

# WYOMING RoadWork GUIDE



Wyoming Road Work Guide  
Wyoming Department of Transportation  
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Last but not least, the project included 12 miles of 8-ft. tall wildlife fencing, 6.75 miles of pavement overlay at Halleck Ridge and a new WYDOT winter maintenance salt/sand storage building at Quealy Dome.

“Hopefully, this project will not only create that safety for the truckers and the traveling public, but it will also provide an opportunity for our staff to know that we have a place for those trucks to park, so they can get out and do their jobs in a safe manner while I-80 is closed,” Westby said. “I really appreciate that.”

After speeches from Bhatt and Westby, Wyoming Trucking Association CEO and President Sheila Foertsch spoke about the project’s impacts on freight through the state. She noted that “lack of adequate truck parking affects almost every aspect of a commercial driver’s profession.”

“WYDOT identified and began addressing – several years ago – the issue of truck parking, long before it became kind of the buzzword nationwide,” she said during her speech. “They’ve been proactive in pursuing funding and putting those funds to good work for several years now, and the improvements we see today are just a fine example of that work that they’ve done.”

John Waggener, archivist and historian with the University of Wyoming’s Ameri-

can Heritage Center, also spoke to the crowd. Waggener’s book, *Snow Chi Minh Trail: The History of Interstate 80 between Laramie and Walcott Junction*, details how that stretch of I-80 earned its nickname during the Vietnam War, as well as WYDOT’s necessary winter maintenance innovations through the decades to fight the harsh weather.

“I-80 will continue to pose problems for hauling freight during the winter, but highway officials will continue to seek ways to make travel on this highway safer and more reliable,” Waggener said to close his speech.



FHWA Administrator Shailen Bhatt speaks to the crowd gathered for the I-80 Winter Freight project ribbon cutting ceremony at the Quealy Dome parking area on I-80 near Laramie. It was the first time in about 40 years that an FHWA Administrator attended a WYDOT event.

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## WYDOT hosts ribbon cutting for I-80 Winter Freight project



FHWA Administrator Shailen Bhatt (center) stands with other dignitaries and stakeholders as he cuts the ribbon to celebrate the completion of the I-80 Winter Freight project, which was funded largely by a Federal BUILD grant.

### Federal Highway Administration visits Wyoming to celebrate local project with national impacts

By Jordan Young

The Wyoming Department of Transportation recently hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Interstate 80 Winter Freight project that’s been underway for nearly three years.

Keynote speaker for the ribbon cutting was Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt. It was the first time an FHWA administrator had been to a WYDOT event in about 40 years.

The \$34 million project was funded in part by a \$20 million Federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development grant the FHWA awarded WYDOT in 2018.

“Manufacturing in America relies on arteries like I-80, and that’s why this location is so important,” Bhatt said during the ceremony. “Making sure that those goods get safely to market is important for every American; making sure that trucking costs are kept low so that those savings get passed on to [consumers] helps reduce inflation.”

Cheyenne-based Simon Contractors was awarded the project, which involved building almost 200 new semi truck parking spaces in two locations: Quealy Dome, located at exit 290, and the Fort Steele Rest Area, located at exit 228.

The project also included about 4 miles of truck climbing lanes split between an eastbound section of incline at Halleck Ridge and a westbound section of incline at Cooper Cove. The climbing lanes help traffic flow despite steep grades; the trucks can slow down without feeling the pressure from cars trying to pass.

