

Short Sea Shipping: Barriers, Incentives and Feasibility of Truck Ferry

LT Joseph Darcy, USN

Prof. Henry S. Marcus	Prof. Mark S, Welsh
Thesis Supervisor	Thesis Supervisor

Many problems plague the United States' transportation infrastructure; congestion, poor roadway conditions, obsolescence and maintenance cost not the least among these. In recent years, the Department of Transportation, through its Maritime Administration (MARAD), has begun a program for partial solution to this complex transportation issue. MARAD, acting on tasks assigned to it in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, has established the Marine Highways Initiative to spur development of alternative and supplemental transportation modes that utilize inland waterways and coastlines of the United States. At the same time, the U.S. Department of Defense is investigating ways to fulfill its sealift requirements, while at the same time reducing its inventory of government owned vessels that do not trade.

This paper explores the issues surrounding the current state of transportation and transportation infrastructure. It also seeks to determine the feasibility of a truck ferry that would accomplish both MARAD's Marine Highway as well as the Department of Defense's sealift goals. The feasibility study examines the hypothetical business' profitability through different funding and operating scenarios. The analysis also sets a framework for other studies by using open-source data to determine freight flows, potential costs and market share.

Naval Engineer and Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering