYDOT Project Engineer, Jackson donald.lawless@wyo.gov
Scott Gamo - WYDOT Environmental Services Manager, Cheyenne scott.gamo@wyo.gov
Meg Mordahl, WYDOT NEPA Coordinator, Cheyenne margaret.mordahl@wyo.gov

The meeting was held at the Teton County Public Works building in Jackson. The following items were discussed:

Opening Remarks

1. **Bathrooms, emergency exits, breaks, lunch (will be provided), etc.**

Introductions

1. **Introductions, including name and organization, your interest in the project, and the interest group you represent**
2. **Meeting Ground Rules: be respectful (time, opinions, etc.), be concise (stay on topic), no disruptions (phone, email, side bars), participate openly in discussion, be positive, consensus vs. democracy (we each get our say, not our way)**

-Agreed-Upon Consensus Definition – Slight majority; try to incorporate everyone's opinions; WYDOT encouraged reaching a consensus instead of voting; make cohesive decisions to provide recommendations to WYDOT.

Meeting Agenda

1. **Explanation of the Stakeholder Group and Review Charter**
2. **Clarify Roles**
 - a. **Attend and participate in all meetings**
 - b. **Attend public meetings and support the project at these meetings**
 - c. **You are the voice of the public and specific interest groups**
 - d. **Make recommendations to WYDOT during design**

-Nick passed out charter agreement; requested signatures from stakeholders; summarized agreement (obligated to attend project-related meetings); if unable to attend, send comments to Nick or Bob; concerns will be relayed to group during the meeting; stakeholders will inform public throughout the design process; WYDOT will make final design decisions

3. **Discuss the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study; Review PEL Study**
 - a. **Questions about the PEL Study**

-Purpose and Need (P&N) of the Project – Replace Snake River Bridge; improve mobility through the WYO 22/390 intersection (intersection included in the PEL Study) due to its proximity to the bridge.

-PEL Study Summary – Completed in 2014 and serves as a basis for future NEPA documents; purpose was to develop a vision for the corridors; gathered public input; developed needs of corridors; divided into six segments based on varying characteristics and travel demand.

-Discussion on WYO 22/390 Intersection – WYDOT explained why we settled on the Florida T intersection for WYO 22/390 – it will handle traffic 20 years in the future; discussed traffic cutting through Stilson parking lot; looked at Level of Service (LOS) (LOS E in 2017); in order for FHWA to fund, LOS needs to be improved; emphasized that we are still on Preliminary Plans which is very early in the design process; Traffic Memo dated August 14, 2017, confirms that a roundabout will not fit and will not be approved by FHWA; inquired as to whether or not WYDOT has settled on a preferred alternative; requested that we update traffic data to refine traffic projections (added

to recommendations; see below); WYDOT will obtain updated traffic data and email out to group; alternative solutions have not been discussed; would like to see traffic modeling to visually see traffic patterns; a school is planned for the Stilson Lot and inquired how this roadway section will be impacted...should school representatives be part of the conversation?; we should know soon whether or not the school will be built.

-Discussion on Transit - the key is keeping the buses moving; the PEL Study recommends four lanes on WYO 22/390 corridors; need high-occupancy vehicle (HOV)/hot lanes/smart technology/transit improvements (queue jump lanes, pull out lanes, etc.); need to make transit more desirable than taking a private vehicle; more studies need to be completed; shoulder could be used for transit at peak times (currently implemented in Seattle); per WYDOT, P&N is bridge replacement; can widen bridge in the future...just costly, especially due to length of bridge (884 feet long); keep width in mind in terms of wildlife crossing implementation; expressed concern on the amount of time and cost of completing a transit study; from the perspective of a resident, HOV lane would be used more heavily than a bus lane; better transit can be implemented on future projects; transit is also needed for emergency vehicles; recommended starting out with a HOV lane and see how effective it is; may hold off on hiring a transit subject matter expert (SME) until after the first public meeting in order to involve the public.

4. Review Proposed NEPA Process; Work that has been done

a. NEPA Moving Forward

-Discussion on Corridor Decisions - how does this project affect future decisions?; would like to see final outcome; WYDOT discussed financing and need to move projects forward in order to start implementing vision; WYDOT does not have transit SMEs at WYDOT; may outsource a transit SME; this project needs to be built in a way that accommodates future growth (ex: transit opportunities)

-Discussion on Funding – the build grant (formerly tiger grant...\$1.5M annually) can be used for transit, Darrin was to follow up with WYDOT transit coordinator.

5. Update on Moose Collaring Project

- WGFD discussed moose collaring; thanked WYDOT for coming up with the initiative; at May/June 2018 meeting, moose collaring subject was discussed – need to assess moose movement around Snake River Bridge; discussed outline – collar ten moose, evaluate seasonal movements around Snake River, identify locations where they are selecting or avoiding, describe seasonal habitat use along corridor, look at Sublette and Jackson moose herds, identify mortality rates and causes; cost - \$22K, collars are in production and should be complete by February 2019, at which time moose will be collared (not gender-specific); collars will remain on moose for two years; real-time monitoring; WYDOT may be given an account to follow daily movements of moose; WGFD will solicit participation and adhere to schedule; opportunity for additional funding from Greater Yellowstone Coalition; capture will occur on private land; suggested offering a monetary award for moose sightings; suggested monitoring moose after wildlife structures are built; WGFD agreed that this would be valuable information; requested email addresses to keep everyone in the loop; this data may help us determine locations of wildlife fencing

6. Project Schedule

-Preliminary Plans – complete

-Public Meeting – mid-February 2019 (after modeling is presented to stakeholders in January 2019)

-Grading Plans – November 2019

-Right-of-Way & Engineering Plans – July 2020

-Right-of-Way & Utility Plans – October 2020

-Final Plans – April 2021

7. Discuss Project Design Flow Chart (Hank Doering)

-WYDOT discussed plan issuances and timeline – they build on each other; Preliminary Plans focus on alignment and termini; Grading Plans focus on grade and cut/fill; Right-of-Way & Engineering Plans focus on right-of-way limits and acquisition...start discussions with landowners; Right-of-Way & Utility Plans focus on utility locations... start discussions with utility companies on moving utilities if within right-of-way; Final plans – look at quantities (plans, specifications, & estimates to follow)

8. Review Preliminary Plans; Identify any Upfront Concerns with this Project

-WYDOT went through Preliminary Plans – Described plan and profile sheets, stationing, different line types, typical sections, WYO 390 and Snake River Bridge will be concrete...rest is asphalt, design speed, discussed curve at intersection, the old bridge will be utilized for traffic during construction, new bridge to be constructed one half at a time to accommodate traffic, we cannot avoid impacts to adjacent landowners, medians will be depressed, coming into project with two lanes, transitions to four lanes by bridge, turn lane by Emily's Pond area, deceleration lane at this location will be omitted since there will be two lanes; inquired about shoulders; putting in wider 8-foot shoulders (shoulders vary at intersection); inquired whether tree screens can be included to dissuade wildlife viewing; asked whether we can/should accommodate viewing; discussed closing parking on southwest side of bridge; this project is viewed as bridge replacement and needs to be voiced to the public this way; at the public meeting WYDOT will address why recommendations shown in the PEL Study are not being implemented; the PEL Study is very broad and the project narrows the focus; the PEL Study will be referenced in the CE

-Wildlife crossings originated from the Wildlife Crossing Master Plan

-Priority No. 3 Crossing (Station 760), Sheet 4 – due to design constraints, can only build it 10 feet high (box culvert), ranked lower due to riparian habitat and potential Stilson School; cost is approx. \$400K

-Priority No. 1 (Station 773), Sheet 5 – con-span bridge...wider and more agreeable to wildlife; try to include riparian habitat (move slightly west); might extend deceleration lane; dimensions: 65 feet wide x 13 feet high x 112 feet long; WYDOT mentioned the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' requirement to avoid or minimize impacts to wetlands and must mitigate if greater than one tenth of an acre; mentioned the benefit of increasing spawning area for fish

-There is planned development where the boat access is, which includes a parking area and a pullout for recreation (ex: raft outfitters); will this dissuade wildlife?; consensus: although this may affect wildlife, we still need to do something; looking at seasonal closures of the boat ramp/parking area to lessen disruption of wildlife

-Group recommends forming a subgroup to further analyze crossing locations and bring ideas back to larger group; groundwork has already been done; big question is funding; need clarity on fencing and crossing combinations; need Friends of Pathways to participate in fencing recommendations

- Priority No. 4 (Station 3), Sheet 8 – lowest priority based on location
- Priority No. 2 (Station 789), Sheet 6 – could only fit a 10- x 16-foot wide box; discussed extending the bridge span on the west side for a wildlife crossing; expressed concern with noise affecting wildlife; Per WGFD, wildlife will still use bridge as an underpass; we are right by existing right-of-way line, which would make it difficult to widen shoulders; pathway would be relocated on top of culvert; must leave levee intact which increases cost to approx. \$900K
- Per WYDOT, if we build all crossings, it would cost over \$9M; lengthening bridge on either side is approx. \$1M; be cognizant of cost; have to balance statewide and district budgets; currently have ~\$22M for this project in the STIP; when is funding decided?; more discussion is needed with wildlife groups; need to look at most cost-effective and optimal solution; recognize this project started out as just bridge replacement due to it being fracture critical; be cognizant of timing; will need to decide design of bridge soon; takes about one year to design; Greater Yellowstone Coalition will try and raise funding to support wildlife crossings; WYDOT would like to see all wildlife data before determining final design; WYDOT needs to know by summer 2019 to allow enough time for design; bridge will be designed for seismic loading using a time history analysis; construction will take two summers
- Cost-benefit of underpasses and other mitigation measures – suggested looking at locations of wildlife fencing in the corridors; 42 moose killed within the last 30 years on this section of highway; is a human safety issue as well as wildlife; this area is shown as a priority area in the Wyoming Wildlife Initiative; Greater Yellowstone Coalition stated they are exploring other avenues to raise money (philanthropy, donations, private funding, etc.); discussed observations on number of big game seen on both sides of road (ex: location of proposed Stilson School)

Meeting Closing

9. Additional Comments or Concerns

- Will need a system of crossings
- Would like to see wildlife underpass put in place of 48 inch culvert that links ponds on north and south side of road
- Stilson School may include a bike path underpass (Green Lane to Wilson)...paralleling WYO 22 on south side
- Crossings are ranked using different parameters (ex: presence of riparian habitat)
- Discussed extending the free right turn lane onto WYO 390; WYDOT will have it as long as possible without impacting pedestrian underpass
- Expressed concern that we should have a different public meeting format which includes a presentation (group agreed); suggested disclosing evaluation process and end results in presentation
- Requested that we share transit study scope with the group...WYDOT agreed

-The group recommended:

- A Transit Study - The group does not want a wide road (3 lanes each way) and was curious to know if a two-lane road with one lane dedicated as a hot lane, HOV, bus lane, etc. would still meet the traffic needs for the corridor; the group would like to promote more transit in the community and without making transit faster than taking your own car, they will continue to have difficulty getting more transit riders; they would also like us to look at smart signals to allow the buses to move through the signals faster

- WYDOT to look at minimizing the island where the Florida T is located; they feel it is too wide and that it could be narrowed down, possibly reducing the amount of ROW take; there was also discussion on the elevation of the through lane – they did not want there to be a significant elevation change between the road and the through lane

- WYDOT should update the traffic numbers that were used in the PEL Study; they would like to see more current traffic numbers and traffic forecasting

- WYDOT needs to consider changing the public meeting format; they do not like the open house style; they want a presentation; WYDOT agreed to a presentation at the charter group meeting and that we would have a dry run of the public meeting presentation to present to the charter group in late January; the public meeting would be scheduled for mid-February

- The group thought it would be best to create a wildlife subgroup; this group will consist of Jack, Alyson, Gary, Chris, Bob, and Amy – organizer for the group

- Other big decisions that were made were that we needed to decide on the bridge changes by early summer 2019; major decisions to the design plans should be made early 2020 in order to have them incorporated into the design plans

- There was also a lot of discussion on making sure this project met all the needs in the PEL Study; the ending of this was we would try our best but this segment of road is short and WYDOT will not be able to address all of the needs listed in the PEL Study, on this project

10. Next Meeting Date

- End of January 2019; Give a dry run of the presentation; in the meantime, wildlife subgroup will meet and further discuss locations/number of wildlife crossings, length of fencing, etc.

11. Contact Info

- Email addresses shown on first page