

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

MP - 2221

# 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: South Platte River Bridge

Other names/site number: 5PA.1250

Name of related multiple property listing:

Highway Bridges in Colorado

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: County Road 90a over South Platte River, mile marker 40

City or town: Lake George State: CO County: Park

Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

Signature of certifying official/Title: <u>Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer</u> <u>History Colorado, Office of Archaeology &amp; Historic Preservation</u>	Date: <u>5 February 2018</u>
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	
In my opinion, the property <input type="checkbox"/> meets <input type="checkbox"/> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

*for*   
Signature of the Keeper

*2-22-18*  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
<u>1</u>	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation: Road-related

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not in Use

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Concrete slab and girder bridge

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Concrete

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The South Platte River Bridge carries County Road 90A over the South Platte River at the north end of Lake George, Colorado in eastern Park County. The bridge was completed in 1920 to serve State Highway 8—which later became State Highway 4, U.S Highway 40 South, and is now U.S. Highway 24—and carry it over the South Platte River. The bridge is an early example of a standard-plan concrete deck and girder bridge in Colorado and is one of the few noteworthy examples of early highway bridges remaining in the state. The entire structure is 89' in length, 21.70' in width, and composed of two 40'-long concrete deck girder spans. The *Highway Bridges in Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) refers to the South Platte River Bridge as a noteworthy example of Colorado Highways Department (CHD) design standards for concrete slab and girder bridges during the 1920s. The bridge illustrates the type of design adopted by the CHD (later Colorado Department of Transportation or CDOT) during the era and embodies the standardization of transportation planning within the state.

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## Narrative Description

### *Immediate Surroundings*

The South Platte River Bridge is at the northwest end of the town of Lake George and lies immediately adjacent to the Lake George Reservoir to the southwest. This moderately sized reservoir historically had been used for harvesting ice to be shipped to the Front Range<sup>1</sup> and elsewhere. Currently it is mostly used for recreational fishing and small boats. The South Platte River runs along the east side of the reservoir where it crosses a narrow floodplain of a valley before entering the Tarryall Mountains. This floodplain is where the bridge crosses the South Platte River. Thick brush lines the banks of the river while the rest of the surrounding area is grassy prairie. The current alignment of U.S. Highway 24 and its associated bridge crosses the South Platte River immediately to the northeast of the South Platte River Bridge.

U.S. Highway 24 serves as the major east-west road through the southern end of Park County. The highway begins at the Kansas-Colorado border and its western terminus is located near Minturn, Colorado. The highway was rerouted near Lake George in 1936 and the former route over the bridge became County Road 90. Vehicular traffic access was closed in 2008 and is blocked on the north end by guardrails and on the south end by a closed gate. Park County retains ownership of the bridge, which has received little maintenance over the years.

### *Description*

The South Platte River Bridge is oriented southeast-to-northwest, crossing the South Platte River. In a 2000 Colorado Historic Bridge Inventory form, historian Clayton B. Fraser described the South Platte River Bridge as a structure with “two 40-foot reinforced concrete deck girder spans, supported by concrete abutments and a pier with bullnosed cutwaters” and a superstructure “comprised of six 22-inch-deep, reinforced concrete girders that carried an integrally poured, 8-inch-thick concrete deck.”<sup>2</sup> The beams have their effective span lengths somewhat reduced by arched brackets at the bearing points. The bridge has concrete curbs and concrete post-and-beam guardrails that frame the 20’-wide roadway. There is asphalt paving material that remains on top of the concrete decking.<sup>3</sup> In addition, placed in the curb of the southeast portion of the bridge is a bronze benchmark for the Denver Municipal Water Works (D.M.W.W.) with date (1930), elevation (7,923’), and other data. There have been few alterations made to the structure since its date of construction in 1920. The changes that have been made include the D.M.W.W. benchmark placed in 1930 and the barricades installed when the bridge was closed in 2008. The southeast end of the bridge is blocked by a steel tube gate

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<sup>1</sup> The Front Range is technically the front mountain range for the Colorado Rockies; however, it also colloquially refers to the Front Range Urban Corridor, this being the region along the eastern edge of the range where the majority of the state’s population is located.

<sup>2</sup> Clayton Fraser, “Historic Bridge Inventory: South Platte River Bridge,” On file at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Site No. 5PA.1250, March 21, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

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with a “Bridge Closed” sign attached. On this end there is also a post with a sign that reads “Dangerous Bridge: No Use Recommended.” The northwest end of the bridge is blocked by a waist-high steel guardrail, and another post. Each have the exact same signs attached as found on the southeast end. The bridge has been evaluated as structurally deficient for traffic and was barricaded in 2008.<sup>4</sup> The bridge has spalling on the curbs and square balustrade posts, and a couple of the posts have completely deteriorated, exposing some of the twisted rebar utilized to strengthen the concrete. This type of rebar was patented by Ernest L. Ransome in 1884 and its unique shape allows the rebar to be fixed within the material at every end, forming a rigid bond.<sup>5</sup> The bridge also has spalling and deterioration along the abutments and extensive deterioration at the base of the bullnosed pier.

### *Integrity*

Despite its deterioration, overall the South Platte River Bridge retains a good level of integrity and meets the requirements of integrity under the guidelines of the MPDF, in particular with its emphasis on materials and design as this bridge remains practically unaltered since its date of construction. The bridge remains in its initial site of construction and therefore maintains its original location. The setting of the bridge appears much as it was during its period of significance of 1920-1936. The surrounding area is rural with a grass-covered valley, historic reservoir, the town of Lake George, and the course of the South Platte River flowing into the Tarryall Mountains. The primary difference between now and the setting of the bridge’s period of significance is the 1936 realignment of what are now U.S. Highway 24 and its related bridge. The new bridge also runs southeast-to-northwest and is nearly parallel to the historic bridge. On the southeast end the bridges are approximately 75’ apart and 100’ apart on the northwest end. The resource has a good level of integrity in its materials. Although there has been deterioration and spalling of the concrete the bridge has not been altered since its period of significance. Because of this the workmanship of the resource is also readily apparent. The integrity of feeling for the bridge is good as it retains its appearance and setting, and continues to be recognizable as an early highway bridge. Furthermore, when U.S. Highway 24 was rerouted it was paved, while this stretch of road and bridge is essential unaltered and retains the feeling of traveling on Colorado’s early highways. The property also speaks to the historic contexts that led to its construction and type with which it is associated.

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<sup>4</sup> Colorado Department of Transportation, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure PA90-W0.1-S24, Located at CDOT, Staff Bridge, Denver, CO.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest L. Ransome, Building Construction, U.S. Patent No. 305,226 filed May 1, 1884, and issued September 16, 1884.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- 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 and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation

Engineering

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1920-1936

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1920

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Colorado Highway Department

J. R. Donaghy

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The South Platte River Bridge is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Transportation as well as under Criterion C in the area of Engineering. Throughout its various designations (State Highway 8, State Highway 4, U.S. Highway 40 South, and U.S. Highway 24) this route was an important transportation corridor and link to population centers like Colorado Springs. The South Platte River Bridge remains as an intact reminder of this particular Colorado highway and the structures that carried its route. The period of significance for Transportation begins with its date of construction (1920) and ends when U.S. Highway 24 was re-routed over a new bridge (1936). Additionally, the bridge is significant for Engineering as a relatively early use of concrete construction and speaks to the codification of design standards as promulgated by the CHD. The period of significance for Engineering is its date of construction in 1920 as it marks when the resource obtained its historic characteristics and form. The South Platte River Bridge fulfills the registration requirements of the *Highway Bridges in Colorado* MPDF under the property type of “concrete slab and girder bridges.”

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The South Platte River Bridge was originally documented and evaluated in 2000 during a state-wide historic bridge inventory completed by historian Clayton B. Fraser and is specifically referenced within the narrative of the *Highway Bridges in Colorado* MPDF. In discussing the evolution of Colorado Highway Department bridges it argues that concrete slab and girder bridges were reflective of changing bridge standards and CHD design policy in the 1920s. The South Platte River Bridge is referenced as one of the noteworthy examples of standard concrete or steel beam designs “that remain intact from this formative period” of department history.<sup>6</sup>

Under the MPDF it is noted that “concrete slab or girder bridges in Colorado may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with the events that have made a significant contribution to the broad historical patterns of the country, the state, or the region,” in particular when “those bridges have played an important role in the development of the state’s highway transportation system.” In addition, the concrete slab and girder bridge property type must meet particular registration requirements under the criteria. Specific requirements under Criterion A applicable to the South Platte River Bridge include requirement 1: being one of the few bridges that remain in place that were designed by the Colorado Highway Commission/Colorado Highway Department in the 1910s and early 1920s; and requirement 2: as this particular bridge is also associated with a significant route that “helped

<sup>6</sup> Clayton Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado* National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Denver, 2000, E32.

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open up a region for travel and commerce” and is unaltered from the period of significance.<sup>7</sup> The bridge qualifies as an example constructed by the CHD in 1920 that remains in place and practically unaltered from its date of construction. The bridge is also an example of the work undertaken as road and bridge construction was organization under state and federal agencies and representative of the standardization those agencies brought to bridge design. The bridge also qualifies in that is it associated with a significant route that was part of the broader development of the state’s highway system. As State Highway 4, the route carried a section of the Pikes Peak Ocean-to-Ocean Highway that stretched from New York City to Los Angeles during the 1910s and 1920s. By the 1930s and 1940s, the route had become one of the state’s most popular tourist highways, helping fuel the industry that sustains many mountain towns and is a central feature to the Colorado economy. The artery of U.S. Highway 24 through much of Colorado was and continues to be one of the most important tourist routes for the state. The authors of a 2002 context of Colorado state highways found this section of U.S. Highway 24 (5PA.2004.1) eligible for National Register listing in its own right as an important piece of transportation history within Colorado.<sup>8</sup>

The MPDF also states that these structures may be eligible under Criterion C for the significance of their engineering and “must have definitive historical documentation and superlative features that distinguish them from their peers.” This may include early construction date, exceptional length of span or number of spans, or well-executed architectural design. The South Platte River Bridge also meets requirement 1 under Criterion C as an early and/or representative concrete slab and deck girder bridge.<sup>9</sup> With a construction date of 1920, the South Platte River Bridge is a relatively early example of the property type as many counties were slow in adopting concrete construction. The bridge is also a representative example of this type of engineering. The concrete slab construction with parallel lines of beams running under the roadway exemplifies the standard designs promulgated by the CHD. Furthermore, historian Clayton B. Fraser’s description of the type as featuring “haunches that were angled or arched to decrease the effective span length by cantilevering” and their roadways as “bounded on both sides by solid concrete parapets or concrete post-and-beam guardrails” perfectly encapsulates the appearance of this particular bridge.<sup>10</sup> Of the six concrete slab and girder bridges from the 1920s that are discussed in the *Highway Bridges in Colorado* MPDF, the Spring Creek Bridge in Kit Carson County (5KC.168) is the only other to be listed in the National Register (NRIS.02001143, listing date October 15, 2002).

## Developmental History and Historic Context

The corridor through which U.S. Highway 24 runs and that the South Platte River Bridge serviced had long been a path of travel. Long before any Euro- or Anglo-American peoples made

<sup>7</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, F71-72. ()

<sup>8</sup> Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky*, 11:76-11:78; Deborah Dobson-Brown and Robert Autobee, “CDOT Historic Highway Context,” On file at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Site No. 5PA.2004.1, January 31, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, F71-F72.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, F68.

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their way through the area the Utes and other tribal groups used the area for their seasonal travels. Following their forcible displacement, Euro-American settlers began to come on foot and stagecoach, soon to be followed by the Midland Railroad. The state roads and highways then made their way across much of what had been the former rail grade. This route was also an early corridor for automobile travel and the South Platte River Bridge is one of the few noteworthy examples of Colorado's early highway bridges and an unaltered example of its type.

Bridges and other transportation infrastructure not only reflect advancement in fabrication technology, design, and construction techniques, they also represent the cultural values of the communities and agencies that built them and speak to the ambitions of society. This is particularly true of a state such as Colorado where themes of overland transportation such as migratory subsistence practices, exploration, colonization, and mobility have long defined the peoples who have made the area of the state their home.<sup>11</sup>

As settlements and towns sprang up along sites of mineral extraction, rivers, or along rail lines, overland roads began to be laid across the landscape. This undertaking was often done on an ad-hoc basis to connect people to settlements and major transportation networks such as the railroads.<sup>12</sup> These roads and bridges were often difficult, unreliable, and in the Colorado high country, even treacherous. Little was done for roads in the early years of the territory and state as the rapid expansion of the railroads led many to believe travel by foot, horse, and wagon would be largely unnecessary. However, beginning in the late 1800s things began to change and an unlikely coalition of bicyclists, motorists, farmers, and local boosters formed a movement that greatly shaped transportation in the state and a nation as a whole.<sup>13</sup>

In 1878, Colonel Albert Pope introduced the "safety bicycle" that led to a rapid increase of bicycle ownership and associated interest groups. Pope and other enthusiasts began to advocate for road improvements and launched the Good Roads movement. Increased participation in bicycling and the Good Roads movement eventually dovetailed into the rise of the automobile. Automobile ownership rapidly expanded with the introduction of Henry Ford's mass produced Model T in 1908, which created a new and growing constituency of people advocating for good roads.<sup>14</sup> Historian Marion C. Wiley argues that the result "of the whole thing was that this mass-produced, low-cost automobile would before long put millions of cars in the hands of owners who wanted good roads to carry them."<sup>15</sup> As automobile ownership increased a newly mobile class of citizens became untethered from railroad transportation and began to explore and vacation on their own terms. Soon auto clubs formed that advocated for recreational car travel, and families began to take their vacations on the road. Local boosters quickly realized the

<sup>11</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, E1

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* E16.

<sup>13</sup> Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky: A Context and History of Colorado's Highway System* (Denver: Colorado Department of Transportation, 2002), 5:2.

<sup>14</sup> Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky*, 5:1 – 5:2.

<sup>15</sup> Colorado Division of Highways, *The High Road* (Denver: State Department of Highways, 1976), 12.

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automobile provided tourism-based economic opportunities as well as access to markets.<sup>16</sup> All of these groups began to push for good roads and for more active involvement by the Colorado legislature as well as the federal government.

The mountainous regions of the state meant difficult terrain and in the Colorado high country, good roads often included dependable bridges. Historic and current routes into and through the mountains often follow rivers as naturally occurring byways. Nevertheless, although they followed the path of least resistance, roads still encountered rough topography, steep canyons, and the rivers themselves that shaped the terrain. The mountains often include long uninhabited stretches of country. In order to serve the dispersed settlements and to cater to the growing tourism industry, the physical obstacles of the region had to be overcome by good roads with bridges as an integral part. The importance of this infrastructure brought together various groups with potentially diverse goals to lobby for roads.<sup>17</sup>

By 1908, the Good Roads Association, Colorado Auto Club, and the Rocky Mountain Highway Association combined their efforts in lobbying the state legislature and were able to put increasing pressure on the state to take action. In 1910, these efforts culminated in the passing of the Taylor Bill that established the Colorado State Highway Commission, composed of three members and a budget of \$56,000.<sup>18</sup> The commissioners set out on a tour to establish feasible routes for state roads. This included a route from Colorado Springs to Buena Vista, which became the South Park Highway. This highway turned into State Highway 8 in 1916 and State Highway 4 in the 1920s, the route of which followed much of the current path of U.S. Highway 24. The route of State Highway 4 was re-designated as U.S. Highway 40 South in 1926 and then into the modern U.S. Highway 24 across most of its length by 1936.<sup>19</sup>

Although the Colorado Highway Commission and its Internal Improvement Fund were strides forward in road development, funding and planning still lagged behind the needs of citizens and vacationers who began to stream into the state during the 1910s. Groups continued to push for more comprehensive planning, which led to more federal involvement with the passage of the 1916 Federal Highway Act that provided funds for the building of roads. The following year, the Colorado legislature passed the Highway Act that transitioned the Highway Commission into the Colorado Highway Department.<sup>20</sup> Following World War I, automobile ownership rapidly expanded, further fueling the growth of tourism in the state as well as the demand for comprehensively planned and well-built roads.

Of course good roads do not only include grades with gravel or paving on them. In order to move through the state by automobile, people had to cross the many drainages, creeks, and rivers of the

<sup>16</sup> Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky*, 5:12; Colorado Division of Highways, *The High Road*, 11.

<sup>17</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, E7, E24.

<sup>18</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, E24; Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky*, 5:18.

<sup>19</sup> Colorado Division of Highways, *The High Road*, 11.; Associated Cultural Resource Experts, *Highways to the Sky*, 11:75-11:76.

<sup>20</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, E28-E29.

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state and depended on well-built bridges. Shortly after its establishment, the Highway Commission set to refining the standard bridge designs placed along state and county roads. In 1915 to 1916 the Highway Commission constructed 275 bridges, replacing many wood structures with steel and/or concrete spans in their campaign to standardize bridge construction.<sup>21</sup> A July 18, 1918 issue of the *Colorado Highways Bulletin* published by the CHD argued that the present condition of bridges forcibly demonstrated “the absolute need of greater care in the location and construction of bridges on all state and county roads,” and that there should be a law to ensure that “all bridges and culverts should be built in conformity to a rigid standard design.”<sup>22</sup> The following year the CHD published standard bridge designs in an issue of *Colorado Highways Bulletin* that illustrated standards for concrete girder, steel truss, and reinforced concrete arch bridges that provided for slight variation according to conditions. An illustration plate for the article reflects the form that the South Platte River Bridge would take the next year (Figure 1).<sup>23</sup>

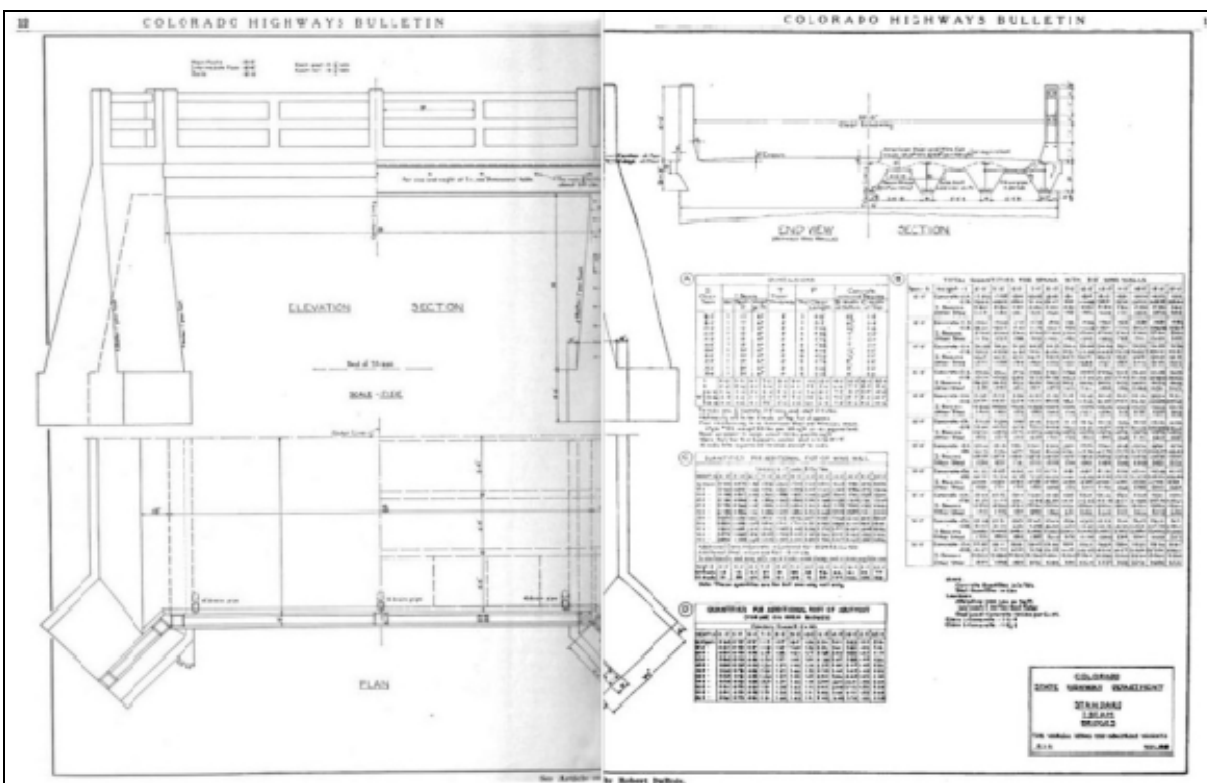


Figure 1: Illustration plate from *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 2:12 (December, 1919), 11-12.

In 1920, with a more vigorous state and federal presence in road and bridge construction, the CHD and U.S. Bureau of Public Roads funded Federal Aid Project 112 as part of a larger \$315,000 package for projects in 1920. Federal Aid Project 112 was specific to improvements

<sup>21</sup> Fraser, *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, E28-E29.

<sup>22</sup> “Rigid Standards Needed in Good Bridge Construction,” *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 1:4 (July 1918), 5.

<sup>23</sup> “Standard I-Beam Bridges,” *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 2:12 (December, 1919), 6.

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along a three-quarter mile section of the highway between Divide and Lake George and the contract was awarded to a J. R. Donaghy. The major piece of work for this project was construction of a concrete bridge over the South Platte River. The South Platte River Bridge carried mainline traffic until the route was re-aligned over another bridge immediately to the north in 1936.<sup>24</sup> On June 23, 1930, the Highway Advisory Board held a meeting to discuss a proposed road change in Park County “rendered necessary by the proposed construction, by the City of Denver, of a dam in Eleven Mile Canyon.”<sup>25</sup> Construction on the dam began in 1930 and the project was completed two years later.<sup>26</sup> The beginning date of construction correlates to the D.M.W.W. benchmark located on the bridge and a later map also indicates that a flow gage for the department was attached to the bridge. The flow gage was installed in order to monitor the water released into the South Platte River through the dam located in Eleven Mile Canyon. The exact reason for the benchmark remains unclear beyond marking the presence of a D.M.W.W. flow gage. Research with Denver Water did not turn up any additional information on what the benchmark was meant to indicate, or specifics of what the center inscription signified.

From 1927 until late 1930, the route of State Highway 4/U.S. Highway 40 South turned to the southwest before the bridge, following what is now County Road 96 through Eleven Mile Canyon (Figure 2). The path the highway took became blocked by the reservoir behind Eleven Mile Canyon Dam. This necessitated the road change discussed by the Advisory Board in 1930. This moved the highway route “from a point southerly from Lake George, thence westerly to a point approximately two miles west of Glenrivar (sic),” taking the highway along what had been its former route and at the time was State Highway No. 128 over Wilkerson Pass. The Advisory Board minutes indicate that the City and County of Denver had offered to pay the State a total of \$85,000 for the improvement of any road selected to serve in lieu of the portion of the road that had to be abandoned because of the dam.<sup>27</sup> In 1936, plans were approved for the realignment of State Highway No. 4/U.S. Highway 40 South which was re-designated as U.S. Highway 24. The plans show the proposed alignment and new bridge, indicating that the South Platte River Bridge would remain in place and the present road would be retained as a dike for the river, a role it continues to serve in case the adjacent lake or river were to flood (Figure 3).<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Fraser, “Historic Bridge Inventory,” Site File No. 5PA.1250.; Colorado Transportation Commission Resolutions, 1920, On file at the Colorado Department of Transportation Library, Denver, CO, 78; “Federal Aid Projects for 1920,” *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 2:10 (October, 1919), 15.

<sup>25</sup> Colorado State Highway Commission, Minutes, June 23, 1930, On file at the Colorado Department of Transportation Library, Denver, CO, 949.

<sup>26</sup> Colorado Parks and Wildlife, “Eleven Mile: History,” <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ElevenMile/Pages/History.aspx> (accessed September 19, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Colorado State Highway Commission, Minutes, June 23, 1930, 359-360.

<sup>28</sup> Colorado Highway Department, Plan and Profile of Proposed A.W.P. 5004, State Highway No. 4, approved March 3, 1936, Sheet 16.

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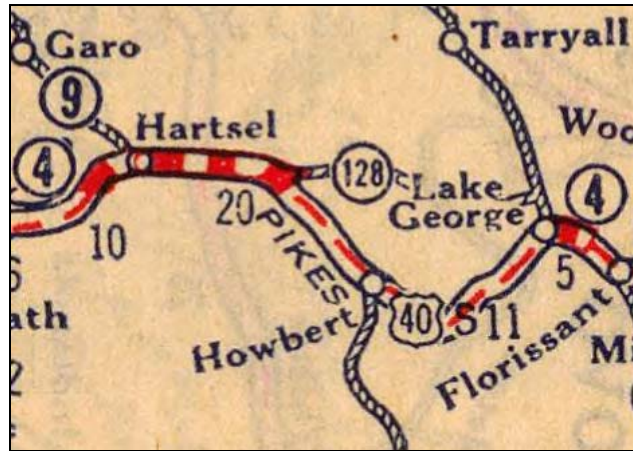


Figure 2: Detail of 1927 Rand McNally map showing route before construction of the dam.

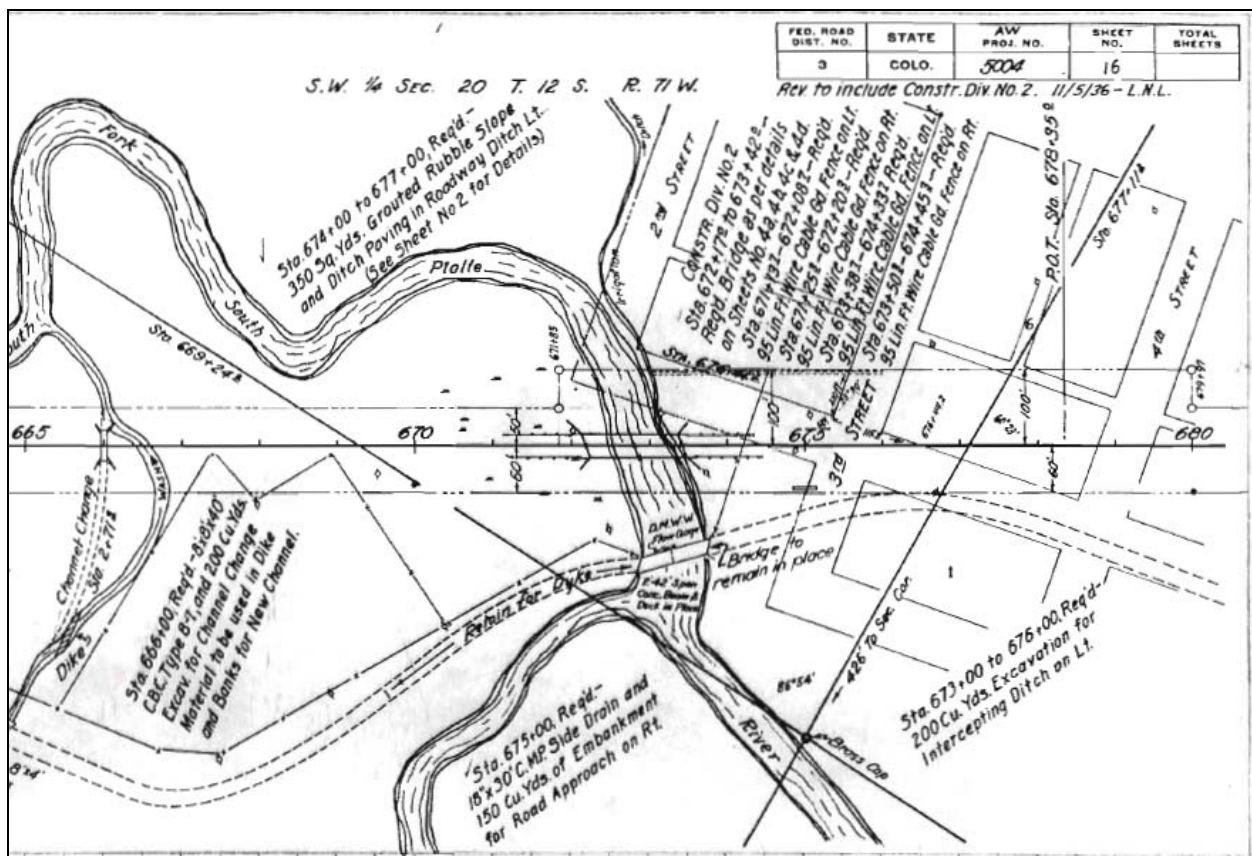


Figure 3: Detail of Plan and Profile of State Highway No. 4 realignment.

South Platte River Bridge  
Highway Bridges in Colorado MPS  
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County and State

As the bridge was closed and barricaded in 2008 it no longer carries auto traffic as it had in the past. Currently, its modern use consists of being a popular local spot to fish off of into the South Platte River. At the time of the nomination there were no future plans for the South Platte River Bridge. The rerouting of the highway over an adjacent bridge in 1936 led the South Platte River Bridge to remain intact and to look as it did then, practically unchanged from its historic appearance. The bridge therefore stands as an excellent example of the property type and speaks to the history of transportation in the state.



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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Associated Cultural Resource Experts. *Highways to the Sky: A Context and History of Colorado's Highway System* (Denver: Colorado Department of Transportation, 2002).

Fraser, Clayton. *Highway Bridges in Colorado* National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. On file with the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Denver, 2000.

Fraser, Clayton B. "Historic Bridge Inventory: South Platte River Bridge." On file at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Site No. 5PA.1250, March 21, 2000.

Colorado Department of Transportation. Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure PA90-W0.1-S24, Located at CDOT, Staff Bridge, Denver, CO.

Colorado Division of Highways. *The High Road* (Denver: State Department of Highways, 1976).

Colorado Highway Department, Plan and Profile of Proposed A.W.P. 5004, State Highway No. 4, approved March 3, 1936.

Colorado Parks and Wildlife. "Eleven Mile: History."

<http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ElevenMile/Pages/History.aspx> (accessed September 19, 2017).

Colorado State Highway Commission, Minutes, June 23, 1930. On file at the Colorado Department of Transportation Library, Denver, CO.

Colorado Transportation Commission Resolutions, 1920. On file at the Colorado Department of Transportation Library, Denver, CO.

Dobson-Brown, Deborah and Robert Autobee. "CDOT Historic Highway Context." On file at the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Site No. 5PA.2004.1, January 31, 2002.

"Federal Aid Projects for 1920." *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 2:10 (October, 1919).

Rand McNally and Company. "Rand McNally Junior Auto Road Map: Colorado." (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1927).

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Ransome, Ernest L. Building Construction, U.S. Patent No. 305,226 filed May 1, 1884, and issued September 16, 1884.

“Rigid Standards Needed in Good Bridge Construction.” *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 1:4 (July 1918).

“Standard I-Beam Bridges.” *Colorado Highways Bulletin* 2:12 (December, 1919).

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: History Colorado

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** 5PA.1250

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** Less than one

South Platte River Bridge  
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Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:

2. Latitude: Longitude:

3. Latitude: Longitude:

4. Latitude: Longitude:

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: 13 Easting: 468526 Northing: 4315332

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting: Northing:

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The bridge is located on County Road 90 at milepost 40. The boundary consists of the bridge itself and the right of way 30' on either side from the bridge's center line, all of which is owned by Park County.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination includes all the land historically associated with the bridge.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jason O'Brien, Preservationist II  
organization: Park County Department of Heritage, Tourism and Community Development  
street & number: 418 Main St, PO Box 1373  
city or town: Fairplay state: CO zip code: 80440  
e-mail: jobrien@parkco.us  
telephone: (719) 836-4292  
date: 9/20/2017

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log

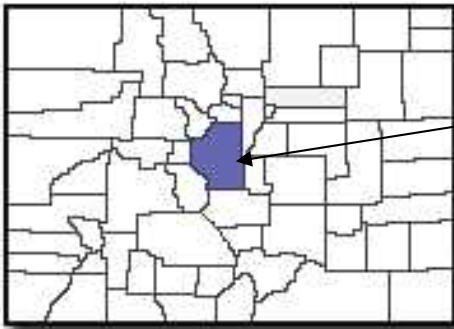
Name of Property: South Platte River Bridge  
City or Vicinity: Lake George  
County: Park State: Colorado  
Photographer: Jason O'Brien  
Date Photographed: June 11, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

South Platte River Bridge  
Highway Bridges in Colorado MPS  
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- 001\_View to northeast
- 002\_View to the west
- 003\_View to the northwest
- 004\_View to the southeast
- 005\_East side stringer
- 006\_Detail of pier
- 007\_Girders view to the southeast
- 008\_Detail of cantilevered bracket
- 009\_Detail of abutment, view to southeast
- 010\_Detail of benchmark medallion
- 011\_Rebar detail



South Platte River  
Bridge, 5PA.1250

Location: Park County

South Platte River Bridge  
Highway Bridges in Colorado MPS  
Name of Property

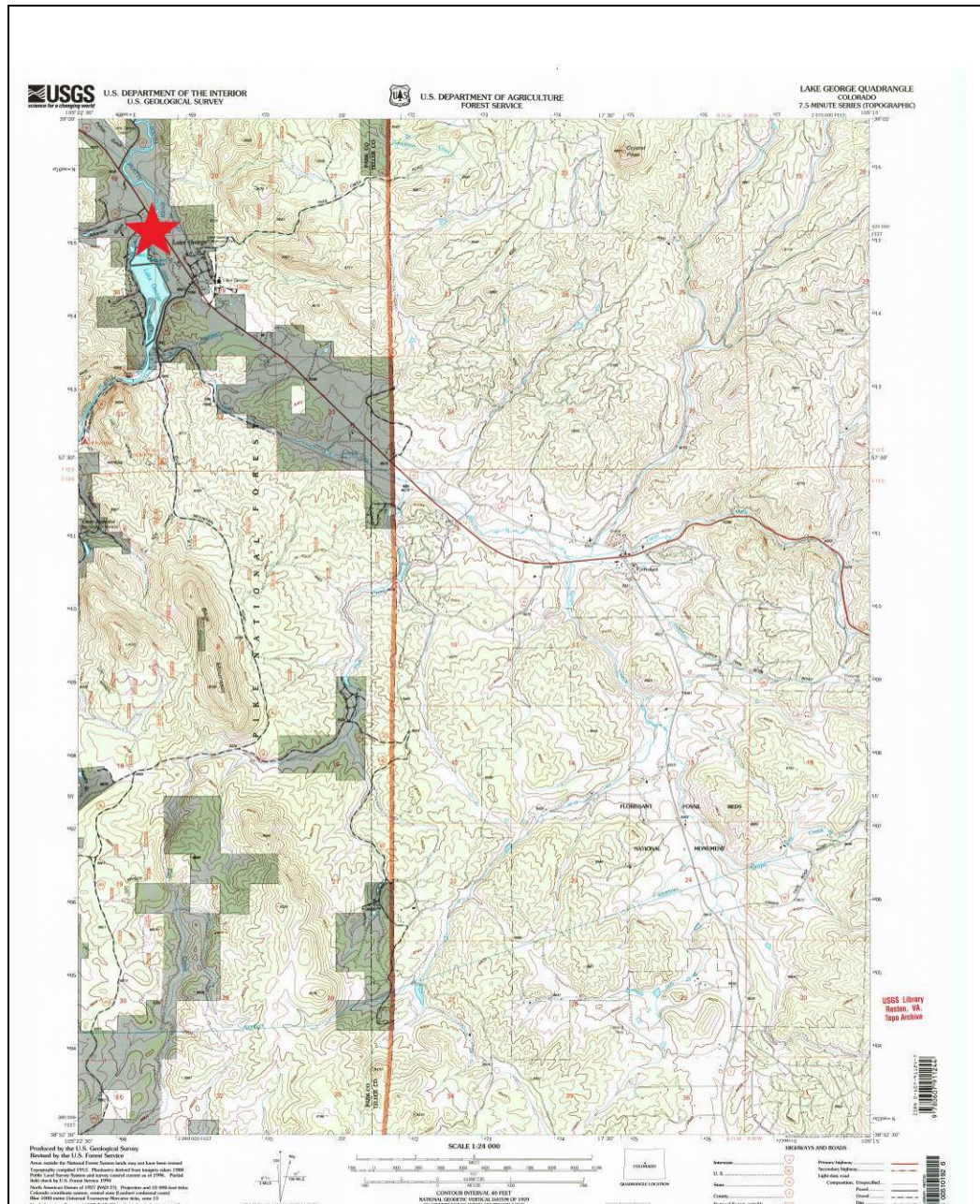
Park County, Colorado  
County and State

# USGS Topographic Map

## Lake George Quadrangle, Colorado: 7.5 Minute Series

T 12S R 71W SE,SE,SE,SE Section 19

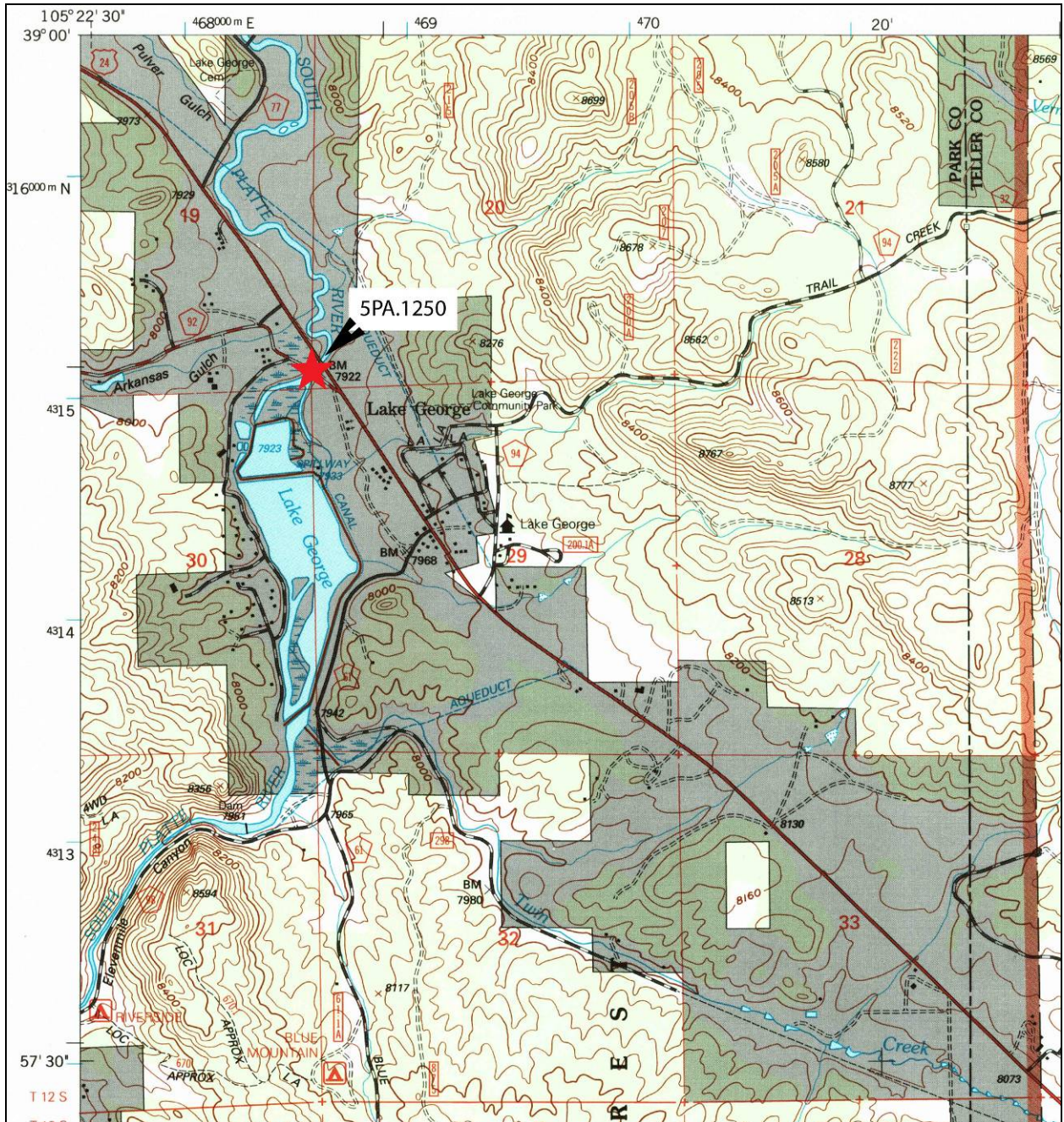
UTM: Zone 13 468526mE; 4315332mN





South Platte River Bridge  
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South Platte River Bridge  
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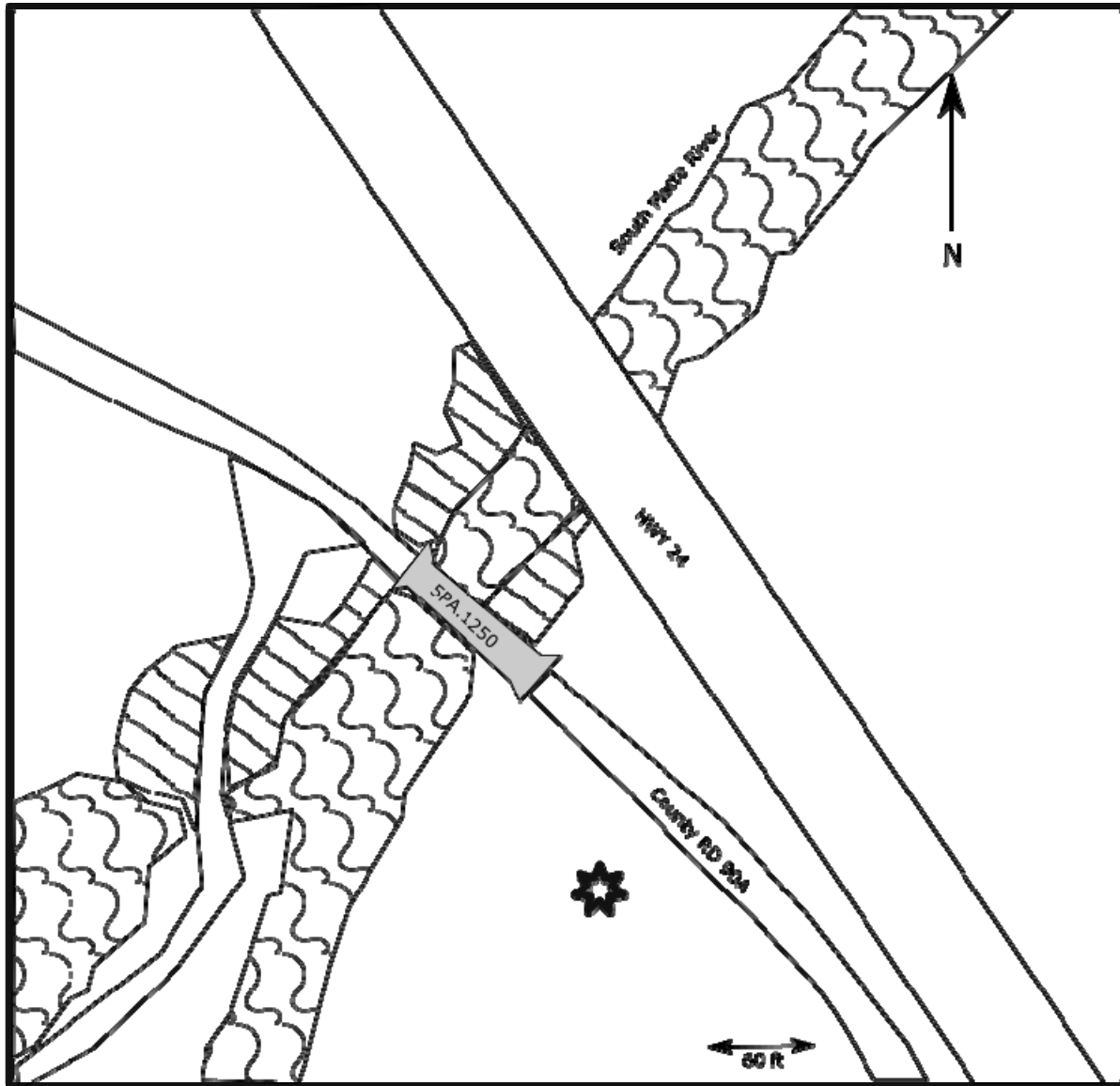
**UTM Coordinates (NAD 83):** Zone 13

1: 468526mE; 4315332mN



South Platte River Bridge  
Highway Bridges in Colorado MPS  
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**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 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.







**DANGEROUS  
BRIDGE**  
NO USE  
RECOMMENDED

**BRIDGE  
CLOSED**





BRIDGE  
CLOSED

DANGEROUS  
BRIDGE  
NO USE  
RECOMMENDED





















D.M.W.N.  
1930  
B.M.  
NO. 1  
ELEV. 7923



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received:       Date of Pending List:       Date of 16th Day:       Date of 45th Day:       Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject       Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer       Discipline

Telephone       Date

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.





# HISTORY *Colorado*

February 5, 2018

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
Chief, NR and NHL Programs  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240



Dear Mr. Loether:

We are pleased to submit for your review the enclosed National Register of Historic Places nomination for the South Platte River Bridge (5PA.1250) in Park County, Colorado.

The Colorado Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the nomination at its meeting on January 19, 2018. The board voted unanimously to recommend to the State Historic Preservation Officer that the property met the criteria for listing in the National Register.

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the South Platte River Bridge to the National Register of Historic Places.

We look forward to the formal listing of this property. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at 303-866-4683 or by email at [erika.warzel@state.co.us](mailto:erika.warzel@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

Erika Warzel  
National and State Register Coordinator, State Preservation Planning Manager  
(303) 866-4683  
[erika.warzel@state.co.us](mailto:erika.warzel@state.co.us)

Enclosures

CDs (2)  
Signature Page