

= Maryland Route 135 =

Maryland Route 135 (MD 135) is a state highway in the U.S. state of Maryland . Known for most of its length as Maryland Highway , the state highway runs 29 @. @ 00 miles (46 @. @ 67 km) from U.S. Route 219 (US 219) in Oakland in Garrett County east to US 220 in McCoole in Allegany County . MD 135 is the main link between the towns of Oakland , Mountain Lake Park , Loch Lynn Heights , and Deer Park on the Appalachian Plateau and the communities of Bloomington , Luke , Westernport , and McCoole in the upper valley of the Potomac River . These groups of towns are separated by Backbone Mountain .

MD 135 was originally built in the early 1930s as a link between McCoole and Westernport . In the late 1930s , the state highway was extended west to Bloomington . In addition , a separate segment of MD 135 was completed around Swanton in the mid @-@ 1930s . These separate segments were unified in the early 1950s when the highway over Backbone Mountain was completed . In the late 1950s , MD 135 was extended west over a portion of MD 38 and all of Maryland Route 41 to Oakland , and was mostly rebuilt over its entire length , bypassing Bloomington , Swanton , Deer Park , and Mountain Lake Park . MD 135 remains notorious for the eastbound descent from Backbone Mountain , which has claimed many lives . The Maryland State Highway Administration has instituted many measures to get trucks down the mountain safely and to avoid the downgrade if possible .

= = Route description = =

MD 135 begins at an intersection with US 219 on the eastern edge of Oakland . Northbound US 219 (Oak Street) continues straight west into downtown Oakland , southbound US 219 (Garrett Highway) heads south toward Red House , and 9th Street heads north along the alignment of the future Oakland Bypass . MD 135 heads east through Mountain Lake Park as Maryland Highway , a controlled access two @-@ lane highway . Oakland Drive , which is unsigned MD 825B , splits to the northeast to serve residential areas on the north side of town . The old alignment rejoins MD 135 at G Street before access controls cease upon crossing the Little Youghiogheny River . The state highway intersects MD 560 (Paull Street) , which heads south into Loch Lynn Heights . After crossing the river again , MD 135 leaves Mountain Lake Park . The state highway passes scattered residences , farms , and businesses before entering Deer Park . After passing Deer Park Hotel Road , which passes the Pennington Cottage , MD 135 intersects the old alignment of MD 38 , which is Sand Flat Road to the north and Main Street to the south . The state highway passes the historic home Glamorgan and Edgewood Drive , part of the old alignment of MD 38 , before leaving Deer Park . Upon reaching the hamlet of Altamont , MD 495 (Swanton Road) continues straight northeast toward Swanton while MD 135 turns to the southeast .

MD 135 heads straight southeast toward a grade @-@ separated crossing of CSX 's Mountain Subdivision very close to the railroad 's crossing of the Eastern Continental Divide . The state highway curves to the northeast and gently ascends Backbone Mountain . A scenic overlook marks the highest point on MD 135 (2 @, @ 969 feet (905 m)) shortly before the intersection with MD 38 (Kitzmiller Road) . The state highway continues northeast along the ridgeline through Potomac @-@ Garrett State Forest and intersects Swanton Road and a few roads on the south side of the highway that access Jennings Randolph Lake . Upon leaving the state forest , MD 135 begins to pass scattered residences ahead of the descent of Backbone Mountain , which has grades as steep as 9 % . Trucks are required to stop at three different brake check locations and obey a posted speed limit of 10 mph (16 km / h) . After Bloomington Hill Road splits to the north and the state highway passes the third brake check stop , a runaway truck ramp splits to the south . The downhill grade eases as MD 135 enters Bloomington , where the name of the highway changes to Bloomington Road . After passing through residential areas , the state highway crosses the Mountain Subdivision and the Savage River before meeting Savage Hillside Road at a T intersection in front of Franklin Hill .

MD 135 turns southeast into Allegany County and enters the town of Luke as Pratt Street . The

state highway immediately intersects Masteller Road , which is unsigned MD 135D and meets the eastern end of the western segment of West Virginia Route 46 (WV 46) at the Potomac River . At a bend in the river , MD 135 makes a sharp turn to the north around the mountain and the road passes the large NewPage Corporation paper mill . The state highway turns east and its name changes to Church Street upon entering Westernport , where the highway intersects MD 36 (New Georges Creek Road) , which crosses the Potomac River to become the eastern segment of WV 46 . MD 135 crosses Georges Creek and meets the Georges Creek Railway at @-@ grade before intersecting Main Street , which is unsigned MD 937 . Upon leaving Westernport , the road 's name changes to McCoolle ? Westernport Road . MD 135 parallels the Potomac River and Georges Creek Railway as it passes scattered residences and businesses . Upon reaching McCoolle , the highway passes unsigned MD 135A , which provides an alternate access route to US 220 north . Shortly after , MD 135 reaches Paxton Street , which is officially MD 135B but is marked as MD 135 . Paxton Street leads to a junction with US 220 (McMullen Highway) . MD 135 itself continues east under the McCoolle ? Keyser bridge to its eastern terminus at the intersection of Queens Point Road and Golden Cross Street .

= = History = =

The present course of MD 135 consists of the original course of the state highway and its extensions westward , and assumption of a portion of MD 38 and all of MD 41 . MD 135 also followed a segment of what is today MD 495 . The original segment of MD 135 was under construction between McCoolle and Westernport in 1930 and completed by 1931 . The state highway was constructed between Bloomington and Luke in 1936 and 1937 , including the bridge over the Savage River . This segment was connected to Westernport in 1940 by carving a roadbed out of the cliffs of Franklin Hill . MD 38 was paved from its original northern terminus to Altamont between 1924 and 1926 and to the top of Backbone Mountain by 1930 . The present segment of MD 38 south to Kitzmiller was under construction by 1930 and completed by 1933 . MD 41 included the first section of what is now MD 135 to be constructed ; the segment of the state highway between Oakland and Mountain Lake Park was paved between 1916 and 1919 . The state highway was extended past Loch Lynn Heights in 1933 and to MD 38 in Deer Park by 1938 .

A second , disconnected segment of MD 135 was constructed in two sections between MD 38 in Altamont and Swanton that were completed in 1933 and 1935 . This road was extended east to the top of Backbone Mountain in 1939 . The discontinuous segments of MD 135 were unified in 1953 when the pre @-@ existing Bloomington Road was reconstructed between the eastern end of the western MD 135 on top of Backbone Mountain and the western end of the eastern MD 135 in Bloomington . When the present US 220 bridge over the Potomac River was completed in 1951 , MD 135 was extended east from its old intersection with US 220 , which is today the intersection with MD 135A , to its present eastern terminus .

MD 135 attained its present alignment through several projects in the mid to late 1950s , concurrent with MD 135 's extension west over part of MD 38 and all of MD 41 to Oakland in 1956 . The segment of MD 38 in Deer Park was bypassed by the newly extended state highway in 1956 . The state highway between McCoolle and Westernport was relocated , and Bloomington Hill Road was bypassed with a straighter highway featuring a grade @-@ separated crossing of the railroad in Bloomington in 1956 and 1957 . The present section of MD 135 between MD 38 and Swanton Road was built in 1955 and 1956 ; MD 135 was then removed through Swanton and partially replaced by MD 495 . The segment between Swanton Road and Bloomington Hill Road was upgraded between 1953 and 1956 . Finally , the portion of MD 135 between Deer Park and Oakland , including the bypass of Mountain Lake Park , was rebuilt between 1957 and 1959 .

Since the present alignment of MD 135 was completed west of Bloomington in the late 1950s , the descent of Backbone Mountain has become notorious due to its steep grade and the 90 degree turn at the bottom to avoid a mountain dead ahead . A retaining wall at the bottom of the mountain features white crosses in memoriam of those who lost their lives ; there were 24 crosses painted as of 2009 . After five people had been killed on the descent by 1965 , the State Roads Commission

responded in 1967 by enacting the truck speed limit of 10 mph (16 km / h) , marking the three mandatory stopping areas , and installing ample warning signage , including the infamous " If Brakes Fail Ditch Truck Immediately " sign . In 1997 , signs were installed on Interstate 68 , US 219 , and US 40 advising truckers to use MD 36 instead of MD 135 to access Luke and Westernport . The runaway truck ramp was installed by 2005 and supplemented with a runaway truck warning system and updated signage in 2007 .

= = Junction list = =

= = Auxiliary routes = =

MD 135A is the unsigned designation for the unnamed 0 @. @ 78 @- @ mile (1 @. @ 26 km) connector between MD 135 in McCoole and US 220 north of McCoole . The state highway heads north from MD 135 on the western edge of McCoole and passes under US 220 . MD 135A curves northwest and intersects Burke Hill Road before reaching its northern terminus at an oblique intersection with US 220 opposite Red Rock Lane . MD 135A is part of the original alignment of US 220 through McCoole prior to the completion of the present alignment in 1951 .

MD 135B is the designation for Paxton Street and Chesapeake Avenue , a 0 @. @ 11 @- @ mile (0 @. @ 18 km) connector between MD 135 and US 220 in McCoole . MD 135B is signed as MD 135 .

MD 135C is the unsigned designation for an unnamed 0 @. @ 03 @- @ mile (0 @. @ 048 km) connector between MD 135 and MD 825C , itself an unsigned and unnamed highway , on top of Backbone Mountain east of MD 38 . MD 135C provides access to a salt dome .

MD 135D is the unsigned designation for Masteller Road , a 0 @. @ 02 @- @ mile (0 @. @ 032 km) connector between MD 135 in Luke and the western segment of WV 46 across the Potomac River in Beryl .

MD 135E is the designation for Chesapeake Avenue , a 0 @. @ 09 @- @ mile (0 @. @ 14 km) connector between MD 135 and US 220 in McCoole . MD 135E was designated in 2013 .