

PH0098990

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| STATE:<br>CALIFORNIA |             |
| COUNTY:<br>YUBA      |             |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY     |             |
| ENTRY NUMBER         | DATE        |
|                      | MAY 30 1975 |

1. NAME

COMMON:  
OREGON CREEK COVERED BRIDGE

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Freeman's Covered Bridge

2. LOCATION *3mi NE of North San Juan over Oregon Creek*

STREET AND NUMBER: *Northeast 2 1/2 miles on State Hwy. 49 and 1/4 mile NE on County Road (SW 1/4 NE 1/4, Sec. 28, T.18N., R.8E.)*

CITY OR TOWN:  
~~from~~ North San Juan *vic.*

|                     |            |                 |             |
|---------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| STATE<br>California | CODE<br>06 | COUNTY:<br>Yuba | CODE<br>115 |
|---------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|

3. CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP  | STATUS   | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC  |
|---|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both                                    | Public Acquisition:<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)  |  |  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Educational<br><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Government<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park<br><input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religious<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Community          |

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
County of Yuba

STREET AND NUMBER:  
County Courthouse, 219 - 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Marysville      STATE: California      CODE: 06

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Yuba County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
219 - 5th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Marysville      STATE: California      CODE: 06

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
USFS SITE RECONNAISSANCE - No. 05-17-53-11

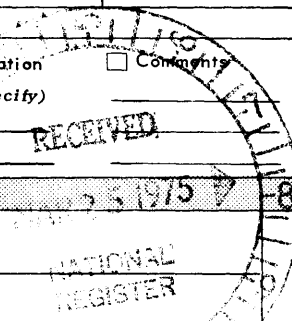
DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Tahoe National Forest

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Nevada City      STATE: California      CODE: 06

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

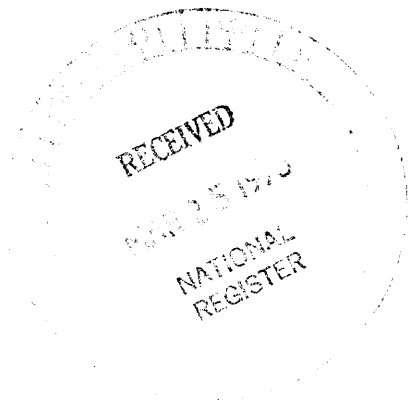
|           |   |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                 |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                 |  |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered       | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This covered bridge across Oregon Creek, in Yuba County, has a span of approximately 83 feet.

The bridge itself is a Howe pony truss structure. The hand hewn wooden Ponderosa Pine beams are approximately 16 inches square and are still sound. The sides consist of wooden siding and the structure originally had a shake roof. The abutments were originally of unmortared stone construction. The east abutment appears to be as originally constructed, however, the west abutment was faced with concrete at some later date. Yuba County replaced the wooden siding and replaced the shake roof with one of corrugated tin because of the snow loads, some 40 to 50 years ago.

The structure is owned and maintained by Yuba County and is located on lands administered by the Tahoe National Forest adjacent to the Oregon Creek Campground.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal             | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric            | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic    | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                   | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                 | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture           | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian       | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                   | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce               | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications         | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation           |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The covered bridge over Oregon Creek has been used continuously since its construction over a century ago. The actual construction date is in question, however. Thompson and West indicates that Tom Freeman built a bridge across Oregon Creek in 1858 and in 1871 built another a little above the first at a cost of \$2,500.00. The original bridge was washed away subsequent to the construction of the new bridge. (1879:100)

Other references quote various dates, including 1860, 1861 and 1862 as the year that the bridge was constructed. (Adams 1963:134)

In any event, this bridge is either the oldest, or one of the oldest covered bridges in the western United States still in general use. (Adams 1963:134)

Tom Freeman, who built the bridge, operated it and another bridge across the Middle Yuba River nearby, as toll bridges, apparently until his death, in 1892. Subsequently, Yuba County acquired the bridge and still operates it. The date of acquisition is unverified, but is thought to be about 1910. (Thompson & West 1879:100)

The bridge is unique in the annals of American covered bridge building in that the portals curve to meet the traveler at either end. (Adams 1963:134)

In 1883, the failure of the English Dam far upstream on the Middle Yuba River sent a mass of water flooding downstream. The high flood waters surged upstream in Oregon Creek, lifted the bridge from its abutments and carried it away. When the flood waters subsided, the bridge was found some 50 yards below its original location. Mr. Freeman hired a logging contractor, Solon Chatfield, to return the bridge to its abutments. However, during the flood the bridge had been turned end for end and the west end of the bridge was placed on the east abutment and the east end on the west abutment as it has remained to the present time. (Adams 1963:134) (Smith 3-29-64)

The bridge has been free to public use since Tom Freeman's death in 1892. Today it furnishes the principal access to the nearby Oregon Creek Camp-ground, operated by the Tahoe National Forest. The bridge is commemorated with a plaque placed by the Columbia Parlor #70, Native Daughters of the Golden West on May 16, 1965.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. ADAMS, Kramer A. (1963) "Covered Bridges of the West, Howell-North Publishing Co. Berkeley, CA.
2. THOMPSON & WEST(1879) "History of Yuba County"
3. MORLEY, Sylvanus G. (1938) "The Covered Bridges of California"-University of Calif. Press
4. SMITH, Joe (3-29-64) "Even A River Flowed the Wrong Way When the Dam Broke" - The Sacramento Bee.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |         |           |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------|-----------|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               | LATITUDE  |         | LONGITUDE |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees   | Minutes | Seconds   |
| NW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   | 39  | 23      | 48        |
| NE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   | 121   | 04      | 52        |
| SE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |   |         |           |
| SW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |   |         |           |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **2 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **George W. Taylor, Land Use Planner**

ORGANIZATION: **Tahoe National Forest** DATE: **7-22-74**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Nevada City** STATE: **California 95959** CODE: **06**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature]  
 Title: State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: **MAR 17 1975**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/30/75

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: **5.30.75**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS