

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 89002027

Date Listed: 11/21/89

**Sarto Bridge
Property Name**

**Avoyelles
County**

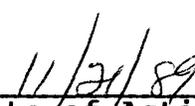
**LA
State**

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper



Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

This bridge is being nominated under criterion C and the nomination describes its significance as an engineering design, but transportation was listed as the area of significance. Donna Fricker of the Louisiana SHPO confirmed that the area of significance should be Engineering. The nomination is officially amended to reflect this change.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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 Sarto Bridge
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number LA HWY 451 N/A not for publication
city, town Big Bend N/A vicinity
state Louisiana code LA county Avoyelles code 009 zip code 71318

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Leslie Tassin October 18, 1989
Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, LA State Historic Preservation Officer, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism Date
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

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.
 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:) _____

Amy Federman 11/21/89

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road and water related

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

other: swing truss bridge

foundation _____

walls _____

roof _____

other steel

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sarto Bridge (1916) is a steel swing truss bridge traversing Bayou des Glaises in the rural community of Big Bend. The swing mechanism is still extant but no longer in operation; however, the bridge still exemplifies its type and hence retains its National Register eligibility.

The Sarto Bridge is a pedestrian and vehicular bridge one lane wide with a three part central span mounted on a pivoting gear and ratchet mechanism. The central support is a concrete cylinder embedded in the substratum of Bayou des Glaises. The central swinging span is approached on both sides by a ramp mounted on wooden trestles with steel railings. The central span itself consists of two modified queen post truss sections, each of which runs from a concrete trestle near the bank to the aforementioned central pivoting support. These two truss sections carry the load when the bridge is in the closed position. When it rotates into the open position, the two sections are supported by cables which run to four central vertical posts over the pivoting cylinder. Various members of the trusses and the central vertical supports are formed of riveted steel latticework.

When the bridge swung open, it was rotated manually using a large inserted gear lever. However, after about 1930, Bayou des Glaises was no longer considered navigable, and thus the turning mechanism on the bridge was disconnected. However, the mechanism remains in place for the most part. The only missing piece is a giant horizontal cog that encircled the central concrete support cylinder. In our opinion, this alteration should be regarded as minor.

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
transportation

Period of Significance
1916

Significant Dates
1916

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
Contractor: Austin Brothers (Texas)

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

The Sarto Bridge is of statewide significance in the area of transportation as an early surviving example of a rare bridge type. The steel truss swing bridge was the principal bridge type used to traverse navigable waterways in Louisiana during the early twentieth century. Although these bridges were part of the nascent automobile age, they also provided service for the dying steamboat trade. Indeed, to this day bayou or river traffic still has right-of-way over vehicular traffic. The Sarto Bridge is thought to be one of only about twenty early twentieth century steel truss swing bridges remaining in the state. It should be noted that these bridges will no longer accommodate modern traffic needs, and thus the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development has an active program to replace them. Thus the Sarto Bridge's rarity as an example of its type will increase significantly in future years.

Historical Background: (excerpted from sketch prepared by Mrs. Eleanor Blakewood Marshall)

Prior to 1913 a recognized need to provide an elevated traffic bridge over Bayou des Glaises in the Big Bend-Kleinwood area of northeast Avoyelles Parish existed. An area of four to eight miles between this bayou and the nearby Red River was prone to frequent flooding resulting in the need to evacuate people, livestock, crops and property during flooding periods and otherwise on a day-to-day basis. This navigable bayou was most important to trade and commerce by boat and steamer for the transporting of goods in and out of the southern and northeastern parts of Avoyelles.

The Kleinwood-Big Bend area received floodwaters from three rivers (Mississippi, Atchafalaya and Red rivers). These floods often washed out during the first part of the twentieth century the low water wooden bridges over Bayou des Glaises, hindering the evacuation of people, livestock and property.

Two particularly destructive floods occurred in 1912 and 1913, which prompted the Avoyelles Parish Police Jury in their meeting of November 12, 1913 to appoint a committee "to investigate the matter of a bridge on Bayou des Glaises at Big Bend." The bridge site at Sarto Lane was approved by the police jury on May 5, 1915, a bid was approved in June of 1915, and the bridge was completed in 1916.

The old iron bridge has been a community and parish landmark and has meant much to the people of the area as a traffic bridge for See continuation sheet the transport of goods and the movement of livestock.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Historical sketch of Sarto Bridge, based upon research in Avoyelles Parish Police Jury minutes, compiled by Eleanor Blakewood Marshall.

Personal communication with Gill Gautreau, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property @ 1 acre _____

UTM References

A

1	5
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6	1	5	2	0	0
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3	4	3	8	2	2	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Please refer to enclosed sketch map.

See continuation sheet

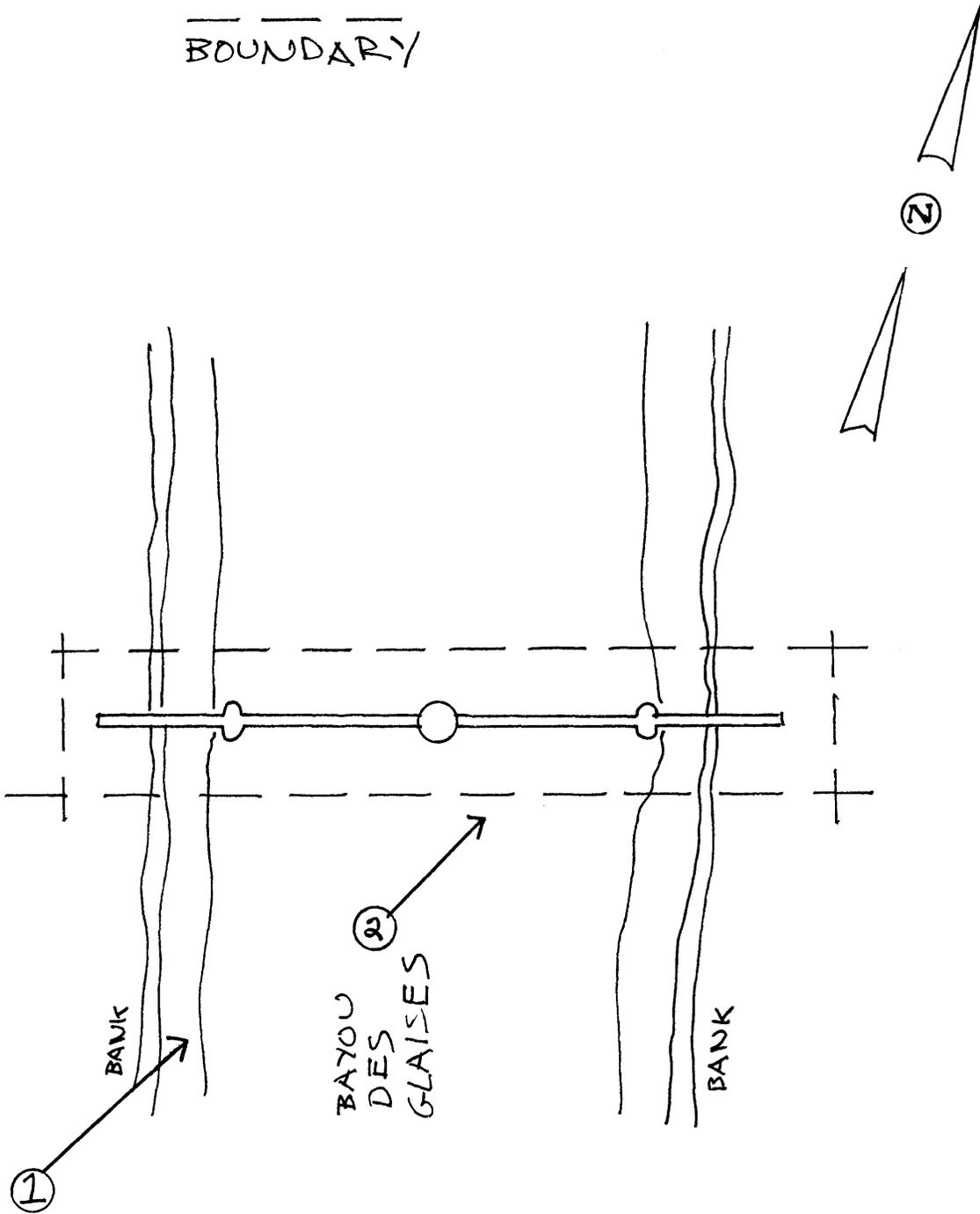
Boundary Justification Boundaries were drawn to discretely encompass the significant resource. They follow the bridge right-of-way on the north and south.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff
 organization Division of Historic Preservation date August 1989
 street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone 504-342-8160
 city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

BOUNDARY



SARTO BRIDGE
AVOYELLES PARISH, LA.

SCALE 1"=100'