

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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DATE: December 18, 2011

TO: David Singer

FROM: Steven M. Wallace

SUBJECT: Paleontological assessment for project C 0703-377, I-70 Twin Tunnels EA

Project C 0703-377, for preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) for eastbound Interstate Highway 70 tunnel widening and roadway improvements construction between Exits 241 and 244 on I-70, located on and along the existing I-70 alignment between a point [milepost 241.3] in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 31 (SW justification), T3S, R72W, Clear Creek County, and a point [milepost 244.45] in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 34 (SW justification), T3S, R72W, Clear Creek County, will not require on-the-ground reconnaissance for paleontological resources for the following reasons:

According to the best available geologic map of the area, the proposed project lies on igneous and/or metamorphic bedrock, rock types whose mode of formation generally precludes preservation of organic matter.

According to the best available geologic map of the area, outcrop within the proposed project limits is Holocene in age (less than 10,000 radiocarbon years old). Surface exposures could produce prehistoric bone, shell, or plant material, but because of the age of the sediments, material found could be in an archaeological context and should be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist.

Although the best available geologic map of the area shows potentially fossiliferous informal Holocene and Pleistocene "Piney Creek Alluvium and (or) older alluvium" unit and informal Pleistocene "older alluvium" unit outcrops, visual inspection of the area within the proposed project limits has shown that no potentially fossiliferous bedrock exposures or harvester anthills meriting on-the-ground reconnaissance are present.

Furthermore, I know of no previously recorded fossil localities within the proposed project limits. As a result, paleontological clearance with no attached mitigation stipulations is recommended for project C 0703-377. If paleontological resources are uncovered during project construction, I should be notified immediately.

Geologic Map Reference

Sheridan, D. M., and S. P. Marsh

1976 Geologic Map of the Squaw Pass Quadrangle, Clear Creek, Jefferson, and Gilpin Counties, Colorado. U. S. Geological Survey Geologic Quadrangle Map GQ-1337. 1:24,000 scale.

SMW:smw

cc: CF, Wallace