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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 Big Papillion Creek Bridge
other name/site number 120th Street Bridge; NEHBS Number SY00-189

2. Location

street & number 120th Street over South Branch of Big Papillion Creek N/A not for publication
city, town 3.2 miles west of La Vista X vicinity
state NE county Sarpy code 153 zip code 68046

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	<u>Sarpy County</u>	Number of Resources within Property	
Category of Property	<u>structure</u>	Contributing	Noncontributing
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> 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 Puchenberg 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
- 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**

Albany Byers 6/29/92

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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 / welded/bolted, tied arch 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.

Located 3.2 miles west of La Vista, the Big Papillion Creek Bridge spans the South Branch of Big Papillion Creek in a rural Sarpy County setting that has changed little since the structure's period of significance. Other than maintenance-related repairs, the bridge remains essentially unaltered as it continues to carry vehicular traffic. The Big Papillion Creek 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:	1	construction date:	ca.1940
span length:	80.0'	construction cost:	unknown
total length:	142.0'	current condition:	good
roadway wdt.:	15.1'	alterations:	none

superstructure: steel, 6-panel, welded/bolted, tied arch pony truss with steel stringer approach spans
substructure: steel pile bent piers and abutments with timber back- and wingwalls
floor/decking: timber deck over steel stringers
other features: arch rib: 2 channels with welded lacing; lower chord: 2 rectangular bars with welded lacing; vertical: I-beam welded/bolted to arch ribs; lateral bracing: cross braced angles; floor beam: I-beam; railing: 2 channels.

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	1940 (The period of significance is derived from the original construction date.)
Significant Dates	ca.1940
Cultural Affiliation	N/A
Significant Person	N/A
Architect/Builder (Designer)	unknown
(Fabricator)	Illinois S USA
(Builder)	county work force [probably]

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

With its combined welded/bolted tied arch design, this bridge is the only one of its type identified by Nebraska's statewide bridge inventory. Physical evidence indicates that the structure's components were shop-welded, brought to the bridge site in sections, and then bolted together in the field. Welded bridge construction first appeared in the United States in the late 1920s, so this bridge was almost assuredly built sometime after that date. County records, though, are somewhat obscure regarding the span's construction history. The Monarch Engineering Company of Falls City, Nebraska was Sarpy County's chief bridge building contractor during the 1920s and 1930s, and may be responsible for erecting this distinctive bridge. Another possibility is that this bridge is attributable to the locally based Thomas Construction Company, which was active in Sarpy County bridge construction and repair from the 1940s through the 1960s. The most likely source for the bridge, however, was the county itself, which built its own structures in the 1930s and 1940s. The relative crudeness of the welds, combined with the non-standard nature of the truss suggest this source. Whenever this bridge may have been built, it was not the first steel bridge at its location. On July 15, 1903, C.G. Sheely was awarded a contract to build several Sarpy County bridges, including a steel span, at this location, on the line between sections 19/20, T14N, R12E.

The Big Papillion Creek Bridge combines elements that are both innovative and anachronistic. Its arched configuration resembles an updated version of the venerable bowstring arch-truss built on eastern Nebraska roads in the 1870s, 1880s and early 1890s. Its extensive use of welded connections at a time in which welding technology was in its formative stages, however, marks the bridge as a sophisticated design exercise. Like the Hastings Subway (NEHBS No. AD04-716) in Adams County, the Big Papillion Bridge is technologically significant as one of Nebraska's earliest extant examples of welded bridge construction.

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 C007712515; Sarpy County Commissioners' Record, Books 5-7, covering period 1900 to 1920, (see specifically, Book 5, page 338, 15 July 1903); County Commissioners' Record, Book 9, covering period 1934-1939; field inspection by Carl McWilliams and Richard Collier, 21 January 1991.

___ 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 S19/20, T14N, R12E
USGS Quadrangle Ralston (7.5 Minute Series, 1956; photorevised 1984)
UTM References zone 14 easting 743260 northing 4561930

___ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular shaped parcel measuring 142 feet by 17.1 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

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