

FHWA Office of Federal Lands Highway

West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design *Engagement Strategy*



Yellowstone National Park

To: West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design Project Management Team
From: FHWA Western Federal Lands Highway Division
Subject: Memo 1: Engagement Strategy
Project Name: West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design
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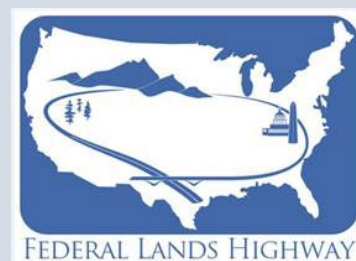


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Introduction

This document outlines the engagement strategy for the West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design project. The engagement strategy describes how the Project Management Team (Town of West Yellowstone, Western Federal Lands Highway Division, and US Forest Service) will engage with the public and key stakeholders. This document includes the proposed engagement goals, milestones, engagement tools, timeline, and outcomes for this project.

The study area encompasses the Town of West Yellowstone, Montana, and a proposed trail within the Town boundaries. The study considers connection with the trails connecting to and passing through West Yellowstone as well. The relevant trails to this project include the Yellowstone Shortline Trail, Frontier Trail, Boundary Trail, Rendezvous Nordic Ski Trail, and Riverside Trail.

Applicable Federal Regulations

The engagement strategy for the West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design project must comply with federal regulations for Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Environmental Justice, and Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Section 508

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 508) is a federal law that requires Federal agencies to make their information and communication technology (ICT) accessible to people with disabilities in accordance with standards issued by the U.S. Access Board.

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/508/authorities.cfm>

Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 requires that "each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States...."

https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/environmental_justice.aspx

Title VI

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 –prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 USC 2000d states that "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." The use of the word "person" is important as the protections afforded under Title VI apply to anyone, regardless of whether the individual is lawfully present in the United States or a citizen of a State within the United States.

In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 USC 324) (sex), Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability).

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/civilrights/programs/title_vi/

Engagement Goals

The engagement goals for the West Yellowstone Trail Planning and Design project aim to keep the public and stakeholder voices actively involved from beginning to the end of the process. Making sure community input is fostered and accurately represented through the entirety of the project ensures that the final designs achieve community concerns and needs.

- Goal 1** Ensure continuous and comprehensive engagement with public and stakeholders throughout project
- Goal 2** Understand user and community preferences to ensure context-sensitive design solutions
- Goal 3** Address and incorporate public and stakeholder feedback into project decisions and deliverables

Key Stakeholders

The following stakeholders have been identified as key groups to engage with during the scope of the project. However, engagement is not limited to these groups and new groups may be added to this list as the project continues.

Table 1. Identified project stakeholders

<p>Government agencies and institutions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of West Yellowstone Council • Montana Department of Transportation • Chamber of Commerce • Town of West Yellowstone Parks and Recreation Advisory Board • Town of West Yellowstone Planning Board • Town of West Yellowstone Business Improvement Advisory Board • Gallatin County • West Yellowstone School (K-12) • National Park Service • US Forest Service
<p>Business Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea Reach • Freeheel and Wheel • Polaris West • Yellowstone Adventures • Backcountry Adventures • Yellowstone Vacations • 3 Bear Rentals • Hi Mark Rental
<p>Non-profit organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museum of the Yellowstone • Greenup West Yellowstone • Yellowstone Shortline Trail Committee • West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation

Engagement Strategy

WFL shall facilitate and lead public engagement activities over the proposed twelve-month study period. Engagement activities shall reflect engagement goals and align with the four planned milestones.

Table 2. Proposed engagement timeline and activities

	Milestone 1	Milestone 2	Milestone 3	Milestone 4
Purpose	Develop Engagement Strategy	Existing conditions	Conceptual designs and cost estimates	Final report
Timing	September 2022 – November 2022	January 2022	January 2023 – May 2023	June 2023 – August 2023
Engagement activity	Introduce project elements to public and stakeholders to begin initial dialogue and feedback process.	Introduce project elements to public and stakeholders to begin initial dialogue and feedback process.	Solicit public and stakeholder feedback on project route, designs, and other decisions.	Produce a report summarizing findings and incorporating all public feedback on project.
Engagement tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Initial email messaging to identified stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Webinar on Existing Conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar on proposed designs • Open house (in-person/online) prior to final report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment period prior to completion of final report

The proposed engagement activities shall form the foundation of project engagement. Additional stakeholders and engagement opportunities may be identified over the course of the project by the project team, engagement activities, or otherwise. These improvements to the engagement strategy shall be incorporated as they arise.