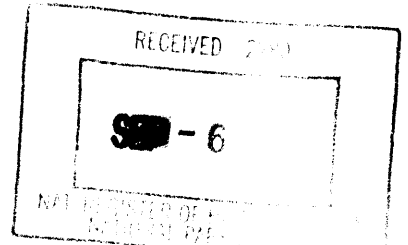


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Rito Seco Creek Culvert

other names/site number CDOT No. P-15-D; 5CT322

2. Location

street & number Colorado Highway 142 at milepost 33.81 [N/A] not for publication

city or town San Luis [NA] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Costilla code 023 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Guerrina Corteglia State Historic Preservation Officer August 21, 2002
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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
[] See continuation sheet.

Edson B. Beall Signature of the Keeper 10/15/02 Date of Action

Rico Seco Creek Culvert
Name of Property

Costilla County, Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Highway Bridges in Colorado

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Steel multiplate arch

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____
roof _____
other Stone _____
Asphalt _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Name of Property

Costilla County, Colorado
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Transportation
- Politics/Government
- Engineering

Periods of Significance
1936-1952

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person(s)
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Colorado Department of Highways
Works Progress Administration

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- Name of repository:
Colorado Historical Society
Colorado Dept. of Transportation

Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Name of Property

Costilla County, Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 462190 4116930
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and Clay Fraser, principal
organization Colorado Historical Society and Fraser Design date May 21, 2002
street & number 1300 Broadway telephone 303-866-4681
city or town Denver state CO zip code 80203

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Colorado Department of Transportation
street & number 4201 E. Arkansas Avenue telephone _____
city or town Denver state CO zip code 80222

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

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National Park Service**

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Continuation Sheet**

Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

Location: Colorado Highway 142 at milepost 33.81 on the west side of San Luis

Setting: Over Rito Seco Creek

Structure length: 39 feet

Structure width: 35.50 feet

Roadway width: 30.30 feet

Main span number: 2

Main span length: 18 feet

Superstructure: Steel multiplate arch culvert

Substructure: Stone foundations

Floor/decking: Asphalt roadway on earth fill

Other features: Volcanic fieldstone headwalls and parapets
Stone voussiors around pipes

Erected: 1936

Designer: Colorado Department of Highways

Contractor: Works Progress Administration

Alterations: Flex beam guardrail installed between road and sidewalk circa 1980

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Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 9 Page 2

SIGNIFICANCE

The 1936 Rito Seco Creek Culvert on Colorado Highway 142, in San Luis, meets the registration requirements under Criterion A in the areas of Transportation and Politics/Government and under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as set forth in the *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, Multiple Property Documentation Form. The period of significance begins in 1936 with the completion of the culvert and extends through its historic use to 1952, a date fifty-years-of-age in keeping with National Register criteria.

Established in the mid-19th century, the main road through San Luis, the Costilla County seat, was designated as State Primary Road No. 61 by the Highway Commission in the 1910s. It was later renumbered State Highway 159. Near the north end of town, this route was intersected by an unimproved secondary road, which came in eastward from San Acacio, and, beyond that, Manassa in Conejos County. This latter route was designated State Highway 142. In 1936 the Colorado Highway Department engineered a two-barrel culvert to carry Highway 142 over Rito Seco Creek in San Luis.

During the 1930s the Great Depression devastated the nation's economy, leaving millions jobless and homeless. By 1933 more than 13 million workers were unemployed, more than a thousand homes were being foreclosed upon each day, and cities and counties across the country were bankrupt. In an effort to alleviate the financial distress, at least in part, President Franklin Roosevelt established a variety of federal agencies whose primary purpose was to funnel billions of dollars of relief money to the destitute citizenry. A favored way of distributing funds to the unemployed was by means of so-called make-work projects directed toward maintaining national forests and parks, producing artwork for public places, writing tourist guides, documenting historic sites, constructing buildings, irrigation works, dams, roads, bridges, etc.

To administer all of this activity, the Roosevelt administration established such bureaus as the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Work Projects Administration (later renamed the Works Progress Administration). In Colorado the WPA employed as many as 43,000 workers at one time on projects that ranged from sewing and writing to landscaping urban parks, constructing libraries and hospitals and grading roads. According to *The WPA Worker*,

The vast panorama of roads and bridges, of new school houses and additions, or sidewalks and curbs, of unsightly trash holes covered and landscaped into scenic spots, of new camping nooks in the mountains, of flood protection in retaining walls and rip-rapping, altogether have set this state ahead by many decades.

In August 1936, the WPA completed its longest bridge in the state, a 74-span structure over

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Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 9 Page 3

Bijou Creek in Morgan County. Though at the other end of the scale in size, the Rito Seco Creek Culvert is noteworthy nonetheless. Its extensive, well crafted stonework and its prominent position in the county seat make it the most important WPA built bridge in Costilla County. Its use of steel multiplate arches marks it as one of the first such WPA structures built in Colorado.

Engineering

The Rito Seco Creek Culvert was built by the Works Progress Administration using igneous fieldstones. The WPA workers constructed the arches with faux voussiors and keystones. The structure was comprised of two multiplate steel arches, surrounded by extensive stone headwalls and wingwalls. *The WPA Worker* described the construction process:

The multiplate arch is delivered to the field in sections and when fastened together forms a practically solid arch. It is erected with the use of templates holding the first arch in place until it is securely bolted. The remaining sections are self-supporting, resting on the first arch.

Once the arches were installed and the masonry work completed, earth fill was shoveled over them, on top of which was laid the gravel roadway. Since its completion, the Rito Seco Creek Culvert has carried light traffic, with the installation of flex beam guardrails and the asphalt paving of the road as the only alterations of note.

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Continuation Sheet**

Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

"A Grand Panorama of Colorado Through Works Progress Administration." *The WPA Worker* 1:3, August 1936.

"Bridges." *The WPA Worker* 1:2, July 1936.

Colorado Department of Transportation, Structure Inventory and Appraisal: Structure No. P-15-D. Located at CDOT, Denver, CO.

Colorado Highway Department Bridge Kardex: File. Located at CDOT Bridge Division, Denver, CO.

"Flood Destroyed Structures Replaced by WPA." *The WPA Worker* 1:7, December 1936.

Fraser, Clayton B. Field inspection September 1998.

Fraser, Clayton B. "Rito Seco Creek Culvert, 5CT322," Historic Bridge Inventory, 31 March 2000.

"Longest WPA Bridge in the State." *The WPA Worker* 1:3, August 1936.

"Multiplate Arch Bridge Built on Red Rocks Road." *The WPA Worker* 2:6 (June 1937).

"New Bridges Eliminate Highway Dangers." *The WPA Worker* 2:2, February 1937.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 10 Page 5

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The bridge is located on Colorado Highway 142 at milepost 33.81. The boundaries of this nomination consist of a rectangle of land 10 feet out in each direction from the footprint of the bridge.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nomination includes all the land directly and historically associated with the bridge.

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-2:

Name of Property: Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Location: Costilla County, Colorado
Photographer: Clayton Fraser
Date of Photographs: September 1998
Negatives: Colorado Department of Transportation

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 View to southwest of roadway
- 2 View to northwest through culvert

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Rito Seco Creek Culvert
Costilla County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
San Luis Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

