

Press Release: U.S. Highway System,
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Office of Information Press Service:
Complete U.S. Highway System Now
Designated and Approved

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Office of Information Press Service

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Complete U.S. Highway System Now Designated and Approved

Final location of the United States System of Highways consisting of approximately 80,000 miles of the most important roads in the country was made known to-day by the Bureau of Public Roads of the United States Department of Agriculture. The system was given final approval by the American Association of State Highway Officials at its annual meeting at Pinehurst, N. C., on November 11 but public announcement of the exact location of the routes has been withheld until maps could be prepared for distribution.

The system selected embraces ten main transcontinental routes designated by numbers which are multiples of ten while the important north and south routes are numbered 1, 11, 21, 31 etc. These important through routes have many variants and cross overs to other routes, reaching practically all of the larger cities and serving every section of the country.

The work of selection has been so completely done that it will be practically impossible to designate additional through routes without making them coincident to a considerable extent with already existing routes. This will not be done as it would defeat the purpose of a uniform system of highway designation.

The route-numbering system which has been decided upon will be of great assistance to tourists in following through routes. All east and west routes bear even numbers while north and south routes have odd numbers. Frequently three digit numbers are used to indicate branches of through routes. For example, Route 40 is a direct road from Atlantic City to San Francisco. A tourist in Washington desiring to go to San Francisco might take Route 240 to its junction with Route 40 at Frederick, Maryland.

There will be no difficulty in following any selected route since a standard sign showing the route number has been adopted and also standard danger[,] caution and directional signs. These standard signs will add greatly to the safety and convenience of travel as there will be no change in their character in passing from one State to another. Twenty-two States already report their United States highways completely marked, 14 report the work partially complete and 6 which have not yet started anticipate that it will be completed next season.

Work on the designation of a system of United States highways began in February 1925, when on the recommendation of the American Association of State Highway officials, the Secretary of Agriculture appointed the Joint Board on Interstate Highways consisting of State and Federal highway officials. Suggested systems, submitted by all of the States were harmonized by the board and a report was made to the Secretary of Agriculture. This report was approved and transmitted to the Association of State Highway Officials and the application of the plan was left to that body. With a few minor changes by them the present map has been adopted as final.

The system in its final form has the approval of each of the State highway departments and work on the unimproved sections is to be pushed rapidly.

No special funds are to become available as the result of the designation of any road as a part of the system. The purpose has been to select a main system of highways for the nation, the unimproved sections of which will be given priority in improvement, and to eliminate confusion as to route designation, marking and safety signs. Practically all of the system is on the system of Federal-aid highways and is eligible to receive Federal aid.
