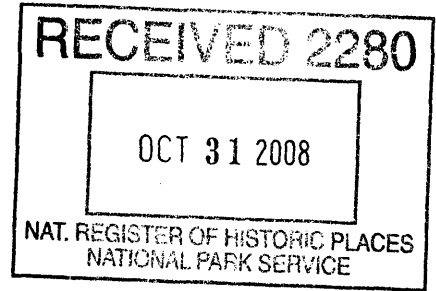


(Oct. 1990)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**



1181

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Santa Fe River Park Channel
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Alameda

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: _____ **NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A**
CITY OR TOWN: Santa Fe **VICINITY: N/A**
STATE: New Mexico **CODE: NM** **COUNTY: Santa Fe** **CODE: 049** **ZIP CODE: 87504**

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Kathleen Slick

Signature of certifying official

27 October 2008

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register 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): _____

for
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Edison K. Beall 12-10-08

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: private; public-local; public State

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Structure

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	0	0 BUILDINGS
	0	0 SITES
	7	10 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	7	10 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: One. The associated Don Gaspar Bridge is individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places (02001163)

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: *The Historic and Architectural Resources of the new Deal in New Mexico*

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: Landscape: park
Natural feature: river
Government: public works (channel improvement)

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: Landscape: park
Natural feature: river
Government: public works (channel improvement)

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Other

MATERIALS: **FOUNDATION:** STONE
WALLS : STONE
ROOF N/A
OTHER: CONCRETE

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-12).

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- 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 VALUE, 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: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Social History; Landscape Architecture

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1933-1940

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1933; 1940

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Civilian Conservation Corps

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-13 through 8-17).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-18).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- 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:

- State historic preservation office (*Historic Preservation Division, Office of Cultural Affairs*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: New Mexico State Parks

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: approximately 6.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES	Zone	Easting	Northing
1. (East terminus)	13	0416996	3948872
2. (West terminus)	13	0414920	3949414

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (see contention sheet 10-19)

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION (see contention sheet 10-19)

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: David Kammer, Ph.D.

ORGANIZATION: consulting historian

DATE: June, 2008

STREET & NUMBER: 521 Aliso Dr. NE

TELEPHONE: (505) 266-0586

CITY OR TOWN: Albuquerque

STATE: NM

ZIP CODE: 87108

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see enclosed *Santa Fe, NM* USGS quadrangle map)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-20 through Photo-21)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS N/A

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: List of property owners maintained by the Historic Preservation Division

STREET & NUMBER:

TELEPHONE:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

ZIP CODE:

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Santa Fe River Park Channel
Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Description

The Santa Fe River State Park and adjacent city-owned riparian park to the east extend approximately 1.5 miles along the Santa Fe River between the bridges at Don Gaspar Street and Camino Cabra. Central to this section of urban greenway is the masonry structure lining much of the river's banks that dates to its construction by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) between 1933 and 1940. Comprised of masonry retaining walls and culverts lining the channel of the river and naturalistic rock weirs within the streambed, the structure has been a defining characteristic of this urban park since its construction. It continues to imbue it with a high degree of integrity as to location, setting, workmanship, materials and design associated with the CCC's only urban park project in New Mexico. Varying in width from approximately 15 to 45 feet and in height from approximately four to eight feet, the structure is bounded by random-coursed limestone masonry walls and encompasses approximately 6.9 acres as it extends through the heart of the city of Santa Fe. Over the seven decades since its construction, the river channel has undergone periodic flooding. As a result, a few small sections of the original masonry wall have been replaced and others silted so that sediment covers the lower courses of some wall sections. Measures to stabilize riverbanks have also resulted in the construction of small-scale revetments and the addition of concrete abutments adjacent to bridges. One bridge constructed prior to the completion of the CCC project and five other public vehicular bridges cross the park as do three private vehicular and two smaller pedestrian bridges. The 1928 Delgado Street Bridge, gaining eligibility during the period of significance, contributes to the historic resource. The Don Gaspar Bridge, built in 1934 as part of a related project, was previously listed in the National Register. Although the design of the remaining bridges is generally complementary to the feeling of an urban riparian greenway, they are considered noncontributing. Contributing to the resource are three associated weirs and two masonry culverts. Each of these structures is distinctive enough in design to contribute to the structure as a whole.

Setting

Heading at Santa Fe Lake in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains northeast of Santa Fe, the Santa Fe River flows 20 miles south and then southwest through the city of Santa Fe and then another 25 miles southwest to just below Cochiti Pueblo where it empties into the Rio Grande. The source of local water supply dating to prehistoric settlement, in 1880 the river was dammed above the city and continued to provide both drinking water and irrigation for Santa Fe's farmers who drew the water from gravity-based canals, or *acequias*, that diverted at higher elevations east of the city.

Although Santa Fe's plaza is just two blocks to the north of the river, by the 1930s the State Capitol, the Governor's Mansion, and several residential neighborhoods lay to the south with the river dividing the city. With the river subject to periodic flooding, especially during the cloudbursts that accompanied the Southwest's summer monsoon season, civic leaders began to envision ways of reducing the river as a threat. At the same time, New Deal planners sought to use the wooded riparian strand, or *alameda*, as a means of linking the

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Santa Fe River Park Channel
Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

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downtown on the north bank with the growing state government complex on the south bank. With funding available from New Deal programs, they developed a plan to contain the river by channeling it in a deepened bed with its banks lined with masonry walls and to add park amenities along its banks.

Following the creation of the New Mexico State Parks system in 1933 and the state's acquisition of private lands abutting the river, work on a river park fell within the purview of the CCC. Over the next six years CCC companies assigned to SP-1-N in Santa Fe worked on the park project, generally alternating their efforts between nearby Hyde State Park at a higher elevation in the summer and the river park in the winter. The results of these efforts remain most apparent in the one and a half-mile greenway extending from Camino Cabra, the structure's eastern boundary to Don Gaspar Bridge, its western boundary.

A Structure with Varied Urban Settings

Over its mile and a half course, the river park passes through three distinct urban settings. Lining the river's entire course along the north side is Alameda Street, also partially developed by the CCC. The north side of Alameda Street offers a good indicator of the transition of urban settings through which the park passes. Although not as discernable from the masonry structure, the line of buildings along the south bank of the park reflects a similar transition. The park system's easterly section, extending 0.9 miles from Camino Cabra to the Delgado Street Bridge passes through a residential neighborhood that is a part of Santa Fe's Eastside Historic District.

Sympathetic with the regional architecture within the district and the neighborhood's rustic setting, the park retains a naturalistic character with heavy vegetation and a riparian trail lining much of the structure. The middle section, extending 0.3 miles from the Delgado Street Bridge to Paseo de Peralta Bridge offers a transitional zone in which lodgings and small offices are mixed with residences.

Now within the boundary of the Santa Fe River State Park, which continues to its western boundary, the structure is lined along its north boundary by a narrow greensward with benches and picnic tables. The south boundary of the structure is sometimes abutted by buildings, some predating the creation of the park. Its masonry wall, broken in a few small sections by abutments protecting those buildings, reflects the long history of the river's periodic flooding.

The westerly section, extending 0.3 miles from the Paseo de Peralta Bridge to the east side of the Don Gaspar Bridge, passes through downtown Santa Fe with offices, businesses, apartments and government buildings lining the structure on both sides of the river. The greensward lining the structure along the north side offers several picnic tables and benches that are popular with downtown workers and tourists. Here the width of the channel between the masonry retaining walls is at its widest, often as much as 45 feet, and the wall achieves its greatest heights, rising in some areas eight feet to the landscaped grounds lining the structure.

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Santa Fe River Park Channel
Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

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The Channel Landscape: East-to-West

Constructed after the period of significance the bridge at Camino Cabra marks the point at which the Santa Fe River transforms from a meandering mountain stream to a waterway set within a man-made channel (Figure 7-1). Just to the west of the bridge's concrete abutments, rough-faced ashlar limestone walls approximately 30 feet apart define both banks of the river. Heavy growths of small willow trees, periodically removed by local residents and city park personnel, fill much of the river's floodplain, obscuring clear views of the masonry walls. Along the south wall for a length of approximately 75 yards, a few residents whose properties border the masonry wall have constructed elevated walls atop the structure, using a variety of construction materials ranging from river cobbles to stucco-faced concrete block. These additions terminate at the eastern boundary of the city's Monsignor Patrick Smith Park where a concrete slab bridge offers access to the park south of the river.

For 0.3 miles extending westward from the bridge at the park to the East Palace Avenue Bridge the masonry walls continue on both side of the riverbed. While the height of the walls in this area is approximately four feet, silting along the north side has resulted in earthen slopes extending upwards from the riverbed to within one or two feet of the top of the masonry walls. This silting also has obscured a section of the north wall extending approximately 100 yards east of the Palace Avenue Bridge where only occasional limestone rocks appear through the earthen incline that rises from the riverbed to the grade of the land bordering the structure. Although most properties along the south bank of the river are accessible from Canyon Road to the south, a private wood pony-truss bridge crosses the river, and, in some instances, courses of river cobbles have been laid on the top of the south wall. South of the bridge at Smith Park the heavy stand of willows in the floodplain gradually gives way to a more open riverbed with cottonwoods growing along the outer perimeter of the structure providing a canopy. Alameda Street comes closest to the masonry structure in the vicinity of the East Palace Avenue Bridge with only an intermittent footpath available to pedestrians along the north bank.

The structure retains its most pristine setting in the half-mile section of the greenway westward from the East Palace Avenue Bridge to the Delgado Street Bridge. A sidewalk and wooded buffer separate it on the north side from Alameda Street, and a pedestrian walkway parallels the structure on the south side. Cottonwoods comprise much of the canopy with evidence of recent xeriscaping efforts along the pedestrian walkway. The floodplain contains less vegetation than farther upstream and is marked by some of the CCC-constructed weirs that contribute to the structure's naturalistic feeling. Most notable of these weirs is the approximately four feet waterfall (the "Falls") appearing a quarter mile west of the Palace Avenue Bridge. Set in a concave arc about 45 feet in diameter, a seven-course naturalistic limestone structure narrows the waterway to eight feet, creating a waterfall with a pool at the base. Due to its design and important function along the channel, the "Falls" and two other weirs are considered contributing resources to the nominated structure.

Notable also along this section of the structure are two arched masonry culverts along the north wall that extend under Alameda Street. The more easterly culvert, approximately 100 yards east of the waterfall, is

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approximately eight feet in diameter at its base and rises in height to approximately five feet. The masonry culvert just to the east of the Delgado Street Bridge has been truncated by the concrete slab bridge along Alameda Street so that its only its eastern wall remains. With limestone masonry similar in facing and random coursing to the walls lining the river, the channels entering these culverts permit occasional floodwaters from the steep escarpments north of East Palace Avenue, less than 200 yards to the north, to drain into the river channel.

Toward the western end of this section further evidence of periodic flooding and efforts to stabilize the channel is evident. A two-tier gabion lines the south bank of the river for approximately 200 yards, and inclined concrete abutments extend some 25 yards away from the Delgado Street Bridge along the south bank. Overall, however, the integrity of the structure remains high not only with regard to materials, workmanship and design but to preserving the feeling of an urban riparian greenway.

The Delgado Street Bridge, a concrete beam constructed in 1928, marks the end of the city-owned river park to the east and the beginning of the Santa Fe River State Park to the west. Reflective of a transitional area with greater pedestrian traffic, a more formal greensward with a maintained lawn and sidewalk offers park benches and picnic tables in the grassy strip paralleling the north wall of the structure. West of the Delgado Street Bridge's concrete abutments, the structure's masonry retaining walls remain largely intact, increasing in height to about six feet. The greater height of the walls also offers greater evidence of the project's efforts to imbue the manmade stonework with a naturalistic feeling. Although some coursing of the masonry is evident, the variety of stone size and the avoidance of four contiguous corners gives the wall the natural, informal feeling.

Approximately 0.3 miles to the west the Paseo de Peralta Bridge crosses the structure. West of this bridge, the final 0.3 miles of the structure, terminating at Don Gaspar Street Bridge, are set in downtown Santa Fe with shops, restaurants, and offices lining the north side of Alameda Street. South of the structure's south wall, the Castillo Apartments are accessible over a private vehicular bridge. Evidence of the ongoing commitment to preserve the legacy of the CCC's park project currently appears in the reconstruction of a collapsed 25-yard section of the masonry wall. Farther west, the Shelby Street footbridge offers pedestrian access to a pathway along the south bank of the river. Just before reaching the Don Gaspar Street Bridge, the path passes in front of the New Mexico Supreme Court Building, constructed as a Public Works Administration (PWA) project in 1937. The masonry wall structure ends at the east side of the Don Gaspar Street Bridge, constructed under the New Deal's National Recovery Municipal Program in 1934.

While the north wall of the structure extends largely intact for this entire length of the westerly section of the property, the south wall has is broken for a distance of approximately 100 yards. Composed of walls consisting of cobble or concrete or cobble revetments, the break reflects previous efforts to protect private lands adjacent to the eroding riverbank before the CCC project. A motel, located at the southeast corner of where the Old Santa Fe Trail Bridge crosses the structure was once the site of the Orchard Campground, an early tourist

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camp. There, a concrete block and cobble wall abuts a building on the motel property that predates the creation of the river park, recalling an earlier era in which the river often flooded and private owners with adjacent land constructed walls for flood protection (Figure 7-2).

In the seven decades since the CCC constructed the Santa Fe River Park, the *Alameda* has continued to serve its intended purpose of an urban riparian park linking the north and south banks of the city. Recurring floods and the city's growth, especially the capitol complex south of the river, have prompted changes that have somewhat altered the park's initial appearance. These measures, including the installation of rip-rap and revetments to reduce flooding and the construction of four bridges over the park, however, have not substantially reduced the integrity of the masonry retaining structure that comprised the heart of the CCC project.

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Table of Contributing and Noncontributing Resources (East-to-West)

Resource #	Resource Name	Year of Construction	Resource Type	Contributing
N/A	Masonry Channel	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
1	Camino Cabra Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
2	Monsignor Smith Park Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
3	Private Vehicular Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
4	Palace Avenue Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
5	Masonry Culvert # 1	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
6	"Falls" Weir #1	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
7	Masonry Culvert # 2	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
8	Delgado Street Bridge	1928	Structure	Yes
9	Private Vehicular Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
10	Paseo de Peralta Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
11	Weir # 2	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
12	Old Santa Fe Trail Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
13	El Castillo Bridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
14	Brother's Lane Bridge Footbridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
15	Shelby Street Footbridge	Post-1940	Structure	No
16	Weir # 3	c.1933-1940	Structure	Yes
17	Don Gaspar Bridge (02001163)	1934	Structure	N/A, previously listed in National Register

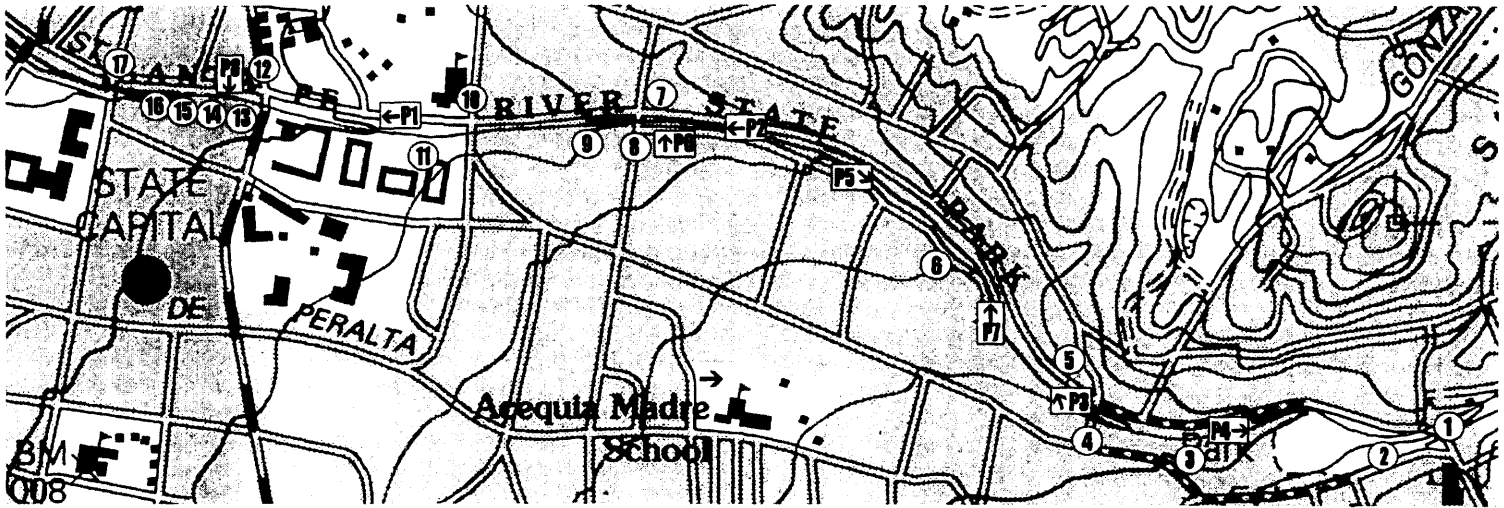
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Figure 7-1: Sketch Map (not drawn to scale)



Legend

1. Camino Cabra Bridge (NC), East Terminus
2. Monsignor Smith Park Bridge (NC)
3. Private Vehicular Bridge (NC)
4. Palace Avenue Bridge (NC)
5. Masonry Culvert # 1 (C)
6. "Falls" Weir #1 (C)
7. Masonry Culvert #2 (C)
8. Delgado Street Bridge (C)
9. Private Vehicular Bridge (NC)
10. Paseo de Peralta Bridge (NC)
11. Weir # 2 (C)
12. Old Santa Fe Trail Bridge (NC)
13. El Castillo Bridge (NC)
14. Brother's Lane Footbridge (NC)
15. Shelby Street Footbridge (NC)
16. Weir # 3 (C)
17. Don Gaspar Bridge (N/A), West Terminus



North

→ Photograph and direction
C = Contributing resource
NC = Non-contributing resource

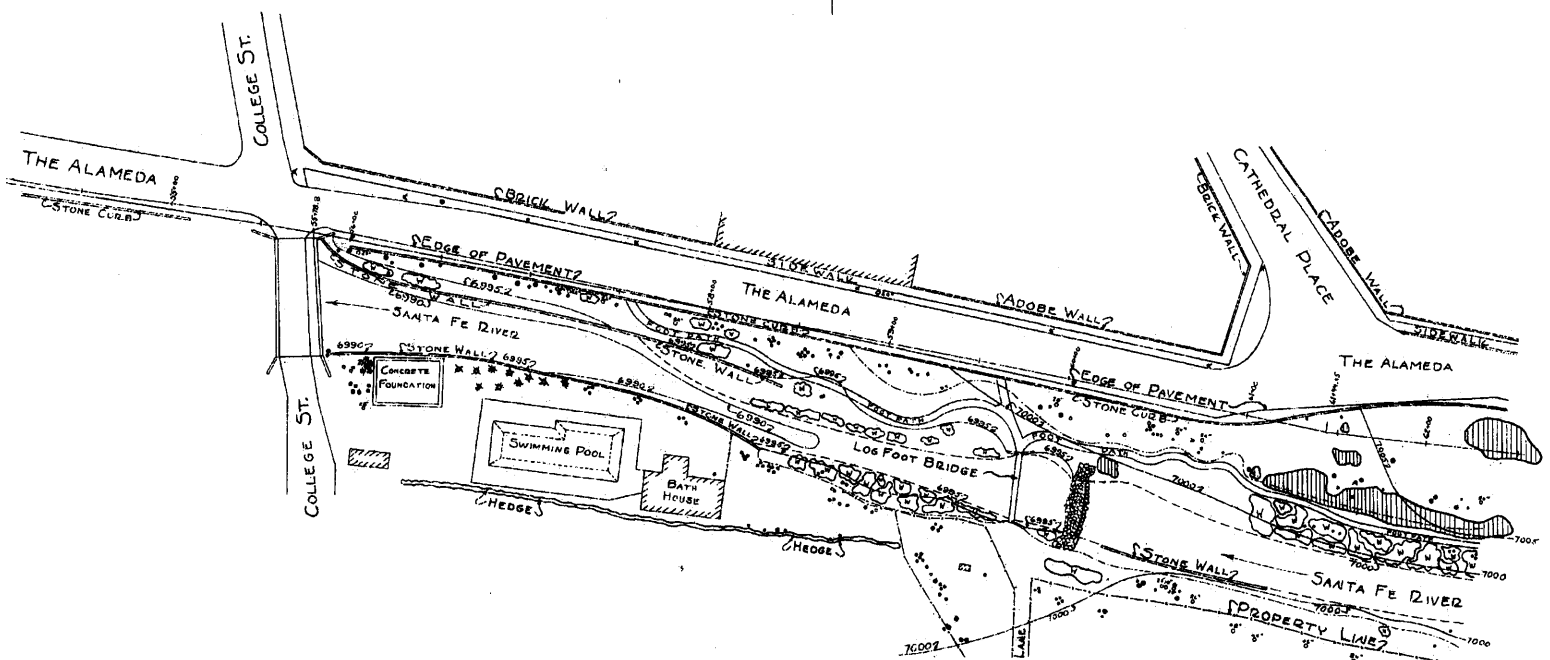
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Figure 7-2: Topographic Map of River Showing Existing Conditions Before Channel Improvement. Note existing stone wall at southeast corner of College Street Bridge. (Source National Park Service, State Park Emergency Work, January 22, 1935, Drawing No. 9-1-E).¹



¹ No construction plans were found in regional state or federal depositories.

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Santa Fe River Park Channel
Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Statement of Significance

Like many states, New Mexico had no state park system prior to the advent of the New Deal. When federal programs, especially projects undertaken by the CCC, became available to states with park systems, New Mexico quickly responded, creating a State Park Commission and designating several parks that were then developed by the CCC. Among them were Hyde Park in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains just northeast of Santa Fe and Santa Fe River State Park. Because of Hyde Park's close proximity to Santa Fe, the two park projects moved ahead, more or less in tandem, with a CCC company stationed at Camp SP-1-N in Santa Fe working at Hyde Park in the summer and at the river park in the winter. A goal of Santa Fe leaders since statehood in 1912, the creation of a river park offered several benefits to Santa Fe, including flood control, a riparian urban park, and a landscaped *Alameda* that would beautify the emerging complex of state government buildings south of the river. Central to the project was the straightening of the river and the construction of masonry retaining walls lining riverbanks intended to reduce the threat of seasonal flooding. Between 1933 and 1940 the CCC quarried and faced limestone rocks and used them to construct masonry walls, culverts and weirs that comprised the principal structure of the park project. Although CCC workers also contributed to the eastward extension of Alameda Street and provided the first generation of park amenities such as picnic tables, it is the structure redefining the riverbed that remains the CCC's most indelible legacy along the Santa Fe River. The Santa Fe River Park Channel is eligible under Criterion A for its association as a New Deal project. It is also eligible under Criterion C as a good example of the CCC's efforts to protect natural resources and features and for its naturalistic use of rockwork to harmonize manmade development with natural surroundings.

In 1609 when Pedro de Peralta, the newly appointed governor of the Spain's royal province of New Mexico, relocated the colonial capital from San Gabriel to Santa Fe, the availability of water from the Santa Fe River was a leading consideration in his selection of the site. Over the next three centuries, the Santa Fe River generally vindicated Peralta's decision, but in years of heavy rains also demonstrated its capacity for destructive flooding. In 1872, during a particularly destructive flood all of Santa Fe's wagon and footbridges were swept away as the river swelled to a "reef-like front six feet high" (*Santa Fe New Mexican*, August 20 1872:1). To equalize the ebb and flow of the river, the citizens of Santa Fe had long advocated damming the river above the city. Except for earthen, stone and brush diversions for the acequias carrying water to houses and fields along both banks of the river, the first impoundment of the river's water occurred only in 1880 when Stone Dam was completed. Over the next seven decades a series of four dams were constructed to provide the city with water and to reduce the threat of flooding. Despite these measures, periodic flooding continued as in May 1919 when flood conditions extending from Santa Fe southwest to La Bajada prompted a writer to declare, "The Santa Fe River is running riot" (*Santa Fe New Mexican* May 24, 1919:1).

In 1912, when Mayor Arthur Seligman formed the Santa Fe Planning Commission to define the city and its economic future, commissioners adopted a unique version of the City Beautiful movement, calling for a "city different" that would emphasize its traditional architecture and its historic winding streets. Also included in the

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plans, depicted in the map N.L. King prepared for the commission, were proposals for several city parks, including Fort Marcy Park, the Federal Oval and Parque del Rio. The latter was envisioned as a linear riparian park extending over two miles from the city's pump house near the eastern boundary of the masonry structure to a point near where the intermittent waters of Mascaras Arroyo flow into the Santa Fe River. Despite these ambitious plans and citizens' efforts in the 1920s to realize the plans, little progress was made on Parque del Rio (*Santa Fe New Mexican*, Nov. 11, 1933:1).

It wasn't until the creation of the CCC that the now 20-year old proposal for a river park became reality. In August 1933, just a prior to his fatal heart attack, now Governor Arthur Seligman issued an executive mandate creating the New Mexico State Park Commission. Doing so enabled New Mexico to take advantage of CCC labor available to state park systems under the New Deal's State Park Emergency Conservation Program (SPECP). To satisfy the requirements of the SPECP, it was necessary that the CCC's work be in park on lands owned by the state. To accomplish this goal within the city of Santa Fe where the meandering course of the river resulted in numerous private land holdings abutting the river, citizens organized a public meeting. To demonstrate their support for a park, land owners stood and announced a donation of portions of their land to the State of New Mexico for use as "a park or parkway in connection with the system of state parks in the city of Santa Fe, New Mexico" (Pablo Griego Quit Claim Deed, 1934). Inspired, in part, by the precedent of Talbot Babbit Hyde donating land for nearby Hyde State Park, each announcement was greeted with applause (*Santa Fe New Mexican*, Nov. 11, 1933:1).

This outpouring of public support prompted State Park Commissioner Jesse Nusbaum to note that with the state securing park land within the city, Santa Fe became "the one exception in the United States where a CCC camp is located within city limits." Echoing Nusbaum's enthusiasm for Santa Fe's prospects of an urban state park, the *Santa Fe New Mexican's* editorial described the citizens' actions as "magnificent." Moreover, it proclaimed Santa Fe "the pioneer...in a state park movement" and saw "no reason why this should not now be made the most beautiful 'different' state capital in America" (*Santa Fe New Mexican*, Nov. 11, 1933:4).

As plans began to develop regarding the park, two key figures emerged. Serving as a technical adviser for CCC Company 833 was Carlos Vierra. A leading proponent of preserving Santa Fe historic character through reviving its traditional architecture, he advocated the park project as a means of creating landscapes sympathetic with the surrounding built environment. Representing the New Mexico Planning Board as plans developed was S.R DeBoer. Formerly Denver's city planner who had overseen the creation of its municipal park system, DeBoer had also planned Boulder City, Nevada, the community that grew out of the massive Hoover Dam Project, and had directed capital landscaping projects in Boise, Idaho and Cheyenne, Wyoming. In New Mexico to advise the state's Planning Board, DeBoer had begun to formulate plans for the capital complex south of the river, envisioning a gradual stepping of new government buildings up to the State Capitol (now the Bataan Building). DeBoer's plan included an attractive river park with the PWA-financed New Mexico Supreme Court Building (01001468), located on a slight terrace just south of the riverbank, facing on it. The varied character of the river park, ranging from its more naturalistic character in its eastern section to its more

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formal composition fronting the court building suggests how the park's development reflected both men's visions.

With a third of New Mexico's lands held by the federal government, the state was the location of over 100 CCC camps between 1933 and 1942 when Congress voted to terminate the CCC. The companies located at these many camps brought great benefits to New Mexico not only with the projects they undertook but with money the CCC spent in nearby towns for equipment and volunteers' incidentals. Despite these positive attributes, however, camps often faced uncertain futures. CCC administrators in Washington D.C., seeking to juggle requests for new projects often transferred companies from camp to camp and themselves were subject to the uncertainties of continued congressional funding for the CCC.

Within this context of uncertainty and relocations, Camp SP-1-N, located a mile and a half northwest of Santa Fe's plaza, was unusual. Unlike most other camps in the state, it was in proximity to an urban area. Moreover, it served as the headquarters for two companies between the fall of 1933 at least until the end of 1936, resulting in a camp of over 450 men. Company 836, consisting of men from Texas and Oklahoma as well as New Mexico worked under the auspices of the Soil Conservation Service until it was transferred to Fort Stanton, New Mexico in late 1936. Company 833, consisting of New Mexicans from the northern part of the state, worked under the auspices of the National Park Service, alternating work seasonally between the higher Hyde Park in warm months and the Santa Fe River in cool months (CCC Annual 1936:58-65).

Although newspaper accounts provide periodic reports of the progress made on the river park project, a helpful overview of the ongoing work in late 1935 appears in a letter that Governor Clyde Tingley sent to Robert Fechner, Director of Emergency Conservation Work for the CCC. Concerned that the camp would be "discontinued and disbanded" in January 1936, Tingley informed Fechner that much of the park project along the river was a work in progress and that to abandon it would be both a "serious detriment" and "dangerous to the public safety" (Tingley CCC Correspondence, 1935: letter dated Dec. 12, 1935).

Describing the project, Tingley noted that plans had been completed for a one and a half mile park along the river and that the river's "stream bed...is being straightened at several points." Although some of the native limestone masonry walls had been installed and others were "already started and footings excavations made," he warned that "large piles of native lime stone are strewn about the park area awaiting placement in walls, dams, culverts, etc." He also cited the "incomplete" construction of naturalistic rock weirs to check flooding, asserting that only when completed would they "control flood waters" and "enhance the scenic features of the river development." He further warned of dangers to the public in the form of holes already dug to plant "five thousand native trees and shrubs...in the river park area." Finally, appealing to economic considerations, Tingley noted that "all of the essential materials for the construction and completion of unfinished projects have been purchased and are on hand."

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The details Tingley presented offer a concise description of how the project was seeking to complete an urban riparian park that would meet several of the aesthetic sensibilities advocated in projects sponsored under the National Park Service. Dating to the landscape architect William Jackson Downing's advocacy of preserving natural areas and using design to produce picturesque landscapes, a succession of designers had sought to manipulate rockwork to create naturalistic appearances of manmade projects. This desire to replicate nature flourished in the during the back to nature movement of the 1910s and 20s, and became a part of design specifications for both national and state park projects undertaken by the CCC. These designs included the creation of scenic features, the use of naturalistic techniques in rockwork, and the planting of native vegetation to erase scars of construction, all included on a modest scale in the CCC's efforts along the Santa Fe River.

Supporting Tingley's request to continue the project was New Mexico's congressional delegation. Three month's later, Representative John J. Dempsey announced that the "state park camp of Santa Fe will be retained," and the CCC remained at the camp until the end of 1940 (*Santa Fe New Mexican* March 4, 1936:3). Over the next four years the CCC completed the masonry retaining walls and the two major culverts along the northern wall that permitted floodwaters to drain from the steep escarpments just north of East Palace Avenue. Workers also completed the installation of several small weirs that were intended to enhance the scenic beauty and natural appearance of the river even as its former channel had been straightened. With work completed on the structure, in its final years the CCC installed picnic tables in the grassy strip lining the river in the vicinity of the downtown near the Don Gaspar Street Bridge and the New Mexico Supreme Court Building. At the same time, the CCC moved ahead with a related project, extending Alameda Street eastward from Delgado Street to its current eastern terminus at Camino Cabra.

As the United States turned more attention to preparing for a likely entry into World War II and even the training of CCC volunteers began to approximate training for military duty, the CCC began winding down by 1940, ending two years later. Compared to other camps in New Mexico, Camp SP-1-N in Santa Fe had a notably long tenure, accounting for the creation of two of New Mexico's first state parks. While Hyde Park represented a more traditional approach to park development and contributed to Santa Fe's growing reputation as a year-round recreational center, the Santa Fe River Park represented an uncommon example of CCC involvement in the creation of an urban park. Set within a city and catering to varied needs from preserving natural settings to providing limited park amenities in a downtown setting, the park achieved both.

Ironically, some of the landscape plans incorporated into the design of the park proved less successful than initially envisioned. The plans to straighten the river channel and to contain it with retaining walls proved to be an inadequate flood control measure during times of heavy cloudbursts. The river's capacity for flooding was demonstrated in August 1957, prompting a series of studies by the Army Corps of Engineers during the 1960s and 70s. These resulted in proposals to alter the river's channel, giving it a concrete-lined V form. In the late 1960s, further recommendations for altering the river park came from the city's urban renewal program. As a result of these developments, the river park west of the Don Gaspar Street Bridge was significantly altered

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with a concrete was installed and the City of Santa Fe developing its own Santa Fe River Park as a part of the DeVargas Urban Renewal Project (*Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 31, 1968:A-4).

During the debate regarding the future of the Santa Fe River east of the Don Gaspar Street Bridge, however, public sentiment rested strongly with preserving the character of the river and its landscape structure much as the CCC had rendered it. Although improvements, including the construction of revetments and gabions and the raising of some masonry walls, were completed to stabilize the river channel, the CCC structure extending 1.5 miles to the east retains a high degree of historic integrity as well as a good deal of public support for maintaining it.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The boundary of the nominated property is indicated on the accompanying USGS quadrangle map. It consists of a 1.5-mile long masonry channel outlining the course of the Santa Fe River between the west side of the Camino Cabra Bridge at the east terminus and the west side of the Don Gaspar Bridge at the west terminus. The width of the channel varies between approximately 15 to 45 feet. The north and south boundaries encompass the outer edges of the masonry retaining walls that generally line both sides of the riverbank between the east and west boundary points. The nominated boundary includes only the area between the walls and the structure's immediate setting of ten feet.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION The boundary includes the remaining section of the parcel historically associated with the CCC-constructed Santa Fe River Park Channel structure and excludes adjacent commercial and residential development and park infrastructure established after the period of significance.

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Santa Fe River Park Channel
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PHOTO LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs unless otherwise noted.

Santa Fe River Park Channel

Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, New Mexico

Photographer: David Kammer

May, 2008

Location of Negatives: New Mexico Historic Preservation Division

Photo 1 of 8

Western terminus of property, Don Gaspar Bridge

Facing west

Photo 2 of 8

Walls and adjacent greensward

Facing west

Photo 3 of 8

Riparian vegetation

Facing west

Photo 4 of 8

Private vehicular bridge and wall addition

Facing east

Photo 5 of 8

Naturalistic rockwork and weir, "Falls"

Facing east

Photo 6 of 8

Concrete and masonry culvert at E. Alameda and Delgado Street Bridge

Facing north

Photo 7 of 8

Masonry Culvert #1

Facing north

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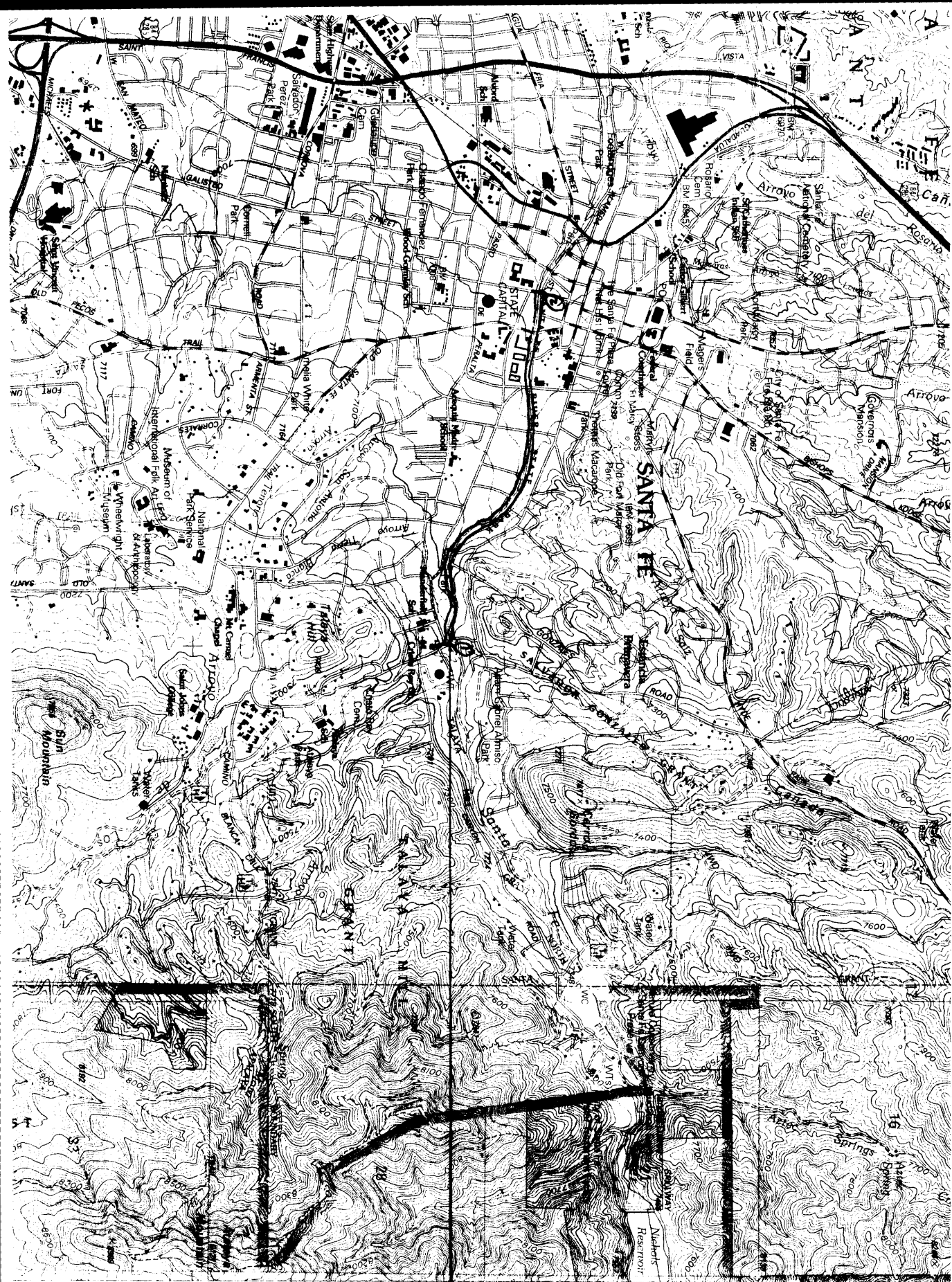
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Santa Fe River Park Channel
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Photo 8 of 8
Repair of masonry wall
Facing south



Santa Fe River
 Park Channel
 Santa Fe, Santa Fe
 Co, NM
 UTM coord. mkt
 3948 JS
 1.0416996 E
 3948872 N
 2.0414920 E
 3949414 N
 3947
 40

3949

3950

3951