

R-2822B - Revisit of 4A, 4B, 4C-20260916_150106-Meeting Recording

September 16, 2026, 7:01PM

55m 8s

● **Headrick, Hannah S** started transcription

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 0:04

OK.

Good afternoon, everybody.

We're here today for the R2822B meeting.

We're going through a revisit of a concurrence points 4A4B and 4C.

First, we'll go through introductions will get us here in the room.

I've had a header with the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

It's very little policy unit.

Enjoy sat there with STV hydraulics.

All right, good through folks online, Amy.

I can't hear you, Amy.

Sorry, Amy, we can't hear you have any comments?

Feel free to chat, type in in chat.

AA **Annino, Amy** 1:15

Oh.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 1:16

Oh, are you there?

AA **Annino, Amy** 1:18

How about here?

I am sorry.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 1:19

Yep.

AA **Annino, Amy** 1:20

I had the wrong setting on.

Hey. Hi, Amy. Nina. With division of water resources.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 1:24

Thank you, Asher.

A Asher B. Blackmore, P.G. 1:28

Asha Blackmore with DCS geotechnical.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 1:35

Mukesh.

BJ Bhupesh Joshi 1:37

Bhupesh Joshi STV roadway.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 1:38

All right.

Thank you, Jared.

BM Bond (RS&H), Jared M 1:45

Jared Bond, Division 14 project manager.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 1:49

Patrick.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 1:53

Patrick Breedlove, NCDOT Division 14, Padilla engineer.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 1:58

Thank you, Brooke.

Ruth Davis.

BU Brooke Davis- USACE 2:10

Hey, I'm Brooke Davis.

I'm with the core.

I'm actually just listening today because I'm taking Lori's spot in 11 and 13.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 2:21

Alright, thank you, James Browning.

B **Browning, James - FS, NC** 2:28

Good afternoon, James O'Brien Browning.

I'm the district Ranger on the Chua Tusquette Ranger districts with US4 service.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 2:37

All right.

Thank you.

CT **Cao, Luan T** 2:41

Like downstate Historic Preservation office.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 2:44

Corey.

CA **Cavalier, Corey A** 2:48

Corey Cavalier hydraulics unit.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 2:51

Thank you, Hannah.

CH **Clements, Hannah** 2:55

Hannah Clements with Stantec.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 2:58

Crystal.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 3:08

Hey, sorry.

Yep, Crystal Amherst with the Corps of Engineers.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:12
Thank you, Jay.

DB **Day, Jake B** 3:15
Jack Dye dot route of way.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:18
Thank you, Doug.

DP **Doug Chappell, P.E.** 3:24
Doug Chappell with ECS.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:26
Mr. McIntosh.

E **Edgar Angus McIntosh, P.E.** 3:30
Eddie McIntosh, ECS.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:32
Thank you.
Hey.

E **Emmons, Heath - FS, NC** 3:37
Yeah, heathens, US Forest Service recreation program manager.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:43
Thank you, Eric.

EL **Eric Leonhart** 3:45
Eric Leonhardt, STV hydraulics.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 3:48
Thank you, Chris Glover.

GC Glover, Chris 3:52
Yep. Chris Glover, Brookfield renewable.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 3:55
Thank you.
Faye.

HF Hardin, Faith 4:04
What's your favorite?
DWR.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 4:09
Thank you.
I'm James super.

HJ Hooper, James 4:15
Vision 14 utilities.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 4:17
Thank you, chastity.
That city, Joe.
Bob.

LS Lepsic (GFT Inc.), Robert S 4:39
Bob Lepsek Division 14, Padilla.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 4:43
Thank you, Lindsay.

LF Lindsay Ferrante 4:46
Lindsay Ferrante, Corps of Engineers.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 4:49
Thank you, David Kendrick.



McHenry, David G 4:53

I'm Dave McHenry, North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission.



Headrick, Hannah S 4:57

Mike.



Mike Hage 5:02

Mike Hague, STV project manager.



Headrick, Hannah S 5:06

Thank you, Paul Kelly.



Paul Kelly 5:10

Paul Kelly, STV structures.



Headrick, Hannah S 5:14

I did see.



Russell, Jesse A 5:17

Andy Russell, Ncdot district engineer.



Headrick, Hannah S 5:21

Thank you, Eric.



Seiler, Erik P 5:27

Eric Sadler dot hydraulics.



Headrick, Hannah S 5:31

Call renata.



Somerville, Amanetta 5:33

Amanetta Somerville with EPA Region 4.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 5:36
Thank you, Tiffany.

TP Tiffany Preddy 5:40
Tiffany, pride. STV hydro.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 5:43
And Ryan?

WR White, Ryan 5:46
Hey every.
Hey, everyone, Ryan White, Stantec.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 5:49
Did anyone else come in that we may miss Oma?
All right. I will turn the meeting over to Ryan.

WR White, Ryan 6:02
All right. Excellent. Thanks, Hannah.
And so I just want to make sure we we level setting everyone's on the same page.
So this is an interagency update. So just we're all on the same page. So we are not revisiting for a 4B and 4C.
So we won't be looking for concurrence.
No, you're good.
No worries.
So what we're looking for concurrence, but this is really an opportunity for us to get the agencies and the team back together.
To start progressing and looking toward.
CP for AM 4B.
And so before I jump in, I do wanna give Patrick our Division Four team Padilla engineered.
Just opportunity to just add anything before we really start diving in.

HS Headrick, Hannah S 6:44

Oh well. And first of all, does the core or EPA have any opening comments for us?

CA Crystal Amschler 6:54

Hey, this is crystal.

I don't, Ryan.

I appreciate you clarifying.

I had thought that this was an informational meeting and then I just kind of start scrambling to make sure I had missed something.

So yeah, I I think we met on this project in the spring as well.

So I guess we're just doing an update.

From any anything new that's happened since that point.

Is that right?

Or just to get everybody to OK.

WR White, Ryan 7:22

Yes, ma'am.

CA Crystal Amschler 7:24

Yeah, I don't.

I don't have anything specific to open with. Thank you.

WR White, Ryan 7:32

Anybody else?

Patrick, anything before I dive in.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 7:36

Yeah, just 111 item. This is an informational meeting today. dot has.

Set firm or set project construction Lt. dates which will be covered in this informational meeting.

We do have, you know, time to work through.

To reopen some of the parts of merger, but we just wanted to give everyone updates and then kind of let all of our agencies know, here is our projected construction let date.

And we'll get into get into this.

This project will be segmented for construction only, similar to other large merger projects.

But but yeah, that that's all I wanted to add. Thanks Ron.

WR **White, Ryan** 8:20

All right. All right. Excellent.

And so as we go through, I'll, I'll take pauses just to make sure we open up the floor for any kind of discussion at any points of clarity.

Because again, this is an update.

So there's this is room for discussion.

Pushing to try to go to any detailed design reviews or anything like that, we've got and we just wanna make sure as we progress through this meeting. We also are very clear on if there's any informational needs as we go into the subsequent merger meetings where we are.

Looking for concurrence that we're clear on what we need to provide moving forward so.

So quick overview and the limits have not changed on this project.

I mean this project's got a lot of history I think.

You know the team members have been involved for a while, so.

I won't spend a lot of time on this, but this project does propose to do safety improvements along NC 143 from West Buffalo Creek to the intersection of NC 143 and and really the driving factor here is the vertical and and horizontal.

Curvature on the road.

Is contributed to quite a few crashes and so forth and we we.

Talk with that in purpose and even years ago and so forth. So.

I'll continue to progress.

I think one of the key things to know is that this project also includes the replacement of bridge 13 over Snowbird Creek as well.

So again, it's horizontal and vertical realignments, and the replacement of bridge 13 over Snowbird Creek.

And so I won't dive into the history 'cause this thing's been around for a long time.

And so I think for the most part, everyone's pretty clear on how we got here, at least some of the the the pre COVID history and so forth I will.

Note we did sign the state minimum criteria as this is state funded back in 2022, we

did hold a 4B combined to a 4B meeting back in 22 as well.

And that goes back to.

To a Co replacement on Hooper Branch, which we'll talk about in a minute.

We also noted that back in 2024, a new environmental environmentally sensitive area was identified near the waste convenience site, and so that's something we'll talk about as well, so.

Really, the key takeaways in regards of the history is that there have been new environmental sensitive areas that have been identified.

We've been working through how to.

To address and replace the covert at Hooper Branch.

And so there's also a coordination element to this project and so forth. And so that's really what we're doing, revisiting some of those areas as well as impacts to a potential impacts to the Chickailee cemetery.

So these are all things we've discussed before, but again, just trying to, I don't want to take too much time into the history, but I will pause if there's any questions before we.

Start looking at some of the actual areas of focus and so forth.

And I'm looking to see if the invite.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 11:37

Well, one thing I wanted to bring up, Patrick, you did pass along the few emails that were sent, correct?

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 11:51

Are you referring to the agency emails?

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 11:54

Yes, Sir.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 11:55

Yes. So would you like me to cover those real quick?

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 12:00

Umm.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 12:03

OK.

So today.

Allison Connor was not able to be with us today.

I do think that there are several US Forest Service folks that are on the call today.

And it within her emails she just talked about the progress in which we have.

Went through so far, Holland Youngman with us Fish and Wildlife, also is not able to be here today.

She had a few general questions.

And we I did address or I have I have responded to the questions but not sent the response out yet.

And then we also had an e-mail from.

Another US Forest Service.

Representative.

I'm sorry, Michelle Aldridge.

And I did have some questions about that. I think John Jamison and John Jamison and I were the only ones from dot that were included on this.

But she she has concerns about this project regarding legal uncertainty with US Forest Service.

I did try to call her back yesterday.

She was gonna give me a call back because up until this point, we really haven't been told there would be legal uncertainty from US Forest Service.

So I that was.

Something new for me.

On that one.

But there were. Allison Connor is not able to be here today.

Neither is Crystal Amsler.

I'm sorry. Not Crystal Amsler Holland Youngman from US Fish and Wildlife.

So crystal, you were included on the e-mail, I think from Michelle. And I guess there'll be further discussions as we progress, but that was that was something new that I we were not aware of, dot.

Was not aware of any legal uncertainty from the Forest Service for this project.

WR **White, Ryan** 14:06

Any. Oh, there you go. Hey, Michelle.

A **Aldridge, Michelle - FS, NC** 14:11

Hey there.

Sorry I I had a cough but it was shorter than I thought.

Yeah, we can talk more offline, Patrick, but it's just we're in the middle of some legal challenges to our forest plan that make that that make us make it difficult to to demonstrate consistency with that plan at the moment.

So these are bigger picture issues that are not specific to this project, but that might impact this project and we can talk more.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 14:43

OK.

That sounds great.

That makes me feel a little better.

I was thinking it was project specific and I was scratching my head.

So yeah, we'll talk about it.

WR **White, Ryan** 14:54

Alright, good deal.

Well, I'll continue to progress on, but again, if you have any questions and Hannah, if you don't, you would give me a hand.

And this is both Hannah's. If you see hands raised, just stop me.

Just so I can make sure we give everyone a chance to get the questions asked and so forth. And so first area that we're gonna focus on is Hoover Branch, covert replacement. And so a little bit of history here. And so we are realigning.

NC 143 away from the Snowbird picnic area.

Which results in the need to replace or actually construct a new.

Covert Karen Hooper branch under NC 143.

Again, a it's currently a 48 inch corrugated pipe and during the November 2018, which speaks to the history of the project, the CP2A meeting, the fission Wildlife Service requested a bottomless hydraulic structure.

B constructed at that location and so.

Ncdot did evaluate the feasibility of a boundless cover, but based on the depth of the bedrock, it was determined that a bottomless covert would not be feasible at that location, and so based off of further coordination with the Forest Service, the preferred corporate solution was a aquatic organ.

Passage.

And so that design will extend a little bit further upstream and downstream of the existing cover.

And using more natural substrate design and so forth and so part of the design and design team, feel free to to jump in because I'm not a hydraulics engineer.

So don't let me mess this up, but we will have to. The lower the the covert invert by two feet rather than widen it.

And so we do get instead of what was potentially going to be a 20 foot wide covert, we get a deeper covert to ensure that we still meet the hydraulic conveyance requirements.

And so forth and so as of now and again team feel free, the US Forest Service approval of the the AOP design is expected to take 30 days at once. We reenter the merger process. And so I'm gonna pause here for a second and just open the floor. For any conversation or any points of clarity that need to be made, whether it's from our design team or from.

The the Forest Service.

So the floor is open.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 17:26

Hey Ryan, this is gerardon.

I just got a quick update on the AOP design. We've had a kind of a 30% design summary that was submitted by RK and K on August the 28th.

I believe we've got some initial comments from the Forest Service, a lot of them were out on fire.

Duties are responding to fire issues, so we're expecting to get the rest of the comments. Probably the end of this month and we'll turn that around and then get the full APO design submitted ASAP.

WR **White, Ryan** 17:55

So here's a question so.

Looking ahead, this thing keeps changing screens on me.

With the the design of the the AOP covert drive, the next merger meeting, and we don't necessarily have to answer that now, but I just want to throw that out there. Looking at schedule and opportunity to get back in front of the agency.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 18:21

Yeah, that'll be one component of it, I don't think.

The AOP design, the redline drainage plans were submitted today, though probably it's a pretty extensive project. So we'll you know, it'll take a little bit of time to review for that.

I think those will be the two driving factors then of course.

And then, yeah, erosion control permitting plans kind of our next steps.

WR **White, Ryan** 18:45

All right. Excellent. Us fore service.

Any questions? Concerns before we progress?

I think there's something in the chat. Let's see here.

OK.

Nope, we're good, alright.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 19:05

And then and then one other item, Ryan, I'm sorry.

And then one other item.

Yeah, we will need to resubmit the the BSR.

I'm sorry the the Culvert survey report just because that hydraulic opening will have changed a little bit.

WR **White, Ryan** 19:12

OK.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 19:16

We just want to make sure you know, obviously we'll have to resubmit that for approval with the SFC.

WR **White, Ryan** 19:22

OK.

CA Crystal Amschler 19:24
And Ryan, this is crystal with the core. Just to note too.

WR White, Ryan 19:25
Hey, crystal.

CA Crystal Amschler 19:28
Hey, how are you?
This will have to go with. We'll have to put this by the the tribes as well due to the proximity to the.
One of the tribal sites in that area, so this will have to be part of the 106 package.

WR White, Ryan 19:45
OK.
Don't do it.
Sorry, just taking a quick note.

MG McHenry, David G 20:03
This is Dave McHenry.
Can I ask a quick question, Ryan?

WR White, Ryan 20:06
Oh, go for it, Dave.

MG McHenry, David G 20:07
Once you, once you know your notes.

WR White, Ryan 20:08
Yeah, I'm. I'm good.
I was chicken scratch anyway.

MG McHenry, David G 20:10
Did you?
Or or anybody actually who or Jared, or somebody. You say the invert's gonna be

dropped 2 feet lower than the original design.

Is that correct or did I hear wrong?

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 20:25

That's that's really to accommodate this AOP design.

So rather than just having your kind of your one foot sills and baffles, you know it's kind of more of a recreating a stream with with boulders and rocks and stuff.

So we really couldn't in in order to maintain that original hydraulic opening, we couldn't really go out for any further cause already kind of maximizing the the, the, the width limits just based on having that single barrel and so.

So really just and we can't really go up because we're already at kind of a minimum clearance, so.

So we're having to kind of do the covert itself is just gonna be bigger. The hydraulic opening and the inverts will basically be the same.

We're just gonna be putting more stuff in and more substrate into the bottom of that culvert.

MG **McHenry, David G** 21:06

Oh, I gotcha. OK.

Yeah, I was.

My first thought was you're gonna have to step the channel down to get into it, but no, it doesn't sound like that, so.

That's good. OK.

Thanks.

WR **White, Ryan** 21:17

All right.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 21:17

Wait, is this? I'm sorry.

WR **White, Ryan** 21:17

So any. Oh, go ahead. No, go for it.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 21:19

This is I just want to make sure my comment was correct.

This is the culvert.

I think I'm getting mixed up.

It might be Huber Branch that I was thinking of, which is the one that's there.

WR **White, Ryan** 21:28

This is this is super wrench.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 21:29

This is.

This is right at IU, what right at IU Gap near the?

CA **Crystal Amschler** 21:31

OK.

So is this.

Is this the?

OK.

I'm thinking so the one that needs to get.

By in with, the tribes would be the one near the picnic area that is in the picnic area.

Is this the same one or am I getting my sites confused?

WR **White, Ryan** 21:47

Oh, this is Nita Picnic picnic area crystal so.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 21:49

OK, OK.

All right.

Got you.

OK, I'll look at.

I'm looking at it here, all right.

All right then.

Yes, and that's the one that I was thinking of that would need to go back through.

With the 106 package alright, sorry to interrupt.

Please continue.

WR **White, Ryan** 22:03

No, you're good. You're good. Good.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 22:06

Iran, could I add one quick thing.

WR **White, Ryan** 22:07

Yes, Sir.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 22:08

So this, this this might help a little bit to extradite. So with the AOP we originally when we had the Culver Survey report completed, it was a 2 barrel, but utilizing the US Forest Service, AOP, Aquatic Organism passage, reference material, we don't do 2 barrels.

So it's a single barrel and you know like on A2 barrel on the low flow you'll have one foot baffles 1 foot.

The sales to retain the bad load and then in the high flow you'll have two foot.

Well, basically the materials that we've kind of looked at reference reach materials.

Were the basically the bottom of the culvert will be two foot lower than the stream bed, but then they'll be two foot of natural channel substrate and similar size materials upstream and downstream.

So the bed elevation will stay the same and then also.

Usually with AO using the AOP guidance that for service has they don't, they don't have a bottom. However there was worry with scour potential.

So this culvert has a bottom in it.

But again, we've got about two foot or a little over 2 foot of natural channel substrate to bring the bed elevation to where it is now, if that makes sense.

MG **McHenry, David G** 23:29

Yeah, it sure does. Thanks, Patrick.

Yeah, I think that worked pretty good.

Thanks.

WR **White, Ryan** 23:38

Alright, I don't see any more hands raised, so we're gonna continue to progress.

So cultural resources.

And so we'll start with Chickalee Lee Cemetery.

And so just to give context and you can look at the map.

So we're actually realigning the curve in North Carolina, 143 adjacent to the cemetery. And so based off the curve realignment, the roadway is actually being pulled.

In closer to the cemetery, and so based off that need.

The department's putting in a retaining wall, and so when we met back in February of 2021, we did receive a no adverse effect determination based off some very specific conditions that were also included in the green sheet commitments and so forth.

And it was based.

Off of and I'm gonna run through these bullets real quick.

The length of the retaining wall.

But then also the height of the retaining wall.

There was a commitment to ensure that there was archaeological monitoring during reconstruction by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian TPH.

O.

The addition of a an aesthetic facade.

A landscaping plan to determine what types of vegetation, if any, could be included on the retaining wall as well, at least on behind it, and on top of it.

But then also insuring.

Agent equipment staging was not on the cemetery site and so forth.

Again, this was all agreed upon based off of a February 2021 effects meeting and again included in our environmental document. And so based off of updated geotechnical studies, there is a change in the dimension of the wall.

The height that the maximum height but then also the length and so based off of this we're having to reopen the 106 process.

This and then have another look at it providing the the the tribal historic preservation officers as well as the the shippo, an opportunity to actually look at the designs and revisit an effects determination and so forth and so.

Not sure if everybody understands this. I had to get a briefing on the first time I saw it too.

But ultimately what we're showing here is where one the the height of the wall based off of the LinkedIn. So forth.

So I don't necessarily want to spend a lot of time on this and get into too much detail as I need to.

But I think the bigger most important one is here, where making sure we're able to maintain a specific distance away from the cemetery based off the new halt wall height and ensure based off of the right of way requirements, but also with the construction of the wall making.

Sure. And being able to account for how far back construction behind the wall would have to go.

And still maintaining a certain amount of distance between the cemetery boundary and the construction limits cause ultimately, that also dictates what happens to the vegetation that's currently in front of the cemetery between the cemetery and 1:43. So I'm going to pause here for a second because the next slide really looks more at the the facade.

But I wanted to give our geotechnical team or our design team or Patrick an opportunity to provide any points of clarity that I didn't hit.

All right, so I'm doing that. Good. Apparently so. No questions at all so far, alright.

CT **Cao, Luan T** 27:26

Yeah, we'll, we'll, we'll sort it out in, in effects again, I don't.

I don't think there's any major cause of concerns just off the off the top only because you know you guys will simply have to design it as you need to with for the Geo technical requirements.

But overall, our major concern was just the overall like scale and massing of the wall. So as long as long as it's kind of maintained the original design you guys had in even though increasing it by what about 5 feet?

As as long as it looks pretty OK and you know the easy BI as well as forward service are happy with the material treatment.

Shippo will be happy.

WR **White, Ryan** 28:02

All right.

Sounds good.

And so I did want to. Oh, go ahead.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 28:04

Yeah, and this is.

Sorry, Ryan, this is crystal. So and just to be clear, the wall will be longer and taller and that's the biggest change. Or what did you say that if something else was going to change?

WR **White, Ryan** 28:06

Oh, you're good.

So the wall's taller, but it's actually shorter.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 28:19

OK, longer or taller and shorter?

OK. And any other?

WR **White, Ryan** 28:21

Yes, ma'am.

No, I think the only other thing is that we got we've kind of made it.

I'm gonna say a decision, but Patrick, feel free to kick me virtually.

But as far as what?

The facade will look like what you're seeing in the picture on the lower right is, I believe, from a nine.

And so that is.

Ideally what?

The facade would mimic for the retaining wall.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 28:45

OK.

Yeah. And so I think that's been discussed a preliminary.

I think Stephen might have been in the previous informational meeting we had and I think that he was relatively unconcerned about those changes, so hopefully that won't be a big concern of theirs as long as they just get to, you know, see it and approve it that won.

Be a big hit up with the tribes.

So just wanted to throw that out there for.

The for the team.

WR **White, Ryan** 29:13

All right.

Any other question?

Oh, there we go.

Hey, Lindsay, go for it.

LF **Lindsay Ferrante** 29:17

Hey Ryan. Thanks.

I think one of the questions that was raised earlier and this might have been addressed in earlier meetings, so I apologize if it was, but I think it was about the view from the cemetery looking out towards the wall, if the wall would be more visible with this.

Change in design.

That's something you all know.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 29:37

Yeah, I'll answer that, Ryan.

Yeah. So I mean aesthetically.

No, there's gonna be no difference.

The wall will be tying into the same point of ground on top of the Chickalee cemetery.

It's really if you want to think about it, we have to extend it 5 feet down, not 5 feet up.

So yeah, if you take this.

So if we maintain that 5 foot or that 25 foot Max height, that 2 to one side slope kind of at the top of that?

Top of the wall would end up encroaching further.

Into the cemetery area and then if we took the road and raise it up five feet to maintain that 25 foot height, then we would be so your existing Rd. is to the left of the the proposed Rd. that you kind of see with the the numbers.

In the point O 6 which would create some challenges with construction and you know we would need a lot of temporary shoring and would just be more costly.

So I think it would be, you know, rather than thinking we're.

Extending the wall 5 feet taller from the top, we're making a 5 feet taller from the bottom.

LF Lindsay Ferrante 30:38

Understood. Thank you.

WR White, Ryan 30:40

All right.

Any other questions before we move on?

And Jared, thanks for that clarity too.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 30:48

And run on the facade.

WR White, Ryan 30:49

Yes, Sir.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 30:49

So crystal, we have a monthly meeting with Forest Service and Allison.

I think it shared it to some of the local experts.

Again, both a nine and this project are in Graham same county, kind of the same area.

And Allison seemed to think that they that the facade that we or the form liners that we put on a nine would work perfect.

Because it's similar for us and then also the tribes that already approved the A9.

Form liners that we've got there and again it's same county. So I don't.

I don't think we have shown Steven Yerker or any of the other tribes, the form liners for this project.

We're here to today, but this is what we're proposing.

The same form liners as we did on A9.

Same coloration too.

BM Bond (RS&H), Jared M 31:40

Patrick, we did have a meeting with ECBI Cherokee Nation core and the Forest Service, and they all had and I can.

I can resend out those beating minutes. All had fundamentally agreed that that treatment was acceptable. I think we'd want to. Yeah, maybe get one more. You know, confirmation, but did seem like everybody was happy with it and that, especially at this cemetery that it would provide an aesthetically pleasing. The escape at, you know, in and around the cemetery.

WR **White, Ryan** 32:16

Right. But I'm looking for hands.

No hands.

Alright. Well, we'll continue on and if you've got questions that pop up, feel free and we can always come back.

So the next archaeological site or cultural resource site is the archaeological site, 31, GH 227 and so.

And this one's further north or West, depending on your orientation of the project as well.

And so this project, the site actually sits below.

The highway and so and so some of the things that were including the commitments was making sure the site was delineated during construction of the project.

And so that's something I'll make sure that's committed to as far as the plans, but also during the construction phase.

And so again, there's a proposed retaining wall.

Again, I won't spend a lot of time on this versus being able to show the the cross section. And so as I mentioned, the archaeological site is down in this area and it'll sit below the roadway.

And so we propose a MSC wall to avoid the site and the base of the the actual wall would be, which is here was shown right here will be approximately 13 feet away from the archaeological site.

I don't think there's any major changes besides that. Anything we need to hit on design team in this area.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 33:51

And then crystal, I just want to point out we will not refer to this as an archaeological site.

Any of the plans that'll just be referred to as environmental sensitive area and the have safety fence and to not enter.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 34:03

Perfect. Glad to hear that. Thank you.

WR **White, Ryan** 34:05

Alright.

And so in 2024, there was a new environmentally sensitive area identified, and that's toward the eastern end of the project near the waste convenience site.

And so the roadway is being realigned in that area. And so we have not had any officials section 106 meetings or effects or anything of that nature for this particular site.

And so as of right now, the the site is a penny eligibility.

With the usage coordination.

And there is some additional coordination required, because this does fall within the US Forest Service land as well.

So I'll pause for a second.

Not sure, Patrick, if you want to or Jared give an update on where we are with this, but I've I'm assuming everybody's aware of the the ESA.

I think this is new news but.

Anything we need to add here?

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 35:16

I'll just mention you know one O 6 was was resolved back in 2021-2022 and and and you know, anytime you find a new potential site it it reopens it. And I can't remember the date, but I want to say sometime in 2020.

3:00-ish.

2024 ish we were notified.

From Eastern Bank, Cherokee Indians of a cult of of a cultural site.

Within our proposed impacts and as soon as we found that out, you know we we've been working with Crystal and I think crystal you've been coordinating with the tribe and again I know Steven.

Has been out a little bit, but the eligibility of that site determined it and then.

Again, just just my thoughts.

You know what we're doing there at Hooper branch again.

We're we're changing a few things.

I think Forest Service is wanted us to pave that, do a little bit of improvements there, but this site here I would say would potentially have the most significant impacts to where again we're not there.

You know, we'll try to minimize and avoid as much as we can, but.

That.

Just looking at it with what we've got proposed, I think there's a potential for an adverse effect. MOA, again we want to avoid that if we can, but I think crystal, I think I'd mentioned that to you a while back.

CA Crystal Amschler 36:56

Yeah, Patrick.

I I recall some of that conversation, and I know Lindsey has been working with another one of the tribal members.

I think I think the person's name is Beau. To try to coordinate and get a determination made on that TCP.

I mean, as you're aware, sometimes it's difficult to to coordinate with the tribes.

They got a lot going on and it's just kinda difficult to get them all.

In one place so that we can work through some of these issues and I can, I can let her kind of speak if if there's any updates on that.

But I know last I heard, we had reached out to them.

We're trying to coordinate with, I believe the museum or community members or something along those lines to try to get a determination. Now as far as an adverse effect, I've never done an adverse effect in the MOA for, I mean probably none of us have.

For potential TCP.

So that could certainly be challenging and I guess at this point, I would just say, you know.

Patrick, I mean, there's just, you don't see any expectation or any ability to be able to maintain access to this area.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 38:16

So Jerry can speak a little further, but.

If we provided access, I really think it would cause some hazard.

If we were so there's a little gravel pull off there.

Now we're trying to eliminate pedestrians walking up through there.

And.

Putting the walls up and with the drainage and everything that's there, it's.

I don't want to say impossible and Jerry, please. You may have better words than I have, but it's it'll be very difficult for us not to affect it visually or actually physically affect it, correct, Jerrod.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 38:57

Yeah, this this particular spot is just at a low point.

So there's a lot of drainage.

There's an out fall. I'm going into Lake Santilla. Arden, snowbird. But then?

So as far as you know, it effects like there will be an effect unless we just completely realign the road again and then as far as yeah, I think I think the division and then Andy might wanna.

Chime in as well as yeah, I think providing a A pull off just given the geometry of the.

And this is in a safety project to improve the safety of the road and then kind of.

Adding an extra you know adding an element that could potentially be unsafe.

Would it not be?

The divisions are the district's preference, but of course you know if it becomes.

You know, we we'll have to do what we have to do if it. If it means I think knowing the project forward.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 39:52

Yeah. And I and I don't want to get too far ahead of ourselves because again, the first and foremost question is, is it even eligible?

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 39:55

Yes.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 39:57

And that's that's what we're trying to chase down now, but it's just good, I guess, to have an idea of of what we're looking at.

If it is determined eligible.

But that's all I really had on that particular area for now.

WR **White, Ryan** 40:13

OK.

Any other questions before we move on to some other coordination?

All right. So quick update on T&E species and so.

The surveys for the Forest Service species of conservation concern were completed this past spring and validated by the Forest Service.

And bat surveys were completed this summer as well.

And so there is no evidence of bats.

Now we still do need to work through some coordination efforts with the Forest Service regarding the Snowbird picnic area and access revision, and so to your right is a visualization of what based off the current design is, what it will likely look like.

I'll park here, Mark.

I see a hand raised.

EM Endries, Mark 41:05

Yeah. Hi, my colleague Holland Youngman sent some response comments on the BAT surveys and wanting a little clarity of the of the types and timing.

WR White, Ryan 41:10

OK.

EM Endries, Mark 41:18

Of the surveys that were done and any any sort of reports that were were constructed, I just wanna just wanna make sure everybody was aware of those comments at Holland sent.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 41:30

Hey, Marcus, it's Patrick.

Yeah. So we've we actually did the survey while I was out sick about a month ago.

And central, the Environmental assessment unit.

For the Environmental Analysis unit from Central came up and helped.

We'll have those full reports.

We have the field reports right now, but we're working on the memo.

And just wanted to let you know, I think we've got about five or five or six survey seasons of all TNA species.

And only I think it was back in 2011, we had some positive results and but but Mark,

I'll get that response.

Well, are you crystal?

Are you OK with me responding directly back to Holland and Cece and you, since you're our federal lead? Or do you wanna e-mail that response to Holland?

CA **Crystal Amschler** 42:32

I think that's fine if you just want to CC me.

That's fine if you want to speak directly to her.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 42:38

OK. And so Mark, I did put in there as well.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 42:38

Thank you.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 42:41

We're we're probably going to be looking in the latter part of 2027, early 2028.

Our goal is is to do informal consultation with a conference opinion and the conference opinion will be for the eastern hellbender.

It's not listed, but we do know that there are streams with with it in there and and I've got the all of this in our response.

And then as soon as we get the memos, I will absolutely share those with you and Holland. And I did need to make one comment on the US Forest Service SEC surveys. Cheryl Knapp has sent those to Allison.

I think Allison has distributed them to some of her specialists.

I think they're it's not completely validated. We're getting there so.

I did want to make that comment because Allison did respond that respond to that e-mail.

When she wasn't able to be here, I think there's a few areas there's still looking at, but there was no major species of conservation concern within our disturbed footprint.

I don't think.

So I hope that answers.

EM **Endries, Mark** 43:52

Oh great.

Yeah. No, that.

Thank you, Patrick, for being responsive to to the request from the Fish and Wildlife Service and yeah, appreciate that sounds great.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 44:03

And one other thing also Mark and the response that I'll send to y'all, we are going to be requesting to use the WNC bat PBO on this project.

It looks like it is a qualifier, especially since the I believe it's the Indiana bat ranges changed. I think you had y'all had sent that out to us.

So for utilities and construction, we'll probably include that in the. The request to utilization of the WNC bat Pbo.

For this project.

EM **Endries, Mark** 44:36

Great, no.

Yep, sounds good.

WR **White, Ryan** 44:40

Alright, excellent.

And I don't see more hands. So we're gonna keep progressing so.

Lake Santilla is a hydropower lake, and so based off the anticipated.

Overlap of the FERC boundary and our construction limits, we will need to progress for coordination and and so conversations have started with Brookfield Smoky Mountain already.

But again, that's something that will the project will have to procedurally.

Go through his whale.

Not sure if there's anything specific to the the merger team here or not, but I will pause and see if there's any hands raised or anything before I go on and I don't see any hands.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 45:28

Brian, I'll just.

WR White, Ryan 45:29

Yes, Sir.

BM Bond (RS&H), Jared M 45:29

Yeah, just, you know, just kind of expand on it.

So we have Smokey Mountain Brookfield.

Smoke Mountain has been responsive mostly.

For the most part.

And so we do have that front boundary and a shape file. STV has incorporated that into the Red Line drainage plans.

So we do have all of those FERC boundary intrusions located.

And so we'll, yeah, we've got a good starting point from there.

WR White, Ryan 45:52

All right.

Good deal. Excellent. Thanks, Jerry.

All right. So we'll talk a little bit about the schedule.

Again, this is high level, but ideally based off of where we are going into the fall, which we're pretty close to now. We do want to revisit Section 106, but again that is pending. I guess final confirmation that.

The ESA is eligible to be a TCP correct and throwing that out there crystal.

CA Crystal Amschler 46:31

I'm sorry, Ryan, what was your question?

WR White, Ryan 46:33

Oh no. As far as the.

Revisit section 106 'cause.

I know we've gotta look at, of course, Chick-filée Cemetery. But then the ESA.

Near the waste convenience site.

So that schedule is still being driven by.

The response in regards to whether the site is eligible to be designated as a TCP OK.

CA Crystal Amschler 46:53

That's right.

Yeah. So that's our first step.

So that's what we're trying to get from the tribes is just information. So we can make that determination. And so far we've just not been able to get.

We've just not been able to get that info, so we're still working it.

Hopefully we'll have at least some sort of idea of when we can expect to move forward soon.

But yeah, I'll just.

I'll try to keep you guys updated.

WR **White, Ryan** 47:19

All right.

Yes, ma'am.

And so as far as for the the merger team goes, so ideally winter 2027, we will revisit CP4A and then in the spring have a combined 4B4C meeting. Moving beyond that summer 2029 is when the project is expected to.

Go the right of way and then ultimately construction in fall of 2029.

And so I'll pause there because I know we hit at a high level.

But if there's any specifics, Mike Jarrett, Patrick that we need to speak to, I'll open the floor for you all to share any more details in regards to any of the concurrence meetings and some of the, I guess, decision points required before we can actually do any of.

Those meetings, so I'll pause for a second.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 48:09

I just wanted to to point out that that fall 2029 construction is for the BB section.

So that's going to be the bridge.

And then where it ties back into the existing roadway, so it is it's, it's not just a bridge replacement, it is.

There's probably going to be about 15-18 hundred feet of linear roadway, and then the other section, which would you know, encompass the rest of the project, would be fall of 2031.

One of the other drivers, Pushnet, is there's going to be a lot of special right of way acquisition.

That would have to go through our Central office. That would be handling the ebc

right of way acquisitions.

The BB section does not have those.

It's just for service and I believe there might be a couple of private property owners.

WR **White, Ryan** 48:57

Right. Any other questions or comments regarding the schedule?

MH **Mike Hage** 49:01

And right now that's that's showing right away certification, but the right away plan is complete is scheduled for next.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 49:01

One of the.

WR **White, Ryan** 49:02

I go for.

MH **Mike Hage** 49:10

Spring of 27 or so. To my knowledge, that's when that goes in.

WR **White, Ryan** 49:17

OK.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 49:20

Hey, Ron, this is Patrick.

WR **White, Ryan** 49:21

Yes, Sir.

Yes, Sir.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 49:21

So as I've mentioned before, this is our 2822 and then BB as Jared mentioned is going to be the bridge. And Jared, I think it includes the Hooper Hooper branch box culvert as well as well as the improvements to the US Forest Service picnic area.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 49:37

Yes, Sir.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 49:41

Or that's also TCP there.

Crystal we we had received some red line drainage plans.

Not really.

Draft permit plans about a year ago and there are a couple of again, we're we're hoping for a nationwide 14, but there are a couple of spots you know that are a little bit larger than the thresholds allow.

And it's either going to be a nationwide 14.

With you and I having some discussions about single and complete or it's going to be an IP.

What? Whatever.

Whatever you decide.

But I think once we get through 4A4B4C.

And you know that's going to be probably, hopefully, by next fall of next year, we'll have draft permit plans, crystal and I'd like to just maybe.

You and I, whoever else needs to be in there, will have a discussion about permit types and showing how we've avoided minimized to the best extent possible.

And then we'll we'll determine.

The best what? Whatever your your thoughts is about the best approach for permit type, whether it's a NWP 14 or an IP.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 51:01

OK, well, and hopefully it'll fall.

It could possibly fall under the GP 31 as well because.

Unless I'm missing something, the GP 31 should work for a best fit.

Widening that goes through merger.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 51:14

Yes, yes, absolutely yes.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 51:17

OK.

So that might be the the way to go then. So we don't.

So we can avoid the IP, but we yeah, we can certainly talk about that as as things move along.

BJ Breedlove, Patrick J 51:27

OK.

Thank you.

WR White, Ryan 51:33

Right. And so that concludes the presentation. So I'm not sure again, Patrick, Mike, Jared, if there's any specifics that we need to talk about before we dismiss the team, so or if there's any questions from our agency partners or even from some of the other division or cons?

Team.

MH Mike Hage 51:51

Quick question on the merger calendar for next year.

When does that get released?

HS Headrick, Hannah S 51:58

We reach out to the board in October.

Check back with us for sure.

Maybe first or second week in November?

MH Mike Hage 52:11

Thank you.

WR White, Ryan 52:16

All right.

Any other questions?

BM Bond (RS&H), Jared M 52:17

Up.

WR **White, Ryan** 52:18

Oh, go ahead.

BM **Bond (RS&H), Jared M** 52:19

Well, I'll just say one thing.

I just wanted to point out for the folks, the US Four services has our geotech exploration has progressed the the length of walls needed has also increased.

You know, and I just want to kind of prepare you all for that.

We went through into the greatest extent practical, you know, certainly wanted to reduce those wall heights.

The issue is is that ECS in there as they did their geotech exploration.

They are just.

Was not allowed to rock out there.

That was being that we are expecting to find even through our, you know the beginning soundings and rotting that there were that was done during the very early stage of this project. And so I just wanted to prepare you for that.

WR **White, Ryan** 53:12

Alright. Any other questions or comments?

Patrick. And then I'll turn it back over to Hannah for any administrative stuff before we close the meeting.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 53:26

Yeah. I just want to thank everyone for joining today and and again.

I will get Allison Connor from Forest Service. Had a few questions.

Or Ally did.

I'll get those responses sent to her probably next week, and crystal the whole team will be included on that.

And then also Mark, I'll get, I've already finished the the responses back for Holland and again it it just may take some months to get the final memos and the reports.

Stop. But again, I wanna thank everyone from joining and then a question.

Do you all think that we maybe need to reconvene, maybe in two months? Crystal.

Would that give y'all a little bit of ample time to work with the tribes? Or what do you think about the our next Recon when we reconvene again?

CA **Crystal Amschler** 54:18

That sounds like a good plan to me.

I think that that'll give us some time to kind of reach out a little further to the tribes and at least get some idea of which direction we're going to be going in.

BJ **Breedlove, Patrick J** 54:38

All night round. That's all I have.

Thank you all so much.

WR **White, Ryan** 54:39

All right.

Thanks everyone.

Have a great day.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 54:45

The the recordings and transcript and everything will be.

MH **Mike Hage** 54:45

Thank you.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 54:53

Shared out sometime tomorrow morning.

WR **White, Ryan** 55:01

Thanks Hannah.

HS **Headrick, Hannah S** 55:02

Thank you all.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 55:04

Thanks everybody.

CT **Cao, Luan T** 55:05

Is everybody?

EM **Endries, Mark** 55:05
Thanks everyone.

CA **Crystal Amschler** 55:07
Bye.

● **Headrick, Hannah S** stopped transcription