

Wet County Lines

“A County Line boundary may be a river, lake, water reservoir, creek, brook, stream, or other watercourse, including a dry riverbed or arroyo. This type of county boundary is called a Wet County Line. As long as a Wet County Line can be run safely, it may be run using the same requirements as any other County Line.”

So sayeth the MARAC rules. So some discussion is in order to help explain some of this grey area of “Wet County Lines”. Let us take two recent examples of these lines and dissect them. How about the county line in Montana of Fergus and Phillips? These two counties are separated by the Missouri River. The river is wide at this point and is only crossed by one bridge on US-191. This is an example of a true wet line. The adjoining counties have no boundary in common that is not the river. Of course if you were stopped in the center of the river where the GPS declared it the dividing line and can run it safely then have at it. It would be up to the mobile and the contact station to know that it is a safe operation and log it as a contact for both counties. The MARAC Logger program will not allow you to select this as a county line contact. This is by design to give you some warning that the contact is in question. If you believe this is a legal and safe operation, Logger will force you to log both counties separately.

Another example where an apparent wet line MAY be legal and safe. Let’s look at the line of Phelps and Buffalo in Nebraska. The problem here is that this is MOSTLY a wet county line separated by the Platte River. However over a period of time the river has changed its course slightly. There are portions of this “Wet County Line” that are now on dry land. It would be possible for the mobile to move off the road and run this line quite safely. There are several roads that cross this river and the adjoining county lines. There are a lot of examples along the Platte, Mississippi, Missouri and other rivers where this has taken place. MARAC Logger will allow this to be entered as a county line contact.

One last example where this grey area still exists. Take the example of Tazewell, Virginia and McDowell, West Virginia. Some of this county line is ‘wet’ and some is dry west of highway 16. There are dozens of this type of separation. It is a judgment call on the parties involved as well as the Logger team as to whether the contacts are legal and safely being run. Presently it is up to this author to pass judgment on whether an individual county line should be included in the MARAC Logger acceptable table of county lines. I use mostly DeLorme Street Atlas USA to do the research to aid in my decision.

Presently there are nearly 15,000 county lines in the county line table that MARAC Logger uses. I have, on rare occasion, added new ones to this table and even deleted one recently. However there is always room for improvement. I am collecting a list of county lines that are not presently included in MARAC Logger that are often run safely. Someday these may be in Logger as an alternate to the “Legal” county lines. If you have any candidates for this new collection, please send them to me and include the road(s) or sites that make your suggestions qualify for consideration.

I hope this sheds some light on a controversial subject. “It ain’t always easy”.

73

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