

From: [Milunski, Sarah A.](#)
To: [Bhattacharyya, Arpita](#); [Walsh, Richard B., Jr.](#); [Hickey, Michael J.](#); [Holmes Hawkins](#)
Cc: [McCauley, Robert](#); [Carron, Virginia](#); [Selburn, Gail](#); [Young, Lauren](#)
Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule
Date: Friday, June 14, 2024 2:35:19 PM
Attachments: [SRAM-FOX GA - Joint Proposed Scheduling Plan.docx](#)

Arpita,

First, we do not know how you can characterize the Court's Order, denying transfer and *sua sponte* compelling Fox to show cause why sanctions are not appropriate, as being "in Fox's favor". Even before Fox filed its Motion to Transfer, during our meet and confer calls, I stated the facts to Rob that a transfer was not proper when Fox's headquarters and PPB were in Georgia. Fox decided to file anyway apparently without conducting any investigation—and then continued its argument even after we had compiled a mountain of publicly available documents disproving the veracity of Fox's claims. Fox's response to the Judge's show cause order stated it would not have filed the motion if it had known the facts, but we told you those facts before you filed the motion and again in SRAM's opposition. The Judge's Order speaks for itself regarding the lack of merit to Fox's motion, which unnecessarily delayed the progression of discovery and, ultimately, trial.

Second, the delay in Fox's proposed schedule is multifaceted. The first delay came from Fox's request to delay "fact discovery" (but not claim construction) based on its Motion to Transfer. Of course, the Rules of Civil Procedure would have been the same even if Fox had prevailed in its transfer request. Second, Fox further delayed by not even responding to the email I sent months ago in March about claim construction. Even if Fox disagreed with the date proposed, if Fox thought construction was needed, it should have stated as much then, not three months later. Now, Fox wants to further indefinitely delay setting a trial date and other deadlines pending this new demand for claim construction. The Local Rules provide that Fox should have exchanged claim terms by July 17, 2023, long before SRAM filed its IPR response, which Fox is now attempting to use (without specificity) to rationalize this new claimed "need" for claim construction. Fox made the unequivocal statement in the Joint Scheduling Plan that only fact discovery would be stayed, not claim construction, so July 17 was the deadline. Additionally, 44 days had already passed between the time the Joint Scheduling Plan was filed (April 17, 2023) and the Court's entry of a stay of fact discovery on May 31, so even assuming any time was left after the stay was lifted, it would be, at most, 46 days (meaning that Fox should have exchanged terms by no later than April 22, 2024 and still before SRAM's IPR response).

Third, you have not identified (either below or during our meet and confer) anything in SRAM's IPR response that suggests claim construction is necessary. Please specifically identify (with page references) the specific argument(s) that allegedly led Fox to change its stated position that no claim construction would be necessary and now belatedly claim that the parties have "fundamental claim construction disputes".

Fourth, the long phrases you list below without explanation are not what the process of "claim construction" intends. The "terms for construction" in your email are not terms at all, but are long phrases and entire claim elements without any identification of the specific terms Fox wants construed or believes are unclear, or how you want them now rewritten. For example, do you really need the term "bicycle" construed? You have had well over a year now to consider which claims need to be construed and how, so the purported exchange of terms below (already nearly a year overdue) is deficient. The entire patent should be construed using the plain and ordinary meaning of the terms, as Fox has done for the year and a half this

suit has been pending and as stated in the IPRs Fox filed.

Finally, based on your prior email, we cannot even tell if there is a “fundamental claim construction dispute”—please send us the specific terms you want construed and the proposed construction so we can determine whether claim construction is needed at all. As we continue to believe that claim construction is unnecessary and Fox waived its right to seek claim construction, I am attaching a proposed schedule that would address expert discovery and dispositive motions. Please let me know if you are willing to agree to this schedule or, if not, when you can meet and confer.

Sarah

From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 12, 2024 12:00 AM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Sarah,

As we’ve discussed previously, FOX’s motion to transfer was not frivolous notwithstanding our mistake regarding FOX’s PPB, which we have recognized and apologized for. For example, Judge Jones agreed that the locus of operative facts for the case is in NDCA, and also ruled in FOX’s favor on other factors.

FOX’s proposed claim construction schedule tracks the presumptive time frames in the Patent Local Rules, so we do not understand what you mean when you claim there are delays in our proposed schedule. We are open to discuss your concerns. Please get back to us promptly with any suggestions you may have regarding the claim construction schedule we sent you yesterday, so that we can promptly take up any disputes with Judge Jones for resolution.

As we’ve also discussed, FOX understood that Judge Jones’s stay by its terms applied to claim construction, and that as a result, the parties were due to exchange proposed claim terms on or about June 4, as I suggested in my email of that date. We have agreed to disagree with your argument that claim construction exchanges should have begun earlier, but regardless, SRAM’s arguments in its patent owner preliminary responses in the IPRs, which was not filed until mid-May, made it very clear that the parties have fundamental claim construction disputes that will require resolution by the Court under Q2 Micro.

You’ve stated in your email below, and during our meet and confer on Friday June 7, that SRAM does not wish to have any terms construed. FOX’s proposed terms for construction are listed below. Thank you.

‘207 patent:

“adjusting the damping characteristics corresponding to at least one of the positions of the valve actuating assembly independently of the damping characteristics corresponding to another position of the valve actuating assembly” (claim 1)

‘993 patent:

“a vertical plane of travel of the bicycle”/“plane of travel of the bicycle” (claims 1, 61, 64)

“a thickness of the wall at any point in the lower section of the body varying as a function of the cross-sectional angle of the point relative to the plane of travel” (claims 1, 61, 64)

Best,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

Partner

Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP

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From: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 11, 2024 9:15 AM

To: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Arpita,

We are reviewing your proposal with SRAM, although we clearly have issues with the many delays you have incorporated into your proposed schedule, especially in light of the wholly unnecessary delay you already took on a frivolous transfer motion. Just like Fox has already stated to the PTAB in the IPRs on these same patents, SRAM does not believe any claim construction is needed so it has no terms to exchange. If Fox’s position has now changed, delaying telling us of Fox’s new position on terms is just another delay. In short, provide your proposed terms for construction today. Once we receive that, we may be able to better evaluate whether claim construction is needed at all and, if so, the time needed.

Sarah

From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2024 12:04 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Sarah,

Attached is FOX's proposed case schedule. It tracks the Local Patent Rules. But if SRAM wants to propose any alternative dates, please add a column with SRAM's proposed dates and we will consider them. Please send your response by noon Central tomorrow, so that we can tee this up before the Court soon if there are irreconcilable disputes regarding the case schedule.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

Partner

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From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita

Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 2:26 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Sarah,

We can talk Friday at 2:30 PM Pacific. I will send a Teams invite shortly.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

Partner

Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP

3300 Hillview Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94304-1203

From: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 1:45 PM

To: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Arpita,
Friday, I am available at 4-5 p.m. CST/2-3 p.m. PST. Would that work for you?

Sarah

From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 3:10 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Sarah,

Tomorrow would be difficult for us. What is your availability between 9 AM-12 PM Pacific time on Friday to meet and confer? If Friday does not work for you, then please suggest some time slots tomorrow (Thursday) after 9 AM Pacific time and one of us will join.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

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From: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 5, 2024 6:20 AM

To: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>
Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>
Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Arpita,

Your email below is a mischaracterization of the March emails between counsel and includes an untrue statement that I did not follow up on my March 7 email. In fact, I sent another email on March 15 when no one from either of Finnegan's offices responded for over a week to my March 7 email. Further, when Rob did respond, his March 15 email did *not* offer to meet and confer regarding claim construction as you suggest. Rather, he specifically states that he is available to "discuss SRAM's discovery requests" only. He never mentions claim construction whatsoever.

Additionally, neither the Local Rules nor the Court's orders support your proposed schedule.

Per *Fox's* own language in the Joint Preliminary Report and Discovery Plan, it stated "FOX is not requesting any stays on the parties' exchanges of contentions, etc., under the Patent Local Rules. Rather, FOX is simply requesting a stay of fact discovery until decision on the motion to transfer" [ECF No. 24 at 6.] The Court's Scheduling Order provides that "the time limits for adding parties, amending the pleadings, filing motions, completing discovery, and discussing settlement are as stated in the above referenced form, except as herein modified: This matter is assigned to a four (4) month discovery track. Discovery and all related deadlines will proceed in accordance the Local Rules of this Court as well as the Federal Rules of Federal Procedure following the Court's ruling on Defendant's outstanding Motion to Transfer to the Northern District of California [Doc. 22]." [ECF No. 27.]

Under the Patent Local Rules, which per Fox's statement "FOX is not requesting any stays on the parties' exchanges of contentions, etc., under the Patent Local Rules", "Not later than ninety (90) days after filing of the Joint Preliminary Report and Discovery Plan, each party must simultaneously exchange a list of claim terms, phrases, or clauses (including the qualifications of a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention(s) of the patent(s)-in-suit) which that party contends should be construed by the Court, and identify any claim element which that party contends should be governed by 35 U.S.C. § 112(6)." LPR 6.1. The Parties' Report and Discovery Plan was filed on 4/17/23. 90 days passed last year. The only thing that the Court stayed was discovery, so this Rule and deadline were unaltered. SRAM's position is that no claim construction is needed and if Fox believed it was necessary, it should have complied with the Local Rules or at least responded to my prior email correspondence instead of sitting silent for three months in an attempt to further delay this litigation in order to gain a tactical advantage in the pending IPRs.

Indeed, our understanding that Fox did not desire claim construction is not simply based on its failure to comply with the Local Rules' deadlines or to respond to my email. Rather, Fox explicitly stated in the IPRs it filed on these very patents that "No terms need construction to resolve the controversy in this forum." (IPR2024-00491 at 9; *see also* IPR2024-00492 at 8

(“No terms need construction to resolve the controversy here.”).) Given Fox’s statements to the PTAB, Fox’s current requests appears to be nothing but a further delay tactic.

I will further note that under the Court’s Order, discovery closes on July 8 (4 months after the Court’s Order denying Fox’s Motion to Transfer), and under the Joint Proposed Scheduling Plan, summary judgment motions are due within 30 days after the close of discovery (August 7). [ECF 24 at 5.] The proposal below would require alteration of these dates, which would be prejudicial to SRAM, especially in light of Fox’s frivolous Motion to Transfer, which slowed this case for no reason. If you would like to meet and confer to discuss a deadline for expert disclosures, I am available tomorrow afternoon.

Sarah



Sarah A. Milunski
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From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 7:06 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Sarah,

We disagree with your assertions about the case schedule, and with your assertion that claim construction will not proceed and/or has been waived in this case. The case was stayed until March 6, as stated in the Court’s Scheduling Order (Dkt. 27) (“[d]iscovery and all related deadlines will proceed in accordance the Local Rules of this Court as well as the Federal Rules of Federal Procedure following the Court’s ruling on Defendant’s outstanding Motion to Transfer to the Northern District of California.”). The Court’s decision denying transfer issued on March 6, and per the Local Patent Rules the due date for exchange of claim construction terms is today (90 days from March 6), by our calculation.

Importantly, we never agreed to your previously proposed deadline of March 20 to start claim construction, which you unilaterally proposed in an email on March 7, but which you never followed up on. In fact, Rob McCauley responded to your email on March 15, saying that he was available to meet and confer the following week, but you never responded to his email, and we have not discussed claim construction scheduling at all since March. Moreover, there was no basis for your

unilateral due date of March 20, particularly given the Court's order that discovery and all related deadlines would not proceed until after the Court's ruling on the transfer motion.

We remain prepared to exchange claim terms today; if SRAM is unable to do so, or refuses to do so, then we suggest that we schedule a time to meet and confer per the Local Rules.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

Partner

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From: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 3:55 PM

To: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Arpita,

This is the first time since this case was filed over a year and a half ago that Fox has suggested that any terms in the patents at issue might need to be construed. The time for doing that has long since passed. I emailed you back on March 7 about whether Fox would be exchanging a list of claim terms for construction, given that the time to do so under the local rules had already passed while the case was stayed. At that time, we had proposed an exchange by no later than March 20. Fox did not respond. As such, and consistent with Fox's position in the IPRs, we understood that Fox did not believe any terms needed to be construed.

Sarah

From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita <Arpita.Bhattacharyya@finnegan.com>

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 5:47 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; Walsh, Richard B., Jr. <RWalsh@lewisrice.com>; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Hi Sarah and Michael,

I am following up on my email below. Since we have not heard from you about FOX's proposed claim construction schedule, and given that it is almost 7 PM Eastern, FOX will not serve its claim construction terms today. We propose meeting and conferring next week to map out a schedule for fact discovery and claim construction.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

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From: Bhattacharyya, Arpita

Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2024 12:16 PM

To: Milunski, Sarah A. <SMilunski@lewisrice.com>; rwalsh@lewisrice.com; Hickey, Michael J. <MHickey@lewisrice.com>; Holmes Hawkins <hhawkins@kslaw.com>

Cc: McCauley, Robert <Robert.McCauley@finnegan.com>; Carron, Virginia <Virginia.Carron@finnegan.com>; Selburn, Gail <Gail.Selburn@finnegan.com>; Young, Lauren <lauren.young@finnegan.com>

Subject: SRAM v. FOX (GA case): claim construction schedule

Hi Sarah and Michael,

Since we do not have a case schedule from the Court, we think the March 6th order denying transfer (ECF 30) should be treated as the filing date of a Joint Preliminary Report and Discovery, from which the claim construction and other fact discovery due dates should be calculated. If we follow a schedule based on the Local Patent Rules and March 6 as the starting date, the parties are supposed to simultaneously exchange claim construction terms today. Do you agree with this approach?

We are not opposed to mapping out a different case schedule if SRAM is not prepared to exchange claim terms today. We just want to make sure the parties are on the same schedule for claim construction. Please let us know if you are ready to start the claim construction process today.

Thanks,

Arpita

Arpita Bhattacharyya, Ph.D. | [Bio](#)

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This e-mail message is intended only for individual(s) to whom it is addressed and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, proprietary, or otherwise exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you believe you have received this message in error, please advise the sender by return e-mail and delete it from your mailbox. Thank you.