

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies. A public meeting and meetings with local officials and neighborhood groups will be held in the study area. A public hearing will also be held. Information on the time and place of the public hearing will be provided in the local news media. The supplemental draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment at the time of the hearing. No formal scoping meeting is planned at this time.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments and questions concerning the proposed action should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: March 3, 2004.

**Emily Lawton,**

*Operations Engineer, Raleigh, North Carolina.*  
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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Watauga and Caldwell Counties, NC

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Rescindment of notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA rescinds its notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed US 321 Improvements project at Blowing Rock.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Emily Lawton, Operations Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601, Telephone: (919) 856-4350.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (FHWA-NC-EIS-02-D) for the US 321 Improvements project at Blowing Rock in Caldwell and Watauga Counties, North Carolina. The FHWA does not

intend to prepare a Final Environmental Impact Statement on this action.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

#### Qualification of Drivers; Exemption Applications; Vision

**AGENCY:** Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of denials.

**SUMMARY:** The FMCSA announces its denial of 43 applications from individuals who requested an exemption from the Federal vision standards applicable to interstate truck drivers and the reasons for the denials. The FMCSA has statutory authority to exempt individuals from vision standards if the exemptions granted will not compromise safety. The agency has concluded that granting these exemptions does not provide a level of safety that will equal or exceed the level of safety maintained without the exemptions for these commercial motor vehicle drivers.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Sandra Zywockarte, Office of Bus and Truck Standards and Operations, (MC-PSD), (202) 366-2987, Department of Transportation, FMCSA, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. Office hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 4:15 p.m., e.t., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

Under 49 U.S.C. 31315 and 31136(e), FMCSA may grant an exemption from the Federal vision standards for a renewable 2-year period if it finds such an exemption would likely achieve a level of safety that is equivalent to, or greater than, the level that would be achieved absent such an exemption (49 CFR 391.41(b)(10)).

Accordingly, FMCSA evaluated 43 individual exemption requests on their merits and made a determination that these applicants do not satisfy the

criteria established to demonstrate that granting an exemption is likely to achieve an equal or greater level of safety than exists without the exemption. Each applicant has, prior to this notice, received a letter of final disposition on his/her individual exemption request. Those decision letters fully outlined the basis for the denial and constitute final agency action. The list published today summarizes the agency's recent denials as required under 49 U.S.C. 31315(b)(4) by periodically publishing names and reason for denials.

The following 20 applicants lacked sufficient recent driving experience over three years:

Allen, Percy B.  
Bacon, Nick D.  
Clifton, Jr., Raymond E.  
Coleman, Jerry D.  
Hallwachs, Jerry  
Hansen, Michael P.  
Hardee, Richard G.  
Henson, Richard M.  
Hillman, Robert  
Hoefner, Patrick L.  
King, William J.  
Levine, Martin L.  
McEntyre, William C.  
Meyer, Fred G.  
Osuna, Jorge L.  
Pierce, Jr., Charles E.  
Reynolds, Glenn L.  
Sharp, Ronald L.  
Weeks, David N.  
Whitlow, Jr., Bernard R.

Two applicants, Mr. David W. Shrimplin and Mr. Timothy D. Leggett, do not have experience operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) and therefore presented no evidence from which FMCSA can conclude that granting the exemption is likely to achieve a level of safety equal to that existing without the exemption.

The following 9 applicants do not have 3 years of experience driving a CMV on public highways with the vision deficiency:

Burnworth, Randy L.  
Huelster, Randy  
McFalls, Carol W.  
Miller, Larry  
Rich, Ross C.  
Roberts, Michael J.  
Schwab, Charles F.  
Steinmetz, Daniel L.  
Willhoyt, Richard P.

Four applicants do not have 3 years of recent experience driving a CMV with the vision deficiency:

Crane, James R.  
Gruszecki, Ronald J.  
Holland, Billie E.  
Powell, Richard G.

Three applicants, Mr. Danny Netherland, Mr. Edward J. Peretto and