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## Heavy Haul Access to U.S. Ports

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### Background

Texas exporters are increasingly concerned that current overweight regulations do not allow for the full use of the capacity of oceangoing containers. Even with an over-axle/over-gross weight tolerance permit (also known as the HB 2060 permit), the oceangoing container is not full. To comply with current weight regulations, some containers destined for overseas markets are underloaded and transported to a transloading facility typically on port property. Additional product is added at the transloading facility to take full advantage of the capacity of the oceangoing containers.

Exporters maintain that this process adds costs to the supply chain and results in higher numbers of truck trips on Texas roads. Furthermore, exporters state that all other major U.S. container ports have a mechanism (e.g., permit) that allows higher weights for oceangoing containers to use roads accessing the ports. This allows exporters in those states to maximize the capacity of the container.

This research investigates the claim that in most cases a mechanism exists for allowing higher weights for oceangoing containers to traverse roads that access major container ports and documents the findings of whether or not this claim is true.

### Research Methodology

The research methodology involves a combination of web research and telephone interviews to identify heavy haul requirements to access/egress the top U.S. container ports.<sup>1</sup> Since the reference list includes a port in Texas (Port of Houston)<sup>2</sup> and a port outside the continental United States (Port of San Juan, Puerto Rico), researchers sought information for only the remaining eight ports, which include the following:

- Port of Los Angeles.
- Port of Long Beach.
- Port of New Jersey.
- Port of Seattle/Tacoma.

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<sup>1</sup> The top 10 U. S. container ports are listed here: <http://www.inboundlogistics.com/cms/article/top-10-us-container-ports/>. The metric used to rank the ports is the Twenty-Foot Equivalent Unit (TEU).

<sup>2</sup> The recently passed SB 1534 allows for six axle trucks to have a GWV of 93,000 lbs. within 30 miles of the dock at Port of Houston, and for seven axle trucks to have a GVW of 100,000 lbs.

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- Port of Savannah.
  - Port of Oakland.
  - Port of Virginia.
  - Port of Charleston.

Specific details targeted for collection include the following:

- Permitting organizations.
- Permit type (duration).
- Permit cost.
- Permitted maximum gross vehicle weight (GVW).
- Permitted route requirements.

Details about each specific port are provided beginning on page 3. If available, maps are provided for each port. In some instances, (Port of New Jersey and Port of Virginia), maps are not available. Table 1 presents a high level summary for each Port.

## Key Findings

Some of the key findings are:

- The larger the port, the more organizations require permitting. The port complexes composed of the Ports of Los Angeles/Long Beach and the Ports of Seattle/Tacoma each have multiple organizations, state and municipal departments of transportation (DOT), that require heavy haul permits. A municipal DOT requires a permit only if travel is conducted on a street for which the municipality is responsible for maintenance.
- Permitting organizations include state DOTs, state departments of motor vehicles, municipal DOTs, and municipal police departments.
- Permit types offered include single trip (one way), round trip, monthly, 90-day, annual, and two-year permits.
- Permit costs range from free to \$3,000. The average price<sup>3</sup> for each permit type is as follows:
  - Single trip, \$23.20.
  - Round trip, \$40.

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<sup>3</sup> Excludes minimum value (0 or free) and maximum value (\$3,000).

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- Monthly, \$175.
  - 90-day, \$75.
  - Annual, \$254.85.
  - Two year, \$260.
- Maximum allowable GVWs range from a minimum of 90,000 lb to a maximum of 105,500 lb. The median maximum allowable GVW is 95,000 lb, and the mean is 96,654 lb.<sup>4</sup>

## **Detailed Findings**

### *Port of Los Angeles/Port of Long Beach*

The Ports do not issue permits for heavier weight ocean going containers (i.e., the GVW of the oceangoing container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb). However, several agencies that manage the transportation network adjacent and leading to the ports do issue permits that allow trucks transporting oceangoing containers handled by the ports to operate at weights exceeding 80,000 lb. These organizations include the City of Los Angeles, City of Long Beach, City of Carson, and Caltrans. The Heavy Container Corridor is actually a network of routes that are under the jurisdictions of a number of municipalities and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Any organization transporting heavier weight oceangoing containers has to purchase a permit from each of the organizations, whose routes are going to be used to access the ports.

#### *City of Los Angeles*

The City of Los Angeles issues an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW (including truck, chassis, container and contents) up to 95,000 lb/43,130 kg (with proper equipment) to travel on designated roads (see Figure 1 for designated portions of the Ports Heavy Container Corridor for which a City of Los Angeles permit is required). The permit cost is \$85.80.

#### *City of Long Beach*

The City of Long Beach issues a single trip and an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW (including truck, chassis, container and contents) up to 95,000 lb/43,130 kg to travel on designated roads (see Figure 1 for designated Ports Heavy Container Corridor for which a City of Long Beach permit is required). The single trip permit costs \$16, and the annual permit cost is \$90.

#### *City of Carson*

The City of Carson issues a single trip and an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW (including truck, chassis, container and contents) up to 95,000 lb/43,130 kg to travel on

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<sup>4</sup> The median and mean calculations exclude Virginia DOT because their max GVW was contingent on the number of axles.

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designated roads (see Figure 1 for designated Ports Heavy Container Corridor for which a City of Carson permit is required). The single trip permit costs \$16, and the annual permit cost is \$90.

*Caltrans*

Caltrans issues an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW (including truck, chassis, container and contents) up to 95,000 lb/43,130 kg (with proper equipment) to travel on designated roads (see Figure 1 for designated Ports Heavy Container Corridor for which a Caltrans permit is required). The permit cost is \$90. Caltrans issues these permits only within the LA/Long Beach Harbor Corridor.

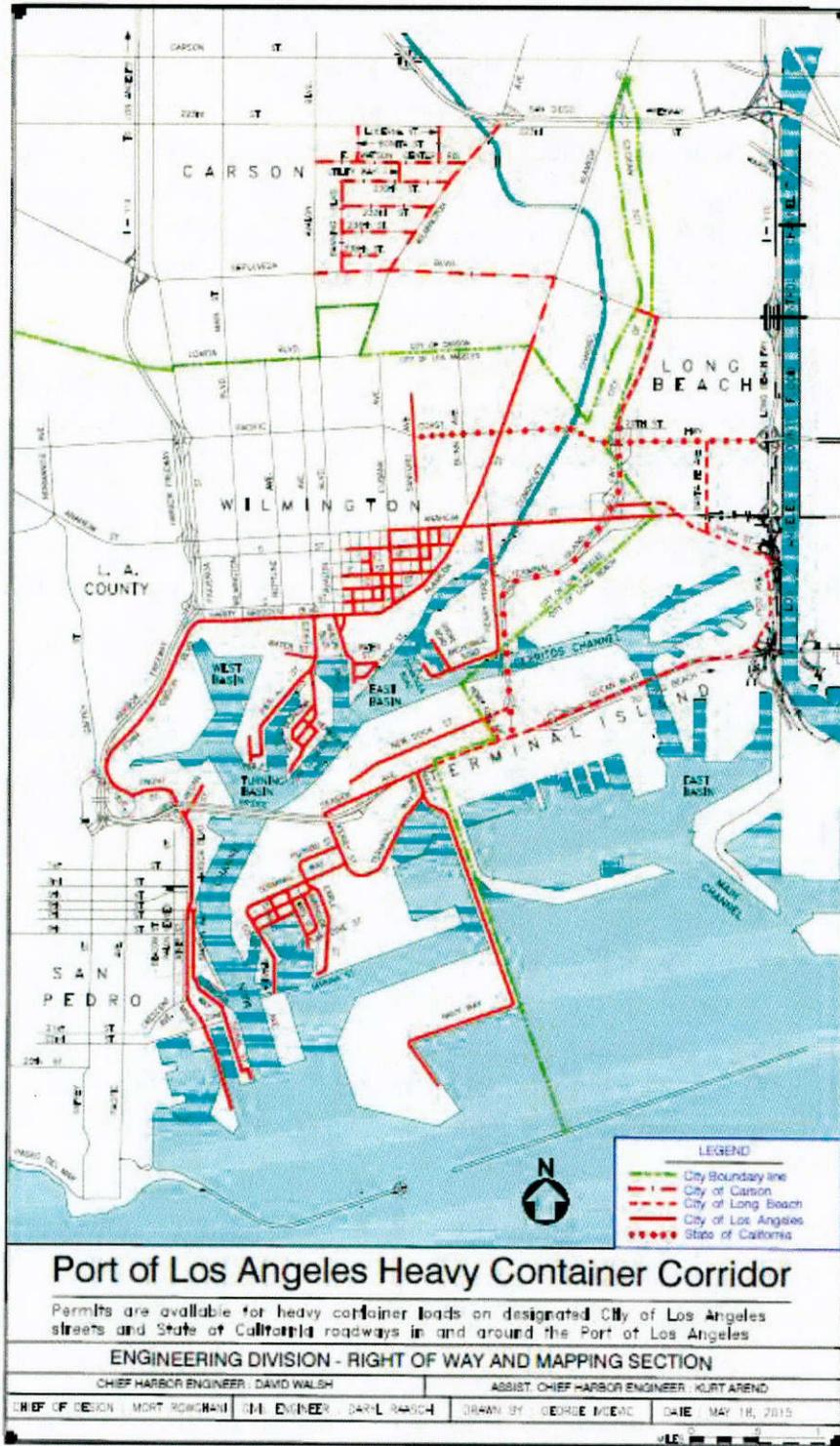


Figure 1. Port of Los Angeles/Port of Long Beach Heavy Container Corridor.

Source: [https://www.portoflosangeles.org/pdf/heavy\\_container%20corridor.pdf](https://www.portoflosangeles.org/pdf/heavy_container%20corridor.pdf)

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### *Port of New Jersey*

The Port of New Jersey does not issue permits for heavier weight oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb). However, several agencies that manage the transportation network adjacent and leading to the port do issue permits that allow trucks transporting oceangoing containers handled by the port to operate at weights exceeding 80,000 lb. These organizations include New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).

#### *NYSDOT*

NYSDOT issues a round trip, monthly, and annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 100,000 lb to travel on designated routes. Round trip permits are route specific. Annual and monthly permits are not route specific, but they are valid only on highways under NYSDOT jurisdiction. Monthly and annual permit holders need to make sure no permit or bridge restrictions are violated. NYSDOT does not maintain a port-specific heavy haul route. Rather, NYSDOT permits are route specific, and routes are specified after review by NYSDOT. The permit costs are \$40 for round trip, \$250 for monthly, and \$750 for annual.

#### *NJDOT*

NJDOT issues an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 90,000 lb/43,130 kg to travel on designated roads. NJDOT does not maintain a port-specific heavy haul route. Rather, NJDOT permits are not route specific. The permit cost is \$117.60.

### *Port of Seattle/Tacoma*

The Port of Seattle/Tacoma does not issue permits for heavier weight oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb). However, several agencies that manage the transportation networks adjacent and leading to the port do issue permits that allow trucks transporting ocean going containers handled by the port to operate at weights exceeding 80,000 lb. These organizations include the City of Seattle, City of Tacoma, and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

#### *City of Seattle*

The City of Seattle issues an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 98,000 lb to travel specific routes with a sealed container, point to point. The City of Seattle maintains a port-specific heavy haul route that is illustrated in Figure 2. The permit cost is \$200.

#### *City of Tacoma*

The City of Tacoma issues an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 98,000 lb to travel specific routes with a sealed container, point to point. The City of Tacoma maintains a port-specific heavy haul route that is illustrated in Figure 3. The permit cost is \$3,000.

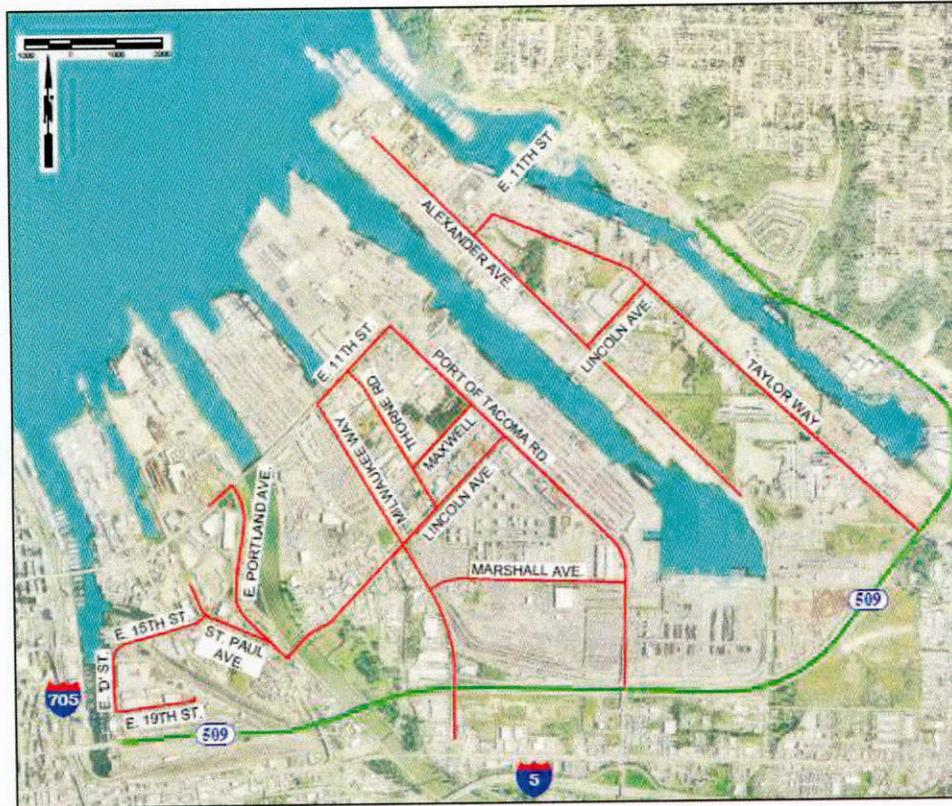
WSDOT

WSDOT issues a monthly and an annual permit that allow vehicles with a GVW up to 105,500 lb to travel on State Route 509 between mile post 0.25 and mile post 5.7 with a sealed container. The monthly permit cost is \$100, and the annual permit cost is \$1,000.



Figure 2. Port of Seattle/Tacoma Heavy Container Corridor—City of Seattle.

Source: Personal communication with Port of Seattle staff



**LEGEND**

- HEAVY HAUL CORRIDOR ROUTES
- SR 509 (A STATE PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR SR 509)

**Figure 3. Port of Seattle/Tacoma Heavy Container Corridor—City of Tacoma.**

Source: <http://www.tacomadailyindex.com/blog/port-of-tacoma-commission-to-consider-heavy-haul-corridor-extension-hylebos-waterway-cleanup/2260716/>

*Port of Savannah*

The Port of Savannah does not issue permits for heavier weight oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb).

*Georgia Department of Transportation*

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) manages a statewide oversize truck route network. It also issues permits that allow trucks transporting oceangoing containers handled by the port to operate at weights exceeding 80,000 lb. GDOT issues a single trip and an annual permit that allow vehicles with a GVW up to 100,000 lb to travel throughout the state. The single trip permit is route specific with turn-by-turn instructions printed on the permit. The annual

permit allows vehicles to use any approved road in the state (see Figure 4). The single trip permit cost is \$38, and the annual permit cost is \$150.

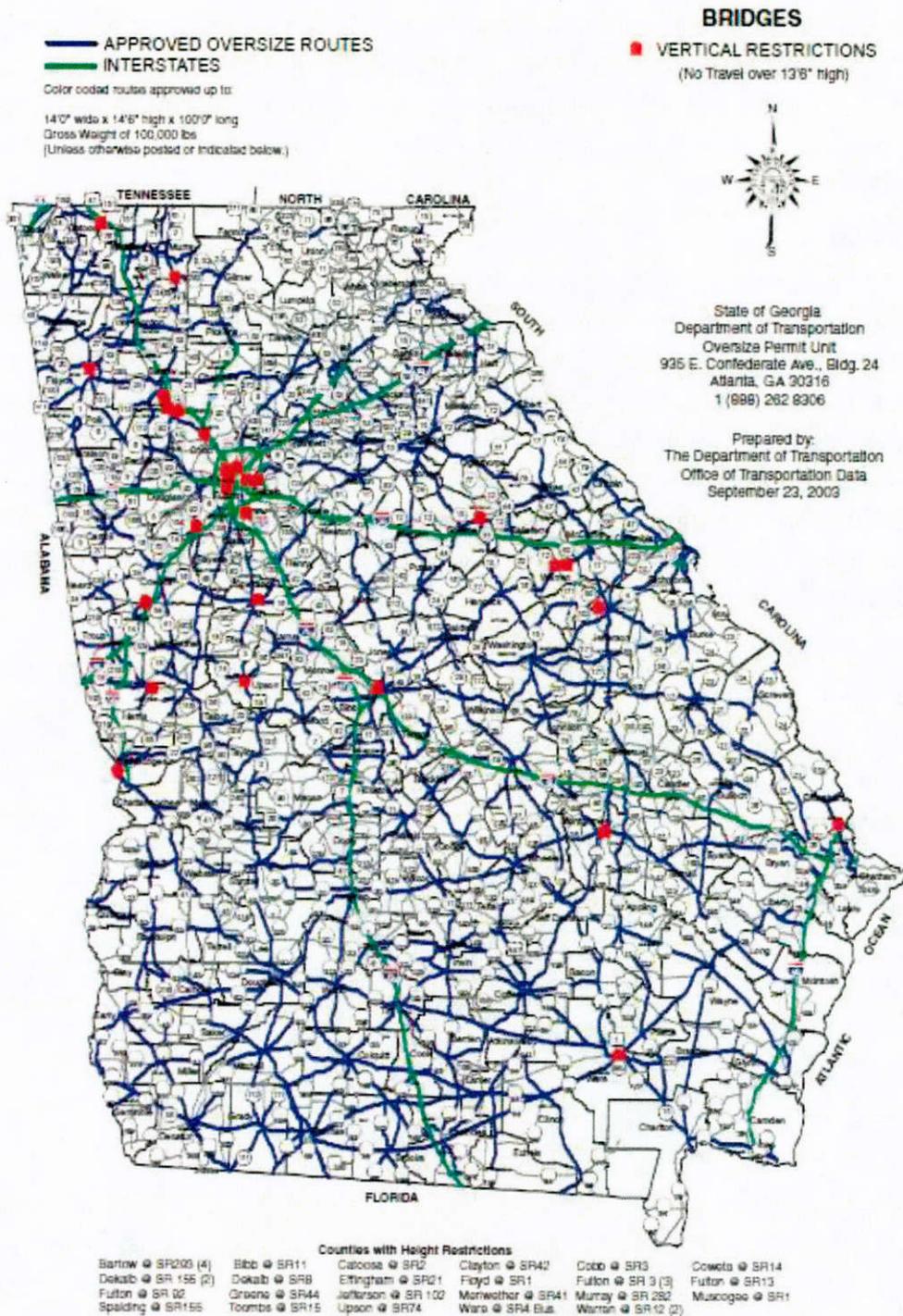


Figure 4. Georgia Oversized Truck Routes.

Source: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/PartnerSmart/permits/Documents/GaOversizeTrkRouteMap.pdf>

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## Port of Oakland

The Port of Oakland issues a permit for heavier weight 40+ foot oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb). The annual permit allows vehicles with a GVW up to 95,000 lb to travel specific routes with a container, point to point (see Figure 5). The permit is free. Special three-axle chassis must be used. Speed and time of day restrictions are also in place.

## City of Oakland

The City of Oakland issues a 90-day permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 95,000 lb to travel specific routes with a 40+ foot container, point to point. Applicants must identify the origin and destination, and the city will review and identify a specific route that will be specified on the permit. The permit cost is \$75. The City of Oakland requires that the applicant obtain a Port of Oakland permit, prior to applying for the City of Oakland permit. The City of Oakland requires that specially designed tri-axle chassis trailers be used for heavy hauls. Speed and time of day restrictions are also in place. The requirements are outlined in a document maintained by the City of Oakland Police Department Commercial Enforcement Unit. The most recent iteration of the document is dated August 2014.



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### Figure 5. Port of Oakland Heavy Container Route.

Source: [http://www.oaklandseaport.com/files/PDF/PoOak\\_16\\_OperationsFacilitiesMap\\_V15\\_TRIFOLD\\_2.17.17\\_Page\\_1.jpg](http://www.oaklandseaport.com/files/PDF/PoOak_16_OperationsFacilitiesMap_V15_TRIFOLD_2.17.17_Page_1.jpg)

#### *Port of Virginia*

The Port of Virginia does not issue permits for heavier weight oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb).

#### *Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles*

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issues one-year and two-year permits that allow vehicles with five axles to travel on any unrestricted road with a GVW up to 94,500 lb. Six axle vehicles may travel on any unrestricted road with a GVW up to 100,000 lb. The cost of the one-year permit is \$130, and the cost of the two-year permit is \$260. More information on Virginia road network restrictions can be found at <http://gis.vdot.virginia.gov/StructureExclusion/>.

#### *Port of Charleston*

The Port of Charleston does not issue permits for heavier weight oceangoing containers (i.e., the GVW of the ocean going container and truck exceeds 80,000 lb).

#### *South Carolina Department of Transportation*

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) issues a single trip (good for 7 days) and an annual permit that allows vehicles with a GVW up to 100,000 lb to travel on designated routes. Single trip permits are specific to a pre-defined route that is printed on the permit. The annual permit may use any of the statewide-approved routes specified in Figure 6 through Figure 9. The cost of the single trip permit is \$30, and the cost of the annual permit is \$100.

# South Carolina Overweight Truck Routes (With a permit, up to 100,000 lbs. GWW)

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Figure 6. South Carolina Overweight Truck Routes—Map 1.

Source: [http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap\\_11x17.pdf](http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap_11x17.pdf)

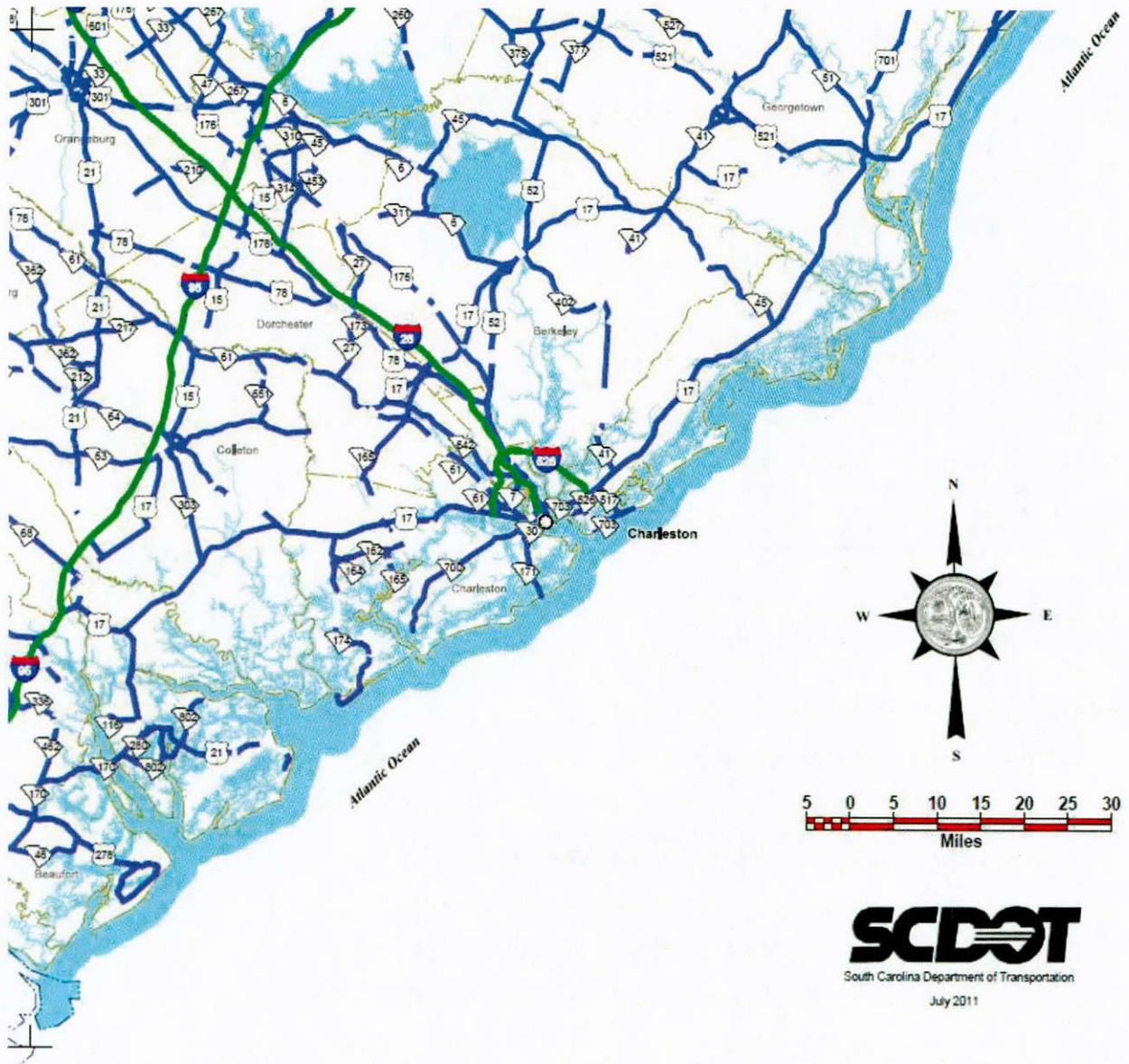
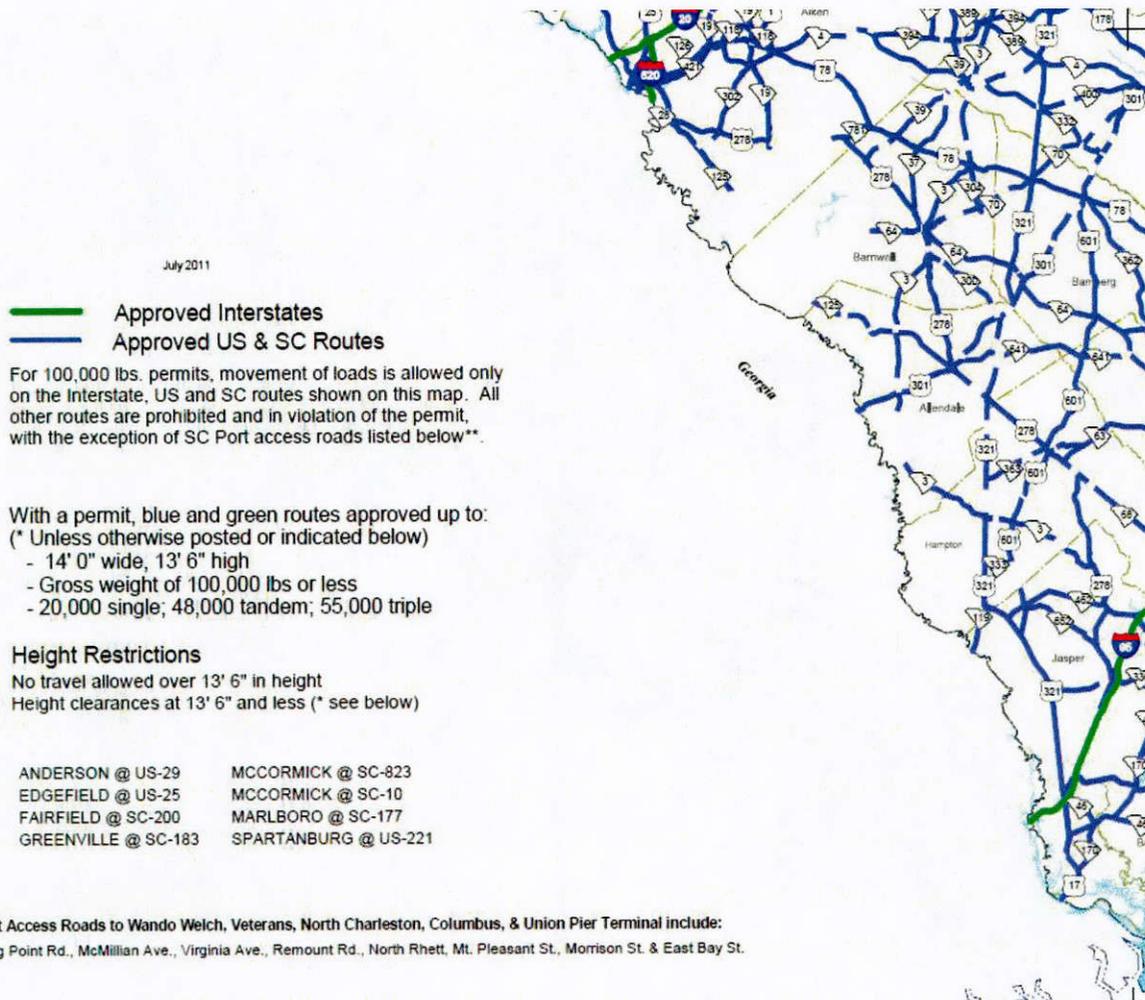


Figure 7. South Carolina Overweight Truck Routes— Map 2.

Source: [http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap\\_11x17.pdf](http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap_11x17.pdf)



**Figure 8. South Carolina Overweight Truck Routes—Map 3.**

Source: [http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap\\_11x17.pdf](http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap_11x17.pdf)



Figure 9. South Carolina Overweight Truck Routes—Map 4.

Source: [http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap\\_11x17.pdf](http://www.scdot.org/doing/doingPDFs/permits/TruckRouteMap_11x17.pdf)

**Table 1. Heavy Haul Permit Details.**

Port	Permitting Organization	Permit Type (Duration)	Cost	Max GVW	Designated Routes	Notes of Interest
Los Angeles	City of Los Angeles	Annual	\$85.80	95,000	Yes	
Los Angeles	City of Long Beach	Single trip/annual	\$16/\$90	95,000	Yes	
Los Angeles	City of Carson	Single trip/annual	\$16/\$90	95,000	Yes	
Los Angeles	Caltrans	Annual	\$90	95,000	Yes	
Long Beach	City of Long Beach	Single trip/annual	\$16/\$90	95,000	Yes	
New Jersey	NYSDOT	Round trip/monthly/annual	\$40/\$250/\$750	100,000	No	
New Jersey	NJDOT	Annual	\$117.60	90,000	Yes	
Seattle/Tacoma	City of Tacoma	Annual	\$3,000	98,000	Yes	
Seattle/Tacoma	City of Seattle	Annual	\$200	98,000	Yes	Allows travel on specific routes with a sealed container, point to point.
Seattle/Tacoma	WSDOT	Monthly/annual	\$100/\$1,000	105,500	Yes	This permit is only valid for SR 509 between mile post 0.25 and mile post 5.7
Savannah	GDOT	Single trip/annual	\$38/\$150	100,000	Yes	Single trip permit includes turn by turn instructions. Annual permit holders can use any approved state road.
Oakland	City of Oakland (PD)	90-day	\$75	95,000	Yes	The city will use the trip origin and destination to generate a permit specific route.
Oakland	Port of Oakland	Annual	Free	95,000	Yes	Have to get city permit before Port permit can be obtained
Virginia	Virginia DMV	One-year/two-year	\$130 / \$260	5-axle=94,500; 6-axle=100,000	No	The permit says travel is allowed on any unrestricted road.
Charleston	SCDOT	Single trip/annual	\$30 / \$100	100,000	Yes	Single trip uses a pre-defined route that is printed on the permit.