

News Release

TASK FORCE *on* CAPITOL REHABILITATION *and* RESTORATION

FOR RELEASE Immediately

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ANALYSIS OF THE WYOMING CAPITOL CONTINUES TO PROGRESS

CHEYENNE – The preliminary study to restore and rehabilitate the Wyoming Capitol is progressing as extensive assessment and evaluation is conducted to determine the overall needs of the building. Some of the more noticeable work was completed last week on the exterior of the building, including the dome.

A team of three specialized engineers from a company called Vertical Access performed an up-close assessment of Wyoming’s iconic gold dome. The team then used tablets and digital cameras to document their findings as they propelled down the 145-foot-tall dome.

“Vertical Access took great care to ensure that no damage was done to the dome during the analysis,” said George Skarmas, preservation architect from the Preservation Design Partnership. “The team documented the dome with 40 pounds of gear on and discovered extensive paint and hail damage. There are parts of the dome that have broken off that will require reconstruction at some point,” he added. Vertical Access is a nationally recognized firm specializing in assessing historic buildings that are not easily accessible. Their work includes several capitols throughout the country, including the U.S. Capitol.

In addition to the dome inspection, engineers have also been assessing the condition of the building’s exterior stone by using high-reaching lifts. Skarmas said that initial analysis indicates masonry issues with parts of the building. “Pieces of the stone are peeling away from the building and in some cases the damage is pretty severe,” Skarmas said.

During the analysis, engineers discovered four stones above the front entrance of the Capitol that appear to be poorly secured and are at risk of falling. After further investigation, the team recommended roping off the area immediately and securing the stones with protective netting. As a result, the majority of the Capitol’s front steps will be roped off for the public’s safety until protective netting can be installed.

A non-destructive evaluation program of the building’s exterior and interior will continue over the next few weeks. This program uses state-of-the art technologies that create the equivalent of an “MRI” for the building. This analysis will allow the design team to pinpoint where moisture has entered the building, where it is and in what direction it is moving. The end result will be to ensure that the risk and associated costs of hidden conditions is known and properly included in the future budget to avoid unforeseen costs.

To assist in the preliminary analysis and to ensure a future restoration is as historically accurate as possible, the design team is continuing to seek photographs from 1886 up to 1980, when the last major building renovation was completed. The team would like photographs submitted no later than June 7. To submit photographs visit: wyoarchives.state.wy.us/Press/CapitolPhotos.aspx

The Task Force was created during the 2013 General Session through Section 339 of the Legislature’s “Budget Bill.” The role of the Task Force is to begin developing rehabilitation and restoration priorities for the State Capitol. **–END–**