

By the Federal-aid Road Act, passed in 1916, the Congress established the new Federal policy of financial participation with the States in the construction of roads. The act of 1916 was amended in 1921 so as to restrict the use of the Federal funds to the improvement of a definite system of main interstate and inter-county roads, known as the Federal-aid system. The roads which comprise the system have been designated jointly by the several State highway departments and the Secretary of Agriculture and now total in the United States as a whole 193,049 miles.

The appropriations provided annually by Congress to match corresponding funds of the States are apportioned among all States and the Territory of Hawaii in accordance with a formula laid down by the Federal law, which specifies that the money is to be divided in proportion to the area, population, and mileage of rural post roads in each State.

The sum apportioned to each State is immediately available for allotment to the improvement of portions of the designated system within the State. Under the provisions of the law the Federal Government pays any amount up to one-half the cost of the work within a specified maximum sum which is ordinarily \$15,000 per mile, but which under certain exceptional circumstances may be increased to \$25,000 per mile.

For several years past the Federal appropriations authorized have been \$75,000,000 annually. With a view to providing additional opportunity for the employment of labor the authorizations for the current fiscal year and the two succeeding years have been increased to \$125,000,000. Pennsylvania's portion of these funds is \$5,524,512 for the current year and will be approximately the same amount for the two years following.

Although the appropriation authorized for the next fiscal year would not normally be apportioned until January first next, the Secretary of Agriculture, prompted by the desire to do everything possible to give employment to persons who have suffered from the prolonged drought recently announced that he would apportion the next year's funds on September 1. This will enable the various States to proceed at once with projects approved by the Secretary, if the States themselves are able to finance the whole cost of the work until the actual expenditure of the Federal funds becomes possible under the law on July 1, 1931. At that time the States will be reimbursed by the Government for the amount of the Federal share of the cost which they have advanced.

The construction of the Federally aided roads is carried out under the immediate direction of the State highway departments subject to the approval of the Secretary of Agriculture acting through the Bureau of Public Roads. The plans for all work are, of course, submitted to the Bureau and the Secretary for approval before work is begun.

Up to June 30 last this cooperation in road building between the States and the nation had resulted in the improvement of more than 86,000 miles of the country's most important rural highways.

The portion of the Federal-aid system in Pennsylvania includes 5,487 miles, of which 2,341 miles have thus far received Federal assistance. Of the mileage thus improved 274 miles were added during the past year; and on June 30 there were under construction 226 miles and approved for immediate construction 57 miles additional.

The improved mileage in Pennsylvania includes 157 miles of graded and drained earth roads, 11 miles of surface-treated macadam, 8 miles of bituminous macadam, 98 miles of bituminous concrete, 2,036 miles of cement concrete, and 39 miles of block pavements, in addition to which there are bridges and their approaches totalling 2 miles in length.

The total cost of all Federal-aid roads completed in Pennsylvania during the past year was \$15,902,009, of which the Federal Government paid \$4,439,698. On June 30 there was a balance of the currently authorized Federal funds allotted to the State and still available for new construction amounting to \$1,082,377.

Somerset County is well served by the Federal-aid system, there being five routes radiating from Somerset, and Route U.S. 30 passing across the northern half of the county. All of this mileage

not already improved is now under construction and applications for the use of Federal aid in the further improvement of Route U.S. 30 and of three of the routes entering Somerset have been approved by the Federal Government.