

## DID YOU KNOW???

### US ROUTE 11 VERSUS STATE ROUTE 11

Fact! There is no “State Route 11”. But, you argue, we have “State Route 11” in Franklin County. Well, not really. We only make the mistake of erroneously designating US Route 11 as State Route 11. So, who’s guilty of this? Everyone that refers to Route 11 as “State Route 11”, including the US Postal Service. As far as I can determine, we are the only county in the state that incorrectly uses State Route 11 for addresses along this highway.

From Wikipedia, **U.S. Route 11** or **U.S. Highway 11 (US 11)** is a major north–south (while physically generally northeast-southwest) United States Highway extending 1,645 miles across the eastern United States. The southern terminus of the route is in New Orleans, Louisiana. The northern terminus is at the Rouses Point-Lacolle 223 Border Crossing in Rouses Point, NY. The route continues across the border into Canada as Quebec Route 223.

US 11 was designated as part of the 1926 establishment of the U.S. Highway System. It was first signed in New York in 1927, replacing **New York State Route 2** (NY 2), a route assigned three years earlier as part of the creation of the modern New York state route system. The termini of US 11 have more or less remained the same since; however, multiple realignments have occurred along the points in between. One of US 11's three suffixed routes, NY 11C in St. Lawrence County, follows a former routing of US 11.

The portion of US 11 in New York passes through the central district of four cities: Binghamton, Cortland, Syracuse, and Watertown. East of Watertown, the route traverses mostly rural terrain and serves only small villages, such as Potsdam, Malone, and Champlain. While the portion of US 11 between the Pennsylvania state line and Watertown is merely an alternate route to I-81, the section east of Watertown is the primary long-distance route across the North Country of New York.

So, why, in Franklin County, do we call US Route 11 “State Route 11” while the rest of the counties along US Route 11 properly designate this highway as US Route 11 or in some cases Federal Route 11? The answer lies with the 911 re-numbering of all properties within Franklin County several decades ago. When the re-numbering took place, those in charge apparently didn’t understand the differences between state routes and US routes. This is understandable as US highways and interstate highways in the US are maintained by state departments of transportation. Thus NYS DOT maintains US Route 11 throughout NYS except in the cities of Binghamton, Cortland, Syracuse, and Watertown.

Since the error of designating US Route 11 in Franklin County as State Route 11 would now be a disaster to correct (all addresses along Route 11 would have to be changed), here is a compromise. Why not just call it simply “Route 11”? Everyone knows Route 11 – in fact, it is the only Route 11 in the state. We wouldn’t therefore have to refer to it erroneously as State Route 11 nor would we have to state US Route 11 – just Route 11 would be a solution for all. What are your thoughts?