



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Idaho Division

November 26, 2013

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In Reply Refer To:
HFO-ID

Brian W. Ness, Director
Idaho Transportation Department
P.O. Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707

Attention: Jason Minzghor, District 1 Operations Manager

RE: Mammoet Oversize Load

Dear Mr. Ness:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is in receipt of the Idaho Transportation Department's (ITD) letter dated November 20, 2013 written by Jason Minzghor, District 1's Operations Manager. The subject of the letter is a proposed temporary access break for Interstate 90, milepost 19.85, near Coeur d'Alene that is scheduled to accommodate three oversize loads being transported by Mammoet USA over the next three months. The letter states ITD is ready to allow Mammoet to start constructing the temporary access ramp upon FHWA's approval for the temporary interstate access. No formal request for the new interstate access has been submitted to FHWA.

As stated in a previous e-mail sent November 13, 2013, an Access Justification Report is required for the new temporary access. New temporary access locations require approval of the FHWA and may be approved only in instances where the need for access is infrequent and where other means of access cannot reasonably be provided or justified. All requests for new interstate access must include sufficient supporting information to allow FHWA to independently evaluate the request and ensure that all pertinent factors and alternatives have been appropriately considered.

ITD must demonstrate and provide supporting information that the existing interstate access locations and infrastructure cannot adequately accommodate the oversize load. The new access presented in ITD's letter would allow the oversize loads in question to bypass the Veteran's Memorial Centennial Bridge. Based on information in the National Bridge Inventory this bridge has not been load rated as required by 23 CFR 650.313(c) to determine its safe load-carrying capacity; therefore, it is unclear whether this oversize load can be accommodated by the existing interstate infrastructure or if this bridge must be bypassed by the oversize load. Please demonstrate the existing interstate infrastructure, including the bridge, cannot adequately accommodate the oversize load.

The FHWA approval of a new interstate access constitutes a federal action and, as such, requires that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedures be followed. This

means that final FHWA approval of requests for new or revised access cannot precede the completion of the NEPA process.

Due to the controversy that has surrounded some oversize loads and their selected routes in Idaho, one could assume that establishing an oversize load route to accommodate a load that is 1.6 million pounds and 400 feet in length through the Coeur d'Alene area alongside the Coeur d'Alene Lake might receive significant public comment during the NEPA process.

FHWA Idaho Division looks forward to working with ITD on this issue and consulting with ITD in the development of the necessary interstate access request.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 208-334-9180 extension 127.

Sincerely,

(original signed by)

Kyle P. Holman
Operations Engineer

cc: FHWA: Peter Hartman, Gus Shanine, John A. Perry, Brent Inghram, Ed Miltner
ITD: Jim Carpenter, Damon Allen, Matt Farrar