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## Commission: No pass sheds until 1993

By Diane Estridge  
Staff Writer

Design planning for two avalanche sheds on Teton Pass will begin this fall, but construction of those sheds will not start until 1993 under a budget schedule approved by the Wyoming Highway Commission last Friday.

Don Diller, assistant chief engineer for the department, said the commission unanimously agreed upon the need for sheds to protect travelers on the pass from the numerous active avalanche paths there—especially the Glory Bowl and the Lower Twin paths.

But, he said, based upon the extensive number of road projects proposed in the state, and on the time needed to complete foundation studies on the Lower Twin path and to design sheds for both paths, the commission voted not to put the project out for bid until 1993.

"We can start the preliminary designs immediately," Diller said. "The crews can get going this fall. But the commission put (the shed project) in the construction program for 1993. I think that's reasonable considering what all we have to do. Otherwise, we'd have to drop everything else we have going to get that done."

Ralph Gill, the Highway Commissioner representing Teton County, was not available for comment about the plans on Tuesday.

Avalanche sheds are concrete structures built over roadways in avalanche slide paths to direct sliding snow over the road.

Business representatives on the west side of the Teton Range have promoted shed construction, claiming the avalanche-related highway closures hurt business and endanger area residents who travel the pass to work daily.

Early this month, representatives of the Grand Targhee and Jackson Hole ski areas, in Alta and Teton Village respectively, urged that sheds be built on Teton Pass in 1990.

In a study commissioned by the Highway Department this year, two avalanche experts, Rod Newcomb of Wilson and Art Mears of Gunnison, Colo., recommended that the state build sheds to protect Highway 22 where it crosses the Glory Bowl and Lower Twin slide paths on Teton Pass at a 1989 estimated cost of about \$3.46 million.

That "Avalanche Hazard Control Analysis" suggested that building those two sheds and pursuing an enhanced "non-structural (avalanche) control program" at an annual expenditure of about \$371,600, would reduce the avalanche danger to 39 percent of the present level.

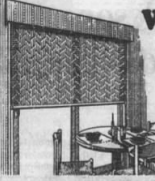
The total Highway-Department budget approved last week for fiscal year 1990, which begins Oct. 1, is \$234 million, up about \$2 million, or about 1 percent, from the 1989 budget.

About \$137.3 million of that is dedicated to the Highway Improvement Plan and about \$18.2 million to maintenance, leaving about 66 percent of the budget earmarked for road construction.

The budget calls for completing a total of 67 projects on more than 260 miles of roadway in 1990. The 73 state maintenance projects budgeted for 1990 involve more than 392 miles of roads.

According to Teton County, the major project for Teton County in 1990 will be the \$900,000 reconstruction of Highway 89 through town, from Deloney Avenue to the Flat Creek bridge.

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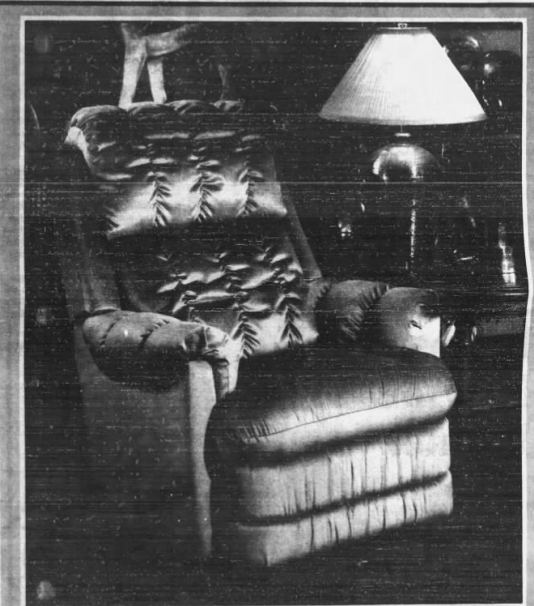
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