

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED DEC 28 1979
DATE ENTERED FEB 27 1980

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Van Loon Wildlife Area Truss Bridge Group Thematic Resources

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Van Loon Wildlife Area

NW of La Crosse

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

La Crosse

VICINITY OF

Third

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Wisconsin

55

La Crosse

063

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURES

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources, Office of Lands, J.R. Huntoon, Dir.

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 7921

CITY, TOWN

Madison

VICINITY OF

STATE

Wisconsin 53707

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

La Crosse County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

La Crosse

STATE

Wisconsin 54601

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1979

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

CITY, TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The truss bridge group is located in the Van Loon Wildlife Area along the McGilvray Bottoms Road. The wildlife area contains over 4,000 acres of land--much of it former farmland--along and through the Black River and its backwaters in northern La Crosse County. The purpose of the area is to provide put-and-take pheasant hunting and to provide an area for fishing and for waterfowl, upland game, and deer hunting near the La Crosse population center. The roadway is now open only to pedestrian traffic.

The six bridges that constitute this group are numbered one to six, with Bridge #1 being the most easterly and Bridge #6 the most westerly. All five of the bowstring bridges were constructed in 1891-1892 by the Clinton Bridge Company of Clinton, Iowa; all are made of steel from the Jones and Laughlin Steel Company; and the tension members of each bridge are a combination of round and square eye-bars with the eyes made by looping over and welding the end of the bar. The wood king post bridge was built in 1920 by the Clinton Bridge Company to replace a flood-damaged bowstring arch bridge.

Bridge #1 is a double span bowstring arch truss bridge 17 feet wide and 134 feet in length, with one mid-span support and a wooden deck. Bridge #2 is a double span bowstring arch truss bridge 17 feet wide and 141 feet in length, with a mid-span support and a concrete deck. Bridge #3 is a single span bowstring arch truss bridge 17 feet wide and 110 feet in length, with two center supports and a wooden deck. Bridge #4 is a double span bowstring arch truss bridge 17 feet wide and 131 feet in length, with mid-span support and a concrete deck. Bridge #5 is a kingpost bridge 17 feet wide and 65 feet in length, with two center supports and a wooden deck. Bridge #6 is a bowstring arch truss bridge 17 feet wide and 50 feet in length, with a wooden deck.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

1892¹ 1920²

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Clinton Bridge Company

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Van Loon Wildlife Area Truss Bridge Group is a unique combination in Wisconsin of five rare bowstring arch truss bridges and one kingpost truss bridge. They represent two styles of bridge construction popular in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which are quickly being replaced due to deterioration or to meet today's greater traffic requirements. That these bridges are located on a former county highway now closed to vehicular traffic provides a rare opportunity for their preservation.

These six are all that remain of seven bridges built in 1891-92 by the Clinton Bridge Company, of Clinton, Iowa, to facilitate traffic between rural Trempealeau County and the city of La Crosse. The Black River had long blocked travel between these two locations before Alex McGilvray built his ferry in 1861. However the increased logging over the years made for difficult maintenance and discontinuous operation of the ferry. After repeated petitioning from residents of both Trempealeau and La Crosse counties, the La Crosse County Board appropriated funds to construct seven bowstring arch truss bridges: the main bridge no longer extant and not included in the nomination, and six on the La Crosse County road leading over the river's swampy backwaters to the ferry, to replace McGilvray's ferry across the Black River. In 1911, a flood substantially weakened and partially washed away one of the bridges.

After nearly nine years of bickering between the respective boards of the Town of Holland, in which the road and bridges are located, and the County of La Crosse over ownership and maintenance of the road and bridges, the county finally agreed to pay the Clinton Bridge Company to replace the damaged bowstring arch truss bridge with the present kingpost bridge. In 1957 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources acquired the roadway, bridges, and much of the surrounding countryside for inclusion in the Van Loon Wildlife Area. The department plans to maintain the roadway and bridges for pedestrian access to the preserve.

1. The Record, Onalaska, Wis., Vol. 7, No. 8, February 25, 1892; Proceedings of the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors, 1918-1919, p. 220
2. Proceedings of the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors, 1920, p. 5

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 0.744

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM REFERENCES Quadrangle Name: Galesville, Wis.

Quadrangle Scale: 1:24000

Bridge #1	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,5</u>	<u>6,4,0</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>3,6,0</u>	#2	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,5</u>	<u>4,1,0</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>3,8,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		
#3	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,5</u>	<u>1,1,5</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>4,0,5</u>	#4	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,4</u>	<u>6,1,0</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>6,0,0</u>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

Bridge #5	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,3</u>	<u>9,3,0</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>6,1,5</u>
Bridge #6	<u>1,5</u>	<u>6,3,3</u>	<u>3,9,5</u>	<u>4,8</u>	<u>7,5</u>	<u>6,8,0</u>

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Patricia Marks, Preservation Assistant, Historic Preservation Division

ORGANIZATION

State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

June 1979

STREET & NUMBER

816 State Street

TELEPHONE

608/262-3390

CITY OR TOWN

Madison

STATE

Wisconsin 53706

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Richard Henry

TITLE Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

DATE

10/16/79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Ray Juce
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

2/27/80

ATTEST: *Kristin O'Connell*
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
DATE 2/25/80

