

U.S. 202 - Maine to Delaware

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U.S. 202 - Maine to Delaware

When the Joint Board on Interstate Highways released its report on the proposed U.S. numbered highway plan in October 1925, the report identified U.S. 2, the northernmost east-west route, from Houlton, Maine, to Bonners Ferry, Idaho. (U.S. 2 was used instead of U.S. 0 for this major route.) The route listings included only one branch of U.S. 2, designated U.S. 102 and located in Michigan from Gladstone to Marquette and Humboldt. By the time the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) approved the U.S. numbered highway system in November 1926, U.S. 2 retained the same termini, but U.S. 102 had shifted. It was designated from U.S. 2 at Crystal Falls via Covington to a junction with U.S. 41 south of L'Anse. Neither the Joint Board nor AASHO used "202" (i.e., a second branch of U.S. 2) or any other branch number of U.S. 2 in the original designations.

In 1928, AASHO approved a request from the State highway agency to eliminate the "102" designation. The roadway was absorbed into U.S. 141 (Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Covington). The original number, 102, has never been used in subsequent U.S. highway logs.

In June 1934, AASHO approved a multi-State request to establish U.S. 202 as a 671-mile route from Bangor, Maine, to State Road, Delaware, south of Wilmington. The number implied that U.S. 202 was the second branch of U.S. 2, but as noted, the first branch had been eliminated. In selecting a number for U.S. 202 for the new branch, the State highway agencies and AASHO's route numbering committee may have wanted to avoid confusion that might result if the old description of U.S. 102 in Michigan were replaced by the description of the new route in the East.

The original route log description of U.S. 202 (with the mileage from town to town) reads:

UNITED STATES HIGHWAY NO. 202

Total Mileage, 671

Maine. Beginning at Bangor 5, Hampden 60, August 31, Auburn 18, Gray 17, Gorham 28, Sanford 18.

New Hampshire. Rochester 9, Barrington 39, Concord 27, Hillsboro 22, Antrim 6, Peterboro 20.

Massachusetts. Winchendon 15, Athol 17, New Salem 9, Pelham 15, Granby 7, Holyoke 13, Westfield 6, Southwick 8.

Connecticut. Granby 13, Simsbury 6, Avon 5, Farmington 6, Thomaston 25, Watertown 6, Danbury 10.

New York. Brewster 6, Somers 12, Peekskill 5, Bear Mountain Bridge 5, Jones Point 11, Ladentown 9, Suffern 8.

New Jersey. Pompton 12, Mountain View 12, Parsippany 7, Morristown 8, Bernardsville 6, Bedminster 8, Somerville 14, Flemington 14, Lambertville 1. (Until certain road construction is completed, the temporary description between Bedminster and Flemington, New Jersey, will be as follows: Bedminster 6, Lamington 9, Whitehouse 9, Flemington 14.)

Pennsylvania. New Hope 11, Doylestown 8, Montgomeryville 11, Norristown 9, Paoli 9, West Chester 8, Elam 8.

Delaware. Wilmington 8, State Road.

The temporary routing in New Jersey remained in the description until the 1939 log.

Over the years, the southern terminus has changed. On June 2, 1964, AASHO approved a request by Delaware to eliminate the portion south of Farnhurst. The description of the section deleted was as follows:

Beginning at junction of present US 202, US 13, US 40 and US 301 at State Road, thence run northerly with US 13 and 40 to interchange with Interstate Routes 95 and 295 at Farnhurst.

On May 23, 1984, the route numbering committee considered a request to extend U.S. 202:

Beginning at the present terminus of U.S. Route 202 in Wilmington, then southwesterly over I-95 to the intersection of State Road 141, then southeasterly over SR 141 to the intersection of U.S. Route 13 in Wilmington.

The committee withheld action on the request, but approved it, upon resubmittal, on December 7, 1984. The southern terminus is now listed as Basin Corner. The route today is 627 miles long.
