United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1430

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions 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 War Eagle Creek Bridge		
other names/site number Site #MA00	078, Bridge #15035, Bridge #267	
Site #MA00	76, Blidge #15055, Blidge #207	
2. Location		
street & number Madison County Road	1 53 over War Eagle Creek	not for publication
city or town Old Alabam		
•	12	
state Arkansas code	AR county Madison code	
3. State/Federal Agency Certification		
5. State/Federal Agency Certification		
request for determination of eligibility meets the Places and meets the procedural and professional does not meet the National Register criteria. I re nationally statewide locally. (See a Signature of certifying official/Title Arkansas Historic Preservation Prog	Date 10/31/07	ional Register of Historic property ⊠ meets □
State of Federal agency and oureau		
4. National Park Service Certification	100	
I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action 1 · 24 · 08
other, (explain:)		

War Eagle Creek Bridge		Madison County, Arkansas		
Name of Property		County and State		
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in count.)		
private public-local	building(s) district	Contributing Noncontributing	1.31	
public-State	site		_ buildings	
public-Federal			_ sites	
	object	1	structures	
		1	_ objects Total	
Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not par	property listing t of a multiple property listing.)	Number of Contributing resources previously in the National Register		
Historic Bridges of Arkansa	as			
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions	s)	Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		
TRANSPORTATION/road	-related(vehicular)/bridge	TRANSPORTATION/road-related(vehicular)/bridge		
7. Description				
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions		Materials (Enter categories from instructions)		
OTHER/Open Spandrel Con		foundation CONCRETE		
		walls N/A		
		roof N/A		
		other CONCRETE		

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

War Eagle Creek Bridge	e
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Madison County, Arkansas

County and State

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SUMMARY

The War Eagle Creek Bridge is located on Madison County Road 53 (former Arkansas Highway 68, now U.S. 412) at the crossing of War Eagle Creek approximately one mile southwest of the community of Old Alabam. Comprised of two open-spandrel arch spans measuring 70 feet long each, the bridge has a total length of 206 feet.

ELABORATION

The bridge is accessed from both the northeast and southwest. The open spandrel concrete arch, a bridge type that has been built since at least the early 1900s, consists of two parallel concrete arches connected to each other by horizontal concrete beams. The arches are also connected to the bridge's deck with vertical concrete beams.

The War Eagle Creek Bridge consists of two open-spandrel arch spans measuring 70 feet long each; the bridge has a total length of 206 feet. The travel surface and overall width of the bridge is 18.2 feet. The deck surface is concrete. The abutments are also concrete. Resting on top of the deck, a pair of guardrails comprised of evenly spaced concrete posts and two rows of horizontal concrete beams run the entire length of the bridge on the northwest and southeast sides.

INTEGRITY

No structural alterations have been made to the bridge to compromise its integrity. Its location remains rural, and its setting remains pristine. The bridge still illustrates its original design and materials. In addition, the bridge is still in use for vehicular travel.

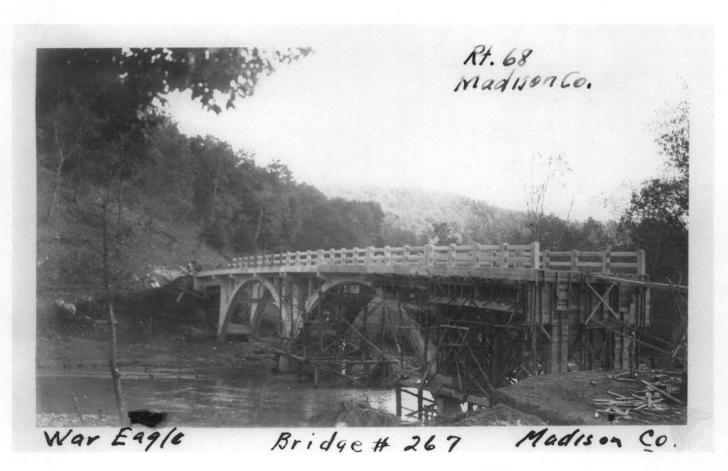
County and State

Name of Property

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c.1926 photograph of the War Eagle Creek Bridge under construction.

County and State

Name of Property

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1926 picture of the War Eagle Creek Bridge

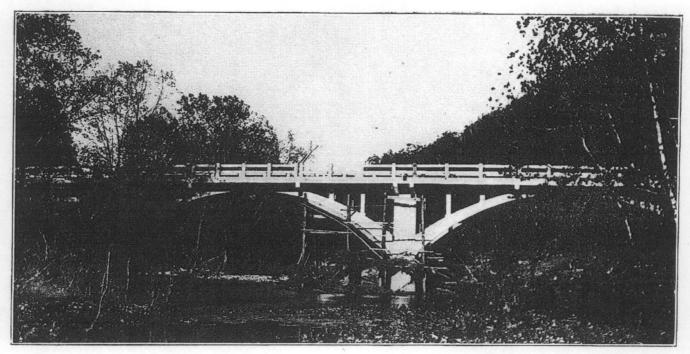
County and State

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A pretty view of a Concrete Arch Bridge under construction over War Eagle Creek east of Huntsville in Madison County. State Highway No. 68.

Picture of the War Eagle Creek from the Seventh Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements (c.1926)

War Eagle Creek Bridge Name of Property	War Eagle Creek Bridge County and 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.)	Levels of Significance (local, state, national) Local
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions) Engineering Transportation
☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	Transportation
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.	Period of Significance 1925-1958
□ 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.)	Significant Dates 1925-1958
Property is: A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
☐ B. removed from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked)
 C. birthplace or grave of a historical figure of outstanding importance. D a cemetery. 	Cultural Affiliation (Complete if Criterion D is marked)
☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
☐ F a commemorative property	Architect/Builder
☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.	Meyer & Greenwald Construction Company, Builder
Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	
9. Major Bibliographical References	
Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one o	r 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	Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State Agency Federal Agency Local Government
Register designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	University Other Name of repository: Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	

War	Eagle	Creek	Bridge	
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Madison County, Arkansas

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SUMMARY

Constructed in 1925-1926 by the Meyer & Greenwald Construction Company, the War Eagle Creek Bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as the only remaining example of an open spandrel concrete deck arch bridge in Madison County. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Madison County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple property listing "Historic Bridges of Arkansas" and under associated historic context "Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939."

ELABORATION

Settlement began in the Madison County area in the first part of the nineteenth century when William Hawkins settled in the area in 1830 and opened a mill by 1838. People began arriving in increasing numbers in the subsequent years with David Phillips, John Phillips, Richard Withrow, and George W. Sanders all settling in the current Huntsville vicinity in 1831 and 1832. By 1836, there were enough people in the area to warrant the creation of the new county by the State Legislature on September 30, 1836. The county was named after president James Madison.

Little is known about the history of Old Alabam. The settlement of Alabam, located approximately one mile north of Old Alabam, had a post office established in 1882, suggesting that Old Alabam was in existence before that.² The name likely refers to the fact that many of the early settlers in the area came from Alabama. However, it appears that Old Alabam, or Alabam for that matter, have not been much more than crossroads settlements.

During the earliest days of settlement in Madison County, few roads existed in the area. The *History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas*, indicates that "Two principal routes were traveled by the earliest settlers to Madison County, one following the Arkansas River to Fort Smith, and thence passing through Fayetteville; the other passing through Missouri, southwesterly from St. Louis through Springfield, to the extreme northwest portion of Arkansas." By 1839, the major road in the area came east out of Washington County near Richland Creek to Sevierville, which became Huntsville in 1840, before turning northeast and heading into Carroll County. A secondary road

¹ History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, pp. 422 and 434.

² Baker, Russell Pierce. From Memdag to Norsk: A Historical Directory of Arkansas Post Offices, 1832-1971. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Genealogical Society, 1988, p. 2.

³ History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, p. 420.

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branched off to the northeast in between Richland Creek and Sevierville.⁴ By 1854, the number of roads in Madison County had increased dramatically, including a road that ran north and south through the county connecting Huntsville to St. Paul in the south and Carroll County to the north and east.⁵

By the late 1800s, there were road districts organized in Madison County. According to *History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas*:

The public roads of the county are under the jurisdiction of the county court. For convenience in repairing and improving their condition they are divided into districts, over each of which an overseer is appointed. The present number of districts is about 100, and varies but little from year to year. The entire county was redistricted every second year. In 1873 the different townships were constituted road districts in the following order, the roads in each being divided into a number of sections: No. 1, War Eagle, 11 sections; No. 2, Prairie, 2 sections; No. 3, Piney, 1 section; No. 4, Marble, 3 sections; No. 5, King's River, 11 sections; No. 6, Whorton's Creek, 2 sections; No. 7, Bowen, 6 sections; No. 8, Hilburn, 8 sections; No. 9, Valley, 4 sections; No. 10, California, 4 sections; No. 11, Richland, 9 sections.

By December 1924, the highway containing the War Eagle Creek Bridge had been designated Highway C-5. Highways with a "C" designation were connecting state roads, while highways with "B" designations were Secondary Federal Aid Roads and highways with "A" designations were Primary Federal Aid Roads. However, by April 1926, the road was redesignated Highway 68.

As the roads were upgraded in Madison County with the new designations, it became necessary to build new bridges to handle the increased traffic and heavier loads. In 1925, the Department of State Lands, Highways, and Improvements sought to build two bridges in eastern Madison County, one over War Eagle Creek at Old Alabam and a second over the Kings River at Marble. Bids were received on September 25, 1925, and the

⁵ Colton's Railroad & Township Map of Arkansas Compiled from the U.S. Surveys and Other Authentic Sources. Map. Unknown Publisher, New York, 1854.

⁶ History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889, pp. 445-446.

⁷ Map of State of Arkansas Showing System of Primary and Secondary Federal Aid Roads and Progress of Improvements. Little Rock: Arkansas State Highway Department, 1924.

⁸ State of Arkansas Showing System of State Highways. Little Rock: Arkansas State Highway Department, 1926.

⁴ Burr, David. H. Map of Mississippi, Louisiana & Arkansas exhibiting the post offices, post roads, canals, rail roads, &c. Map. London: J. Arrowsmith, 1839, and Baker, Russell Pierce. From Memdag to Norsk: A Historical Directory of Arkansas Post Offices, 1832-1971. Hot Springs, AR: Arkansas Genealogical Society, 1988, p. 200.

War	Eagle	Creek	Bridge	

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Meyer & Greenwald Construction Company of Monroe, Louisiana, was selected to build the two bridges. The two bridges, which would have a total length of 490 feet, were anticipated to cost \$28,088.50 to build.9

When choosing the kind of bridge to be built at a certain location, the State Highway Commission looked at several different factors. According to the Eighth Biennial Report, "In choosing types and deciding on layouts, the principal considerations are Traffic, Maximum Stream Flow, Navigation Requirements, Economy, and last but of no minor importance, the consideration of Appearance, for with the natural beauty of many of our streams, no one would wish to waive this feature of the design."¹⁰

The use of concrete bridges seemed to be the preferable alternative to the State Highway Commission whenever possible. They wrote:

> ... The all-concrete bridge properly designed and constructed requires but little maintenance, and it seems decidedly the type to build where the comparative cost is not prohibitive and the foundation conditions as well as other stream requirements are satisfactory.

> Where bed-rock projects above or is at a slight depth below the stream bed, the concrete arch span often proves less expensive than steel. In the mountainous sections bed-rock foundations are generally obtainable at reasonable depths for both concrete and steel bridges, while pile foundations are often resorted to in the delta section. 11

As a result, it was no surprise that a concrete bridge was the preferred choice for the War Eagle Creek crossing.

The design of the War Eagle Creek Bridge reflected other highway bridge designs used in Arkansas during the period. The Arkansas State Highway Department used open spandrel arches exclusively for their concrete bridges. (Along the same lines, they exclusively used the Parker truss design for metal pony-truss bridges.) Although the reason that the Highway Department used open spandrel arches exclusively is not exactly known, it may have been because of cost or that the design may have been able to support more weight. 12

⁹ Seventh Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements. Conway, AR: Conway Printing Co., c.1926, p. 72.

¹⁰ Eighth Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements. Little Rock, AR: H. G. Pugh & Co., c.1928, p. 65.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 66.

¹² Scoggin, Bob. Telephone conversation with the author. 19 July 2007.

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The location of the War Eagle Creek Bridge on a winding section of Highway 68 and its narrow width of 18.2 feet meant that it would have been a relatively dangerous crossing, especially as cars and trucks grew in size during the 1930s and 1940s. As a result, the bridge was bypassed in 1950 by a new bridge and straighter alignment of the road to the southeast. (The bridge built at Marble over the Kings River was also replaced by a new bridge and new highway alignment to the south and the original bridge was subsequently removed.)

Since the completion of the War Eagle Creek Bridge in 1925-1926, virtually no structural alterations have been made to the bridge to compromise its integrity. (A portion of the northern guardrail at the eastern end has been removed, likely the result of an auto accident.) Today, Madison County Road 53 remains an asphalt and gravel road, used by the local residents of the area, and the War Eagle Creek Bridge has been an important crossing on the road for the residents in the area for approximately 85 years. The War Eagle Creek Bridge remains an important transportation link in the area and a good example of an open spandrel concrete deck arch.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1925-1926 by the Meyer & Greenwald Construction Company, the War Eagle Creek Bridge is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with **local significance** under **Criterion C** as the only remaining example of an open spandrel concrete deck arch bridge in Madison County. The bridge is also being nominated under **Criterion A** for its associations with the development of vehicular transportation in Madison County. This nomination is being submitted under the multiple property listing "Historic Bridges of Arkansas" and under associated historic context "Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department Era: 1923-1939."

¹³ Scoggin, Bob. E-mail to the author. 19 July 2007.

War Eagle Creek Bridge	
Name of Property	

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Burr, David. H. Map of Mississippi, Louisiana & Arkansas exhibiting the post offices, post roads, canals, rail roads, &c. Map. London: J. Arrowsmith, 1839.

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History of Benton, Washington, Carroll, Madison, Crawford, Franklin, and Sebastian Counties, Arkansas. Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1889.

Map of State of Arkansas Showing System of Primary and Secondary Federal Aid Roads and Progress of Improvements. Little Rock: Arkansas State Highway Department, 1924.

Scoggin, Bob. E-mail to the author. 19 July 2007.

Scoggin, Bob. Telephone conversation with the author. 19 July 2007.

Seventh Biennial Report of the Department of State Lands, Highways and Improvements. Conway, AR: Conway Printing Co., c.1926.

State of Arkansas Showing System of State Highways. Little Rock: Arkansas State Highway Department, 1926.

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.) Property Owner (Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.) name street & number telephone	War Eagle Creek Bridge		Madisor	County, Arkansas	
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street & number telephone	name				
				telephone	
	city or town	state)	zip code	

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 listing. 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.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

War Eagle Creek Bridge	Madison County, Arkansas	
Name of Property	County and State	

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From a point 20 feet southwest of the southwest end of the bridge, proceed northeasterly along Madison County Road 53 to a point 20 feet northeast of the northeast end of the bridge. The width of the boundary includes 20 feet on either side of the road centerline.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This boundary includes the War Eagle Creek Bridge and its immediate setting.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION
PROPERTY War Eagle Creek Bridge NAME:
MULTIPLE Historic Bridges of Arkansas MPS NAME:
STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Madison
DATE RECEIVED: 12/11/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/03/08 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/18/08 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/24/08 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:
REFERENCE NUMBER: 07001430
REASONS FOR REVIEW:
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N
COMMENT WAIVER: N ACCEPTRETURNREJECT/ 24.08 DATE ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:
Intered in the
RECOM./CRITERIA
REVIEWER DISCIPLINE
TELEPHONE DATE
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
DOCUMENTATION SEE accached commence 1/N see accached SIR 1/N

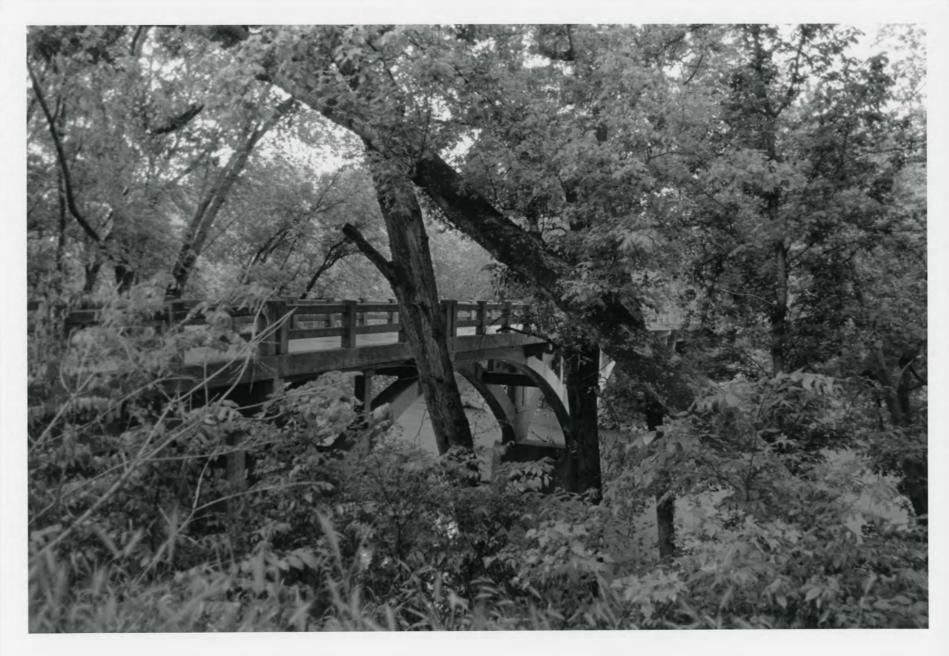
If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



WAR EAGLE CREEK BRIDGE MADISON COUNTY, AR RALPH S. WILCOX

MAY 2007

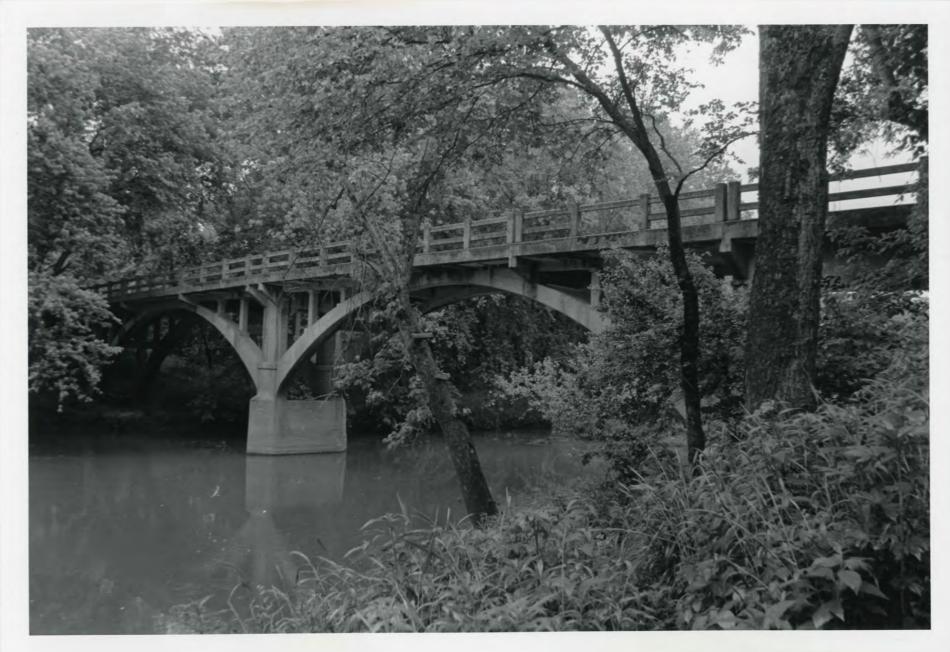
ARKANSAS HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR VIEW OF THE BRIDGE, LOOKING NORTHEAST



WAR EAGLE CREEK BRIDGE MADISON COUNTY, AR RALPH S. WILCOX

MAY ZOOT

ARKANSAS HISTORIL PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR VIEW OF THE BRIDGE, LOOKING NORTH



WAR EAGLE CREEK BRIDGE MADISON COUNTY, AR RALPH S. WILLOX MAY 2007

ARKANSAS HISTORIL PRESERVATION PROGRAM, LITTLE ROCK, AR VIEW OF THE BRIDGE, LOOKING SOUTHEAST



The Department of Arkansas Heritage

Mike Beebe Governor

Cathie Matthews
Director

Arkansas Arts Council

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission

Delta Cultural Center

Historic Arkansas Museum

Mosaic Templars Cultural Center

Old State House Museum



Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

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December 5, 2007

Dr. Janet Matthews
Chief of Registration
United States Department of the Interior
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
8th Floor
1201 Eye Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

RE: War Eagle Creek Bridge - Old Alabam vic., Madison County, Arkansas

Dear Dr. Matthews:

We are enclosing for your review the above-referenced nomination. The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program has complied with all applicable nominating procedures and notification requirements in the nomination process.

If you need further information, please call Ralph S. Wilcox of my staff at (501) 324-9787. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Cathie Matthews

State Historic Preservation Officer

CM:rsw

Enclosure

