Strategies for Reducing Large Truck Traffic in Local Communities

Status of Actions and Regulation
New York State Department of Transportation
September 24, 2008
Welcome

- Background
- Issues & Data
- Actions in Progress
- Proposed Draft Regulation
- Timeline and Next Steps
Concerns about large truck traffic especially trucks using short cuts through smaller, historic communities

To balance the Economy with Quality of Life

DOT has traditionally focused on operating characteristics of trucks and the geometry of roads

The transportation network is vital both to the economy and to our communities
NYSDOT’s Large Truck Policy

- Large trucks should utilize the National Network (primarily, the Interstate System) for all travel, except pick-ups and deliveries, or to reach food, fuel, rest or repair locations.

- When traveling off the Interstates, large trucks should utilize the most direct route to access terminals and services.
National Network in New York State
Evaluating the Quality of Life. Keeping trucks on the Interstates could:

- Reduce accidents
- Promote bicycle and pedestrian activities in smaller communities
- Increase pavement life on short cut routes
- Reduce noise and visual disruptions in communities
Balancing Act

- Trucks Deliver to our communities the Goods We Consume
- Keeping trucks on the Interstates may:
  - Increase trip lengths
  - Increase fuel consumption and emissions
  - Add operating costs
  - Push drivers up against service hour limits
  - Increase delivery costs
  - Cause hardship for some companies
  - Increase the costs of some goods and materials shipped by truck

Trucks Deliver to our communities the Goods We Consume

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Shortcut Routes

- Identified based on observations and known public interest
  - Statewide - 35 potential shortcut routes
  - Finger Lakes and Palmyra Areas – 15 potential shortcut routes
Identified Shortcut Routes – Finger Lakes Area
Evaluating the Issues

- Traffic Volumes
  - Automatic traffic counters
  - Manual counts
  - Other studies
  - NYS Thruway

- Accident Data

- Engineering considerations (geometry, pavement, etc.)

- Social and Economic Considerations

- Environmental
### NYSDOT Historic Traffic Count Data

#### Routes 20, 41, 41A & 321 - Skaneateles

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Traffic Entering Skaneateles</td>
<td>13161</td>
<td>10660</td>
<td>13005</td>
<td>15487</td>
<td>13536</td>
<td>15799</td>
<td>14154</td>
<td>13682</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large Trucks/day Entering Skaneateles</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Notes:**
- The data represents the daily traffic count and large trucks/day entering Skaneateles for the specified years.
- The graph visually displays the traffic count for each month.
Daily Traffic in Finger Lakes Area
Route 20, 41, 41A, and 321 (Skaneateles)

- Other Vehicles, 12738, 93%
- Other Trucks, 759, 6%
- Large Trucks, 185, 1%
Finger Lakes Area
Route 20, 41, 41A, and 321
Truck Types – “Snapshot” (July 22 and 23, 2008)

- Construction: 44%
- Other Large Trucks: 38%
- Municipal Solid Waste: 6%
- Local Garbage: 2%
- Agricultural: 1%
- Tanker Trucks: 9%
MSW Origins by Region

Rest of NY State
141 one way trips/day

Outside NY
71 one way trips/day

Finger Lakes/Palmyra Area
134 one way trips/day

Down State Area
143 one way trips/day

Source: NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Use of Shortcut Routes for MSW
2007 and 2008

Short Cut Routes Are Not Practical
146 one way trips/day

Shortcut Routes Could be Practical
209 one way trips/day

Observed Through Trucks
30 one way trips/day

Potential Through Trucks
179 one way trips/day

Finger Lakes/Palmyra Area (Local Trucks)
134 one way trips/day

30%

27%

43%
A Truck Accident is more likely than a car accident to result in an injury or a fatality.
Accident Rates

- Car Accidents occur more frequently than Truck Accidents
- Interstates have lower accident rates than other State Highways

![Accident Rate Chart]

**2006 Accident Rate Data**

- Car Accidents occur more frequently than Truck Accidents
- Interstates have lower accident rates than other State Highways
Noise and Visual Disruptions

- Nuisance noise and visual disruptions adversely affect:
  - Pedestrians and Bicyclists
  - Outdoor Recreation and Parks
  - Enjoyment of Historic Districts
  - Schools
  - Neighborhoods and Community Cohesion
Municipal Solid Waste Concerns and Water Bodies

- U.S. EPA studies conclude that household trash (municipal solid waste – MSW) is neither hazardous nor flammable.

- New York's regulations require MSW haulers to secure their loads to prevent accidental releases of cargo.
Cost of Remaining on the National Network*  
Finger Lakes/ Palmyra Regions

- Remaining on the National Network adds, on average, about $50 to the cost of a one-way trip compared to using a shortcut route.
- Estimated additional annual costs for large trucks remaining on the National Network: $10 Million/Year

* Includes fuel, tolls and operating costs
Benefits of Remaining on the National Network
Finger Lakes/Palmyra Regions

- Quality of Life Benefits – Not Quantified
- Safety Benefits
  - About $1 in savings per truck staying on the National Network due to fewer accidents
  - Estimated Annual Accident Savings: $0.24M
- Infrastructure Benefits
  - About $9 in savings for each truck remaining on the National Network due to reduced pavement maintenance
  - Estimated Annual Pavement Maintenance Savings: $2.6M
- About $2.84M in Quantifiable Benefits
Non-Regulatory Actions

Traffic Calming

- Strategic physical changes to roadways to promote safety
- NYSDOT initiative
  - working with 13 communities in 16 locations in the Finger Lakes
- Examples:
  - Short Term: signs, signals, speed limits, crosswalks
  - Longer Term: roadway changes, lane configurations
- Over 100 traffic calming actions discussed with cities and villages in the Finger Lakes
Traffic Calming Opportunities

- Examples of traffic calming initiatives to be completed by the end of 2008:
  - Adjusting speed limits
  - Upgrading, replacing and installing new signs
  - Enhancing cross walks and improving pedestrian crossing
  - Adding shoulder striping
  - Adding edge line markings for parking
  - Adding a new speed zone
  - Re-timing an existing signal
  - Adding raised pavement markings to slow traffic entering speed zones
  - Installing larger speed zone warning signs

- Additional locations being considered
Other Actions

- Adding route exclusions to NYSDOT permits
- Locating some truck inspections off Interstates
- Guide signs informing trucks to stay on the National Network
- Investigate hauling waste by rail
- Possible Tandem Truck Staging Facilities Downstate (encourage trucks to stay on thruway)
- Discussions with other agencies, including DEC, State Police, NYSTA, and Ag and Markets
- Encourage modification of new contracts for waste hauling to include route specification
Permit Changes

- Special Hauling and Divisible Load permits will include provisions to exclude trucks from specific highways.
- Modify program website (www.nypermits.org) and associated interactive routing tool to show these highways as excluded for through trips.
- Conduct outreach to active permit holders explaining the effects to both Statewide Divisible Load (annual) and Special Hauling permits of various types
- Conduct outreach to Permit Service Companies.
Inspections

- Performing inspection off the Interstates creates challenges to ensure safety for inspectors, commercial drivers and the motoring public.
- Inspection staff from the Department and State Police are identifying suitable sites in the Finger Lake Region and in particular along Routes 41 and 79 to safely inspect commercial vehicles.
- Suitable parking sites off road are required for those trucks and drivers that have been placed Out-of-Service.
Legal Considerations

Federal and state laws limit NYSDOT’s ability to ban trucks from highways:

- **Federal:**
  - Must provide “reasonable access” to facilities
  - Can not discriminate against interstate commerce

- **State Law:**
  - Commissioner can exclude trucks from highways but can not prevent local pick-up and delivery
  - No express authority to exclude trucks based on commodities carried

- **Enforcement:**
  - need “reasonable suspicion” of a violation of law
  - Penalties set in law
On May 12, the Governor announced that the Department would implement a large-truck policy.

Called for the development of regulations to implement the policy.

Proposed draft regulation affects “through trucks” (trucks not making local deliveries).
### Regulation – Tiered Approach

Calls for a hierarchy of state highways:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Highway Types</th>
<th>Access Rules</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tier 1</td>
<td>National Network (mostly Interstates)</td>
<td>Must be used as the primary means for reaching terminals, facilities and sites for the delivery or pickup of goods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 2</td>
<td>Access Highways</td>
<td>Used only when the access highway provides exclusive access to facility or use is <em>reasonably necessary.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tier 3</td>
<td>Other Highways</td>
<td>Used only when the highway provides exclusive access or when use is <em>reasonably necessary.</em></td>
</tr>
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</table>
State Designated Access Highways

- A network of highways that has been specifically designated by NYSDOT as permissible for use by trucks
- Provides legal access from the Interstates for certain defined vehicle combinations (large trucks)
- Roadways with:
  - Travel lanes 10 feet and wider
  - No significant large truck accident history
Regulation – Reasonably Necessary

- Identifies 14 factors to consider to determine if use of a state highway is *reasonably necessary*:
  - Access to terminals and best use of the highways
  - Where a truck is going
  - Quality of life considerations; proximity to residences, parks, schools and environmentally sensitive areas
  - Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety
  - Exception for extreme circumstances
- Commissioner would provide an opinion upon written request
- Applies statewide
- Specific highways may be designated
Large Truck Traffic – Entering the Finger Lakes Area from I-81 – Local and Through

- Unknown, 171, 66%
- Through, 35, 14%
- Local, 53, 20%

All Trucks Observed

- Local 60%
- Through 40%

Responded to Phone Calls and Knew Destination
Estimating Through Trucks and Local Deliveries

- Previous studies report through trucks ranging from 25% to over 43% of the overall truck volume.
- Studies of a single town or location without an acceptable alternate route identified even higher %.
- To identify the maximum potential effects (both positive and negative).

50% of the large trucks along any short cut route could be considered through trucks.
Existing Traffic on the National Network (I-81, I-690, I-90 corridor)

Existing Traffic Composition in Syracuse Area

- All Other Vehicles: 91.0%
- Large trucks: 9.0%
Change in Traffic on the National Network (I-81, I-690, I-90 corridor)

Projected Post-Regulation Traffic Composition in Syracuse Area

- All Other Vehicles: 90.7%
- Large trucks: 9.0%
- Added Large Trucks: 0.3%
Regulatory Issues

- Need to ensure compliance with and authority under federal and state laws
- Must demonstrate benefits of regulatory action (impact statements under development)
- Must work within existing law for enforcement
- Must clearly define usage that would be a “violation” of the regulation – what is *reasonably necessary*
Regulatory Process

- A regulation requires a formal rulemaking, which includes:
  1. Crafting a proposed regulation
  2. Preparation of formal regulatory impact statements (job impact, impact on businesses and local governments, rural area impacts and an analysis of cost and benefits of the rule and alternatives)
  3. Compliance with SEQRA requirements
  4. Governor’s Office of Regulatory Reform approval
  5. Publication in the State Register
  6. 45 day public comment period
  7. Consideration of public comment; revisions to draft regulation
  8. If significant revisions, subject to another 30 day comment period
  9. Adoption of the regulation