

## **DRAFT**

Subject: US 322/144 Connector Point Paper

1. **PURPOSE**: To request input from trucking companies who routinely transit the 322 missing link and submit it to PennDOT to compliment the information they received from property owners and thus provide a more balanced approach to the decision making process.

2. **BACKGROUND**: US 322 from the Seven Mountains to State College has been a two lane highway forever. With the completion of the four lane section from Harrisburg to the top of the Seven Mountains, and another four lane section from Boalsburg to I99, the section between these two four lanes from Potters Mills to Boalsburg has for many years been called the missing link. It is now being referred to by PennDOT as the State College Area Connector (SCAC).

In 1999-2000 the South Central Centre County Transportation Study commenced with the intention of recommending a solution for the missing link. Several possible routes were developed over a three year period to replace the missing link. In 2003 PennDOT was about to select their preferred route when it was announced they were out of money and the project was tabled.

3. **DISCUSSION**: After 18 years, the missing link/State College Area Connector (SCAC) project is back on. PennDOT has identified 5 possible routes involving 322 from Potters Mills to State College, and 3 possible routes from Potters Mills to I99/I80 involving 144. On 22 & 23 Sept. 2021, PennDOT held a two day open house at the Wyndham Hotel (formerly the Elks Country Club) in Boalsburg where they explained the process and solicited inputs from concerned citizens, mainly worried about their own property and what a new highway would do to their community. Regrettably, PennDOT has not solicited any inputs from actual ultimate users of their proposed routes such as commercial truck and transportation enterprises, a fact yet to be confirmed.

Crash data from January 2014 through December 2018 (five years) for the 322 section showed 108 total accidents, 69 were property damage only and 39 had injuries.

Truck traffic in the study area on 322 indicated 74% were heavy trucks (>26,000 pounds) and 89% were through trips with origins and destinations outside the study area. A problem with the SCAC study is that through traffic data was only collected on a relatively small section of 322. Ultimate destinations and connections to follow on routes are not available.

4. **REQUEST**: With the assistance of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association (PMTA), request a short survey be completed by those companies that transit US 322 to State College and further destinations. Proposed questionnaire follows.

## QUESTIONS FOR TRUCKING COMPANIES USING 322 WEST TO STATE COLLEGE

1. Company name and contact information.
2. How often does the company transit 322 West to State College on a monthly basis?
3. What is the ultimate destination of each trip through the missing link?
  - State College
  - I80
  - Other
4. If I80, how do you connect?
  - Through Philipsburg
  - I99 to Bellefonte
5. Would you prefer a more direct route to I80 such as a new four lane from Potters Mills, around Centre Hall and over Mt. Nittany to the I80 exchange in Bellefonte (approx. 16 mi.)?
6. Would you prefer upgrading the current route 322 to four lanes in and around the existing track to I99, then back to the I80 exchange in Bellefonte (approx. 35 mi.)?
7. Would you support a new four lane route, and then making current 322 a business route?