

= M @-@ 26 ( Michigan highway ) =

M @-@ 26 is a 96 @. @ 355 @-@ mile @-@ long ( 155 @. @ 068 km ) state trunkline highway in the U.S. state of Michigan , running from two miles ( 3 @. @ 2 km ) east of Rockland to its junction with US Highway 41 ( US 41 ) in Copper Harbor . It generally runs southwest @-@ to @-@ northeast in the western half of Michigan 's Upper Peninsula . The northernmost segment , which closely parallels the shore of Lake Superior on the west side of the Keweenaw Peninsula , is highly scenic .

M @-@ 26 previously reached the Wisconsin border , but a section of the highway became US 45 . Other changes on the northern end of M @-@ 26 incorporated highways that were previously numbered M @-@ 111 and M @-@ 206 in the Eagle Harbor and Eagle River area .

= = Route description = =

= = = Southern terminus to Houghton = = =

M @-@ 26 starts at an intersection with US 45 east of Rockland in Michigan 's Ontonagon County . From there it runs through the town of Mass City to the junction with M @-@ 38 east of Greenland . The two highways join for a short distance before M @-@ 26 separates turning northeast to Winona across the Houghton County line . In Twin Lakes M @-@ 26 passes the shores of the namesake lakes and Twin Lakes State Park . M @-@ 26 passes through wooded , hilly terrain in western Houghton County . The segment of roadway in South Range was recently realigned to smooth out curves in the roadway . From there north , M @-@ 26 runs generally downhill on approaching the western business district of Houghton and the Portage Lake Lift Bridge from the west .

= = = Portage Lake Lift Bridge = = =

The Portage Lake Lift Bridge connects the cities of Hancock and Houghton , Michigan by crossing over the Portage Waterway , an arm of Portage Lake which cuts across the Keweenaw Peninsula with a canal linking the final several miles to Lake Superior to the northwest .

As its name states , the bridge is a lift bridge with the middle section capable of being lifted from its low point of four feet clearance over the water to a clearance of thirty two feet to allow boats to pass underneath . The Portage Lake Lift Bridge is the widest and heaviest double decked vertical lift bridge in the world . The lower deck of the bridge was originally open to rail traffic , but this level is now closed to trains and is used in the winter for snowmobile traffic . Throughout the 1960s , 70s and 80s , the bridge was painted the same color as the Mackinac Bridge ? cream and forest green ? however , in the early 1990s , it was repainted in a cream and robins egg blue color scheme ? exactly the same colors as the National Park Service 's ship Ranger III ? to some demoting Houghton as the " Gateway to Isle Royale " .

= = = Hancock to Copper Harbor = = =

On the north end of the bridge , M @-@ 26 turns east while US 41 turns west into Hancock . M @-@ 26 passes through Ripley at the base of the Mt . Ripley Ski Area before turning north to Dollar Bay on the shore of the heavy polluted Torch Lake . Next are the twin communities of Lake Linden and Hubbell . M @-@ 26 forms the main streets of these as it passes north from Hubbell into Lake Linden . The highway then runs back to the west to rejoin US 41 in Calumet . US 41 / M @-@ 26 connects with the northern end of M @-@ 203 on the north side of town before heading out to Keweenaw County . In the town of Phoenix , M @-@ 26 separates from US 41 one last time , turning west for a stretch along the northern shoreline of the Keweenaw Peninsula . It passes through the communities of Eagle River ( county seat of Keweenaw County ) and Eagle Harbor .

M @-@ 26 in Eagle River crosses the namesake river on the glue @-@ laminated Eagle River

Timber Bridge . The 152 @-@ foot ( 46 m ) bridge features two timber frame arches of 74 feet ( 23 m ) and 79 feet ( 24 m ) in length . The connecting work between the wood elements is steel . There are hinge points in the center of each arch . The deck is wood covered with an asphalt driving surface . Enough wood was used in construction to fabricate three or four average @-@ sized homes . All the wood was pressure @-@ treated , and the steel was galvanized and epoxy @-@ coated . Reapplication of preservative and tightening bolts will be the routine maintenance required every three years .

Past Eagle Harbor , M @-@ 26 meets the highly scenic Brockway Mountain Drive . The northern terminus of M @-@ 26 is located in Copper Harbor . The terminus is just past the second intersection with Brockway Mountain Drive near the marina and the location of the Isle Royale Queen ferry to Isle Royale National Park .

= = History = =

Before it was a state highway , many parts of the original route of M @-@ 26 was used as a military road , connecting Fort Wilkins at Copper Harbor with Fort Howard at Green Bay , Wisconsin . From 1919 until 1934 , M @-@ 26 was routed southward to the Wisconsin state line to a connection with STH @-@ 26 along what is now US 45 .

The original northern terminus of M @-@ 26 was in Laurium at M @-@ 15 ( now US 41 ) ; it was extended by 1927 along US 41 to Mohawk and then replacing M @-@ 83 to Gay . This extension would be reversed in 1933 when the Mohawk to Gay routing was turned over to Keweenaw County control . A second extension in 1935 along US 41 to Phoenix replaced M @-@ 129 between Phoenix and Eagle Harbor . At this time , M @-@ 206 was designated from M @-@ 26 to the Eagle Harbor light house . A rerouting of M @-@ 26 in November 1940 moved it between Phoenix and Eagle River , replacing M @-@ 111 . The segment between Phoenix and Eagle River along Copper Falls Mine Road was turned over to Keweenaw County at this time .

In 1979 , M @-@ 26 was rerouted through Dakota Heights , bisecting it . Park Avenue had formerly served as the main route from Houghton to Atlantic Mine , but this was replaced by the new route of the highway .

The Lake Shore Drive Bridge , which had carried M @-@ 26 over the Eagle River , was relegated to pedestrian use in 1990 after the adjacent Eagle River Timber Bridge opened for traffic .

In 2006 , the Michigan Department of Transportation ( MDOT ) opened a bypass around the southwest and southern edge of South Range in order to provide a safer route through the town . As of 4 October 2006 , MDOT has transferred jurisdiction of the necessary pieces of roadway to complete the M @-@ 26 bypass of South Range .

= = M @-@ 111 = =

After 1938 , the M @-@ 111 designation was given to an old M @-@ 6 routing in the Keweenaw Peninsula that ran between Eagle River and Phoenix along what is , now , modern @-@ day M @-@ 26 parallel to Eagle River . That incarnation lasted two years until M @-@ 111 was deleted and M @-@ 26 was realigned over it . The M @-@ 111 designation has not been used since being deleted in 1940 .

= = M @-@ 206 = =

M @-@ 206 was a state highway that served as a spur route from M @-@ 26 into Eagle Harbor and the Eagle Harbor Lighthouse in Keweenaw County in 1935 .

= = Major intersections = =