



TECHNICAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: Bicycle Technical Committee

DATE OF ACTION: 13 June 2003 (*revised 08 January 2004*)

TOPIC: Revisions to Chapter 9B of the MUTCD regarding the M1-9 Sign

ORIGIN OF REQUEST: NCUTCD Bicycle Technical Committee

SUMMARY:

The NCUTCD Bicycle Technical Committee proposes the following changes:

1. Revise the language in Chapter 9B to clarify that the M1-9 is intended for use with AASHTO's network of formally established US Numbered Bicycle Routes.
2. Revise the design of the M1-9 to emphasize its applicability to bicycle routes and to reduce the potential of confusion with other route marker signs.

DISCUSSION:

In 1979, AASHTO established a policy on establishing and signing a network of US Numbered Bicycle Routes, and a copy of the current policy is attached (see Appendix A). As noted in the policy, it is AASHTO's desire that the M1-9 sign exclusively be used to mark US Numbered Bicycle Routes in much the same manner as the M1-4 US Route sign is used to exclusively mark US Highways.

However, recently inconsistencies have been noted between the intent of AASHTO as expressed in the policy and the wording in the current MUTCD on the use of the M1-9 route marker sign. The existing MUTCD language leaves open the potential for the M1-9 to be used in a manner inconsistent with AASHTO's US Numbered Bicycle Route network. Resolution of this issue has taken on a new urgency due to the interest that AASHTO and national bicycle route associations have shown in recent months in extending and expanding the existing network of US Numbered Bicycle Routes.

The current name of the M1-9 as defined in the MUTCD is "Interstate Bicycle Route Marker". The intent of this name was to make it clear that the M1-9 is only applicable for use on continuous numbered routes extending across state lines, and that the M1-9 was not to be substituted for the M1-8 numbered bicycle route sign for use on local and intra-state routes.

However, the use of the word "Interstate" in this name has been misinterpreted by agencies as designating the M1-9 for use only on the System of Interstate and Defense Highways, or that the M1-9 should be used on all Interstate highways open to bicyclists.

The Bicycle Technical Committee (BTC) proposes to change the name of the M1-9 route marker from "Interstate Bicycle Route Marker" to "US Bicycle Route Sign" to be more consistent with the AASHTO policy, to clarify the correct application of this route sign, and to recognize that

these routes might possibly also use letter designations in accordance with Section 2D.11 of the MUTCD.

The BTC also proposes to revise the Option statement in Section 9B.18 of the 2000 MUTCD (Section 9B.20 in 2003 MUTCD) to a Guidance statement to emphasize that all continuous numbered bicycle routes crossing state lines using the M1-9 marker should be coordinated through AASHTO. The BTC also proposes to delete the text "for long distances", since the determining factor for using the M1-9 (and AASHTO approval) is whether it is a continuous multi-state route, not necessarily a route of extraordinary length.

The design of the M1-9 sign was originally established by FHWA in the 1978 MUTCD. In 1982, AASHTO recommended that the design of the M1-9 be changed to emphasize the bicycle symbol and reduce the size of the route number (see Appendix B). FHWA concurred and changed the design of the M1-9 as part of revisions to the 1978 MUTCD. However, the Standard Highway Signs (SHS) book detail for the M1-9 was not changed, and so nearly all agencies continued to use the original M1-9 design as defined by the SHS book, not the MUTCD.

During development of the 2000 MUTCD, the BTC noted this discrepancy between the SHS and MUTCD in the design of the M1-9, but was unaware of the correspondence in Appendix B. Based on the information then available, the BTC recommended that the design as shown in the SHS be used, and FHWA changed the M1-9 back to the original design in the Final Rule adopting the 2000 MUTCD. After the correspondence between AASHTO and FHWA in Appendix B was rediscovered earlier this year, the BTC reconsidered its earlier recommendation, and now recommends that the M1-9 be revised back to the large bike / small numeral configuration.

All proposed changes above were also reviewed and approved by the NCUTCD Guide and Motorist Information (G/MI) Technical Committee at their meeting in June 2003.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

The NCUTCD Bicycle Technical Committee recommends that the National Committee submit these proposed revisions to sponsors for comment and approval.

**Approved unanimously by NCUTCD Council 09
January 2004.**

Note: deleted language is noted in ~~strikethrough-red~~, and added language is noted in underline green.

Section 9B.20 Bicycle Route Signs (M1-8, M1-9)

Option:

To establish a unique identification (route designation) for a State or local bicycle route, the Bicycle Route (M1-8) sign (See Figure 9B-4) may be used.

Standard:

The Bicycle Route sign shall contain a route designation and shall have a green background with a retroreflectorized white legend and border.

~~Option~~ Guidance:

Where a designated bicycle route extends ~~for long distances~~ through two or more States, a coordinated submittal by the affected states for an assignment of ~~an Interstate a~~ US Bicycle Route number designation ~~may~~ should be sent to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (see Page i for the address).

Standard:

The ~~Interstate~~ US Bicycle Route (M1-9) sign shall contain the ~~assigned~~ route ~~number~~ designation as assigned by AASHTO and have a black legend and border with a retroreflectorized white background.

Guidance:

If used, the Bicycle Route or ~~Interstate~~ US Bicycle Route signs should be placed at intervals frequent enough to keep bicyclists informed of changes in route direction and to remind motorists of the presence of bicyclists.

Option:

Bicycle Route or ~~Interstate~~ US Bicycle Route signs may be installed on shared roadways or on shared-use paths to provide guidance for bicyclists.

The Bicycle Route Guide (D11-1) sign may be installed where no unique designation of routes is desired.

Section 9B.21 Destination Arrow and Supplemental Plaque Signs for Bicycle Route Signs

Option:

Destination (D1-1b and D1-1c) signs (see Figure 9B-4) may be installed with Bicycle Route Guide signs, Bicycle Route signs, or **Interstate US** Bicycle Route signs to furnish additional information, such as directional changes in the route, or intermittent distance and destination information.

The M4-11 through M4-13 supplemental plaques (see Figure 9B-4) may be mounted above the appropriate Bicycle Route Guide signs, Bicycle Route signs, or **Interstate US** Bicycle Route signs.

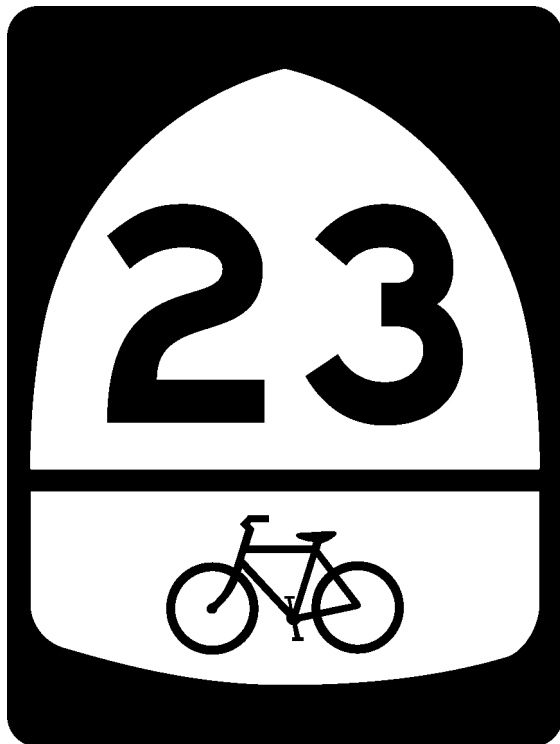
Guidance:

If used, the appropriate arrow (M7-1 through M7-7) sign (see Figure 9B-4) should be placed below the Bicycle Route Guide sign, Bicycle Route sign, or **Interstate US** Bicycle Route sign.

Standard:

The arrow signs and supplemental plaques used with the D11-1 or M1-8 signs shall have a white legend and border on a green background.

The arrow signs and supplemental plaques used with the M1-9 sign shall have a white legend and border on a black background.



Existing M1-9 sign



Revised M1-9 sign

Appendix A

AASHTO Policy on US Bicycle Routes

Purpose and Policy

U.S. Numbered Bicycle Routes

*Adopted October 14, 1979,
Revised June 30, 1982*

Purpose

The purpose of the U.S. bicycle route numbering and marking system is to facilitate travel between the states over routes which have been identified as being more suitable than others for cycling.

Definition

A bicycle route is any road, street, path or way which in some manner is specifically designated as being open to bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

Policies

1. The Executive Committee of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials shall have full authority to review the U.S. numbered bicycle route system and the numbering and marking thereof, to make additions, changes, extensions, revisions or reductions in said route system and to revise the numbering or marking thereof.
2. Before approving any addition, change, extension, revision or reduction in the U.S. numbered bicycle route system, or the numbering or marking of any U.S. numbered bicycle route, the Executive Committee shall consult the State Highway or Transportation Department of the State or States through or within which such addition, change, extension, revision or reduction is located.
3. The State Highway or Transportation Department, by a favorable vote on the adoption of this purpose and policy, agrees and pledges its good faith that it will not erect U.S. markers on any route without the authorization, consent or approval of the Executive Committee of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, notwithstanding the fact that the changes proposed are entirely within that State.
4. No U.S. numbered bicycle route shall be designated that does not extend between two or more States and is mapped and/or appropriately marked along its length.

5. The bicycle route marker included in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices is recommended for use to all travel map makers, also for use by the State Highway and Transportation Departments.
6. Any proposal that would exploit the prestige of the U.S. numbered bicycle route system, especially when it appears to be for the purpose of benefiting businesses located along such a proposed route, shall constitute reason for denying any application to make such an addition to the system.
7. Since the U.S. numbered system was established by joint action of the State Highway or Transportation Departments, only those applications for change in or addition to the U.S. numbered system from the Member State Highway or Transportation Department involved shall be considered by the Executive Committee. Those local officials, organizations, groups, or individuals interested in a change or in an addition to the system should contact their State Highway or Transportation Department and not the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consider only those applications from State Highway or Transportation Departments that are filed on the official form and are complete in all detail to the degree that the Executive Committee can evaluate the need for an adequacy of the proposed route from the application form submitted and without a representative of the State Highway or Transportation Department appearing before the Committee to supply additional information.
8. No person or group of persons shall be allowed to appear either before the Executive Committee or its Route Numbering Subcommittee except in the case of a State Highway or Transportation Department requesting reconsideration of an action by the Executive Committee in regard to an application filed by that Department.
9. In case a proposed change or addition to the U.S. numbered bicycle route system involves two or more States, the proposal shall be given official consideration only when all affected State Highway or Transportation Departments have filed applications to cover the complete proposal.
10. No route should be considered for inclusion in the U.S. numbered system that does not substantially meet the current AASHTO design standards contained in the AASHTO Guide for Development of New Bicycle Facilities.

Appendix B

**Correspondence Between AASHTO and FHWA
Regarding the Design of the M1-9 Sign**

(1982)

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE HIGHWAY
AND TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

WILLIAM A. ORDWAY, President
Director
Arizona Department
of Transportation



FRANCIS B. FRANCOIS
Executive Director

October 12, 1983

Mr. Ray Barnhart
Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Ray:

The AASHTO Special Committee on U.S. Route Numbering and the AASHTO Executive Committee recommend that the present U.S. Bicycle Route sign as shown in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices be modified as shown in the attached sketch. We believe this change can be considered an editorial modification which would not necessitate a formal rulemaking proceeding.

The reason for the change is to present an immediate impression of a "bicycle numbered route" rather than a "highway numbered route which can also be used by bicyclists."

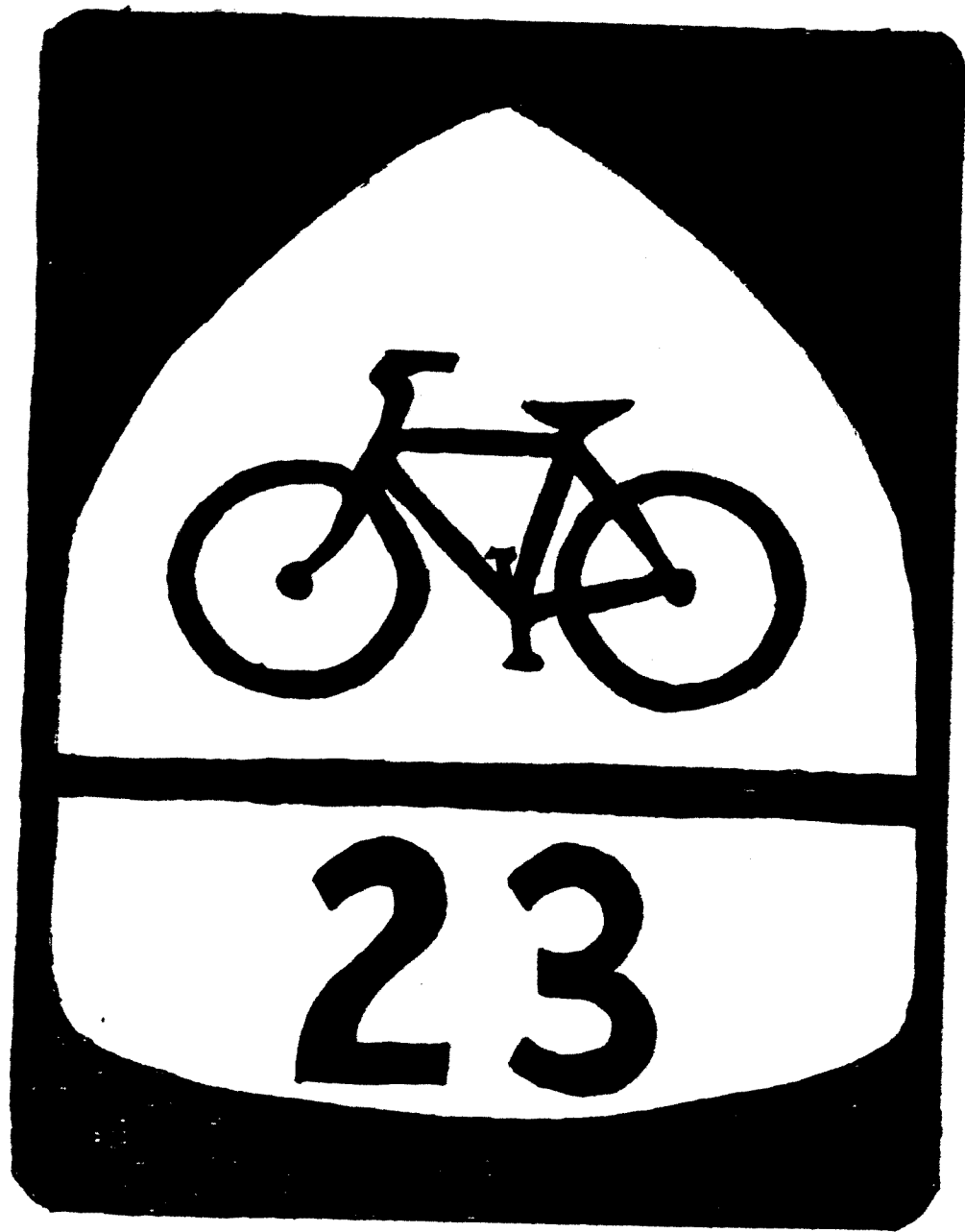
Since AASHTO is responsible for the U.S. Numbered Bicycle Route System, we hope this request will meet with your approval. We would be happy to provide any further information needed or to discuss this with you.

Very truly yours,

Francis B. Francois
Executive Director

FBF:WDL:cam
attach.

cc: Jack Freidenrich, Chairman
AASHTO Special Committee on U.S. Route Numbering



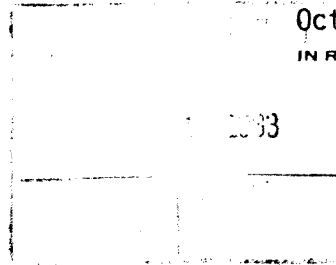


DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

OFFICE OF
THE ADMINISTRATOR

October 28, 1983

IN REPLY REFER TO:
HTO-21



Mr. Francis B. Francois
Executive Director
American Association of State Highway
and Transportation Officials
444 North Capitol Street, NW.
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Francois:

This is in response to your October 12 letter relative to the design of the Bike Route marker (M1-9).

We agree with you and will make an editorial change to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The editorial change will appear in MUTCD Revision No. 3 as the camera ready pages for printing of Revision No. 2 have already been prepared. We anticipate publication of Revision No. 3 early next year.

If we can be of any further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely yours,

R. D. Morgan
Executive Director