High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments: Technical Appendix
Technical Appendix – High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments

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Introduction

Fully electric trucks, often referred to as commercial battery electric trucks, are reaching wider-scale consideration as truck, engine, and other component makers are developing the systems that will support such vehicles. Battery and power-electronic development has progressed to make these trucks viable in certain applications. These trucks will have many benefits (more renewable energy, simpler design, etc.), but come with challenges (need for new infrastructure, development investments, etc.).

To date, the North American Council for Freight Efficiency (NACFE) and Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) have published four Guidance Reports on a range of topics related to commercial battery electric vehicles and continue to study developments in this rapidly changing segment of the trucking industry.

As part of this work, NACFE and RMI have embarked on a three-year project to gain a better understanding of how commercial battery electric vehicles fit into the regional haul market, which research has shown is an important segment of the trucking industry and also one that makes sense for electrification, given its short-haul nature and return-to-base operation (North American Council for Freight Efficiency 2020). Funded by Hewlett Foundation and ClimateWorks Foundation, this work includes:

- Identifying high-potential regional trucking routes
- Supporting implementation of first- and next-mover deployments
- Scaling of best practices in infrastructure deployment
- Increasing confidence in the value of electrification

NACFE and RMI released a new report in August 2020, *High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments*, that proposes a three-part framework that the industry can use to prioritize regions for electric truck deployments:

- **Technology** – Identify the regions that are most favorable to the unique attributes of the technology itself.
- **Need** – Identify the regions that exhibit the greatest need for the technology.
- **Support** – Identify the regions that provide the most support for the technology.
The report also presents an initial analysis of where these three criteria come together to create a “hotspot” for near-term regional haul electric truck deployment. Regions are rated based on these criteria, resulting in a “heatmap” of electric truck potential by state, which distinguishes between regions fleets should consider to those that are the highest priority for electric truck deployments.
The aim of this analysis is to initiate a data-informed dialogue about which regions have the highest potential for successful regional haul electric truck deployments and why, and to spur feedback from the industry. This technical appendix provides detailed information on the methodology used in *High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments*. 

![Heatmap of High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments](image-url)
Overview of Analytical Approach

The analytical approach of *High-Potential Regions for Electric Truck Deployments* consisted of three main steps: (1) identified two to three indicators for each category in the framework; (2) evaluated data for each of the indicators at the state level; and (3) scored states based on their potential for successful electric truck deployments.

For this initial analysis, all indicators were weighted equally, and each had a maximum potential score of two points. There were eight indicators in total, for a total maximum potential score of sixteen.

States with the highest scores are indicated on the heatmap as “high priority,” while states with lower scores are designated as regions the industry should “consider” for regional haul electric truck deployments.

We tried to use publicly available data whenever possible. Some considerations mentioned in the full report were not analyzed for this analysis, either because data was not available or because it varies significantly within states (e.g., grade).

The *High-Potential Regions for Electric Trucks Data Analysis Tool*, available for download, includes the data and calculations used in this initial analysis. Stakeholders are encouraged to use this tool to run their own analyses using data specific to the vehicles within their fleet or jurisdiction.

![Figure 3: High-Potential Regions for Electric Trucks Data Analysis Tool](image-url)
Indicator Analysis

As mentioned above, the study team evaluated multiple indicators for each of three overarching framework categories:

- Technology
- Need
- Support

How these indicators were evaluated is explained below and is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
<th>Data Year</th>
<th>Scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Technology             | Climate                     | Sum of heating degree days and cooling degree days                        | Energy Star PortfolioManager Degree Days Calculator                          | 2019      | <5000 = 2 pts  
5000-7000 = 1 pt  
>7000 = 0 pts |
|                        | Electricity Pricing         | Percent savings from using electricity rather than diesel                | EIA Electric Power Monthly, EIA Monthly Retail Diesel Prices, & study team analysis | 2020      | >40% = 2 pts  
20-40% = 1 pt  
<20% = 0 pts |
| Need                   | Air Quality                 | Population of counties in nonattainment for ozone                        | EPA Green Book                                                               | 2019      | >1M = 2 pts  
1-1M = 1 pt  
0 = 0 pts |
|                        | Greenhouse Gas Emissions    | Percent reduction in lifecycle GHG emissions compared to diesel          | UCS Ready for Work report                                                    | 2019      | 70+% = 2 pts  
50-69% = 1 pt  
35-49% = 0 pts |
|                        | Freight Flow                | Ton-miles                                                               | BTS State Transportation Statistics                                          | 2018      | >100B = 2 pts  
50-100B = 1 pt  
<50B = 0 pts |
| Support                | Supportive Policies & Incentives | Number of supportive policies in place                               | EV Hub Public Policies Map & CARB                                           | 2020      | >2 = 2 pts  
1 = 1 pt  
0 = 0 pts |
|                        | Expressed Interest          | NESCAUM zero-emission truck MOU signatory                               | Multi-State Medium- and Heavy-Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Memorandum of Understanding | 2020      | Yes = 2 pts  
No = 0 pts |
|                        | Funding Availability        | Approved VW funding & utility investment per vehicle                    | EV Hub VW Settlement Dashboard, EV Hub Electric Utility Filings Dashboard & FHWA Highway Statistics | 2020 & 2018 | >$2 = 2 pts  
$0.01-$2 = 1 pt  
$0 = 0 pts |
Technology

We assessed two indicators to determine which regions have the highest potential for electric trucks with respect to technology: climate and electricity pricing.

Climate

As mentioned in the report, climate is important because it impacts the battery performance and increases auxiliary loads for heating and cooling the cab and therefore reduces the range of the truck. Vehicles tend to maximize their range when operating in 70°F weather, with range decreasing as temperature increases or decreases (Fleetcarma 2020).

![Figure 5: Impact of Temperature on Electric Vehicle Range](source: Fleetcarma)

In order to evaluate how ideal or not a climate is for electric trucks, we used data on heating degree days (HDD) and cooling degree days (CDD) by region. HDD and CDD are measures of how cold or hot, respectively, the temperature was on a given day or during a period of days in a particular location (US Energy Information Administration 2020). According to the US Energy Information Administration, a degree day “compares the mean (the average of the high and low) outdoor temperatures recorded for a location to a standard temperature, usually 65° Fahrenheit (F) in the United States. The more extreme the outside temperature, the higher the number of degree days.” For example, a day with a mean temperature of 45°F has 20 HDD. Two such cold days in a row have a total of 40 HDD for the two-day period. Similarly, a day with a mean temperature of 85°F has 20 CDD.

HDD and CDD are used to estimate how much heating or cooling is necessary and are typically weighted according to the population of a region to estimate energy consumption. However, since this analysis is focused on vehicle energy use rather than home energy use, we utilized non-population-weighted data, available from Energy Star® PortfolioManager® (Energy Star PortfolioManager 2020). We analyzed the sum of CDD and HDD for 2019 for the biggest city in each state, assuming that the most freight is being moved near the largest cities. For example, Atlanta, Georgia had 2,701 HDD and 1,978 CDD in 2019, for a total of 4,679.
States with less than 5000 heating and cooling degree days scored 2 points for climate. States with 5001 to 7000 heating and cooling degree days scored 1 point, and states with more than 7000 heating and cooling degree days scored 0 points.

**Electricity Pricing**

The most obvious technological difference between electric and diesel trucks is the energy source – namely, electricity instead of diesel fuel. In order to evaluate which regions present the biggest opportunity for cost savings by switching from diesel to electricity, we couldn’t simply analyze where electricity is cheapest, since this doesn’t account for the regional variability in diesel prices or the increased efficiency of electric trucks. Instead, we compared the estimated cost of fueling a diesel truck with the estimated cost of charging an electric truck.

To conduct this analysis, we first calculated the electricity price per mile by multiplying each state’s average price of electricity to commercial customers in April 2020 (US Energy Information Administration 2020) by an assumed average efficiency of 2.5 kWh/mile, based on existing vehicle specs compiled by CALSTART (CALSTART 2020). Then, to calculate the diesel price per mile, we multiplied the on-highway average retail price for diesel in January 2020 (US Energy Information Administration 2020) by an assumed national average efficiency of 0.17 gallons/mile (6.0 mpg), based on analysis from Run
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On Less Regional (North American Council for Freight Efficiency 2020).1 We used January rather than April 2020 diesel prices because we didn’t want to skew the results by focusing on the temporary drop in price due to COVID-19. (Electricity prices are more highly regulated and therefore did not experience a drop in price due to COVID-19.) Finally, we compared these two costs.

States with potential savings of more than 40% from switching from diesel to electricity scored 2 points for electricity pricing. States with potential savings of more than 20% to 40% scored 1 point, and states with less than 20% potential savings scored 0 points.

Note that this analysis does not account for demand charges or other differences in electricity pricing that vary by utility. Though when considering deployments of electric trucks, fleets should be sure to understand the expenses they’ll face for charging, including not only the electricity itself, but also the cost of the charger, software, and installation (if the fleet chooses to own the electric vehicle supply equipment [EVSE]) or the markup for these expenses and an administrative fee (if the fleet chooses to procure electricity via a charging-as-a-service model).

Need
We assessed three indicators to determine which regions have the highest potential for electric trucks with respect to need: air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and freight flow.

Air Quality
Because they emit no tailpipe emissions, electric trucks offer an improvement in local air quality compared to diesel trucks, which emit air pollution that negatively impacts human health. Regions with particularly bad air pollution are designated as “nonattainment” with National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

To determine where electric truck deployments can provide the greatest good for the greatest number of people, we identified the total population living in 8-hour ozone (2015) nonattainment counties in each state in 2019 (US Environmental Protection Agency 2020).

States with more than 1 million people living in ozone nonattainment areas scored 2 points for air quality. States with some people but less than 1 million living in nonattainment areas scored 1 point, and states with no one living in nonattainment areas scored 0 points.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Although electric trucks have no tailpipe emissions – including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions – they do still generate emissions upstream at the power plant used to generate the electricity. These emissions vary from region to region, depending on the generation mix of the local electricity grid. For example, some areas boasting a large supply from clean, renewable sources like wind and solar while others still rely more heavily on fossil fuels like coal and gas. Since many states, cities, and businesses

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1 Fleets in NACFE’s annual fleet fuel study averaged 7.2 MPG for 2018 (North American Council for Freight Efficiency 2019), and in our Run on Less Regional, the nine diesel trucks averaged 8.7 MPG. The original Run on Less in 2017 saw long-haul trucks achieve over 10 MPG, reflecting what is feasible with well-trained drivers and modern trucks. This analysis uses the 6.0 national average, though we encourage stakeholders to use the framework provided here to run their own analysis using the average diesel efficiency of the vehicles within their fleet or jurisdiction.
are relying on electric vehicles to help achieve their ambitious climate and sustainability goals, near-term electric truck deployments should be prioritized where the grid is cleanest.

Union for Concerned Scientists (UCS) has published an analysis of lifecycle global warming emissions compared with diesel of trucks, and though they found that electric trucks already offer significant reductions in lifecycle global warming emissions in all regions of the United States, the benefits vary from region to region (Union of Concerned Scientists 2019).

Figure 7: Lifecycle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Benefits of Electric Trucks Compared to Diesel

For the purposes of our analysis, we utilized these percent reductions. If a state included multiple grid regions, we defaulted to the percentage reduction that applied to more of the geographic area of the state. For example, although parts of Texas are in grid regions where electric trucks are 62%, 55%, or 68% better than diesel trucks from a GHG perspective, the majority of the state is 63% better, so our analysis assumed 63% better for the entire state.

States considered “best” in UCS’s analysis (representing a 70+% reduction in GHGs) scored 2 points for GHG emissions. States considered “better” (representing a 50-69% reduction in GHGs) scored 1 point, and states considered “good” (representing a less than 50% reduction) scored 0 points.

As the electric grid across the US gets cleaner and cleaner, so too will lifecycle emissions of electric trucks.
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**Freight Flow**

Electric truck deployments are most needed in areas of high freight movement. Not only is freight activity a sort of proxy for the air pollution and GHG emissions challenges mentioned above, but it also highlights where freight movement is concentrated and therefore where fleets are most likely to influence their peers and help the industry as a whole move forward.

We evaluated freight movement based on data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics about the number of ton-miles of freight being transported by state (Bureau of Transportation Statistics 2020).

States with more than 100 billion ton-miles scored 2 points for freight flow. States with more than 50 billion but less than 100 billion ton-miles scored 1 point, and states with less than 50 billion ton-miles scored 0 points.

**Support**

We assessed three indicators to determine which regions have the highest potential for electric trucks with respect to support: supportive policies and incentives, expressed interest, and funding availability.

**Supportive Policies and Incentives**

Obviously, states with zero-emission truck mandates such as California’s Advanced Clean Truck rule should be prioritized for electric truck deployments. However, some states also encourage electric trucks via incentives such as grants, rebates, income tax credits, sales tax exemptions, and loans. The more incentives available for electric trucks, the more likely a fleet is to be able to deploy them. Therefore, for this indicator, we look at the total number of these policies available, for which we relied on data from Atlas EV Hub (Atlas Public Policy 2020).

*Figure 8: Medium- and Heavy-Duty Electric Truck Incentives Available*
Since California is the only state with a heavy-duty zero-emission vehicle mandate, they received an extra number added to their policy count.

States with two or more supportive policies or incentives scored 2 points for this indicator. States with one scored 1 point, and states with no supportive policies or incentives scored 0 points.

Expressed Interest
Some states may be interested in supporting deployments of zero-emission trucks though they have not yet been able to approve specific policies or incentives. These states should still be prioritized for deployments since stakeholders in these regions are likely to in the process of developing these sorts of policies and incentives and may themselves be incentivized by the interest expressed by policymakers to ensure the successful deployment of electric trucks.

As an indicator of expressed interest, we identified the fifteen states and District of Columbia that are signatories to the Multi-State Medium- and Heavy-Duty Zero Emission Vehicle Memorandum of Understanding, organized by Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) in June 2020.

Signatory states scored 2 points for expressed interest, while non-signatories scored 0 points.
Funding Availability

Finally, we also considered funding availability for electric trucks from either VW settlement funds or approved utility filings. For data on both of these, again, we relied on Atlas EV Hub. We looked at the total amount of funding available for which zero-emission trucks are eligible and then determined the total amount of funding available per truck registered in the state, with data for the latter available from the FHWA (US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration 2019).

Figure 10: Approved Electric Utility Filings for Medium- and Heavy-Duty Electric Vehicles

States with more than $2 available per vehicle scored 2 points for this indicator. States with some funding but less than $2 available per vehicle scored 1 point, and states with no funding available scored 0 points.
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About NACFE

The North American Council for Freight Efficiency (NACFE) works to drive the development and adoption of efficiency enhancing, environmentally beneficial, and cost-effective technologies, services, and operational practices in the movement of goods across North America. NACFE provides independent, unbiased research, including Confidence Reports on available technologies and Guidance Reports on emerging ones, which highlight the benefits and consequences of each, and deliver decision-making tools for fleets, manufacturers, and others. NACFE partners with Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) on a variety of projects including the Run on Less fuel efficiency demonstration series, electric trucks, emissions reductions, and low-carbon supply chains. www.nacfe.org

About RMI

Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI)—an independent nonprofit founded in 1982—transforms global energy use to create a clean, prosperous, and secure low-carbon future. It engages businesses, communities, institutions, and entrepreneurs to accelerate the adoption of market-based solutions that cost-effectively shift from fossil fuels to efficiency and renewables. RMI has offices in Basalt and Boulder, Colorado; New York City; Washington, D.C.; and Beijing. www.rmi.org