



**COLORADO**

Department of Transportation



# US 50 Little Blue Creek Canyon Open House Virtual Presentation

March 16, 2021



# Project Team



## ACC General Contractor

John Butcher, Sr. Project Engineer

Rick Rieken, Project Manager/ Quality Control

Travis Madsen, Project Manager



## Federal Highway Administration

### Central Federal Lands Highway Division (FHWA-CFLHD)

Joseph Callaway, Project Engineer

Leo DePaula, Construction Operations Engineer

John Knowles, Project Manager



## Project Resource Studio

(Public Information Team)

Kathleen Wanatowicz, Public Information Manager

Mavis Fitzgerald, Public Information Team



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## Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT)

Raelene Shelly, Region 3 Resident Engineer

Elise Thatcher, Region 3 Communications Manager





## ABOUT AMERICAN CIVIL CONSTRUCTORS MOUNTAIN WEST (ACC)

American Civil Constructors (ACC), an IEA company, provides heavy- and light-civil infrastructure services for government and commercial clients across the country. Our experienced professionals leverage the latest equipment and technology to deliver comprehensive, single-source solutions for the most complex projects.



ACC has constructed some of the nation's most ambitious street and highway, bridge, tunnel, flood control, drainage, and airport facility projects. Our team members have highly specialized knowledge in mass grading, underground utilities, structural concrete, paving, and bridge construction.

Our transportation experience includes complex, phased projects such as multi-level interchanges and the widening of active roadways. We have extensive experience with all types of bridge structures, including cast-in-place concrete, precast concrete girder, steel girder, flat slab, and timber.

Capitalizing on our size, diverse capabilities, and extensive financial resources, we can complete projects using all of today's delivery methods, and we maintain credentialed pre-qualified status with the FHWA and all of the states in which we operate. In addition to working as a general contractor, we also have a history of success with design/build and construction manager at-risk services.



# Project Funding

## PROJECT FUNDING

The U.S. 50 Little Blue Creek Canyon improvement project is the development from a partnership with the Federal Highway Administration- Central Federal Lands Highway Division(FHWA-CFLHD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Funding for the \$40 million project is provided by a \$20 million grant from the Colorado Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP), with CDOT providing the matching \$20 million. The project is also in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Grand Mesa Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests, U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Park Service (NPS).



# Project Area Map

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will begin a 4-mile improvement project on US Highway 50 this Spring. Roadway work to prepare for detours will begin on CO 92 the week of March 15<sup>th</sup>.



The project is located between mileposts 123 and 127, approximately 30 miles east of Montrose, Colorado, and about 33 miles from Gunnison, Colorado. The route provides access to various federal lands, including The Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, Curecanti National Recreational Area, BLM land, and USFS land.



# Purpose & Need for the Project

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to increase safety, maintain economic development, reduce maintenance and operating costs, and enhance recreational travel and driver experience while preserving the existing transportation systems.

## Project Safety Improvements

- Improve sight-distance and visibility
- Construct rockfall catchment
- Widen shoulder, curves and roadway
- Install guardrail





# Purpose & Need for the Project

- US 50 is currently, and has been, the highest priority for the Gunnison Valley Transportation Planning Region (GVTPR) for the past 15 years.
- This is the final phase of the US 50 corridor improvements to bring the roadway to current geometric alignment and design standards along with adding a passing lane.
- Corridor serves as a major detour route during I-70 closures.



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# US 50 LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON IMPROVEMENTS



## PROJECT TIMELINE

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
October		October	March	November	Spring	Fall
Planning, scope, and coordination of the involved agencies began	Design Begins	Initial stakeholder and public meeting	Right-of-way (ROW) acquisition	American Civil Constructors was chosen as the contractor	Construction Begins, Public Open houses  <b>Milestone:</b> July 31 - West end weekday closures to be completed by the end of July, then single-lane, alternating traffic operations on weekdays to allow access to Arrowhead from Montrose.	Construction Complete  <b>Milestone:</b> May 1: Alternating traffic 30-minute delays  <b>Milestone:</b> November 4: Project completion





# Feedback helped shaped new solutions

## Investigated all options in response to feedback

- CDOT requested FHWA investigate the alternative of increasing the roadway openings from 5 hours per day to 8 hours.
- No one wants to unnecessarily hurt businesses when it can be avoided. This is a difficult project to execute and it is impossible to protect the traveling public and our workers during blasting without full closures of the highway for some duration. By offering longer daily openings, it extends the overall length of the project schedule and the closures. This also has impacts on residents, the traveling public and businesses.

## Feedback helped shape solution

CFL has benefited greatly from the dialogue with local residents, business owners and local elected leaders that has occurred in the past two months.

The input we've received has helped us develop some mitigation measures.

- *Prioritize assistance for livestock and agricultural freight haulers*
- *Improve communication services in the canyon*
- *Maximize the detour on Highway 92 as well as adding some additional safety features*
- *Improve communication opportunities throughout the duration of the project*
  - *Monthly virtual meetings during the construction season to hear concerns and provide project updates*
- *Provide safe, sanitary pull-offs for trucks*



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# US 50 LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON IMPROVEMENTS



## TRAFFIC IMPACTS

April 2021- November 2022, American Civil Constructors Mountain West (ACC) are completing a critical improvement project on US Highway 50 through the Little Blue Creek Canyon, 30 miles east of Montrose and 33 miles west of Gunnison.

### Why is the work being completed?

Due to a high number of accidents and fatalities over the last decade, a 4-mile section (from mile points 123 to 127) of US 50 between Gunnison and Montrose, known as the Little Blue Creek Canyon, will undergo safety improvements.

- The new design will improve the driving experience with wider shoulders, improved guardrail, better sight distances, and more reliable travel time.
- To maintain worker safety and the safety of the traveling public, closing US 50 for certain work activities is necessary
- CDOT was awarded a \$20 million Federal Lands Access Program grant through Central Federal Lands (CFL) to complete this \$40 million project.
- Construction on US 50 is anticipated to begin in April 2021 and continue through November 2022.

Travel Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:30-8:30AM	Open to two-way traffic	Open for single-lane, alternating operations				Open to two-way traffic without delays	
8:30AM-12:30PM	Full roadway closures						
12:30-1:30PM	Open for single-lane, alternating operations						
1:30-5:30PM	Full roadway closures						
5:30-7:30PM	Open for single-lane, alternating operations				Open to two-way traffic		
7:30PM-6:30AM	Full roadway closures						

All closures and operations are weather dependent. Traffic schedule and timeline is tentative and subject to change.

### Month-to-Month

2021										2022										
April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.		Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Road Closures														Alternating Traffic						

TEXT: **us50** to **21000** | EMAIL: [US50LittleBlue@gmail.com](mailto:US50LittleBlue@gmail.com) | PHONE: 970-340-4333 | WEB: [us50info.com](http://us50info.com)







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**OFFICIAL DETOUR**  
**USE I-70**



## US 50 LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON

### LEGEND

-  Hwy 50
-  Work Area
-  I-70 Detour
-  Hwy 160 Detour

### DETOUR OPTIONS DURING NIGHTTIME CLOSURES:

When US 50 is closed, passenger vehicles and small trucks can use SH 92 as a local alternate route. All other trucks and recreation vehicles over 70 feet in length will need to use I-70 to the north, US 160 to the south, or wait for one of the planned openings. Please allow additional time due to the restricted open times and single-lane operations.

Vehicles carrying hazardous materials will need to use I-70 to the north, US 160 to the south, or wait for one of the planned openings. Please allow additional time due to the restricted open times and single-lane operations.



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## LOCAL DETOUR AND SMALL TRUCKS



### US 50 LITTLE BLUE CREEK CANYON

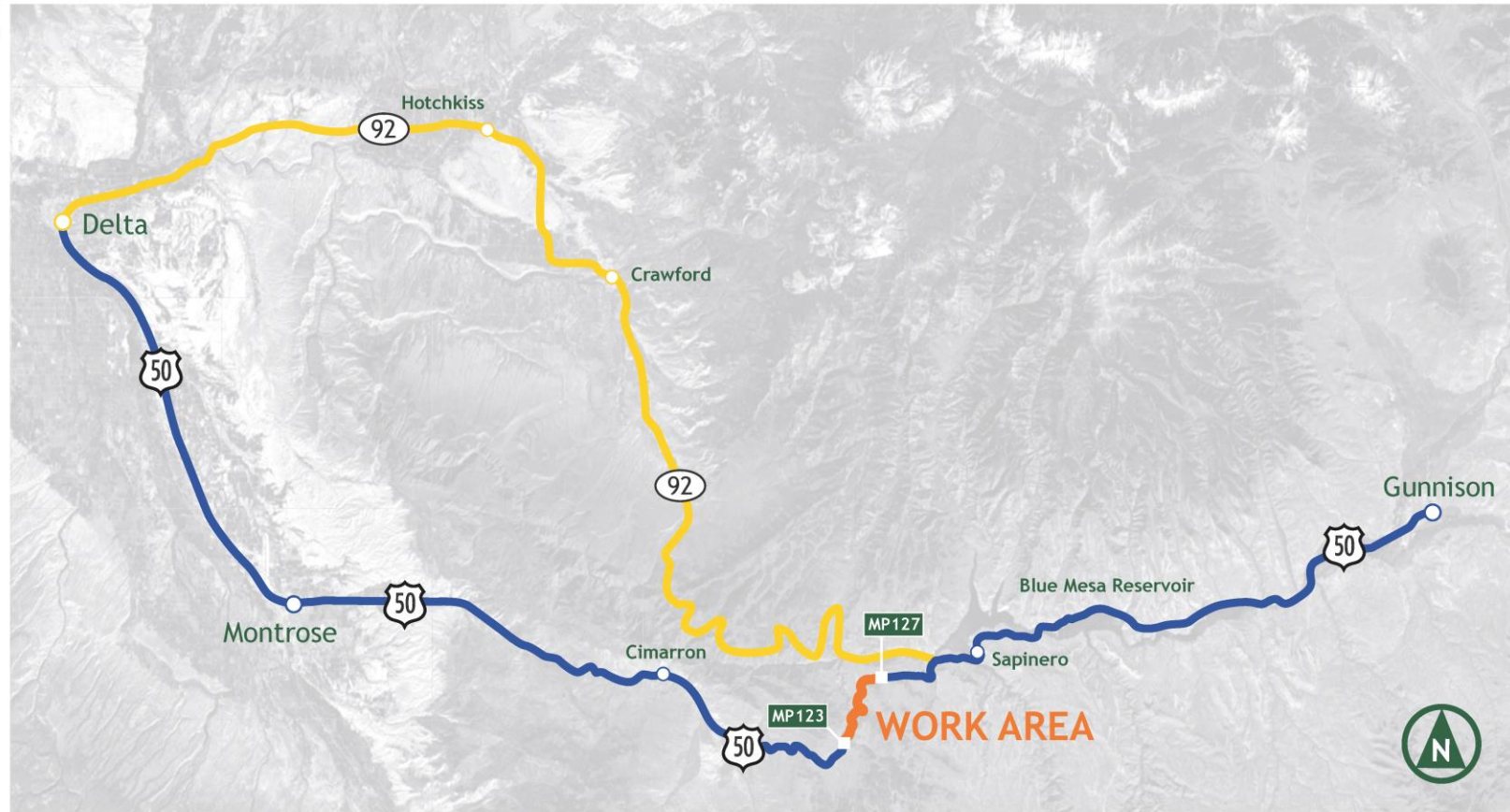
#### LEGEND

-  Hwy 50
-  Work Area
-  Hwy 92 Detour
-  MP123 Mile Marker

#### DETOUR OPTIONS DURING NIGHTTIME CLOSURES:

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## TRAVEL TIPS

- **“KNOW BEFORE YOU GO”** Plan to travel during scheduled road openings or plan for necessary detours and delays by signing up for alerts and checking the project website.
- Queue before the time you want to travel, be prepared for the opening window before the three daily scheduled openings Monday-Friday.
  - Checkpoint for eastbound traffic queue is at the Sand Dome “turnaround location” MP122.(Truck turns MP113.8)
  - Checkpoint for westbound traffic queue will start outside of the project area on US 50 before CO 92.(Around MP127)
- Expect 30-minute to 1-hour delays during roadway opening windows.
- Remember the project area is fully open Friday night - Monday morning. Plan trips through the project area on the weekends whenever possible.
- **Sign up for project or travel alerts:**
  - Project text updates: Text **us50** to **21000**
  - Project email: [us50LittleBlue@gmail.com](mailto:us50LittleBlue@gmail.com)
  - Project information line: 970-340-4333
  - Project website: [www.us50info.com](http://www.us50info.com)



# Project Information Tools

**Webpage:** [www.us50info.com](http://www.us50info.com)

**Email:** [us50LittleBlue@gmail.com](mailto:us50LittleBlue@gmail.com)

**Public Information Phone:**

**970-340-4333**

**Text alerts: text *us50* to *21000***







# Questions and Answers

