

PH0352357

DATA SHEET

Form 10-306
(Oct. 1972)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Colorado
COUNTY: Montrose
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE JUN 18 1976

1. NAME

COMMON: ~~Narrow Gauge Trestle of D&RG Crossing the Cimarron~~

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
NE of Cimarron

CITY OR TOWN: Cimarron

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: Colorado CODE: 08 COUNTY: Montrose CODE: 085

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. AGENCY

United States Government - Bureau of Reclamation (also SEE OVER:

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Montrose

STATE: Colorado CODE: 08

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:
Montrose County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
South 1st Street

CITY OR TOWN: Montrose

STATE: Colorado CODE: 08

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

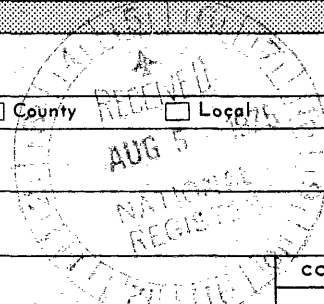
TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Colorado
COUNTY: Montrose
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

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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

The original bridge as designed and constructed was 288 feet in length consisting of four spans. The west end span and the two east spans were deck girder construction. The remaining span was a decked Pratt truss. All the spans were salvaged from other bridges on the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and modified for this structure. All were originally fabricated in the early 1880's.

The three girder spans consist of a deck supported on two built up riveted steel girders. The deck supporting the rails was constructed with 8-inch by 12-inch by 12-foot fir cross ties spaced at 16-inch centers resting directly on the two girders. The girders were built up from steel plate and angle with riveted connections. The two girders were spaced 10 feet on centers and cross-braced.

The only span remaining in place is the 119-foot decked Pratt truss. This span consists of two pin-connected Pratt trusses with eight 14-foot 11-inch panels. The depth between chords is 19 feet 6 inches. The two trusses are spaced 12 feet on centers and connected at panel points with transverse built up girders and cross-bracing. The transverse girders support two 15-inch I-beam stringers which in turn support the deck. The chords and posts for the trusses are built up using channels back to back and diagonals are steel rods. The end posts of the trusses rest on piers using expansion shoes. The deck consists of 8-inch by 8-inch by 14-foot fir cross ties at 16-inch centers supported by the two stringers and top chord of the trusses.

The west abutment was cut into solid rock and the east abutment was constructed of stone masonry. The three intermediate piers were also constructed of stone masonry.

So far, a search of all available literature has not located a single picture which shows the bridge as it was while in use. However, the area has a complete set of "as built" prints of the bridge.

The longest span of the bridge, one bent, and two piers are all that were saved from the scrappers.

This span and piers are in very good condition, although some damage has resulted from rolling road ballast on the south end of the span.

See attached "Technical Information for Special Engineering Structures" for additional descriptive information.

* NOTE: The National Park Service administers this area per Memorandum of Agreement, dated 02/11/1965, between the Service and the Bureau of Reclamation.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input 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

This remaining span of the narrow gauge bridge crossing the Cimarron River is just upstream of the confluence of the Gunnison and Cimarron Rivers.

The bridge was one of three that was necessary to get the trains through the Black Canyon and out at Cimarron. All of the spans, except for this remaining one, were removed or covered by water.

The bridge is noteworthy because of its particular construction and workmanship (see description) and because it also represents one of the last remnants of an engineering and construction feat of outstanding ingenuity and tenacity of men trying to invade the mighty maze of the Rocky Mountains to seek the riches these mountains held.

Except for the two short sections of narrow gauge still operating in Colorado and New Mexico, most of the abandoned narrow gauge routes are reverting back to the natural scene. Only a trained or experienced eye can still detect these routes.

Tied into this section of the Black Canyon route is the entire story of the dramatic race to find a way west, the fastest and best, encouraged by land grants from the U. S. Government. The race started with the epic survey led by Captain Gunnison and ended only after major transcontinental routes were established.

The time between the original surveys and completion makes some of the most dramatic pages of U. S. History. During this history, fortunes were built and lost and untold lives were influenced by these railroads. In fact, no facet of either man or nature will ever be the same again.

Bridge 259, or what remains of it, is a landmark that stands starkly against the rugged rocks of the Black Canyon; a quiet but living page of history during one of the nation's most eventful times. This bridge as it stands now is comprised of two piers (one bent) and one span, but in its rugged setting it creates a wonderful link with the past.

To complement the bridge the National Park Service and the town of Montrose have placed one of the engines from this run and a caboos which was also used on this run, plus a boxcar of the same vintage (but not used on this particular run) on the bridge.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lucius Beebe & Charles Clegg Narrow Gauge in the Rockies (Berkeley, 1958) pp. 12-22
 B. H. Bryant - Report of Survey dated March 17, 1883, ms in records of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad, Denver, 1880-84, pp. 393-98
 Byron H. Bryant, n.d., State Historical Society of Colorado, Bryant Mss XI-26. Published in The Trail and used by Beidleman, Theme 2 "Compilation of Pertinent Data ...," pp. 18-20, files of Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument.
 George A. Root, "Gunnison in the Early 'Eighties'," The Colorado Magazine, 9 (1932) 208.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		107° 32' 10"	38° 27' 00"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		107° 32' 55"	38° 27' 06"	
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than One Acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Karl T. Gilbert DATE: 1/10/75
 Karl T. Gilbert, General Superintendent
 BUSINESS ADDRESS: Colorado West Group, National Park Service
 STREET AND NUMBER: P. O. Box 1648 PHONE: 249-9661
 CITY OR TOWN: Montrose STATE: Colorado CODE: 08

12. CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

State Liaison Officer recommendation:
 Yes
 No
 None
Cynthia Gravelle
 acting State Liaison Officer Signature
 In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby Acting nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Liaison Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The recommended level of significance is National State Local
Sennis J. Grabelle 7/28/75
 Federal Representative Signature Date
 Federal Representative
Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.
W. J. Sturtevant
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
 Date: 6/18/76
 ATTEST:
Charles H. Humpal
 Acting Keeper of The National Register
 Date: 6-18-76

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	Colorado	
COUNTY	Montrose	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	300 15	DATE
	1976	9/

(Number all entries)

Summary and Conclusion: The building of the Denver and Rio Grande main line was one of the most important historical events in the region of the Gunnison River. The route from Gunnison to Cimarron closely adhered to the upper canyons of the Gunnison River and in so doing left its tracks within the proposed boundaries of Curecanti Recreation Area. It is to be regretted that almost the entire extent of the roadbed is today submerged deep beneath the reservoir waters backed up by Blue Mesa and Morrow Point Dams. Furthermore, the greatest part of Curecanti Needle is un~~o~~dated, although its uppermost point will continue to be seen. The road constructed by the Bureau of Reclamation from the town of Cimarron down along Cimarron Creek to the Morrow Point Dam overlays the roadbed of the Denver and Rio Grande. One trestle which crossed the Cimarron along this short route, (Illustration No. 10), is all that remains of the railroad within the Recreation Area except, possibly, for a few short stretches of the roadbed just below each of the upper two dams and along the Gunnison at the eastern terminus of the Recreation Area boundary where the river is still free flowing. Long stretches of the roadbed can be seen switch-backing across U. S. Route 50 across Cerro Summit between Montrose and Cimarron.

Taken from Benjamin Levy's "Curecanti Recreation Area, Colorado Historical Background Study, October 15, 1968" National Park Service

