

WEST VIRGINIA HIGHWAYS

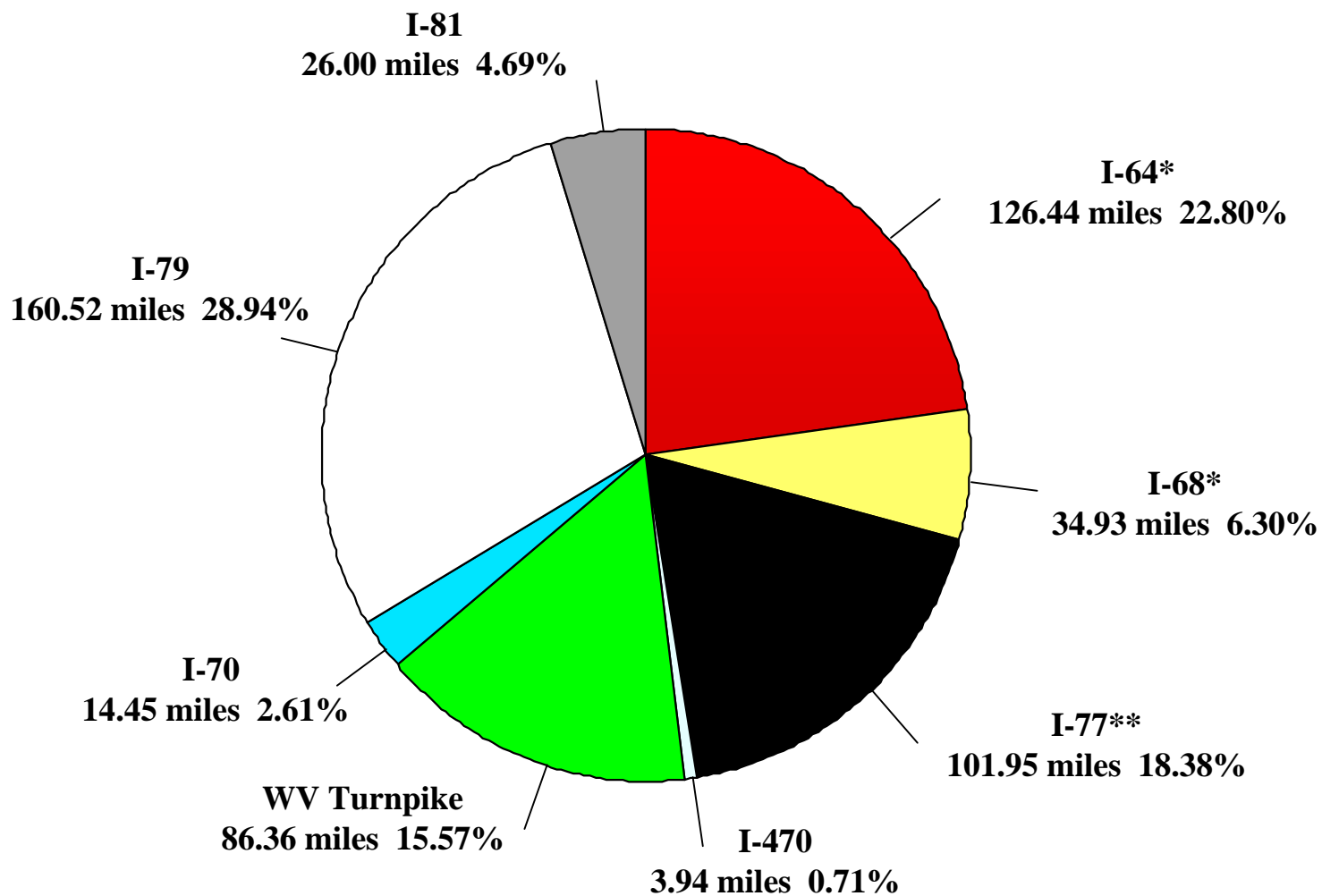
Classification Systems, Characteristics and Usage

The Sign System

The Sign System was established many years ago as a means of aiding the traveling public by providing a guide system for motorists. This classification consists of all public roadways that are identified by a distinctive route number sign such as the Interstate System “shield.” These signs are only intended to provide information to the public and are not intended to indicate any special funding source. This system is classified in a hierarchical manner as follows:

- ***Interstate System*** (Figure - 2.5) - high-speed, high-volume highways with full control of access that serve major metropolitan areas throughout the United States; the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) in 1958 adopted a manual on signing for this system, with the manual prescribing a red-white-and-blue shield as the Interstate route number marker; AASHO also developed a complete numbering system for Interstate routes, as follows:
 - Those routes with odd numbers run north-south
 - Those routes with even numbers run east-west
 - Major routes have one- or two-digit numbers
 - Long, evenly spaced routes have numbers ending in 5 or 0
 - Lowest numbers are in the west and south, to avoid conflict locally with the US Route numbers
 - In urban areas, the main route numbers are carried through the area on the paths of the major traffic streams
 - Connecting circumferential or loop routes at urban areas have three-digit numbers, using the main route number with an even-number prefix
 - Radial and spur routes also have three-digit numbers, with an odd-number
- ***United States Numbered Route System*** – routes with partial control of access that carry interstate travel not served by the Interstate System; routes composing this system are under state jurisdiction (not federal) and have no connection with federal control nor the designation of federal funds for road construction; the administration and maintenance of system records is the responsibility of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), formerly known as AASHO; this system, with its black-and-white “US shield” marker, was adopted in 1926, and has the following numbering plan:
 - Those routes with odd numbers run north-south

Figure 2.5
West Virginia Interstate Highway System
As of June 30, 2000



* Including Interstate Connector road mileage

**Including Interstate Connector road mileage; excluding WV Turnpike mileage

SOURCE: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Planning and Research Division, Traffic Analysis Section.
West Virginia Traffic County File Summary. Charleston, WV:2000.

- Those routes with even numbers run east-west
 - Long distance routes across the country have multiple numbers of 10
 - Principal north-south routes have numbers such as 1, 5, 11, 15
 - Where necessary, this system may have special route designations, as follows:
 - ◆ *Business Route* – principally within the corporate limits of a city; provides the public an opportunity to travel through the business part of the city; connects with the regular numbered route at the opposite side of the city limits
 - ◆ *By-Pass or Relief Route* – route which entirely bypasses a city or congested area; joins with the regular numbered route beyond the city or congested area
 - ◆ *Alternate Route* – begins at a point where it leaves the main numbered route; may pass through certain cities or towns, then connect back with the regular route at some distant point; route is designated only if both routes are needed to accommodate the traffic demand
 - ◆ *Temporary Route* – necessary in some cases to carry a number temporarily over a road that ultimately will not be the permanent location of that number
 - **West Virginia (WV) State Route System** – serves intrastate travel and connects the larger cities within the State; the WV State Road Commission (SRC) assigned numbers to the various State routes in 1922; originally, north-south State routes were assigned even numbers and east-west routes were assigned odd numbers; adopted by the SRC in 1926, the State route marker is rectangular with black numbers on a white background
 - **County Route System** – serves intra-county travel and provides land access to the more rural areas of the State; system was established in 1933, when the public roads under the former county-district road system were placed under the jurisdiction of the WV State Road Commission; originally, the main county routes were assigned whole numbers, with those roads branching off assigned fractions (the main county route is the numerator); route numbers do not repeat within a county; the county route marker has a black number inside a white circle on a green background, usually with the local name of the route
 - **Home Access Road Program (HARP) System** – system was established in 1998 to provide maintenance for those public roads serving as mail routes, school bus routes, etc., which were not (at that time) under the jurisdiction of the Division of Highways; roads are eligible only for routine maintenance; the road marker has a black number inside figure shaped like a house.
-

- **State Park and Forest Road System** – roads used for public travel inside the boundaries of State parks, forests and public hunting and fishing areas; responsibility for these roads was transferred to the Department of Highways from the Department of Natural Resources in 1972; the Division of Highways does not install these signs, which are wooden, with black numbers inside a hexagon.
- **Other systems** – routes that serve localized travel and are not included within one of the higher systems, e.g., municipal roads and US Forest Service roads.

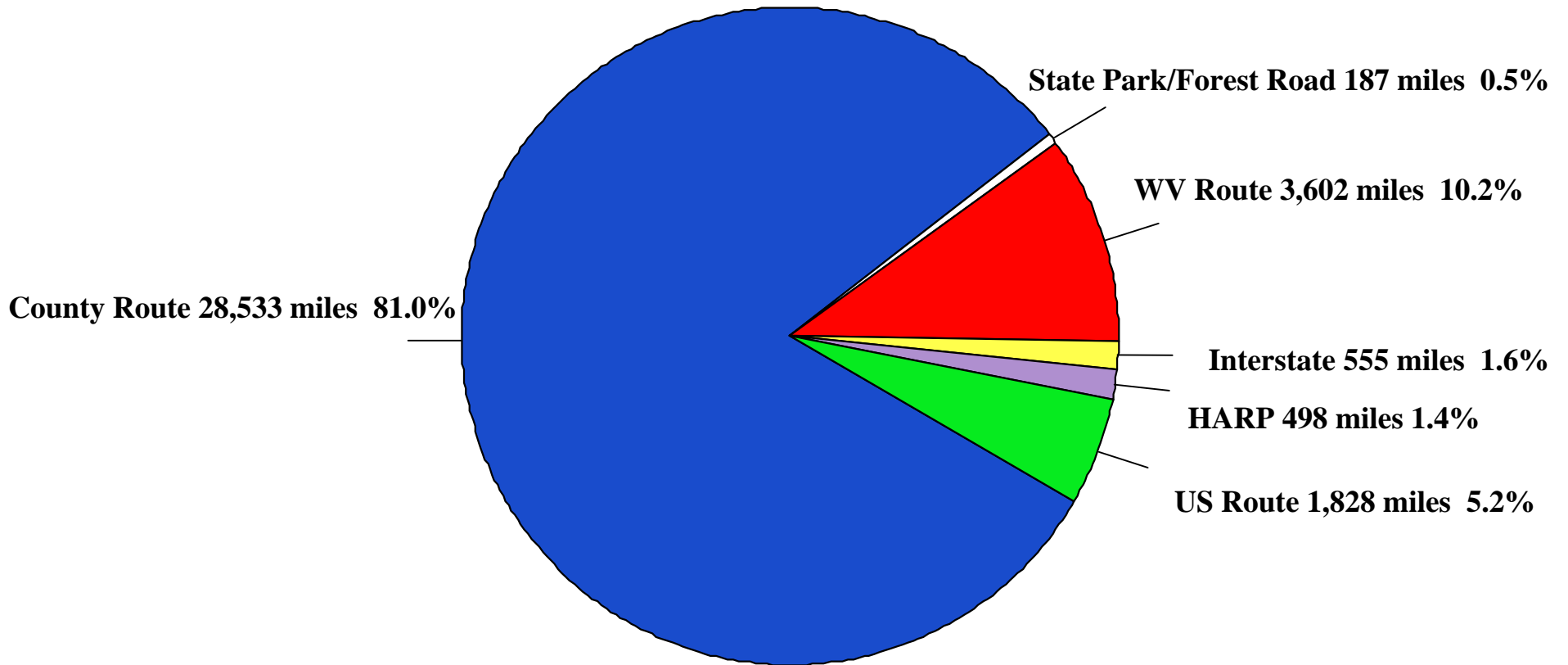
Table 2.7 and Figure 2.6 represent the mileage for the various sign systems within West Virginia. With some exceptions, in situations where two or more routes intersect and follow the same traveled way, mileage is associated with the route in the higher sign system; if the sign system is the same, the lower route number generally controls. It is important to note that a state must obtain the approval of AASHTO to designate or change a route on the Interstate and US Numbered Route systems.

Table 2.7
West Virginia Highways
Under WVDOT Jurisdiction: Sign System
As of June 30, 2000

SIGN SYSTEM	TOTAL STATE-MAINTAINED HIGHWAY MILEAGE	PERCENT OF STATE TOTAL
Interstate System (includes the WV Turnpike)	554.59	1.58%
United States (US) Numbered Route System	1,827.52	5.19%
West Virginia (WV) State Route System	3,602.20	10.23%
County Route System	28,533.17	81.05%
HARP Road System	498.19	1.42%
State Park and Forest Road System	187.19	.53%
TOTAL	35,202.86	100%

SOURCE: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Planning and Research Division, Roadway Records and Statistics Section. PR 528 - *Summary of Existing State and Local Roads and Streets*. Charleston, WV:2000.

Figure 2.6
**West Virginia Highways under WVDOT Jurisdiction
by Sign System
As of June 30, 2000**



SOURCE: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Planning and Research Division, Traffic Analysis Section. *West Virginia Traffic Count File Summary Tables*. Charleston, WV:2000.