Public Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting 1 Questions

Questions received during the PAG meeting

- John Donahue: Yes, I'd like to start at the beginning, and I'd like to understand how you determined what your right-of-way is. Normally roads in New Jersey have a deed. Exactly how did you establish what the size of your right-of-way is?
- John Donahue: Just one more question on the right-of-way. Because of the height of the walls, it makes one wonder, how high in the air does the right-of-way go?
- John Donahue: And just one final question on the right-of-way. It was for the purpose of roads only, right? Well, usually a right-of-way is for a specific purpose—a power line, a pipeline, a road—not for use to be converted to any other purpose.
- John Donahue: And the centerline would be the dividing wall between east and west?
- John Donahue: First, when you say that this is the highest priority area in the State for this Rockfall project, I was wondering, that is determined by a software program?
- John Donahue: So how does this area—you said there were 28 incidents in the last 10 years or so. How does that compare to the other projects that you've completed throughout the state? What kind of incident rate were they having in their areas?
- John Donahue: But I've never been able to find any information about the fatality. Maybe you can direct me towards that. I can't find anything on the internet or anything.
- Lauren Chamberlain: What are non-peak hours, according to NJDOT?
- Lauren Chamberlain: I have a few questions regarding the initial studies that led this project to be at the forefront of a priority, which I will email. I also have some questions regarding about how this will affect traffic.
- John Corlett: Was design/build contract considered?
- Kimberly Witt: How many acres (if any) of NPS land are impacted by the preliminary preferred alternative?
- John Donahue: When you were encouraged to stay within the existing right of way, wasn't that in response to a request for an additional ROW to the top of the mountain for maintaining the curtains and their pinning?
- John Donahue: So one of the questions, regarding the process, that I would've like to have put in for the poll, is regarding the level of environmental compliance. You'll be using federal monies, you'll be doing the federal NEPA process, and I guess at this point you're engaged in Environmental Assessment, the purpose of which is to determine whether you can do a Finding of No Significant Impact or whether you need to do a more complicated Environmental Impact Statement. And I guess I'm just wondering with the magnitude of the monies being spent, and the project, and the potential impact on natural and cultural resources, isn't it really a waste of time and money to do an Environmental Assessment? I mean, to be able to say that a 60-million-dollar project has no significant impacts seems—it doesn't seem appropriate. So, I guess that's what I was wondering. Maybe some more examination of that environmental compliance level.

Questions received via the project email immediately after the PAG meeting

- Lauren Chamberlain:
    o Was the 2009 CD Report that was done based on the 1993 Rock Fall Hazard Rating System? Doesn't that seem out of date considering the changes in environment and levels of hazards as they are considered? Why is such a small amount of incidents considered a priority in the grand scheme of things? For example, tractor trailer traffic has increased, commuting has increased in this area due to rising commuters from NY, etc.
    o Regarding off-peak hours 9pm-12pm, will that be revisited since Covid has changed the way that people travel, for example the amount of tourists in the Water Gap mid-week has increased greatly, not to mention the increased traffic earlier on weekends due to the parks being filled up earlier as everyone has taken to hiking and outdoor activities?
    o Where does the money for this project come from? I understand from the NJDOT/Federal but from what segment? Is it in the same segment that a fix for the S-curves also comes from? Or are they two separate budgets?