OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property	
Historic name Mossmain Overpass	
Other names/site number 24YL0698/MDT Identification No. P000	04057+07411
2. Location	
street & number Milepost 57 on old US Highway 10 (North I-90 From city of town Two miles northeast of Laurel State Montana code MT county Yellowstone	N/A not for publication Vicinity Code
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation I hereby certify that thisX_ nomination request for determination registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _X_ meets does not meet the National X_ statewide X_ local Signature of certifying official Signature of certifying official In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.	ation of eligibility meets the documentation standards and meets the procedural and professional conal Register Criteria. I recommend that this cance: Z 10 Z 0 Z Date TANK STATE HIGTURE PRESENTATION OF THE State or Federal agency and bureau
Signature of commenting official	Date
Title	State or Federal agency and bureau
4. National Park Service Certification	
I, hereby, certify that this property is: Signature of Lentered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register other (explain:)	Date of Action 3/26/2012

Mossmain Overpass Name of Property	Yellowstone County, MT County and State				
5. Classification					
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) Category of Property (Check only one box) private public - Local X public - State public - Federal private Duilding(s) structure building(s) object			ources within Project in Street Project Projec	in the count.)	
Name of related multiple pr (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of Montana's Historic Steel Stri Bridges, 1901	a multiple property listing) nger and Steel Girder	Number of con listed in the Na	tributing resourc tional Register N/A	es previously	
6. Function or Use	1001		1073		
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions) TRANSPORTATION/Road-related (vehicular) =		Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions) TRANSPORTATION/Road-related (vehicular) =			
Bridge		Bridge			
7. Description					
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) OTHER: Steel girder bridge		Materials (Enter categories froundation: C	om instructions) ONCRETE, EART	тн	
		roof:other: _CONCF	REATE, METAL: S	teel	

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

Mossmain Overpass

Name of Property

Yellowstone County, MT

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Mossmain Overpass consists of one contributing structure, a three-span continuous span steel girder bridge built in 1936. The structure is 271 feet long and 35 feet wide with massive earthen approaches that carry the roadway up over the railroad tracks. The overpass was the largest railroad overpass built by the Montana Highway Department in the 1930s and is one of the best remaining examples of the type in the state. The structure incorporates many of the aesthetic features specified by the department's engineers during the decade, specifically the haunched steel girder. The setting of the site has changed somewhat with the construction of nearby Interstate 90 in the 1960s and commercial development in the vicinity of an interchange near the overpass. However, the structure still functions in its original capacity, and retains overall good integrity.

Narrative Description

The Mossmain Overpass is located on old US Highway 10 about two miles northeast of Laurel in Yellowstone County, Montana. The confluence of the Yellowstone and Clark's Fork rivers is about two miles south of the overpass. Interstate 90 is located just to the south, which provides an excellent view of the overpass. The Pryor and Beartooth mountains dominate the landscape to the southeast and south of the structure and the rimrocks delineate the valley to the north. The area surrounding the bridge was at the bottom of the Western Interior Seaway during the Cretaceous Era about 65 million years ago. The sandstone rimrocks are the remnants of a barrier island in the sea. The Yellowstone Valley was settled by non-Indians in the late 1870s after the conclusion of the Sioux War in 1877. The Northern Pacific Railway arrived in 1882 and sparked the settlement of the valley. The railroad founded Billings in 1882 and Laurel, which was established in 1886, once served three railroads: the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Currently, the area surrounding the bridge is a mixture of small agricultural operations that are increasingly being encroached upon by residential, commercial and industrial development.

The Mossmain Overpass is a three-span continuous steel girder structure. The overpass is 271 feet long and is 35 feet wide with a roadway width of 33 feet. There is one 117-foot main span and two 77-foot spans over secondary railroad tracks. The bridge ends rest on stub-type reinforced concrete abutments and the bridge spans rest on two open columnar type concrete bents; the bents have chamfered openings and low concrete walls protect the bases of the features.

The steel superstructure of the bridge consists of two exterior steel girder spans cambered and strengthened with steel angle section stiffeners where they connect to the bents. Two steel I-beam stringers under the deck are also cambered at the bent connections. The steel stringers are connected at the bents by cast steel rocker bearings. The poured-in-place concrete deck is supported by steel I-beam floor beams. The stringers are also strengthened by angle section bottom lateral braces. The bridge was built in 1936 with concrete sidewalks flanking the deck and open Art Deco style concrete guardrails. The sidewalks and railings were removed in 1988 and the railings replaced with the existing Jersey Rails.

The bridge ends are reached by earth approaches containing a total of approximately 156,961 cubic yards of soil that carry the roadway up to a maximum height of 38 feet to connect to the overpass. The road approaches the structure on top of the approach berms. The roadway is flanked by modern steel W-beam guardrails (originally the approaches had wooden post-and-cable guardrails).

Integrity

The overpass retains good integrity. In 1988, the distinctive 1930s-era concrete guardrails were removed and replaced with Jersey Rails; the structure was also widened three feet to accommodate increasing traffic demands. The modifications to the deck and guardrails, however, do not compromise the overall integrity of the structure. The unique concrete bents, abutments, approach berms, and steel girders are unaltered and continue to function in their historic capacity. The primary component of the overpass that distinguished it as an exemplary example of the Montana Highway Department's policy in the 1930s to design "functional and visually appealing" bridge structures, are the configuration of the bents and the girders. As long as those components remain unmodified, the overpass retains its historic integrity.

David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, Roadside Geology of Montana, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1991), 187.

Mossmain Overpass Name of Property	Yellowstone County, MT County and State				
Name of Property	County and Clare				
I. Statement of Significance					
Applicable National Register Criteria Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property or National Register listing)	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)				
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Engineering Transportation				
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.					
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant	Period of Significance				
and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	1936-1962				
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates				
	1936				
Criteria Considerations Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)	Significant Person				
roperty is:	(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)				
owed by a religious institution or used for religious A purposes.					
B removed from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation				
C a birthplace or grave.					
D a cemetery.	initiating man				
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Architect/Builder Montana Highway Department				
F a commemorative property.	James Crick				
G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.					

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance for this site encompasses the construction date of the overpass and continues through the historic period until 1961 and its subsequent use as an important component of US Highway 10 in Montana. The overpass is still in use.

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Mossmain Overpass

Name of Property

Yellowstone County, MT County and State

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The Mossmain Overpass can be listed on the National Register of Historic Places under criteria A and C. The bridge is representative of the Montana Highway Department's attempts to provide grade separation structures at important and busy at-grade railroad crossings to provide a safer roadway for motorists. It is also exemplary of the department's attempt to provide functional and visually appealing bridges on Montana's highways during the 1930s. While modifications occurred to the guardrails and the deck of the structure to accommodate current traffic demands, the distinctive cambered steel girders and concrete bents are intact and serve to visually distinguish this structure.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

The Mossmain Overpass is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the federal government and Montana Highway Department's program to provide overhead grade separation railroad overpass structures on roads with high traffic volume and/or dangerous at-grade railroad crossings. While the highway department relied on reinforced concrete T-beam overpasses during the early 1930s, by the time of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, the department turned increasingly to steel girder and stringer structures for overpasses. This bridge was part of the New Deal's Works Progress Grade Crossing program in effect from 1935 to 1937 when it was supplanted by a more ambitious program in 1938. The overpass was constructed under New Deal regulations and represents how the program was designed to maximize labor while minimizing the use of heavy machinery. The overpass also best exemplifies the department's policy of designing and building steel bridges that were both functional and visually appealing.

The overpass is also an excellent and intact example of the type of steel girder bridge designed and built by the Montana Highway Department that functioned as overhead grade separation structures between 1935 and 1937. The overpass retains a streamlined appearance standard to all steel girder or stringer bridges built during that period. In 1988, the Montana Department of Transportation removed the original concrete guardrails and sidewalks so that the structure could be widened to better accommodate increasing traffic demands on the frontage road between Laurel and Billings. The original guardrails were replaced by Jersey Rails. Fortunately, the rehabilitation did not include the distinctive cambered steel stringers and columnar concrete bents. These features make the bridge eligible for the National Register. The overpass is an excellent example of the type and is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C.

Engineering Significance

The Mossmain Overpass was the most massive steel railroad grade separation structure built by the Montana Highway Department during the 1930s. The structure crosses the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railway tracks at the east end of the Laurel rail yards and just west of the junction of the Great Northern's Billings & Northern Railroad with the Northern Pacific's line. Because of its association with the rail yards and the junction, the overpass crosses four tracks necessitating the long spans of the structure. The overpass incorporated a new fast-drying concrete for the bents and abutments. The overpass also incorporated the highway department's policy of designing functional and visually appealing structures. In 1938, highway department bridge designer Vere Maun wrote:

Good appearance in bridge structures can be obtained by the choosing of the proper type, by careful arrangement and proportioning of spans, honest structural design with simple lines, and by good workmanship. In the Montana Highway Bridge Division several studies are made of a bridge, sketches made, costs of each layout estimated and other factors considered before a choice is made. Then the layout is chosen that promises the best appearance as well as the most economical and suitable structure.

The Mossmain Overpass best exemplifies the department's design policies during the Great Depression. The overpass was also an important component of the highway department's efforts to provide railroad grade separation structures at busy at-grade crossings.²

² Vere P. Maun, "Bridge Building," The Center Line, 1:5 (May 1938), 34

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Mossmain Overpass

Name of Property

Vellowstone County, MT
County and State

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The replacement of the Yellowstone River bridge encouraged Laurel's business and civic leaders to lobby the highway commission for a new railroad overpass on U.S. Highway 10 between Laurel and Billings, which was one of the most heavily used roads in the state. To make matters worse, motorists had two dangerous at-grade crossings to traverse on what was also a very busy railroad. In July 1935, the Northern Pacific Railway and State Highway Commission designated a grade separation structure project east of Laurel as its number one priority. The overpass was one of the first to be funded under the federal government's Works Progress Grade Crossing program. Ben Ornburn completed the designs for the three-span, 271-foot steel girder structure in May 1935 according to the principals later articulated by his employee bridge designer Vere Maun: a structure that was functional and also visually appealing. On the first day of November 1935, the highway commission awarded the contract to Spokane contractor James Crick for the construction of the overpass at the railroad's Mossmain junction.³

Crick began work on the overpass the following month and had completed pouring the concrete for the piers by February 1936 when cold weather forced him to suspend work for a few weeks. The contractor used a new type of quick-setting concrete for the piers and deck. During the cold weather months, he encased the concrete piers in heavy building paper and used gas burners, called salamanders, to provide heat to cure the concrete. Despite precautions, though, one of the salamanders overheated and set fire to the wooden forms on one of the piers. By March, the pier had been repaired and work proceeded rapidly on the structure and its approaches.⁴

The overpass required nearly 157,000 cubic yards of fill material for the approaches. The soil was obtained on-site by the contractor and piled to 38 feet at its maximum height. The overpass utilized over one million pounds of structural steel on the superstructure and 48 tons of reinforcing steel embedded in the 774 cubic yards of concrete needed for the piers, deck, and guardrails. The overpass carried Highway 10 a maximum of 23 feet over four Northern Pacific tracks. Crick completed the structure in May 1936, fully three months ahead of schedule.⁵

The Mossmain Overpass opened with little fanfare on May 23rd. Northern Pacific brakeman George Yerger was first to drive a non-commercial vehicle over the bridge. The *Laurel Outlook* reported that the man "derived quite a thrill from the experiences" as it provided him with an "entirely new view of the far-flung Laurel yards, which he had known intimately for many years." The overpass was the longest and most massive steel girder bridge in the state when completed. Although the double-coursed concrete guardrails were replaced by much-less appealing Jersey Rails in 1988, the elegant cambered girders and streamlined appearance of the overpass continues to make it an aesthetically pleasing structure.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Alt, David and Donald W. Hyndman. Roadside Geology of Montana. (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1991).

Axline, Jon. Conveniences Sorely Needed: Montana's Historic Highway Bridges, 1860-1956. (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 2005).

Bridge Construction File: USWPGC Project No. WPGH 228-F, Unit 1, Montana Highway Department Bridge Bureau Records, 1920-1985, Unprocessed Collection, Montana Historical Society Research Center, Helena; U.S. Bureau Wires Assent, Rail Underpass Part of Deal," Laurel Outlook, 31 July 1935; "Place Mossmain Overpass on List of Next Lettings," Laurel Outlook, 23 October 1935; "Construction Begins on Mossmain Overpass, Road Changes are Involved," Laurel Outlook, 4 December 1935; Maun, "Bridge Building," 34; Montana State Highway Commission Meeting Minutes, Book 6, 377, 378.

Bridge Construction File; "Completion of Mossmain Overpass Hinges on Weather," Laurel Outlook, 12 February 1936.

⁵ Bridge Construction File; "Permanent Bridge is 82% Done, Overpass Ready Soon," *Laurel Outlook*, 13 May 1936; "Overpass at Mossmain Now in Use," *Laurel Outlook*, 27 May 1936; "Completion of Mossmain Overpass Hinges on Weather."

⁶ Bridge Construction File; "Overpass at Mossmain Now in Use;" Letter, William H. Larsen, Montana Department of Highways Construction Bureau, to Roger K. Scott, Federal Highway Administrator, 23 September 1988.

Mossmain	Mossmain Overpass			Yellowstone County, MT					
Name of Pro	pperty			County and State					
		SWPGC Project No. WPGH 226 5. Unprocessed Collection, Mon				hway Department Bridge Bureau esearch Center, Helena.			
Bridge Ins	pection Record N	lo. P00004057+07411. Montar	na D	epartme	ent of Transp	ortation. Helena, Montana.			
"Completic	on of Mossmain (Overpass Hinges on Weather." I	Laur	rel Outlo	ok, 12 Febru	ary 1936.			
"Construct	tion Begins on Mo	ossmain Overpass; Road Chang	ges	are Invo	lved." Laurel	Outlook, 4 December 1935.			
	lliam H. Larsen, M ministrator, 23 Se		ys C	onstruct	ion Bureau, t	o Roger K. Scott, Federal Highway			
Maun, Ver	re P. "Bridge Bui	Iding." The Center Line, 1:5 (Ma	y 19	38).					
Montana S	State Highway Co	ommission Meeting Minutes. Mo	onta	na Depa	rtment of Tra	ansportation. Helena, Montana.			
"Overpass	at Mossmain No	ow in Use." Laurel Outlook, 27 N	lay	1936.					
"Permane	nt Bridge is 82%	Done; Overpass Ready Soon."	Lau	rel Outlo	ok, 13 May 1	936.			
"Place Mo	ssmain Overpas	s on List of Next Lettings." Laure	el O	utlook, 2	3 October 19	35.			
"U.S. Bure	eau Wires Assent	, Rail Underpass Part of Deal."	Lau	rel Outlo	ok, 31 July 1	935.			
Previous do	ocumentation on file	(NPS):		Prima	ary location of	additional data:			
prelimin request		individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been			State Historic Pi Other State age	reservation Office			
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		e by the National Register ic Landmark			Local governme University	nt			
designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #			Other						
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #				Nam	e of repository:	Montana Department of Transportation			
2300 E									
Historic R	esources Survey	Number (if assigned):	-						
10. Geog	raphical Data								
Acreage o	of Property 3.	Ō							
		isted resource acreage)							
UTM Refe	ronces								
		on a continuation sheet)							
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2			4	-	- Francis	News			
Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing			

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary for the Mossmain Overpass measures 271 x 40 feet and encompasses the bridge and its approaches on both sides of the Montana Rail Link tracks. The boundary is centered on the overpass.

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Mossmain Overpass	Yellowstone County, MT
Name of Property	County and State

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Boundaries for the Mossmain Overpass are drawn to encompass the three spans of the structure, its immediate approaches and that portion of the Montana Rail Link tracks spanned by the overpass. The width is increased beyond the measurements of the structure to include the concrete bents and abutments.

name/title Jon Axline/Historian				
organization Montana Department of Transportation	date 10 June 2	2010		
street & number 2701 Prospect Avenue	telephone (406) 444-6258			
city or town Helena	state MT	zip code 59620-1001		
e-mail jaxline@mt.gov				

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
 A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
 - Continuation Sheets
 - Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

(See Continuation Sheets)

Property Owner:	
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)	
name Montana Department of Transportation	
street & number 2701 Prospect Avenue	telephone 406-444-6258

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

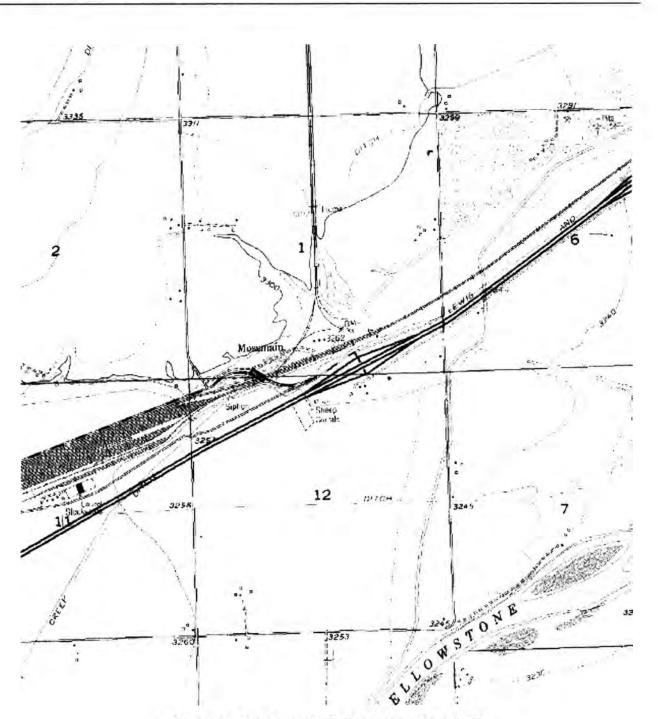
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Maps Page 9

Mossmain Overpass
Name of Property
Yellowstone, MT
County and State
Montana's Historic Steel Stringer and Steel
Girder Bridges, 1901-1961
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Mossmain, Montana USGS Quadrangle Map, 1969

Montana's Historic Steel Stringer and Steel

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs

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Mossmain Overpass

Girder Bridges, 1901-1961

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Name of Property Yellowstone, MT County and State

National Register Photographs

Name:

County and State:

Photographer: Date of Photograph:

Location of original negative: Description and view of camera:

Photograph:

Mossmain Overpass

Yellowstone County, Montana

Unknown circa 1936

Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana.

West elevation. View to the east

0001

Name:

County and State:

Photographer: Date of Photograph:

Location of original negative: Description and view of camera:

Photograph:

Mossmain Overpass

Yellowstone County, Montana

Kristi Hager

2005

Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.

West elevation. View to the north

0002

Montana's Historic Steel Stringer and Steel

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Mossmain Overpass

Girder Bridges, 1901-1961

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Name of Property Yellowstone, MT County and State



Photo 0001. Historic photograph of Mossmain Overpass. West elevation. View to the east.



Photo 0002. Mossmain Overpass. West elevation. View to north.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED AC	TION: NOMINA	rio	N				
PROPERTY M	lossman Overpa	ss					
MULTIPLE M	ontana's Stee	l s	tringer and	Ste	eel Girder Brid	ges MP	S
STATE & COUN	TY: MONTANA,	Ye	llowstone				
DATE RECEIVE DATE OF 16TH DATE OF WEEK	DAY: 3/26				PENDING LIST: 45TH DAY:	3/09/ 4/04/	
REFERENCE NU	MBER: 120001	74					
REASONS FOR	REVIEW:						
OTHER: N	DATA PROBLEM: PDIL: SAMPLE:	N N	LANDSCAPE: PERIOD: SLR DRAFT:	N N N	LESS THAN 50 Y PROGRAM UNAPPR NATIONAL:		N N N
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and loca and intac state hig technolo served a	I levels in the areas of the type the department in egy, the overpass was	of Tree of Mon s am	ansportation and grade separation tana in the 1930s long the largest o transportation de	Eng stru . Uti f its velo	Register Criteria A and ineering. The bridge is ctures designed and blizing typical steel gird type built during the poment. The resource	s an excel built by the der bridge eriod and	llent e
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DOCUMENTATIO	N see attached	d c	omments Y/N	see	e attached SLR	YAY	
If a nominat	ion is return	ed	to the nomin	nat	ing authority,	the	

nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Mossmain overpass Yellowstone Co., MT # 0001



Mossmain overpass Tellowstone Co., MT

