



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

The attached property, Lowell Bridge in Lane County, OREGON, reference number 79002085 and part of the Oregon Covered Bridges Thematic Resource, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places by the Keeper of the National Register on 11/29/1979, as evidenced by the FEDERAL REGISTER/WEEKLY LIST Vol. 45 number 54, notice of Tuesday, March 18, 1980, page 17475. The attached nomination form is a copy of the original documentation provided to the Keeper at the time of listing.

For the Keeper: *Ruth J. Smith / R.J.S.* *2-3-2010*  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places Date

THEMATIC GROUP NOMINATION  
OREGON COVERED BRIDGES

Bridge Name and Number Lowell Bridge, Index No. 27

County Lane

Stream or River Middle Fork Willamette River (Dexter Reservoir)

Location Opposite Lowell, off Highway 58, ca. 1½ miles E of Dexter

NE¼ NW¼ Sec. 23, T.19S., R.1W., W.M.

Zone 10 E517810 N4861600 Lowell Quadrangle

Acreeage and Boundary Description Full width of road right-of-way  
for the distance between abutments and ten feet additional  
at either end, containing in all approximately 11,100 square feet.

Present Owner Lane County Board of Commissioners

Lane County Courthouse

Eugene, OR 97401

Date of Construction 1945

Description of Bridge

Length of span	165 feet
Truss type	Howe truss
Cladding	Board and batten, vertical side walls
Roofing	Metal-clad gable roof
Decking	Wood

Other salient features Semi-elliptical portal arches. Two segmental-arched openings above deck, east elevation. Beams exposed at gable ends. Steel pilings and concrete piers. Covered spans of the 1940s are typically wider. This one accommodates a road width of 24 feet. Rated load limit: 38 tons.

The bridge takes its name from the community of Lowell, on the north bank of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River, which was platted by Amos Hyland ca. 1874 and named for the latter's birthplace in Maine. The 210-foot predecessor bridge at Lowell was built by Nels Roney in 1907. Following a truck mishap, which knocked the truss out of alignment, the Roney bridge was replaced by the existing span in 1945. It was not housed  
(cont. on back)

Legal description is included in the appropriate County Road Department right-of-way files and County Deed Records.

Information based on following sources: Statewide Inventory Form prepared by Stephen Dow Beckham, 1976. Typescript on Oregon Covered Bridges by Nick and Bill Cockrell, 1977. Lane County Department of Public Works Covered Bridge Data Sheet, October 1976.

until two years later. In 1953 the bridge was raised 6 feet and the roadway rebuilt in anticipation of the pool which would be formed between Dexter Dam and Lookout Point Dam. The bridge and a causeway at its north end are the connecting link between Highway 58 and Lowell, where a lumber mill generates regular heavy truck traffic. The Dexter Reservoir rises, at times, to within two feet of the underside of the bridge. Rotting deck elements and punishing loads, combined with the fact that the roadway cannot be easily re-aligned for a by-pass, made this among the most endangered spans in the Thematic Group until recently.

Lowell Bridge is highly visible from Highway 58, and is strongly identified with the community. It carries a mix of recreational, commuter and logging traffic. Expansion of the road network to increase traffic-handling capacity on Highway 58 is planned.

Early in 1979 a plan was developed to bypass the housed structure with a low-profile concrete span with railing to be placed adjacent to the former--within 10 to 18 feet--on the upstream side in order to utilize the existing causeway across the reservoir. Although the covered span will no longer be used by vehicular traffic, Lane County has agreed to maintain the bridge for pedestrian use and bicycle traffic.

Approach piling repaired and decks resurfaced in 1975. Rot in floor beams and stringers; minor portal damage.

Bridge Index No. 27  
Lowell Covered Bridge  
Vicinity of Lowell  
Lane County, Oregon  
North West Elevation

Stephen Dow Beckham Photo, 1976  
History Department  
Lewis and Clark College  
615 SW Palantine Hill Road  
Portland, OR 97219

