

HABS/HAER INVENTORY

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Washington, DC 20240

1. SITE I.D. NO			
2. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE Huerfano Bridge Bridge over Huerfano River L-19-B		5. ORIGINAL USE highway bridge	7. CLASSIFICATION BT&A: ARCH: REINFORCED CONCRETE
3. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO) U.S. Highway 50 over Huerfano River 1.2 miles south of Boone NE¼ S18, T21S, R61W		6. PRESENT USE highway bridge	9. RATING Local
4. CITY/VICINITY Boone vicinity		COUNTY Pueblo	10. DATE 1921
		STATE Colorado	11. REGION RMRO
		8. UTM ZONE 13	EASTING 564700
		NORTHING 4230900	
		SCALE 1:24 OTHER	QUAD NAME Avondale

12. OWNER/ADMIN ADDRESS
Colorado Department of Highways 4201 East Arkansas Avenue Denver Colorado 80222

13. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, MAJOR ALTERATIONS, EXANT EQUIPMENT, AND IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, ETC.

Segmental, reinforced concrete filled spandrel arch

span number: 5	flr./decking: asphalt over earth fill
span length: 80'0"	substructure: buttressed concrete piers w/concrete wingwall abutments
overall length: 480'0"	guardrails : cast concrete doghouse guardrails
roadway width : 30'0"	

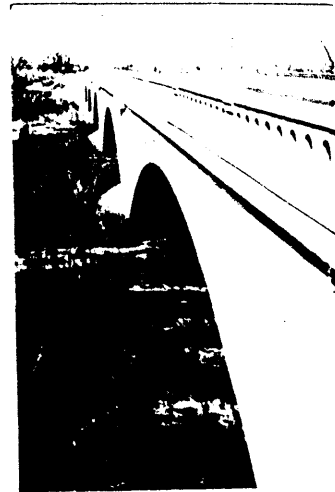
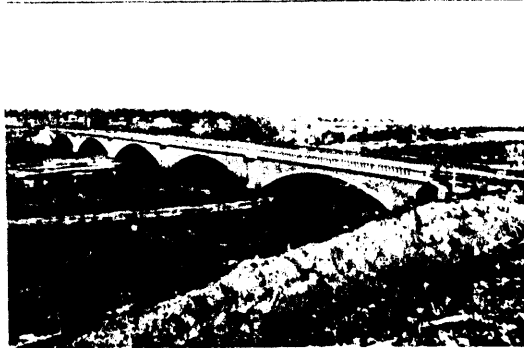
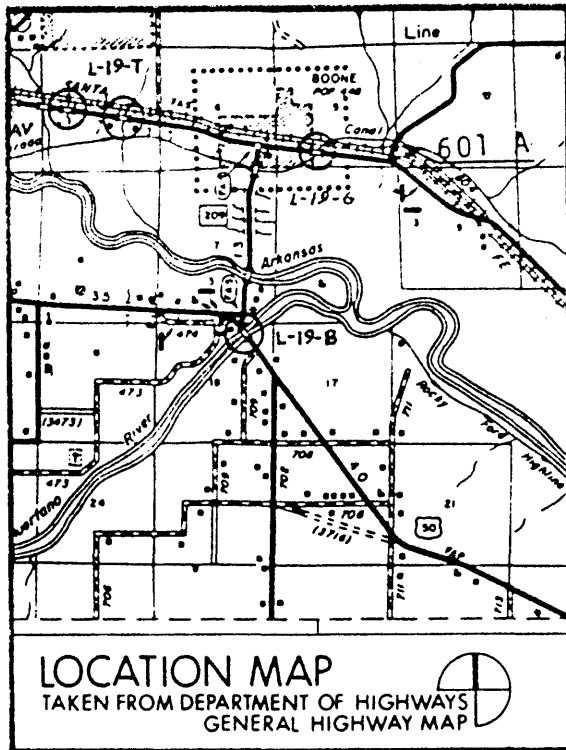
By early 1920 the existing timber truss bridge over the Huerfano River on the Santa Fe Trail had deteriorated beyond repair. Two spans failed because they were "weakened by the drillings of woodpeckers at the hip joints." The Colorado Highway Department elected to replace the bridge, and staff engineer Robert Dubois designed this multi-span deck arch. The Pueblo Bridge Company was contracted to build the bridge for the state and move the timbers of the old trusses to another crossing for the county; construction continued through 1920 and into the spring of 1921. Although the bridge was unfinished in June, it was one of the only spans left in the county after heavy flooding washed the others away, and was put to use immediately. The work was completed later that year. With incised panels of bushhammered texture and tinted concrete, the bridge remains architecturally intact. A major crossing of the Santa Fe Trail (now U.S. 50), it remains structurally sound and is a substantial roadway structure.

14. CONDITION EXCELLENT GOOD FAIR DETERIORATED RUINS

15. DANGER OF DEMOLITION? (SPECIFY THREAT) YES NO UNKNOWN

16. SIGNIFICANCE AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Engineering and Transportation

The preferred alternative to the truss for short- and medium-span vehicular bridges was generally considered to be the concrete arch. More solid under traffic and better resistant to flooding, it was also valued as more aesthetically refined than the starkly functional truss. The Huerfano Bridge has weathered floods that destroyed almost all of the trusses in Pueblo County. Called "one of the finest examples of concrete construction in the state" at its completion, it is a substantial and architecturally well-detailed bridge. This crossing near the mouth of the Huerfano River is a pivotal one to southeast Colorado, and as such the Huerfano Bridge - the longest filled spandrel roadway arch remaining in the state - is a significant structure.



18 LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO NAME

19 PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY YES, LIMITED YES, UNLIMITED NO UNKNOWN

20. EXISTING SURVEYS NR NHL HABS HAER-1 HAER NPS STATE
 COUNTY LOCAL OTHER

21 REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER

Structure Inventory and Appraisal: L-19-B. Colorado Department of Highways, Denver Colorado.

Pueblo County Commissioners' Minutes: 24 May 1920 (Book 21, page 10), 2 June 1921 (Book 21, page 154). Pueblo County Courthouse, Pueblo Colorado.

Robert Dubois. "Longest Concrete Bridge in Colorado," *Colorado Highways*, Vol. 1, Number 2 (May 1922), page 18.

Builder's plate on bridge: "Colorado State Highway Department Builder Pueblo Bridge & Construction Co. 1920-21".

Field inspection by Clayton Fraser and Susan Cason, 3 February 1984.

22 INVENTORIED BY

Clayton Fraser and Carl Hallberg

AFFILIATION

Fraserdesign Loveland Colorado

DATE

8 February 1984