

**State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Meeting
July 19, 2022; 10 a.m.
Big Horn County Courthouse, Commission Room
Basin, Wyoming**

Present:

Bruce Jolley, Big Horn County Commission
Dave Neves, Big Horn County Commission
Felix Carrizales, Big Horn County Commission
Jennifer Kirk, Big Horn County Attorney
Lori Smallwood, Big Horn County Clerk
Barbara Anne Green, Basin Republican Rustler
William Bridges, Big Horn County Engineer
John R. Winter, HD28, Thermopolis
Dexter Woodis, Shoshone Municipal Pipeline
Michael Miller, WYDOT
Randy Merritt, WYDOT
Jack Hoffman, WYDOT
Cody Beers, WYDOT

Presentation:

Randy Merritt and Mike Miller presented the STIP presentation. Handouts included Big Horn County STIP projects, WYDOT Transportation Facts Books, and county-wide projects.

Questions:

Felix Carrizales - Taxpayers believe we (government) should be taking less federal funding. Asked for thoughts? Randy Merritt said WYDOT receives 71 percent of its funds from the federal government.

Felix Carrizales - WyoLink project status, FY2022 (When? Where?); WYDOT's Nathan Smolinski will be scheduled in a future commission meeting to share the status of current/upcoming projects.

Carrizales asked about Georgia-Pacific Road status - Randy Merritt said the project has moved into the December 2022 bid letting. Inflation hit this project relatively hard. WYDOT has added additional funds for the CRIP project. WYDOT funding is now \$5 million.

Merritt said WYDOT D5 is currently over-programmed by \$40 million over the next five years, and that is impacting small projects in the letting schedules. D5 and WYDOT "is hurting" due to inflation and budget cuts.

Carrizales asked about the ongoing US14A slide - Randy Merritt said WYDOT maintenance workers are continuing to patch the slide every spring. WYDOT does have a current pavement overlay project above the slide area on US14A.

Bruce Jolley asked about the status of bridge work between Lovell and Cowley on the new bridges - Randy Merritt said those projects haven't yet been placed in the State Transportation Improvement Program.

Carrizales asked a question about road condition and why some roads in "decent" shape are being overlaid, while other roads in "bad" shape seem to be falling apart with no road work - Randy Merritt said this process is part of WYDOT's pavement preservation program. They key is doing pavement work before a road's condition slips over the edge where it needs reconstruction. The "bad" roads are in the STIP but take longer to design and that adds cost, which creates scheduling difficulty with diminishing budgets.

Dave Neves asked Merritt about cutting into roads to replace pipes and if that's a common practice. Merritt said this is not common on state highways, as a bump usually results from this activity. Some pipe replacements have forced this procedure to happen, but paving this year will happen to smooth the driving surface in these locations (WY30, and near Otto and Burlington).

Bruce Jolley asked about sprinkler pivot problems (water on roadways). Merritt said this can be problem, but landowners accommodate WYDOT pretty well by making adjustments to their sprinklers. He said burning and smoke also create problems for drivers.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Meeting
July 19, 2022; 1:30 p.m.
Washakie County Courthouse, Commission Room
Worland, Wyoming

Present:

Fred Frandson, Washakie County Commission
Aaron Anderson, Washakie County Commission
Terry Wolf, Washakie County Commission
Mary Grace Strauch, Washakie County Clerk
Stuart Bower, Washakie County Road and Bridge Department
David Anderson, Washakie County Planner
LeAnn Baker, Washakie Development Association
Tracy Glanz, City of Worland
Nick Kruger, City of Worland
Jim Gill, City of Worland
Mike Donnell, City of Worland
Erin Leonetti, Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Karla Pomeroy, Northern Wyoming Daily News
Austin Yeoman, WYDOT
Shawn Franzen, WYDOT
Pete Hallsten, WYDOT
Randy Merritt, WYDOT
Mike Miller, WYDOT
Jack Hoffman, WYDOT
Cody Beers, WYDOT

Presentation:

Pete Hallsten, Randy Merritt and Mike Miller presented the STIP presentation. Handouts included Washakie County STIP projects, and county-wide projects.

Questions:

Pete Hallsten gave Commissioners a cost estimate for Big Trails roadway, explaining that there is currently volatility with bid lettings and awards.

Hallsten and Randy Merritt explained the Bridge Funding Program (BFP). Washakie County has two bridges on the statewide list of 44 bridge replacements. Commissioner Aaron Anderson asked if the bridge at East Fork of Sand Creek could be replaced with pipes; this bridge made the list of the worst structures in the state. Merritt said he would check on the idea of viability in replacing this structure with a box culvert or pipes.

Responding to another question, Merritt said the Cottonwood Creek bridge replacement will be a 24-foot bridge, and it has to be this wide due to the use of federal funds. It can't be reconstructed as a single-lane bridge. Anderson would like to see the geology report on the Cottonwood Bridge.

A conversation ensued about turnouts on US16, turnout parking, or construction of parking lots in the popular climbing areas east of Ten Sleep. Fred Frandson said the canyon is dangerous because climbers are using turnout parking. He believes off-road parking needs to be limited so drivers have an opportunity to park in the turnouts, if needed. Hallsten said the county could enter into an agreement with the Forest Service to build new parking areas on US16 that would accommodate other drivers. WYDOT is working toward a plan with the Forest Service to build a large parking lot near the popular climbing areas. Hallsten predicted that an environmental process would probably ensue (NEPA document, public comment period and Record of Decision).

Hallsten mentioned the upcoming slab replacement project in Worland, and that there are opportunities for the City of Worland to partner with the contractor to fix city streets/sidewalk during the project.

Terry Wolf asked about the Wyo-Link tower in the Big Horns off US16. We are trying to schedule Nathan Smolinski to come to a future commission meeting to talk about the plans for Wyo-Link improvements that would help Washakie County.

Nick Kruger asked about circuitry improvements in the Worland area.

Hallsten shared a surplus equipment list with Kruger.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Meeting
Aug. 2, 2022; 1:30 p.m.
Fremont County Courthouse, Commission Room
Lander, Wyoming

Present:

Clarence Thomas, Fremont County Commissioner
Larry Allen, Fremont County Commissioner
Jennifer McCarty, Fremont County Commissioner
Michael Jones, Fremont County Commissioner
Jodi Darrough, Fremont County Attorney's Office
Rep. Lloyd Larson, HD54, Lander
Lance Hopkin, Public Works Director, Lander
Hunter Roseberry, Asst. Public Works Director, Lander
Rep. Pepper Ottman, H34, Riverton
Julie Freese, Fremont County Clerk
Kyle Butterfield, City Administrator, Riverton
Billy Meeks, Fremont County Road and Bridge Supt., Riverton
Daryl Lutz, Wyoming Game and Fish Department wildlife management supervisor
Stan Harter, Wyoming Game and Fish Department wildlife biologist
Richard Duran, Federal Highway Administration, Cheyenne
Greenlee Rigby, Federal Highway Administration, Cheyenne
Paden Anderson, HDR Engineering, Lander
Kyle Lehto, HDR Engineering, Lander
RaJean Strube Fossen, Assistant Mayor, Lander
Pete Hallsten, WYDOT
Randy Merritt, WYDOT
Jack Hoffman, WYDOT
Cody Beers, WYDOT
Robert Scheidemantel, WYDOT
Erik Smith, WYDOT
Baylor Beers, WYDOT

Matt Sanders, WYDOT

Presentation:

Pete Hallsten, Randy Merritt, Robert Scheidemantel and Erik Smith presented the STIP presentation. Handouts included Fremont County STIP projects, and county-wide projects.

Questions:

Pete Hallsten offered an update on traffic numbers on WY134. Traffic numbers remain constant, with no big changes or need to reduce speed limits in Missouri Valley.

Rep. Larson asked WYDOT to fix dip on Lander Hill (Lander to Hudson).

Rep. Larson asked how WYDOT prioritizes projects in District 5. He said Sinks Canyon Road "is very rough." Hallsten explained the condition of each state roadway is analyzed by WYDOT every two years. The Sinks Canyon Road was chip-sealed last year.

Hopkin asked about funding available for roads like 5th Street and Fremont Street, which both link highways together. He was encouraged to contact Sara Ellis in WYDOT's Local Government to look at applying for grants to fix the streets. Also, Hallsten said the Federal Lands Access Program might be a good alternative since Sinks Canyon Road (WY131) connects with the national forest roads in the area.

Commissioner Mike Jones asked about Lyons Valley Road signing, and if the issue mirrors the issue in Washakie County with the Lower Nowood Road - bypass issue. WYDOT's Jack Hoffman said the Washakie County signs are orange/black signs that say "Road Damage, Advise Alternate Route." Hallsten said the Washakie County signs haven't been very

effective in detouring traffic away from the Lower Nowood Road. Jones said speeds and the numbers of vehicles using Lower Nowood Road are increasing. Jones was encouraged to work with Google to end routing of vehicles on Lyons Valley Road. Jones was meeting later Aug. 2 with Lyons Valley landowners about a signing program.

On another subject, Hallsten said WYDOT has mill tailings available to continue helping Fremont County on an alternate route over Cottonwood Pass between Lysite and Ten Sleep. Fremont County has improved its section of roadway over Cottonwood Pass, Billy Meeks said, but Washakie County hasn't touched its side of Cottonwood Pass with roadway improvements.

Larry Allen asked about the safety of Midvale Store/8 Mile Road intersection on Missouri Valley Road. Signs aren't really working in slowing traffic there, either.

Larry Allen commented that the speed limit of WY789 north of Riverton should be lowered to 45 mph until well north of Country Acres Road/Honor Farm Road. Hallsten said development in the area, such as the new hospital and other businesses in the Eastern Shoshone Business Park, will probably lead to lower speed limits on WY789 in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Meeting
Aug. 2, 2022; 9 a.m.
Hot Springs County Courthouse Annex
Thermopolis, Wyoming

Present:

Jurri Schenck, Thermopolis Independent Record
Rep. John Winter, HD28, Thermopolis
Stephan Domhoff, Thermopolis
Bo Bowman, Hot Springs County Planner
Shane Rankin, Hot Springs County Road and Bridge Dept.
Becky Kersten, Hot Springs County Clerk
Tom Ryan, Hot Springs County Commissioner
Jack Baird, Hot Springs County Commissioner
Phillip Scheel, Hot Springs County Commissioner
Penny Herdt, Hot Springs County Commission Clerk
Jill Logan, Hot Springs County Attorney
Pete Hallsten, WYDOT
Randy Merritt, WYDOT
Jack Hoffman, WYDOT
Cody Beers, WYDOT
Clint Huckfeldt, WYDOT
Shane Wilson, WYDOT

Presentation:

Pete Hallsten and Randy Merritt presented the STIP presentation.
Handouts included Hot Springs County STIP projects, and county-wide projects.

Questions:

Hot Springs County Commissioners opened the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of Waskakie County Commissioner Fred Frandson, who passed away following a short battle with cancer.

Citizen Stephan Domhoff said I-80 and Cheyenne seem to take money/funding away from northwest Wyoming. He would like to see more road and bridge improvements in Hot Springs County. He favors toll roads (I-80) to raise funds for WYDOT. District Engineer Pete Hallsten said mobility and capacity are at the bottom of WYDOT's guiding principles for spending money. As a result, WYDOT won't fund turning lanes to Thermopolis' new transfer station, as it doesn't meet requirements. The new trailer court/campground north of Thermopolis won't have turning lanes installed on the main highway, as it doesn't meet requirements. WYDOT makes need-based decisions about funding and highway and bridge improvements.

Hallsten said the bridge over the Big Horn River is one of 44 state bridges that will be replaced with new federal Bridge Replacement Funding. Broadway Bridge is slated for FY25. County attorney Jill Logan encouraged WYDOT to reach out to the towns about enhancements to make the bridge "pretty." This includes walking areas, lights, decorative concrete. She'd like to see a public input process so citizens can have a say in the future bridge. WYDOT will reach out to Thermopolis' Fred Crosby. Hallsten said funding programs exist within WYDOT, such as context sensitive amenities, to beautify bridges.

Tom Ryan said the Black Mountain Road consultant will begin giving updates to the Commission on a monthly basis.

Ryan has noticed the new attenuators in Wind River Canyon are doing their job - to catch and slow down rockfall before it reaches the highway.

Commissioner Jack Baird expressed interest in having a cattleguard installed on the county road right before it links with US20/WY789 in Wind River Canyon. He is concerned with the open range status of this road in relation to the canyon, and this has to do with his cattle. Hallsten said WYDOT may be able to consider this during a future WYDOT project near the canyon.

The meeting adjourned at 10 a.m.

State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Meeting
Aug. 9, 2022; 11 a.m.
Park County Courthouse, Commission Chambers
Cody, Wyoming

Present:

Rep. Dan Laursen, H25, Powell

Sam Hummel, Park County School District 6 Transportation Supervisor,
Cody

Ben McDonald, Park County Road and Bridge Department

Brian Edwards, Park County Road and Bridge Department

Joe Tilden, Park County Commissioner

Lee Livingston, Park County Commissioner

Dossie Overfield, Park County Commissioner

Scott Mangold, Park County Commissioner

Zac Taylor, Cody Enterprise

Tina Hoebelheinrich, Cody Country Chamber of Commerce

Andy Metzler, City of Powell Public Works

Zack Thorington, City of Powell City Administrator

Stefanie Bell, Trustee, Park County School District 6, Cody

Vernon Orndorff, Superintendent, Park County School District 6, Cody

Tim Foley, Asst. Superintendent, Park County School District 6, Cody

Sen. R.J. Kost, S19, Powell

Mayor Matt Hall, City of Cody

Phillip Bowman, City of Cody Public Works Director

Pete Hallsten, WYDOT

Todd Frost, WYDOT

Jack Hoffman, WYDOT

Cody Beers, WYDOT

Jim Berry, WYDOT

Presentation:

Pete Hallsten, Jack Hoffman and Todd Frost presented the STIP presentation. Handouts included Park County STIP projects, and county-wide projects.

Questions:

Jack Hoffman presented an update on the Big Horn Avenue Traffic Study, which will be discussed on Aug. 11 by the Cody Urban Systems Development Committee. Hoffman mentioned the possible test involving a pedestrian crossing at Freedom Street, and no left-hand turns during the test to keep pedestrians safe. He said WYDOT has also inserted a placeholder in the STIP document for a FY2023 traffic signal installation at the Blackburn Avenue/Big Horn Avenue intersection, as it almost meets traffic signal warrants.

Stefanie Bell, a member of the Cody Urban Systems Committee said the decision hasn't been made yet on the interim traffic measures for pedestrians on Big Horn Avenue.

Dossie Overfield asked about the piles of wood at the 3 Clarks Fork River bridges. She was told the wood, cleaned from the upstream side of the bridges, is available to anyone who would like to safely remove it.

Dossie Overfield offered kudos to WYDOT for the pavement overlay work on each side of Corbett Bridge (US14A).

Mayor Matt Hall asked about traffic signal warrants for the Blackburn Avenue traffic signal. Hoffman said the south side of Blackburn currently meets traffic warrants for installation of a traffic signal system, but the restriction of no left turns onto Freedom Street will likely drive the warrants toward a Blackburn signal during the upcoming

pedestrian crossing test, if it receives the OK of the Urban Systems Committee.

Stefanie Bell asked about "engineering judgement" in installing a traffic signal. Hallsten said when an intersection is very close to meeting signal warrants, there are lots of things to consider. Hallsten said he prefers a collaborative approach to managing the intersection traffic.

Hallsten said the discussion on the Big Horn Avenue is precisely the reason by the Big Horn Avenue Traffic Study is under way. He said future growth plans need to be considered as part of the study, as well as traffic movements, and safety improvements.

The meeting adjourned at noon.



August 10, 2022
Wyoming Department of Transportation
District 5
PO Box 461
Basin, WY 82410

RE: Draft Wyoming State Transportation Improvement Program Comments

Submitted via email to: [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Beers and Mr. Hallsten,

Please accept these comments on the FY2023-29 Draft State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). We appreciate the Wyoming Department of Transportation's (WYDOT) commitment to considering the public's input in developing this draft STIP.

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition (GYC) has worked with people to protect the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE) for over 35 years on behalf of its 90,000 supporters. We have long cooperated with the agencies and organizations that manage the lands, waters, and wildlife in the Wyoming portion of the GYE, including WYDOT districts 3 and 5.

The depth of knowledge and understanding of the impacts that our transportation network has on wildlife movement and landscape connectivity is continuing to grow. We commend WYDOT and Wyoming Game and Fish's (WYGFD) commitment to working together to address mutual goals and objectives. When agencies work together toward mutual goals, both the public and our shared natural resources benefit from the cooperation. Wildlife-vehicle collisions continue to pose significant safety concerns for drivers and natural resource management as well as economic concerns for the state. We encourage WYDOT and WYGFD to continue to work together in the development and planning of projects that meet the goals and objectives of both agencies.

Given the importance of our transportation network, as well as the value of healthy wildlife populations in Wyoming and the GYE, GYC submits the following comments for your review. We would be happy to answer any questions about our comments or provide additional information upon request. Thank you in advance for your careful consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Teddy Collins, Western Wyoming Conservation Associate
[REDACTED]

Recommendations

Best Available Science – We encourage WYDOT and other state agencies to continue to develop and use the best available science in planning and developing transportation projects in Wyoming as they relate to wildlife-vehicle collisions and wildlife movement and connectivity. Additionally, there is a significant amount of literature on road ecology that WYDOT should continue to use and implement in their planning and development. The resources, programs, and research from the United States Geological Survey, Wyoming Migration Initiative, and the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University provide an excellent resource base and avenue to new and emerging science.

Be a Leader – Wyoming should continue to lead the western states in creativity and innovation as it relates to issues with wildlife and transportation. Projects such as Trapper’s Point, and the future Dry Piney Connectivity Project, showcase the commitment state agencies have towards protecting wildlife movement across the landscape. Both residents and visitors value Wyoming’s healthy wildlife populations. The high quality of life, hunting heritage, and vibrant outdoor economy of Wyoming rely on robust wildlife populations as an important economic driver of the state.

Use Proven Methods – In addition to leading, WYDOT should not do so blindly. We encourage WYDOT to use methods that are proven to work such as wildlife crossing structures, fencing, and increased bridge spans to encourage safe wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. There are various bridge replacement projects noted in the draft STIP in Districts 3 and 5. Each should be examined to help facilitate wildlife movement and fish passage where appropriate, based on consultation and recommendations from WYGFD.

Cumulative impacts and NEPA – As with all projects that receive federal funding, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the agency to address cumulative impacts. WYDOT should be sure to carefully analyze and address cumulative impacts to wildlife and wildlife movement with all transportation projects that receive federal funding. As indicated in the Draft STIP, many projects are described as a few miles of road. However, the cumulative impacts of several projects on a stretch of road could result in significant, long-term impacts on wildlife populations.

Coordinate with Adjacent States – Wildlife migrations do not stop at state boundaries. It is imperative that WYDOT partners with neighboring state transportation agencies such as Idaho Department of Transportation (ITD) and Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to ensure that transboundary movement of wildlife is protected and that migrations are preserved.

Specific Projects

GYC generally supports all planning and scoping studies as outlined in the Draft STIP for Districts 3 and 5. We encourage WYDOT to coordinate with Wyoming Game and Fish to identify areas with wildlife-vehicle collisions, wildlife corridors, migration routes, and winter/summer ranges that could be addressed through infrastructure improvements.

District 3 For all bridge replacement projects, consider larger span bridges to accommodate wildlife passage and culverts to accommodate fish passage, where appropriate.

1. CN12069 Lincoln County Strawberry Creek County Road 12-126: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian habitat health with reconstruction project.
2. N121112 Idaho to Sage Junction US 30/WY 89: GYC supports this fencing project to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions on the roadway.
3. N103102 Thayne to Alpine Thayne North/US 89: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health with reconstruction project.
4. 1801023 Big Piney WY 351/Cutoff Road: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with drainage repair.
5. CN23044 Sublette County Road 175 Over New Fork River: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
6. CN23043 Sublette Owned By State Lands/BLM Road 4116: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
7. N132111 Daniel Junction to Bondurant US 189/191: GYC supports this fencing project to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions on the roadway.
8. 2000058 Jackson to Wilson WY 22: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
9. 2000061 Jackson to Wilson WY 22: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health with reconstruction project.
10. 2000062 Jackson to Wilson WY 22: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health with reconstruction project.
11. CN22036 Teton County Bridge Over Snake River: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
12. WL32301 Teton County WY 22 & WY 390/Wildlife Crossing: GYC supports this wildlife crossing project to prevent wildlife-vehicle collisions on the roadway.
13. ARS3905 Teton County Tribal Trails Connector/Connect South Park Loop Road to WY 22: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian habitat health with construction project.
14. CN22037 Teton County CR 2/Fall Creek RD: Consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
15. N104094 Alpine Junction to Hoback Junction: Consider riparian health with slide repair project.

District 5 For all bridge replacement projects, consider larger span bridges to accommodate wildlife passage and culverts to accommodate fish passage, where appropriate.

1. B235023 Transportation District 5: GYC supports fencing projects that will reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on the roadway. Consider exclusionary fencing in known areas of wildlife-vehicle collision hotspots.
2. CM22508 Fremont County Various County Roads: GYC supports this environmental project that will include wetland mitigation or monitoring, dust suppression, wildlife crossing, and fish passage.
3. N303059 Dubois to Riverton: Consider riparian health and fish passage with drainage repair.
4. N302061 Dubois US 26/287: Consider riparian health and fish passage with drainage repair.
5. CN10112 Fremont County/County Road 497 Over Haymaker Draw: With bridge replacement, consider a large span to accommodate wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Please also consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.

6. CN10113 Fremont County/County Road 298/Diversion Dam Road Over Wind River: With bridge replacement, consider a large span to accommodate wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Please consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
7. CN10114 Fremont County/County Road 314/Wilderness Road Over Big Wind River: With bridge replacement, consider a large span to accommodate wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Please consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
8. CN10115 Fremont County/Diversion Dam Road over Wyoming Canal: With bridge replacement, consider a large span to accommodate wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Please also consider wildlife movement with bridge replacement.
9. 1507046 Chief Joseph WY 296/Various Locations: Consider riparian health with slide repair project.
10. CM22509 Park County/Various County Roads: GYC supports this environmental project that will include wetland mitigation or monitoring, dust suppression, wildlife crossing, and fish passage.
11. N311103 Yellowstone National Park to Cody: Consider riparian health and fish passage with drainage repair.
12. CN11075 Park County/Park County Road 3XQ Over Greybull River: With bridge replacement, consider a large span to accommodate wildlife movement and reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions. Please also consider wildlife movement, fish passage, and riparian health/flood management with bridge replacement.
13. 1507045 Chief Joseph Two Dot Section/WY 296: GYC supports fencing projects that will reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions on the roadway.