

## SouthEast Connector Phase 2 Design: CWG Meeting No. 9, January 9, 2014

**ATTENDEES:****CWG**

Franco Crivelli  
Lissa Butterfield  
Marge Frandsen  
Randy Walter  
Roger Frantz

**RTC**

Garth Oksol

Doug Maloy  
Michael Moreno

**CH2M HILL**

Cindy Potter  
David Dodson  
Leslie Bonneau  
Matt Setty

**COPY TO:**

Lee Gibson; Jeff Hale; Michael Moreno; Amy Cummings; Alan Gubanich; Anne Woodring; Charles Johns; David Farley; Geoffrey Schafler; Janet Phillips; Jim Nadeau; Leo Heuston; Lynda Nelson; Lisa Mann; Lori Wray; Margo Medeiros; Mike Kazmierski; Mitch Nowicki; Pat Gallagher; Phil Condon; Rae McElroy; Roger Jewett; Scott Carey; Sue Golish; Terri Thomas; Andy Bass; Nancy Vucinich; Tom Judy; Tory Friedman; Rae McElroy; Shannon Windle; Troy Miller; Resource Agency Committee; File

**PREPARED BY:**

Mark Gallegos

**DATE:**

January 9, 2014

**PROJECT NUMBER:**

RTC Project No. 532013 / CH2M HILL Project No. 458732

**NOTE: There will be no CWG meeting in February 2014. The next CWG meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2014, 5:30 PM.**

On January 9, 2014, the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County (RTC) hosted the ninth Community Working Group (CWG) meeting for the SouthEast Connector Phase 2 Design (SEC) project. The meeting was held at the Associated General Contractors of Nevada (AGC) offices located at 5400 Mill Street, Reno, Nevada. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the 90 percent design and provide status updates on permitting activities, Herons Landing HOA outreach, conservation easement development, and Phase 1 construction.

### 5-Minute Opportunity

Attendees were provided a "5-Minute Opportunity" to discuss any items of concern not included within the evening's agenda and suggest topics for future CWG meetings. Items brought forward are as follows:

***Can you address the rumors regarding a potential connection to Clean Water Way? The RTC has been asked to evaluate the possibility for providing future connections to the SEC in the area of Clean Water Way. The RTC has determined that there are options for potential future connections either at Clean Water Way or via a future Mill Street extension; however, no connection is planned for inclusion within the current SouthEast Connector project. The current design will accommodate a possible connection to be made in the future should development in the area create the need for this connection to be made.***

***Can we get an update on the CMAR process? Granite Construction is currently coordinating with and providing input to the design team under the CMAR preconstruction services contract. An informational meeting was held***

**on January 8, 2014 for subcontractors and a Request for Qualifications has been issued for subcontractors. The subcontractor RFQ submittals will be used to develop a prequalification list. Proposals will then be solicited from prequalified subcontractors; these proposals will be reviewed by Granite and recommendations will be forwarded to the RTC for concurrence prior to final subcontractor selection. Should the RTC receive permit approval from the USACE allowing for construction to begin, the necessary contracts will be in place to begin construction soon after. There will also be mechanisms in place to protect the RTC should the USACE permit not be approved and/or if the USACE determines an EIS will be required.**

**Granite and the RTC's Independent Cost Estimator (ICE) are currently working on construction cost estimates based on the 90 percent design. As part of the CMAR process, the RTC and Granite will negotiate a guaranteed maximum price (GMP) for the construction of the Phase 2 project upon completion of the design. If the GMP negotiations are unsuccessful, the RTC will solicit bids from other contractors for evaluation and will award the construction contract based on criteria used in the traditional design-bid-build process.**

**What is the plan to mitigate the removal of the tree within the Rosewood Lakes area used by eagles during migration season? A biological assessment has been performed as part of the project to address the Threatened and Endangered Species Act as well as the Migratory Bird Act. This report is included in the Section 404 application as Appendix H and can be viewed on the project website at <http://www.southeastconnector.com/usace-permit-application/>.**

**The RTC has also been coordinating with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) throughout the development of the Phase 2 design and the USACE will be formally consulting with the USFWS as part of their Section 404 permit application review process. The project team is preparing an Avian Protection Plan which includes measures required to comply with the Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The USFWS has reviewed site surveys of potential bird habitat and has determined that the proposed project does not impact regulated habitat. However, RTC has elected to incorporate the Avian Protection Plan as part of the comprehensive environmental protection measures required during project construction.**

**What is the plan for handling mercury contaminated soil? See mercury discussion below.**

## **Hérons Landing HOA Outreach**

David Dodson/CH2M HILL provided a brief summary on the outreach efforts to the Herons Landing HOA regarding the proposed sound walls at Mira Loma. The team presented a project overview and led a discussion of the noise analysis performed and the proposed sound wall during the Herons Landing HOA meeting held on November 27, 2013. Attendance included at least one resident whose property would have a clear view of the proposed sound wall.

Overall the HOA and residents in attendance were supportive of the need for a sound wall in the area of the Mira Loma intersection. There was consensus that the "mountain" motif, which the CWG previously expressed a preference for, would be the most appropriate aesthetic treatment for the walls facing residences. Some HOA members also requested consideration for inclusion of future sheet metal art installations similar to those used along I-80.

## **Conservation Easement**

Cindy Potter/CH2M HILL provided an overview and update on the conservation easement being developed for the preservation and ongoing maintenance of the mitigation areas east of the new roadway.

A workshop is scheduled for later this month with the RTC legal and finance directors to discuss the proposed agreement framework with the Nevada Land Trust. CH2M HILL has also brought in additional legal counsel to assist in facilitating the discussions and drafting the agreement. Once the agreement language has been finalized it will go before the RTC Board of Directors for final approval.

The City of Reno has been invited to participate in the conservation easement for potential inclusion of City owned property east of the new roadway in the area of the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course.

The conservation easement will serve to satisfy a portion of the financial assurance elements under the Clean Water Act permitting requirements.

## **Phase 1 Construction Update**

The recent mild weather experienced by the Truckee Meadows has allowed for significant Phase 1 construction progress. All of the steel girders for the Veterans Memorial Bridge are now in place and bridge deck pours continue on both the northbound and southbound sides of the bridge. The concrete bridge deck for the bridge over Clean Water Way has been poured. Work has begun on the radio tower relocations. The mild temperatures have allowed hydroseeding and landscaping work to continue. Utility relocations are also nearing completion. Substantial completion of Phase 1 construction is anticipated late summer to early fall 2014.

## **90 Percent Design**

David Dodson and Matt Setty/CH2M HILL provided an overview of the 90 percent design, changes that have been incorporated since the 50 percent design include:

At the south end of the project, additional grading has been included east of Steamboat Creek to improve the hydraulic functioning within this area of the project; no additional work is proposed within the creek itself.

The location of flood equalization culverts remains essentially unchanged since the 50 percent design; however, additional culverts have been added at some locations to improve hydraulic functioning.

Thomas Creek has been reconfigured to maintain existing irrigation rights within the North Butler Ranch. The design team is coordinating with the Federal Water Master and the Butler Ranch to incorporate additional infrastructure needed to perpetuate existing water rights.

The multi-use path at the south end of the project has been redesigned to travel up and over the flood equalization culverts to provide for improved hydraulic functioning.

Habitat islands have been incorporated into the flood mitigation design at the south end of the project, east of the new roadway. These islands will rise about a foot above the surrounding grade and will include clusters of rocks and native shrubbery to provide an opportunity for additional biodiversity within an otherwise flat, wetland type complex.

The team is coordinating with the Butler Ranch to determine the fence type to be used within the North Butler Ranch; a 6-foot high fence has been proposed by ranch representatives to separate path users from ranching operations within this reach of the project.

The open water feature south of Mira Loma has been expanded to provide for improved hydraulic functioning. No changes were needed to the bridge structure at this location to accommodate this change.

A sound wall has been added at Mira Loma as discussed at previous CWG meetings; removable panels have been incorporated into the sound wall to provide maintenance and emergency management access to the culverts under Mira Loma on the west side of the new roadway.

A new tail water ditch is being included on the west side of the roadway through the North Butler Ranch to capture flood irrigation waters from the ranch before reaching the roadway. The design team is working with the Butler Ranch engineers to finalize the design of this ditch to ensure it functions appropriately with the ranch irrigation practices.

The roadway embankment slopes have been steepened through the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course to reduce the roadway footprint in this area. This required the inclusion of barrier rail on the outside edge of the roadway pavement in both directions and also necessitated the use of a closed roadway drainage system within this section as opposed to bioswales used elsewhere on the project. The roadway drainage system in this area will include catch basins within the roadway to catch storm runoff and pipes under the roadway with outlets and energy dissipaters emptying into bioswales further north.

Eight-foot chain link right-of-way fencing has been incorporated through the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course at the request of City of Reno Parks and Recreation to separate multi-use path users from the golf course.

The 90 percent design includes reconstruction/regrading of the driving range at the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course to provide for improved hydraulic functioning at Pembroke. This work has been coordinated with the City of Reno and the driving range will be reestablished after the project is complete. The grading will also improve existing drainage issues within the driving range.

Note was made that material excavated for flood mitigation purposes will be used as fill for the roadway embankment and/or other areas of the project to the extent possible in order to balance the earthwork and minimize the need to import/export material for the construction of the roadway.

Additional culverts have been added under Pembroke east of the connector to improve hydraulics during the peak of large storm events.

The RTC is in discussions with the City of Reno to include weed abatement (whitetop) on City owned property east of the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course and potential inclusion of this property within the conservation easement for ongoing weed management within this parcel.

The effluent line previously shown running along the eastern side of the new roadway in the 50 percent design has been relocated to the western side of the roadway to provide for better maintenance access after construction and to address constructability concerns.

The design team is currently working with NV Energy to evaluate options for relocating existing power poles within the area of the Yori Drain mitigation wetlands to provide improved maintenance access and eliminate the power pole "islands" within these wetlands.

Additional grading east of Steamboat Creek extending into the Phase 1 project limits south of Clean Water Way and additional culverts under Clean Water Way have been included within the 90 percent design to further improve hydraulics in this area and for overall flood conveyance within the corridor by opening up what is currently a hydraulic bottleneck.

## Mercury

During the last few years, over 300 soil samples have been collected at various depths throughout the project alignment. A Surfer model was developed using the mercury data collected. The Surfer model is a statistical computer model used to translate the sampling data to map the concentrations at various locations and depths throughout the project corridor. The Surfer modeling indicates that the greatest concentrations of mercury are present at depths of 0 to 6 inches with lower concentrations present at depths of greater than 6 inches to 5 feet. Sampling performed extended to depths of 10 feet; however, at depths greater than 5 feet, mercury concentrations are statistically normalized at 1 to 2 milligrams per kilogram. The highest concentrations of mercury within the corridor are within the North and South Butler Ranch.

Concentration thresholds used by the project team to determine how to handle the contaminated soil within the corridor were established using guidance provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Using this guidance, the contaminated soil has been split into two categories, with each being handled accordingly. The proposed approach is consistent with the EPA's cleanup activities at the Carson River Mercury Site, which is the source of mercury-containing soil throughout the Steamboat Creek system. At the EPA's Carson River Mercury Site, residential properties containing greater than 80 milligrams per kilogram (mg/Kg) total mercury in surface soil were (1) excavated to a depth of 2 feet and capped/covered with clean, imported soil, or (2) 2 feet of clean, imported soil was placed over mercury-containing soil. Both approaches were determined by the EPA to reduce the risk to residential properties to acceptable levels.

At the SEC project site, soil containing 10 to 50 mg/Kg total mercury (Category 1) requiring excavation will be placed beneath and 3 feet inside the edge of the paved road surface (above the ground water level) and covered with clean embankment material and the roadway pavement. Soil containing relatively higher mercury, greater than 50 mg/Kg, (Category 2) will be placed above the 117-year flood elevation and capped with 18 inches of cement-lime treated fill immediately beneath the roadway's aggregate base. These specifications will serve to control erosion and leachability of mercury containing soils placed within the roadway embankment back into the

environment. The project will result in the permanent removal and sequestration of more than 8,500 Kg (>18,000 pounds) of mercury from the environment of the Steamboat Creek system.

Category 1 and Category 2 mercury containing soil is proposed to be placed/sequestered within areas of the roadway embankment between South Meadows Parkway and Pembroke Drive where the embankment fill volume and height is adequate to meet the specifications outlined above.

While it is important to note that this is not a mercury remediation project, the RTC is making every effort to address public concerns regarding mercury contamination within the project corridor and taking steps to ensure that mercury containing soil excavated as part of the project is handled in a safe and environmentally responsible manner consistent with standards of practice employed across the U.S. for the handling and sequestering of heavy-metal contaminants.

## Miscellaneous Q & A

*Since the project does not include any grading through the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course (with the exception of the grading within the driving range) how will you be meeting the flood mitigation requirements within this reach of the project? **Because we have over-excavated in other areas as well as made changes to the overall hydraulic functioning of the corridor, we can demonstrate with the hydraulic modeling performed that the water surface elevation during the 117-year flood event is at or lower than existing conditions through this reach of the project.***

*Will the new roadway be flooded at the Pembroke intersection since Pembroke currently gets overtopped during the 117-year event? **No. The entire SEC will maintain a single lane in each direction above the 117-year flood event. In order to accommodate this, Pembroke will be reconstructed and raised to the level of the SEC at the new intersection with the Pembroke reconstruction extending east and west of the SEC to provide a gradual slope down to the existing roadway elevation. Mira Loma will be reconstructed and elevated in a similar fashion at its intersection with the SEC.***

*There is a median shown in front of the club house driveway at the Rosewood Lakes Golf Course; how would traffic access this driveway traveling westbound on Pembroke? **Left turn access will be provided both into and out of the golf course at this driveway. This was an error on the exhibit that will be corrected.***

*Has the proposed mercury sequestration method been applied to other roadway projects? **We are not aware of any specific cases where heavy metals have been sequestered under a roadway using the proposed method; however, the proposed mitigation measures are consistent with the standards of practice employed on remediation sites across the U.S., including within the Carson River Mercury Site in Douglas County, Nevada. The team will bring additional information on example projects using this method of sequestration to the March 13, 2014 CWG meeting.***

*Will erosion of the roadway embankment during a large flood event create the potential for the embankment to fail and therefore release mercury contaminated soils back into the environment? **Scour analysis has been performed for all structures per NDOT standards and velocity profiles have been developed for flood flows within the project corridor. Rip-rap has been incorporated into the design to provide additional armoring in areas identified during the hydraulic and scour analyses where hydraulic velocities could pose a potential threat to structures and/or the roadway embankment.***

## City of Reno Special Use Permit/Variance Update

Cindy Potter provided an update on the City of Reno Special Use Permit/Variance process. The Special Use Permit and Variance application was submitted to the City of Reno Community Development Department on August 12, 2013. The application went before the Reno Planning Commission on November 7, 2013 and the commission voted to grant conditional approval of the SUP/Variance application. The Planning Commission decision was subsequently appealed and the appeal was heard by the Reno City Council on December 4, 2013; the Council voted to uphold the Planning Commission's conditional approval of the SUP/Variance application.

The RTC is not aware of any appeals filed contesting the Reno City Council's decision. Should the Council's decision be appealed, the appeal would be heard in district court.

The Special Use Permit and Variance items contained within the application and receiving conditional approval are as follows:

- SUP Item 1a: Allow grading with fills of 10 feet or more
- SUP Item 1b: Disturbance of a major drainage way
- SUP Item 1c: Protection of significant hydrological resources
- Variance Item 2a: Allow encroachment in a floodway
- Variance Item 2b: Rise in Critical Flood Zone 1

The rise in Critical Flood Zone 1 (Variance Item 2b) refers to a rise in the 117-year flood elevation contained within an area east of the new roadway and away from developed/developable land. The flood modeling submitted to the City of Reno and TRFMA for review actually shows no net rise, and in some cases a decrease, in the 117-year flood elevation in areas of current and potential future development west of the new roadway. The isolated rise in the flood level could have been eliminated through additional infrastructure; however, this would have significantly increased project costs as well as reduce the secondary benefit of lowered flood elevations within the developed areas west of the roadway.

The conditions of approval for the SUP/Variance application include:

- Standard conditions related to compliance with City codes and construction permit requirements
- FEMA coordination and Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR)
- Hydraulic modeling analysis to be reviewed by TRFMA and approved by City of Reno
- Construction schedule demonstrating flood volume mitigation will be completed prior to placement of fill
- Coordination with Butler Ranch to mitigate impacts to existing ranching and aggregate pit operations and coordinate with future development under the approved Butler Ranch PUD

## **USACE 404 Permit Update**

The 404 permit application is still under USACE review. On January 9, 2014, the USACE transmitted public and agency comments received during the formal public comment period to the RTC for review and response. The RTC is currently working on responses to the comments as well as responses to a USACE request for additional information on some elements of the application.

## **Next Public Meeting**

The team is working on coordinating a public meeting in mid to late March to provide an update on the design and permitting process, review the final design, answer questions, and solicit public input.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.**

**NOTE: There will be no CWG meeting in February 2014. The next CWG meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2014, 5:30 PM.**