



News for Immediate Release

May 27, 2010

### **PennDOT 4-0 presents Route 115 engineering safety improvements to legislators, stakeholders**

**Dunmore** – PennDOT District 4 traffic engineers met today (Thursday) with stakeholders to present its plan for additional improvements to minimize traffic crashes along Route 115, Bear Creek Township, Luzerne County. This report is the result of the completed engineering study performed by PennDOT district traffic engineers, originally scheduled to be presented by November 2010.

In attendance were representatives from the Wyoming Barracks of the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), legislators, residents, Bear Creek Township Supervisors, the Bear Creek Charter School, and representatives of Sen. Raphael Musto's, Reps. Mike Carroll's and John Yudichak's offices.

"We gave this project the priority it deserves and wanted to complete both the study and its implementation well ahead of time so that motorists could benefit from it," said District Executive George Roberts, P.E.

After reviewing recent crash reports and historical data and conducting speed studies, PennDOT made recommendations that reflect the best practices of appropriate engineering safety solutions for this particular location. Since data reflects that speeding was by far the primary cause of crashes on Route 115, engineers already have begin to implement a plan to reduce the number of passing lanes both northbound (downhill) and southbound (uphill), a practice known to reduce speeding.

"Safe lanes" for turning will be created within these varying traffic patterns to accommodate motorists turning into the side roads and driveways along the route.

Investing about \$98,000 in this phase of improvements, PennDOT also will purchase and install two permanent variable message boards in the corridor as well as install center and shoulder-line rumble strips. PennDOT will also install multiple "Left lane must turn left" signs in both uphill and downhill directions. Additional signage will be added to clarify the new traffic patterns.

Field scoping, line eradication and repainting, installation of pavement markings and rumble strips will begin in June, with expected completion by August.

PennDOT engineers will continue to monitor the situation in partnership with the State Police.

PennDOT's first step in the progressive recommendations was completed by mid-March and included performing a complete sign review, enhancing existing signage and reducing the speed limit through the corridor to 45 m.p.h.

In an attempt to reduce the number of tractor trailers above 10,000 pounds prohibited from utilizing the road, PennDOT was also able to contact several GPS services providers and affect a change to the directions they were providing.

Working in conjunction with PennDOT, The Pennsylvania Turnpike placed variable message boards on its main line directing trucks to Exit 115 and alerting them to the restriction at Exit 105, the new speed limit and the availability of safety information on highway advisory radio. They will install truck restriction signs this summer.

Immediately following the January 2010 crashes, PennDOT placed message boards to alert motorists to the possibility of changing weather conditions and the need to reduce speed. PennDOT also positioned two "speedminders" along the roadway to alert motorists to their current speed. Additionally, PennDOT maintenance activity included sweeping the roadway to remove all anti-skid material and increasing ranger patrols along the roadway during winter. In February PSP increased, and continues to vigorously conduct, speed-limit enforcement in the 115 corridor utilizing unconventional methods.

As part of their commitment to reducing the number of fatalities on all of its roads, PennDOT and its highway safety partners have reached out to businesses along the corridor in an effort to increase public awareness that all motorists share a responsibility in maintaining their own safety through safe driving practices and vehicle maintenance.

For more information on highway safety and to learn what drivers can do to increase their own personal level of safety on Pennsylvania roads, log on to [www.DriveSafePA.org](http://www.DriveSafePA.org).

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