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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

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 Cincinnati Bridge  
other name/site number Fries' Mill Bridge; Big Nemaha River Bridge; NEHBS Number PW00-42

2. Location

street & number closed county road over S. Fk. Big Nemaha River N/A not for publication  
city, town 1 mile south, 0.2 mile east of Du Bois X vicinity  
state NE county Pawnee code 133 zip code 68345

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Pawnee County	Number of Resources within Property	
Category of Property	structure	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  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.

*[Signature]*  
Signature of certifying official

5/6/92  
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  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:)

entered in the  
National Register

*[Signature]*

6/29/92

*[Signature]*  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Function (enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Function (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/not in use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)

OTHER /wrought iron, bowstring through arch-truss

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A

walls N/A

roof N/A

other N/A

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Located a mile south of Du Bois, the Cincinnati Bridge spans the Big Nemaha River's South Fork in a rural Pawnee County setting that has changed little since the structure's period of significance. The bridge's floor system is somewhat deteriorated, but the structure is otherwise intact. The Cincinnati Bridge today retains an extraordinary degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association for a span of its vintage. A description of the structure follows:

span number:	1	construction date:	1879-80
span length:	119.0'	construction cost:	\$3130.50
total length:	135.0'	current condition:	good
roadway wdt.:	16.0'	alterations:	none

superstructure: wrought iron, 10-panel, bowstring through arch-truss

substructure: stone west abutment; steel pile east abutment; concrete-filled iron cylinder piers

floor/decking: wood deck over timber stringers

other features: upper chord: back-to-back channels riveted to two solid plates; lower chord: 2 rectangular eyebars; vertical: cruciform-shaped section alternating with 2 angle sections tied by double lacing to form outriders; diagonal: round rod with threaded ends; strut: 2 angles with double lacing; top lateral: 4 eyerods, bolted to an iron collar at panel center; bottom lateral: cross-braced circular-section eyerods; railing: timber.

See continuation sheet

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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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	1879-80 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)
Significant Dates	1879-80
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Significant Person	N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer)	King Iron Bridge Company, Cleveland OH
(Fabricator)	King Iron Bridge Company, Cleveland OH
(Builder)	King Iron Bridge Company, Cleveland OH

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

Pawnee County appears to have built its first iron bridge - a Pratt truss of unspecified length erected by King and Wheeler of Des Moines - in 1877. The King Iron Bridge Company of Cleveland erected the next all-iron bridges in 1878 (type unspecified) and 1879 (a 90-foot, bowstring arch-truss). In August 1879, the commissioners called for bids for an iron bridge over the Nemaha River near the town of Cincinnati (now gone), in the southeastern corner of the county. The following month the county awarded the contract for a 156-foot, two-span structure to the King Iron Bridge Company. The channel span featured a 119-foot bowstring arch-truss, fabricated from King's patented standard tubular arch design. The county paid King half of the bridge's cost in February 1880, and on March 4th, after examining the newly completed structure, accepted it from King. Total cost: \$3,130.50. Although King raised the superstructure of the Cincinnati Bridge in 1882, little else is known about its history. (The original 37-foot approach span has evidently been replaced.) According to a local resident, the bridge was designated as part of the "Overland Ocean-Pikes Peak Trail" in the early 1900s. In 1982, the county closed the structure after determining that it did not meet the three-ton capacity required by federal standards. In 1985 the road leading to the bridge was vacated. Although now abandoned, the Cincinnati Bridge has retained a high degree of physical integrity.

Marketed widely throughout the Midwest by such industry giants as the King Iron Bridge Company and the Wrought Iron Bridge Company, bowstring arch-trusses were the mainstay bridge type for medium-span roadway crossings in the 1870s, 1880s and early 1890s. Numerous bowstrings were erected in eastern Nebraska during that period, but through subsequent attrition only a handful remains today. Most of these were erected by King in the 1880s and 1890s, and over half, like the Cincinnati Bridge, are now closed to traffic. The oldest originally placed vehicular span in the state, the Cincinnati Bridge is technologically significant as one of the last remaining examples in Nebraska of this once-common, important early bridge type.

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."

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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Proceedings of the Pawnee County Commissioners, located at Pawnee County Courthouse, Pawnee City, Nebraska, refer to the following entries in Book 3: 28 May 1877 (p. 90), 3 July 1878 (p. 137), 6 August 1879 (pp. 169-170), 2 September 1879 (p. 171), 5 February 1880 (p. 185), 3 March 1880 (p. 186), 4 March 1880 (p. 186); Demian Hess, interview with Charlie Morin, Pawnee County Highway Superintendent, 25 January 1990; Demian Hess, telephone interview with Ed Bohm, Pawnee City resident, 9 April 1990; **King Iron Bridge and Manufacturing Company**, published catalog, ca.1888, n.p., located at Ohio State Historical Society, Columbus, Ohio; field inspection by Demian Hess, 26 January 1990.

\_\_\_ 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:**

\_\_\_  State historic preservation office  
\_\_\_ Other State agency  
\_\_\_ Federal agency  
\_\_\_ Local government  
\_\_\_ University  
\_\_\_ Other (specify repository:)

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of Property less than one acre  
Cadastral Reference S35, T1N, R12E  
USGS Quadrangle Du Bois, Nebraska - Kansas (7.5 Minute Series, 1965)  
UTM References zone 14 easting 752270 northing 4433180

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 135 feet by 18 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

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**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

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title	Demian Hess, Research Historian	date	30 June 1991
organization	Fraserdesign and Hess, Roise and Company	telephone	303-669-7969
street & number	1269 Cleveland Avenue	state	Colorado
city or town	Loveland	zip code	80537

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