NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name: Columbus Loup River Bridge
other name/site number: NEHBS Number PT00-68

## 2. Location

street & number: U.S. Highway 30 over the Loup River — N/A not for publication
city, town: south edge of Columbus — N/A vicinity
state NE county: Platte code 141 zip code 68601

## 3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Nebraska Department of Roads
Category of Property: structure

| Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|
| Contributing | Noncontributing |
| 0 | 0 buildings |
| 0 | 0 sites |
| 1 | 0 structures |
| 0 | 0 objects |
| 1 | 0 Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0
Name of related multiple property listing: **Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870-1942**

## 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Bob Puschendorf DSHPO — 5/6/92
Signature of certifying official — Date

Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official — Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

## 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Entered in the National Register
Register
National Park Service

✓ entered in the National Register — Richard Byrne — 6/29/92
____ see continuation sheet
____ determined eligible for the National Register ____ see continuation sheet
____ determined not eligible for the National Register
____ removed from the National Register
____ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

| Historic Function (enter categories from instructions) | Current Function (enter categories from instructions) |
|---|---|
| TRANSPORTATION/road-related | TRANSPORTATION/road-related |

## 7. Description

| Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions) | Materials (enter categories from instructions) | |
|---|---|---|
| OTHER /rigid-connected Parker through truss | foundation | N/A |
| | walls | N/A |
| | roof | N/A |
| | other | N/A |

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Columbus Loup River Bridge spans the Loup River on the southern edge of Columbus. Other than maintenance-related repairs, the bridge remains essentially unaltered as it continues to carry vehicular traffic. The Columbus Loup River Bridge today retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A description of the structure follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| span number: | 7 | construction date: | 1932-1933 |
| span length: | 160.0' | construction cost: | $451,023.76 |
| total length: | 1270.0' | current condition: | excellent |
| roadway wdt.: | 24.0' | alterations: | none |

superstructure: steel, 8-panel, rigid-connected Parker through truss
substructure: concrete abutments, wingwalls and piers
floor/decking: asphalt covered concrete deck over I-beam stringers
other features: upper chord: 2 channels with cover plates and lacing; lower chord: 2 channels with batten plates; vertical: 2 channels with batten plates; diagonal: 2 angles with batten plates, two angles with lacing; strut: 2 angles with lacing; lateral bracing: angles; guardrail: steel with concrete curbing.

___See continuation sheet

## 8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: statewide

| | |
|---|---|
| Applicable National Register Criteria | C |
| Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) | N/A |
| Areas of Significance | Engineering |
| Period of Significance | 1932-33 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.) |
| Significant Dates | 1932-33 |
| Cultural Affiliation | N/A |
| Significant Person | N/A |
| Architect/Builder (Designer) | Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges |
| (Fabricator) | Omaha Steel Works, Omaha NE |
| (Builder) | Omaha Steel Works, Omaha NE |

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations and areas of significance noted above.

Built in 1888 by the King Iron Bridge Company, the first bridge over the Loup River at its mouth, just south of Columbus was one of Nebraska's most visually striking spans, with its four 250-foot pinned through trusses and lengthy trussed approaches. The structure, combined with another multiple-span truss over the Platte River immediately south, served as a regionally important vehicular crossing, and it proved strategic in the routing of the Lincoln Highway between Fremont and Grand Island in the 1910s. By the late 1920s, however, both bridges had become liabilities. The Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges replaced the Platte River bridge in 1930-31, and late in 1931 bureau engineers designed a replacement for the Loup River bridge. The new Columbus Loup River Bridge consisted of seven riveted Parker through trusses and was immense, consuming nearly 2 million pounds of superstructural steel, some 15,000 feet of steel piling and almost 2000 cubic yards of concrete. Early in 1932 the bureau awarded a construction contract for the new bridge to the Omaha Steel Company. The existing bridge was dismantled and two of the spans (NEHBS Nos. SH00-42 and SH00-43) were re-erected in Sheridan County. Omaha Steel, meanwhile, devoted over a year to fabricating and building the new bridge, completing it in mid-1933 for an overall cost of $451,023.76, including approach grading. The structure has since carried vehicular traffic along heavily traveled U.S. Highway 30. With only minimal maintenance-related changes, the Columbus Bridge retains a high degree of physical integrity.

The state bureau of roads ordinarily eschewed truss construction in favor of steel stringers and deck girders for its multiple-span structures over the Platte and Loup Rivers. "As might be expected the steel-truss type of bridge is being used sparingly," the bureau reported in 1938, "due to the better adaptation of deck [girder] construction to the Nebraska terrain and stratigraphy." With an overall length of 1270 feet, the Columbus Loup River Bridge was one of the longest trussed crossings developed by the state bureau of roads. It is today the longest vehicular truss bridge in the state, aside from the Missouri River structures. The Columbus Loup River Bridge is technologically significant as a culmination of truss design by the Nebraska State Engineer.

For further contextual information regarding bridge building in Nebraska, registration requirements, and property types, see related multiple property listing "Highway Bridges in Nebraska, 1870 - 1942."

___See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Nebraska Department of Roads, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure Number S030 37773L; Department of Public Works, **Nineteenth Biennial Report**, 1931-1932, pp. 73, 77; Department of Roads and Irrigation, **Twentieth Biennial Report**, 1933-1934, pp. 30, 83, 96; Plans for "Special Design Class H-15, Columbus Loup River Bridge, 7-160' High Trusses and 2-75' Deck Steel Girders, 24' Roadway, Platte County - prepared by State of Nebraska, Department of Public Works, 1 December 1931; Platte County Supervisors' Record, Book 2: 2 December 1886 (pp.52-53), 14 December 1886 (pp. 56-57), 21 January 1887 (page 96), 12 December 1887 (pp. 194-195), 13 December 1887 (page 208), 7 March 1888 (page 259), 3 October 1888 (page 317); Sheridan County Commissioners Record Book E, 31 August 1933 (page 560), 16 October 1933 (page 571), 3 January 1935 (page 658); field inspection by Clayton Fraser, 16 November 1989.

___See continuation sheet

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 #

Primary location of additional data:

__x__ State historic preservation office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
Other (specify repository:)

## 10. Geographical Data

| | |
|---|---|
| Acreage of Property | less than one acre |
| Cadastral Reference | S30, T17N, R1E |
| USGS Quadrangle | Columbus (7.5 Minute Series, 1958; photorevised 1978) |
| UTM References | zone 14 easting 636405 northing 4586110 |

___See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a narrow, rectangular shaped parcel measuring 1270 feet by 26 feet, which is centered on the UTM point listed above. Included within this rectangular parcel are the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, and approach spans.

___See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated structure includes the bridge's superstructure, substructure, floor system, any approach spans and the property on which they rest. These boundaries encompass, but do not exceed, all of the property that has been historically associated with this bridge.

___See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By


| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| name/title | Clayton B. Fraser, Principal | | |
| organization | **Fraser**design and Hess, Roise and Company | date | 30 June 1991 |
| street & number | 1269 Cleveland Avenue | telephone | 303-669-7969 |
| city or town | Loveland | state | Colorado zip code 80537 |