



**Interstate 80 Project  
Cost to Commuters**

**Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Area**

The *Interstate 80 Project: Cost to Commuters* examines the impact of tolling Interstate 80 on Central Region out-commuters. Out-commuters are simply individuals who are employed in a county other than the county in which they live. Using 2000 Census commuting patterns and establishing several key assumptions, low, medium, and high impact costs were calculated. Total impact estimates are based on the assumed number of out-commuters that actually travel on Interstate 80, assuming a toll rate of **\$0.08/mile** in the first year of the tolling process with a 3% annual increase after that. The **low impact** is based on the assumption that **5%** of all out-commuters take I-80, the **medium impact** is related to a **15%** assumption, and the **high impact** is correlated to a **30%** assumption. One key assumption is all out-commuters incur a toll of \$0.08/mile when commuting on the interstate, based on the undetermined tolling locations. Another vital assumption is that out-commuters travel the **shortest distance** possible while on the interstate. The assumptions are defined on the back of this page.

For the complete report, please visit [www.cpwdc.org](http://www.cpwdc.org).

**\$1,100 – Average Annual Trip (Commute) Cost** – On average, a commute on Interstate 80 for Central Region out-commuters to all possible destinations of interest could be approximately \$1,100 in the first year. This cost is based on the shortest possible distance assumption. This equates to 3.1% of average annual earnings for the Central Region (\$34,000).

**Low Impact (5% of Commuters)**

*Estimated Number of Commuters*  
**1,500**

*Estimated Annual Cost*  
**\$693,000**

**Total First Year Costs by County:**

- **Centre:** \$71,000
- **Clinton:** \$154,000
- **Columbia:** \$145,000
- **Lycoming:** \$110,000
- **Mifflin:** Not Applicable
- **Montour:** \$59,000
- **Northumberland:** \$125,000
- **Snyder:** Not Applicable
- **Union:** \$30,000

**Total (Low) Impact after:**

- **5 years:** \$3.7 million
- **10 years:** \$7.9 million
- **15 years:** \$12.9 million

**Medium Impact (15% of Commuters)**

*Estimated Number of Commuters*  
**4,500**

*Estimated First Year Annual Cost*  
**\$2.1 million**

**Total First Year Costs by County:**

- **Centre:** \$213,000
- **Clinton:** \$461,000
- **Columbia:** \$434,000
- **Lycoming:** \$329,000
- **Mifflin:** Not Applicable
- **Montour:** \$178,000
- **Northumberland:** \$375,000
- **Snyder:** Not Applicable
- **Union:** \$90,000

**Total (Medium) Impact after:**

- **5 years:** \$11.0 million
- **10 years:** \$23.8 million
- **15 years:** \$38.7 million

**High Impact (30% of Commuters)**

*Estimated Number of Commuters*  
**9,000**

*Estimated First Year Annual Cost*  
**\$4.2 million**

**Total First Year Costs by County:**

- **Centre:** \$424,000
- **Clinton:** \$922,000
- **Columbia:** \$868,000
- **Lycoming:** \$659,000
- **Mifflin:** Not Applicable
- **Montour:** \$355,000
- **Northumberland:** \$750,000
- **Snyder:** Not Applicable
- **Union:** \$179,000

**Total (High) Impact after:**

- **5 years:** \$22.1 million
- **10 years:** \$47.6 million
- **15 years:** \$77.3 million

## Assumptions

All calculations used to measure the impact of tolling Interstate 80 are based on several assumptions. These assumptions are held constant throughout the analysis and are as follows:

1. The commuting patterns, based on 2000 Census results, have remained unchanged and will remain constant in the future.
2. Non-commuters (individuals who live and work in the same county) are not tolled for traveling on I-80, even if they in fact do travel I-80 to work.
3. Central Region out-commuters commute to the following counties using Interstate 80: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Union, Clearfield, and Luzerne.
4. Central Region out-commuters do not take I-80 to Mifflin and/or Snyder Counties. Therefore, the commuting patterns for out-commuters of these counties are not considered in calculating various cost estimates for this report.
5. Lycoming County out-commuters do not take I-80 to Northumberland County, and Northumberland County out-commuters do not take I-80 to Lycoming County. Similarly, Lycoming County out-commuters do not take I-80 to Union County, and Union County out-commuters do not take I-80 to Lycoming County. Therefore, the specific commuting patterns of these counties are not considered in calculating various cost estimates for this analysis. Commuting patterns to the other counties, however, are included in the cost calculations.
6. Central Region out-commuters always pay a toll for traveling on Interstate 80 (i.e., they do not avoid the tolling stations). This may cause some inflation of the estimated costs because data available on I-80 tolling suggests that there may be some opportunities to enter and exit I-80 without incurring a toll. ("With 59 existing interchanges, there will be, on average, one toll collection facility for every 5-6 interchanges, **allowing many local trips to remain free**" - <http://www.paturnpike.com>). According to the same website, toll rates on Interstate 80 will be \$0.08/mile in the first year of the tolling process with a 3% annual increase thereafter.
7. The same proportion of out-commuters travel I-80 to work each day/year/etc. in separate vehicles. Three proportions are used in this report to study the impact of tolling I-80 (low-5%, medium-15%, and high-30%).
8. Central Region commuters travel the same distance on I-80 between counties (they get on at the same exit and off at the same exit), whether going to work or returning home. The distance (minimum, maximum, or average) is held constant in the cost calculations over a certain time period. This may cause some inflation of the estimated costs, especially if the maximum distance is considered. **All impact calculations presented in this summary are based on commuters traveling the shortest distance possible.**
9. Central Region out-commuters are full-time workers who work **240** days a year (260 total work days, 5 holidays, 5 sick days, and 10 vacation days).
10. Certain commuting patterns are not presented for several origination county/destination county combinations:
  - o It is the same county, and thus there are no out-commuters (2.)
  - o Mifflin/Snyder County assumption (4.)
  - o Lycoming/Northumberland and Lycoming/Union County assumption (5.)
  - o No commuting pattern data is available from the Census for the counties selected.
11. The commuting patterns and impact calculations do not consider the cost on trucking/logistics companies; all costs are those associated with Central Region out-commuters only.
12. This analysis only considers those traveling outside their county of residence for work, and does not include individuals traveling outside their county of residence for education and training.