Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways
Better known as the Interstate Highway System, or the Eisenhower Interstate System

Ike established the Federal-Aid Highway Act in 1956, which established freeways with unified construction and signage, controlled access, breakdown lanes, no at-grade intersections, no traffic lights, no tolls (except for grandfathered roadways, and subsequent legislation). The IHS was proclaimed complete in 1992, at a cost of $114 billion. The IHS is partially funded by the Highway Trust fund, which is, in turn, funded by the federal fuel tax. IHS roads are owned by the state they are in.

The entire IHS is now at 48,756 miles, and someone calculated that ¼ of all miles driven in the US are driven on the IHS. Someone else figured out that there are approximately 5000 fatalities every year on the IHS.

The US Highway system, by contrast, gets its funding 50%-50% federal and state. It includes expressways, two-lane expressways, freeways, and some large toll roads. Any road or street or travelway of any kind (paths, trails, or waterways) is considered a "highway" and the public has a right to use it. Interestingly, the canals in Venice (California) are considered highways.

Notable highways under this system include Route 66 of course, and the Lincoln Highway (my April 2022 book review) and there are numerous songs about highways: "Carefree Highway" by Gordon Lightfoot, 1974; "Highway 61" by Bob Dylan, 1965; and "Colorado Boulevard" by the Beach Boys, 1964.

One more interesting fact about highways (not Interstate): There are 4 kinds of interchanges: Diamond (with 4 ramps), Cloverleaf (with 8 ramps), Stack (with 8 ramps) and "Parclo" (with 4 or 6 ramps). (I think that means "partial cloverleaf.)

OK, here are the nuts and bolts about the IHS. First the even-numbered routes, West to East

Interstate number	Starting point	Ending point	Total miles
10	Santa Monica	Jacksonville, FL	2460
20	Kent, TX	Florence, SC	1551
30	Fort Worth, TX	Little Rock, AK	319
40	Barstow	Wilmington, NC	2556
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70	Cove Fort, UT	Pittsburgh, PA	2172
80	San Francisco	New York NY	2899
90	Seattle, WA	Boston, MA	3020*

Now the odd-numbered routes, North to South:

5	Seattle, WA	San Diego	1381
15	Sweet Grass, MT	San Diego	1433
25	Billings, MT	El Paso, TX	1081
35	Duluth, MN	Laredo, TX	1568
45	Dallas, TX	Galveston, TX	284
55	Chicago, IL	New Orleans, LA	964
65	Chicago, IL	Mobile, AL	887
75	Sault Ste Marie, MI	Miami, FL	1786
85	Petersburg, VA	Montgomery, AL	670
95	Houlton, ME	Miami, FL	1919*

Three digit routes:

(1) The last two digits conform to the parent Interstate;

(2) If the first number is even, the route goes through or around a city—it connects at both ends;

(3) If the first number is odd, the route goes into a city—connects at only one end.

* Longest segment