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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Sweetwater Mill Bridge
other name/site number Mud Creek Bridge; NEHBS Number BF00-64

2. Location

street & number county road over Mud Creek N/A not for publication
city, town south edge of Sweetwater N/A vicinity
state NE county Buffalo code 019 zip code 68847

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Buffalo 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.

Bob Kuschendorf DSHPO
Signature of certifying official _____ Date 5/6/92

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:)

Submitted to the National Register

Arlene Byers _____ Date 6/29/92

for _____ Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

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

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

7. Description

Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)
OTHER /pin-connected Pratt pony truss

Materials (enter categories from instructions)
foundation N/A
walls N/A
roof N/A
other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sweetwater Mill Bridge crosses over Mud Creek on the southern periphery of the small town of Sweetwater. Other than the repairs, noted below, the bridge is little changed from its original configuration. Today the Sweetwater Mill Bridge still carries traffic and retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. A description of the structure follows:

span number:	1	construction date:	1909
span length:	80.0'	construction cost:	unknown
total length:	93.0'	current condition:	good
roadway wdt.:	16.0'	alterations:	truss added to existing stringer approaches on both sides; new H-shaped steel pile bent supports for the truss; all but one original approach spans replaced by fill.

superstructure: steel, 5-panel, pin-connected Pratt pony truss
substructure: steel pile bent pier and abutments (original) and timber wingwalls (new)
floor/decking: new timber decking over new timber stringers
other features: upper chord: 2 channels with cover and batten plates; lower chord: 2 punched rectangular eyebars; vertical: 4 angles with batten plates; diagonal: 2 looped rectangular eyebars, 1 square eyebar with turnbuckle; lateral bracing: round bar; floor beam: I-beam U-bolted to vertical; guardrail: new timber.

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	1909 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)
Significant Dates	1909
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Significant Person	N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer)	Standard Bridge Company, Omaha NE
(Fabricator)	Illinois Steel Company, Chicago IL
(Builder)	Standard Bridge Company, Omaha NE

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

In November 1908 the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors adopted bridge plans prepared by the Standard Bridge Company as the county standards. The board awarded an annual bridge construction contract to Standard two months later, purchasing numerous small-scale bridges from the Omaha-based firm throughout 1909. Among the structures ordered in May was this 80-foot pinned pony truss over Mud Creek in Beaver Township. Located at the Sweetwater Mill near the county's northern edge, the truss replaced an earlier bridge at this location, using the existing stringer approaches on both sides of the channel span in conjunction with new H-shaped steel pile bent supports for the truss. Standard completed the bridge later in 1909, using steel components rolled by Illinois Steel Company. The original approach spans on the north and all but one of the south approach spans have been replaced by fill, but the Sweetwater Bridge remains otherwise intact as it carries intermittent traffic on this secondary county road.

Robert Zale Drake, proprietor of the Standard Bridge Company, reportedly developed a new steel pile bent configuration for bridge substructures around 1903. Consisting of a 5-inch channel riveted to the backs of two 8-inch channels, these new built-up H-piles, as they were termed, largely replaced the use of steel cylinder piers in Nebraska. They won overwhelming acceptance (used in 95 per cent of the state's bridges, by one report) among county engineers and in-state bridge companies. The built-up piles were superseded by rolled H sections within ten years, and over the next twenty years some 15,000 bridges were constructed in the state using variations of Drake's H-piling. Although the pinned pony truss of the Sweetwater Bridge is unremarkable as a typical example of a relatively common structural type, the bridge is significant as one of the earliest and best-preserved examples remaining in the state of an original Standard Bridge Company built-up H-pile substructure.

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."

9. Major Bibliographical References

Nebraska Department of Roads, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure Number C001034545; Proceedings of the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors, Book 7: 13 November 1908 (page 140), 15 January 1909 (page 158), 20 May 1909 (pages 180-81), 13 January 1910 (pages 223-24), located at the Buffalo County Courthouse, Kearney, Nebraska; Ted Johnson, "Discussion of Steel Foundations for Steel Bridges Constructed in the Missouri Valley," **Nebraska Blue Print 26** (February 1927): 11-12; field inspection by Clayton Fraser, 6 July 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:

- 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 S3/4, T12N, R15W
USGS Quadrangle Hazard (7.5 Minute Series, 1951; photorevised 1978)
UTM References zone 14 easting 499380 northing 4543090

___ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 93 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

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		
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street & number	1269 Cleveland Avenue	telephone	303-669-7969
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