



Municipality of Skagway

MEMO

TO:	Mayor and Borough Assembly
FROM:	Brad Ryan, Borough Manager
DATE:	September 14, 2022
SUBJECT:	Rockslide Mitigation and Road Access Improvements

There has been considerable discussion on the pros and cons of developing the Lower Dewey Lake road in order to access the rockslide area. I understand the desire to move quickly to mitigate the hazard area. However, without a mitigation plan design from our experts that details what actions should be taken, it is still not clear to me the type and quantity of machines that will be needed to conduct the work. I have also had discussions with legal counsel about the project and would advise planning any proposed actions only with his involvement. The uncertainty of the mitigation plan and need to carefully assess any actions with legal counsel give me pause about making any decisions prematurely.

If it is decided that the Assembly wants to begin development of the access road it will be necessary to establish which mitigation method we are using so the road can accommodate the necessary equipment, and the appropriate permits can be obtained. There are two basic methods that are being considered to mitigate the rock fall hazard. We have termed these methods “Upslope Disposal” and “Downslope Disposal.”

Upslope Disposal would implement a project that takes the majority of material and places it upslope in fill pads established just over the summit of the ridge towards Lower Dewey Lake (Figure 2). Upslope Disposal will require more equipment such as dump trucks to haul material from the top of the slide to the established fill areas. It will also require greater equipment access to the staging area and the top of the slide.

Downslope Disposal would implement a project that would send most of the material down the existing slide chute, requiring less equipment and limited access to the slide site via roads. While this would require less equipment, the potential for damage to infrastructure is greater. Both Downslope and Upslope mitigation measures would require the slide material be broken into manageable-sized boulders to limit potential damage and make the material easier to handle.

Permitting Requirements for Road Improvements: It takes 30-45 days for the Army Corps of Engineers to issue a Nationwide Permit authorization. Before we can submit the application, the team needs to develop the following:

- Location of ordinary highwater mark and wetlands at each crossing (completed by contractor in early October)
- Description of construction, including minimization measures
- Purpose (the independent utility of the road improvements)
- Impact quantities at each crossing
- A plan view and cross section drawing for each crossing, see the Corps’ example:
<https://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Portals/34/docs/regulatory/ChecklistDrawings-Stream-Crossing.pdf>.
Additionally, their general drawing checklist is available here:
<https://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Portals/34/docs/regulatory/ChecklistDrawings-PermitApplication.pdf>
- No Effect letter documenting no effects to federally-listed species (we would provide)
- Section 106 documentation/cultural resources (HDR)

Figure 1 Existing route accessing the top of the Rockslide.



Figure 2 Proposed new alignment for access to rockslide.

