



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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JAMES G. MARTIN
GOVERNOR

THOMAS J. HARRELSON
SECRETARY

July 15, 1992

Mr. James C. Masten
Canal Wood Corporation
308 East 5th Street
Lumberton, North Carolina 28358

Dear Mr. Masten:

Thank you for your July 7, 1992 letter concerning the use of "Trucks Entering Highway" signs at logging sites throughout the state.

Trucks Entering Highway signs are presently used where studies show that large volumes of entering truck traffic pose hazards to the mainline traffic. These signs are installed at industrial entrances or other permanent locations with significant volumes of truck traffic.

The time span of a logging operation can range from a matter of days or weeks to months or even years. A typical operation would probably last two to three months. The frequency of erection and removal of Trucks Entering Highway warning signs for these sites would be very burdensome to our highway forces. For this reason, we recommend the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) not become actively involved in the installation of these signs.

We do, however, recognize the importance of warning signs at some logging site entrances. Whenever a driveway or street connection is made to a State Highway System road, a driveway permit issued by NCDOT is required prior to construction of the driveway. Attached is a copy of the Policy on Street and Driveway Access to North Carolina Highways. Please refer to page 9 of the Policy concerning Temporary Street And Driveway Access Permit. We recommend, as part of the permit approval process, that NCDOT District Engineers require Trucks Entering Highway signs be erected by logging firms at sites where such signs are deemed warranted by NCDOT. The erection of these signs could be a condition of driveway permit approval.

It is our understanding that logging operators quite often do not apply to NCDOT for temporary driveway permits. For the sake of highway safety, we strongly urge logging firms to go through the driveway permit process. This will eliminate the possibility of entrances being built in unsafe locations. The logging firms should also consider the element of liability associated with vehicular accidents involving logging trucks at unapproved entrances to logging sites.

By copy of this letter, I am asking NCDOT's Division Engineers to consider, as a condition of permit approval during the driveway permit process, a requirement that logging firms erect Trucks Entering Highway signs at locations where, in the judgement of NCDOT engineers, such signs would be beneficial to highway safety. This action would ensure adequate warning for motorists at entrances with less than desirable sight distances.

Logging firms could also adopt the practice of erecting standard Trucks Entering Highway signs on state highway rights-of-way at entrances to logging operation sites. This practice would require that an encroachment contract between the firm and NCDOT be executed for post mounted signs. For portable ground mounted signs, an encroachment agreement would not be necessary.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please let us know and we will arrange for the appropriate NCDOT staff to meet with you. We very much appreciate your interest in this important safety matter.

Yours truly,



Thomas J. Harrelson

TJH:hs

Attachment

cc: Deputy Secretary Jake F. Alexander
Mr. W. G. Marley, Jr., P.E., State Highway Administrator
Mr. D. W. Bailey, P.E., Chief Engineer - Operations
Mr. J. T. Peacock, Jr., P.E., Chief Engineer - Preconstruction
Division Engineers
Mr. J. M. Lynch, P.E., State Traffic Engineer