

Idaho Transportation Board

129,000 Pound Truck Route Subcommittee

May 23, 2019

Idaho Transportation Board (ITB) 129,000 Pound Truck Route Subcommittee Chairman Dwight Horsch called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM on Thursday, May 23, 2019 at the Idaho Transportation Department in Boise, Idaho. ITB Members Julie DeLorenzo and James R. Thompson were present.

Principal Subcommittee staff members and advisors present included Deputy Attorney General Tim Thomas, Public Transportation Manager (PTM) Jeff Marker, Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Adam Rush, Bridge Engineer Matt Farrar, Compliance Officer (CO) Reymundo Rodriguez, District 3 Operations Engineer Jason Brinkman, and Executive Assistant to the Board (EAB) Sue S. Higgins.

ITB Chairman Jerry Whitehead was also present.

Chairman Horsch said that because the Subcommittee is comprised of three members, motions will not require a second.

January 16, 2019 Meeting Minutes. Member Thompson made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 16, 2019 Subcommittee meeting as submitted. The motion passed unopposed.

Chairman Horsch confirmed that public hearings were held on the District 3 route requests being considered today and the engineer's analysis was completed on each route. The Subcommittee members have received and reviewed the public comments. After listening to staff's analysis of each route, the Subcommittee will determine if additional information is needed or present the full Board with a recommendation to accept or deny the request.

Case #201712: US-30, Milepost (MP) 21.53 to 27.94. PTM Marker presented the Chief Engineer's analysis on behalf of Acting Chief Engineer Blake Rindlisbacher. The Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) confirmed that this section of US -30 falls under the red route category allowing 115-foot overall vehicle length and a 6.5-foot off-track. The bridge analysis determined that the three bridges on the route will safely support vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds, assuming the axle configuration conforms to the legal requirements. The pavement is in good condition with no deficient sections. There are no safety concerns and the Chief Engineer's analysis recommends approving the route.

PIC Rush said there was a lot of interest in the five route requests. Two hearings were initially conducted in December 2018. Due to concerns with insufficient notification of the hearings and the proximity to the holidays, an additional public hearing and 30-day public comment period were scheduled last month. Additionally, staff gave a presentation on the

129,000 pound truck route requests in Gem County. A total of 53 public comments were received on the five routes. A number of comments were either in support of or opposed to all of the route requests. A few comments specifically mentioned US-30.

Member DeLorenzo referenced some public comments claiming that the process was not transparent. Because a second public hearing and 30-day public comment period were conducted and staff visited Gem County, she does not believe that concern is valid. She is confident the process to designate these 129,000 pound truck routes was followed.

Member DeLorenzo stated that even if the routes are approved for vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pound trucks, operators still need to obtain permits to travel on the highway(s) at that weight. She understands that some citizens are concerned with safety, but she emphasized that those concerns are taken into consideration. Because Member DeLorenzo believes the process was followed correctly and the engineering analysis did not identify any concerns, she made a motion to recommend that the Idaho Transportation Board approve the 129,000 pound truck route request for US-30, milepost 21.53 to 27.94.

Chairman Horsch asked if any of the three bridges on US-30 are longer than 115 feet. PTM Marker replied no. All of the structures are short spans.

The motion passed unopposed.

Case #201710: SH-52, MP 14.4 to 28.4. PTM Marker said the DMV confirmed that this section of SH-52 falls under the red route category allowing 115-foot overall vehicle length and a 6.5-foot off-track. The bridge analysis determined that the six bridges on the route will safely support vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds, assuming the axle configuration conforms to the legal requirements. The pavement is in good condition with no deficient sections. There are no safety concerns and the Chief Engineer's analysis recommends approving the route.

PIC Rush said there were a couple of comments on SH-52, but they did not specify which section of the highway the comments applied to.

Member DeLorenzo made a motion to recommend that the Transportation Board approve the 129,000 pound truck route request for SH-52, milepost 14.4 to 28.4. The motion passed unanimously.

Case #201705: SH-52, MP 28.4 to 30.42. PTM Marker said the DMV confirmed that this section of SH-52 falls under the red route category allowing 115-foot overall vehicle length and a 6.5-foot off-track. The bridge analysis determined that the one bridge on the route will safely support vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds, assuming the axle configuration conforms to the legal requirements. The pavement is in good condition with no deficient sections. There are no safety concerns and the Chief Engineer's analysis recommends approving the route.

In response to a question from Chairman Horsch, PTM Marker replied that yes, 105,500 pound vehicles currently operate on this route.

Member DeLorenzo requested confirmation that vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds have the same footprint as 105,500 pound configurations, both commercial vehicles are the same length, and the 129,000 pound configurations require more axles so they put less weight per foot on the pavement. PTM Marker responded that all of those statements are correct. Additionally, Member DeLorenzo noted that the applicant intends to operate fewer trucks on the highway because he will be able to haul at a higher weight.

Member DeLorenzo made a motion to recommend that the Transportation Board approve the 129,000 pound truck route request for SH-52, milepost 28.4 to 30.42. The motion passed unanimously.

Case #201711: SH-72, MP 0.0 to 1.99. PTM Marker said DMV confirmed that this portion of SH-72 falls under the red route category allowing 115-foot overall vehicle length and a 6.5-foot off-track. The bridge analysis determined that the one bridge on the route, which is a short span, will safely support vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds, assuming the axle configuration conforms to the legal requirements. The pavement is in good condition with no deficient sections. There are no safety concerns and the Chief Engineer's analysis recommends approving the route.

Member DeLorenzo asked for confirmation regarding off-tracking: when a 129,000 pound vehicle combination goes around a corner, it has the same footprint as a 105,500 pound truck: the path of the 129,000 pound truck will be the same as the path of a 105,500 pound truck. PTM Marker replied in the affirmative. The off-track of 129,000 pound trucks will be the same as the 105,500 pound vehicles that are currently operating on the highway.

PIC Rush said the Department received 12 comments in support of this route request and 13 opposed.

Member DeLorenzo made a motion to recommend that the Transportation Board approve the 129,000 pound truck route request for SH-72, milepost 0.0 to 1.99. The motion passed unanimously.

Case #201704: SH-16, MP 100.0 to 113.9. PTM Marker said DMV confirmed that this portion of SH-16 falls under the red route category allowing 115-foot overall vehicle length and a 6.5-foot off-track. The bridge analysis determined that the seven bridges on the route, which are all short spans, will safely support vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds, assuming the axle configuration conforms to the legal requirements. Overall, the pavement is in good condition but there is a .8 mile section rated poor and deficient. He acknowledged the number of public comments expressing concern with Freeze Out Hill because there are no passing lanes. Although there are no safety concerns, PTM Marker mentioned that there was a fatality involving a commercial vehicle last fall. A passenger vehicle crossed the center line and struck the truck head on. The Chief Engineer's analysis recommends approving the route.

Member DeLorenzo said she is familiar with this highway and Freeze Out Hill. She asked if 129,000 pound vehicles are slower than 105,500 pound trucks. PTM Marker believes there are variables depending on the tractor.

Member DeLorenzo requested confirmation that each 129,000 pound vehicle has to apply for and be granted a permit before operating at that weight. CO Rodriguez confirmed the requirement for operators to obtain permits. He added that the Administrative Rule includes a provision related to the horse power of 129,000 pound commercial vehicles.

PTM Marker reported that the Department has a project planned in several years to construct a passing lane at the top of Freeze Out Hill.

PIC Rush said the majority of comments received were on this route, including 37 expressing opposition to this route request. Most of those concerns related to Freeze Out Hill and motorists making poor decisions to pass slower vehicles.

Member DeLorenzo believes that the fact that the requestor intends to operate fewer trucks at 129,000 pounds than it currently operates will improve safety and result in less congestion on the route. Additionally, the 129,000 pound vehicle configurations have more axles and more brakes, which should enhance safety. Because state highways are to safely and efficiently move people and goods and because the Department is in the process of extending SH-16 to I-84, she supports the designation of SH-16 for vehicle combinations up to 129,000 pounds.

Member DeLorenzo made a motion to recommend that the Transportation Board approve the 129,000 pound truck route request for SH-16, milepost 100.0 to 113.9. The motion passed unanimously.

IDAPA Rule 39.03.06 – Governing Special Permits for Extra-Length/Excess Weight, Up to 129,000 Pound Vehicle Combinations. EAB Higgins presented minor changes to the referenced rule related to the Board’s process to designate these routes. If approved, the new language will mirror the process outlined in the 129,000 Pound Truck Route Manual.

There were no objections to the proposed revisions, so they will be presented to the full Board for consideration.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Sue S. Higgins  
Respectfully submitted by:  
SUE S. HIGGINS  
Executive Assistant & Secretary  
Idaho Transportation Board