

CRV REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Regional Planning Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2024; 5:00 – 7:00pm Gulkana Fuel Pilot Lounge

- I. Call to Order by Bruce Cain at 5:04pm
 - a. RPO Members Present: Bruce Cain - CV Chamber of Commerce; Joe Bovee – Ahtna; Martin Boniek - Copper Valley Air; Jerry Lesemann – Crowley; John Becker – CVDA; Jennifer Bowman – CVDA (staff); Asa Brewi – CVDA (staff);
 - b. RPO Members Absent: Gary Schliesing – Glenn Transport/Gulkana Fuel; Brett Nelson – DOT&PF.
 - c. Guests: Meg Jensen – Trails Working Group; Sarah Sherwood – CRNA; Colleen Merrick – CRNA; Kate Morse – CRWP; Faye Ewan – Community Member; Jill Baxter-Mcintosh – DOT&PF; Christine Newton – DOT&PF; Russ Johnson – DOT& PF; Michael & Victoria Rego – Community Members; Brandon Irvine – DOT&PF; Jason Hoke – CVDA Board President
- II. Invocation: Bruce Cain
- III. ***Motion to approve the agenda by Joe Bovee, 2nd by John Becker, motion passed***
- IV. ***Motion to approve the 2.7.24 Meeting Minutes by Joe Bovee, 2nd by Martin Boniek, motion passed***
- V. Chairs Report: Upcoming meeting #2 for the McCarthy Road PEL Study is tomorrow 4/4/24. The Spring Flood Meeting on April 1st was well attended. DOT reported on the infrastructure work that was completed and the cleanup from the 2023 spring flood. There are pumps on standby and sandbags will be staged at two locations, Aurora Drive and the Employment Center. Volunteers are needed to fill and stack bags. DOT will provide the sand and fire department will provide bags. This was an informal community gathering of individual residents and no groups were represented. The next CRV-RPO meeting will be held at Copper Valley Air, notices and calendar appointments will be updated with the new location. Thank you, Martin, for volunteering to make the use of the space. Bruce reiterated this is a public meeting and open to the public, anyone can attend. **ACTION ITEM:** Jen will update the meeting location on the website calendar, announcements, calendar appointments etc.
- VI. Reports/Discussion:
 - a. STIP Update – Tabled until next meeting
 - b. Spring Flood Mitigation – addressed in the Chairs report
 - c. Trail Working Group – Meg Jensen; Current Group is Meg Jensen and Mike McQueen. The group is looking at a Simpson Hill Trail, it would be short 45 minute each way, starting at the top of the hill and continuing up along the bluff and ending at an overlook, this is proposed as a four season trail. Meg would like to coordinate with DOT's work plans to tie in any possible trails. She also noted that it would be good idea to provide a parking pull out on the west side of highway to access the trail safely. Discussion Followed: Jason Hoke: DOT has plans to look at the Simpson Hill slide issues and the DOT& PF is sending staff out in the spring. He also noted that Karen Linnell, Executive Director of AITRIC, would like to look at the trail behind the Copper Center School as an instruction trail again, this is on university land. Russ Johnson DOT&PF; Richardson MP 113, Simpson Hill slide, is being monitored and has been since the 60's. This area was identified as a problem area and in 2023 a realignment concept was submitted for review. **ACTION ITEMS:** Russ to email the concept plan to Jen. Jen to send Meg Brett Nelson contact information for coordination with DOT&PF.
 - d. Denali Commission Award Update: The interim Federal Co-Chair was appointed and signed off on. Quarterly reporting is required, Jen requested that a short report from any working group be submitted in writing so it can be included in the reports to the Denali Commission.
 - e. Glenn Hwy MP 158-172 Project – DOT&PF Brandon Irvine shared a presentation and discussed the scope of work, purpose, need and schedule for this project. Construction Q2-Q4 2027 Discussion Followed: Colleen Merrick asked about DOT public communication/meetings on projects, Now that RPO is in place the DOT will coordinate with the RPO to bring projects to this group for presentation to the public, to sign up for DOT&PF notifications/press releases subscribe

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here <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/AKDOT/subscriber/new?preferences=true#tab1> .

ACTION ITEM: Jen to post the presentation on <https://coppervalley.org/documents>.

- f. Fish Passage Update – Copper River Watershed Project - Kate Morse and Richardson Hwy MP 65-80 Rehabilitation, Russ Johnson. Kate Morse presented plans for culvert replacement projects planned by the Copper River Watershed. They have coordinated efforts and are working together with DOT&PF to coordinate overlapping projects in Copper River Valley. Culvert projects planned in our area are identified here <https://copperriver.org/programs/fish-habitat-restoration/restoration/culverts-are-the-culprits/culvert-mapper/> . Russ Johnson presented the rehab project Rich MP65-80 that overlaps with CRWS. It starts at Pump Station 12 and ends just north of Squirrel Creek. He discussed the scope of work, purpose, need, replacement of the Tonsina River Bridge and schedule for this project. Construction Q2-Q4 2026. Discussion Followed: Jerry Lesemann: Will there be a realignment at MP 76/77? DOT&PF will look at this. Jen Bowman: When is the best time for the public comment and how do they do it? Russ Johnson: The best time to review/comment is between preliminary and final. Preliminary designs will be sent to the RPO for review when completed. Jason Hoke: Are these projects that are in concordance with DOT authorized by the NEPA? Kate Morse: Most culvert work is categorically excluded because most culverts are existing. Russ Johnson: NEPA is covered by DOT&PF. Jason: Does DOT& PF take into consideration the economic impact of the timing of these projects, and have you reached out to private industry to review impact? Asked that businesses be consulted on schedule. Bruce Cain: The Tonsina Hill section should be looked at for some time of realignment, it is sharp and steep. **ACTION ITEM:** DOT & PF will look at the potential re-alignment at MP 76/77. DOT will look into realignment and grade issues on the Tonsina hill and north approach to the Tonsina River Bridge (MP 79-80). Jen to coordinate with Brett Nelson for projects and report back to come up with a system to stay ahead of projects and build into the discussions at the RPO fo the public to comment. Jen to post the presentations on <https://coppervalley.org/documents>
- g. Proposal for Wayside Master Plan: Not presented, DOT&PF, there were no significant changes from the design as it was presented. This will move forward as presented and construction is scheduled to begin May/June 2024, but has not been put out to bid. Discussion Followed: CRV-RPO letter was sent to DOT&PF, the committee feel this is a temporary fix and there should be a master plan for the whole area. Jen noted this should be included in the LRTP.
- h. Proposal for Meeting Space and Virtual Equipment: Put together a list of equipment and budget for purchase. **ACTION:** CRV-RPO to put together a budget for equipment.

VII. ***Motion to use the Denali resources to buy equipment for meetings at the CVDA Office by John Becker, 2nd by Jerry Lesemann motion passed.***

VIII. ***Motion to adjourn by Martin Boniek, 2nd by John Becker, motion passed***

IX. Next Meeting April 3, 2024, location to be confirmed.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Jen (CVDA) will update the new meeting location on the website calendar, announcements, calendar appointments etc.
Russ to email the Simpson Hill slide concept plan to Jen. Jen to send Meg Brett Nelson contact information for coordination with DOT&PF.
- Jen (CVDA) to post the DOT&PF and Copper River Watershed presentations on coppervalley.org/documents.
- Bruce or John (Copper Valley Chamber of Commerce) request that the public CRV-RPO meetings be announced at the Chamber Dinner Meetings.

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- Russ (DOT & PF) will look at the potential re-alignment at MP 76/77. Jen to coordinate with Brett Nelson for projects and report back to come up with a system to stay ahead of projects and build into the discussions at the RPO for the public to comment.
- DOT will look into realignment and grade issues on the Tonsina hill and north approach to the Tonsina River Bridge (MP 79-80).
- Staff will put together a budget for DOT will look into realignment and grade issues on the Tonsina hill and north approach to the Tonsina River Bridge (MP 79-80).