

1830

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

SEP 20 1989

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Zieglers Ford Bridge

other names/site number Bridge No. L-5659

2. Location

street & number Twp. RD. 96 over Big Cobb River

not for publication N/A

city, town Decoria Twp.

Good Thunder  vicinity

state Minnesota

code

MN

county Blue Earth

code

013

zip code 56037

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
_____	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
<u>1</u>	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Historic Iron and Steel Bridges in Minn, 1873-1945

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  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  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Nina M. Archabal  
Signature of certifying official Nina M. Archabal

9/22/89  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Helene Boyer

11/6/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

---

**6. Function or Use**

---

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)  

---

---

---

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Transportation: road-related (vehicular)  

---

---

---

---

**7. Description**

---

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Pratt through truss  

---

---

---

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation (Substructure) Sandstonewalls \_\_\_\_\_  

---

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other (Superstructure) Steel  

---

---

---

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Zieglers Ford Bridge is a steel, single-span, five-panel, pin-connected Pratt through truss. It carries township road 96 over the Big Cobb River. Its overall length is 73 feet and its overall width is 17.7 feet. Superstructure: The upper chord consists of paired channels with continuous cover plates riveted on top and batten plates underneath. The main verticals are laced paired channels; the hip verticals are paired forged eye-bars. The lower chord and the diagonals in the 2d and 4th panels are paired punched eye-bars; in the middle panel the diagonals are turnbuckles. The floor is wood planks on wood beam stringers, which rest on the upper flanges of the I-beam floor beams, which in turn are suspended from the pin connections by U-bolts. Portal and sway bracing is of paired angle sections. Top and bottom lateral bracing is round rods. The span rests on coursed, quarry-faced sandstone abutments with wingwalls. Major refacing and repairs in concrete occurred in 1976. The bridge railing is made of angle sections. The movable end is not visible.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Period of Significance

1904

Significant Dates

1904

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Mayer Bros. of Mankato

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Zieglers Ford Bridge is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C as a representative of a truss type (pin-connected Pratt through truss) common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and as a product of a Minnesota company located outside the Twin Cities. The Mayer Brothers, a Mankato firm whose foundry and machine shop produced in 1895 a wide variety of goods--including ditching and grading equipment; engines, boilers, and machinery; and architectural iron work--did not apparently make bridge-building a major part of its business. In this case, the Mayer Brothers competed against nine other firms, from Minneapolis, Iowa, and other Midwest cities. This bridge is being nominated as part of the "Iron and Steel Bridges in Minnesota" Multiple Property Nomination. In spite of some recent concrete work on the abutments, the bridge has good integrity.

As Minnesota's population grew in the second half of the 19th century, a system of transportation evolved which featured railroad lines and a web of local roads leading from rural areas to shipping points along the railroads. These roads needed bridges over rivers and streams to insure year-round travel. The first bridges in Minnesota were constructed of wood, but in the late 1860s and early 1870s, local governments in the state began to build wrought iron bridges because of long-term cost advantages. Blue Earth County made an especially noteworthy effort to replace wood bridges with metal bridges. After early experimentation with a variety of other structural configurations, the pin-connected Pratt truss became the most widely used type of wrought iron bridge. By the early 1890s, steel had supplanted wrought iron as the structural material of choice, but the pin-connected Pratt remained the most widely used configuration into the 20th century. Most of the early metal bridges in Minnesota were built by out-of-state firms, but by the late 19th century, several Minneapolis-based companies had grown to prominence. In the early 20th century, most bridges in the state were erected by these Minneapolis bridge builders, but in some instances, local firms, such as the Mayer Brothers, were successful in bidding against the larger companies.

Work on the bridge began in May 1904, after the Blue Earth County Board of Commissioners selected C. S. Erickson from among four bidders to erect the stone abutments. Erickson bid \$1050 for the job, which the county required completed by early

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

8 1

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

August. At about the same time, the county commissioners sought builders to bid on the construction of five bridges in the county, including this one, ranging in length between 20 and 80 feet. After opening bids on 9 June 1904 and subsequent negotiations, the commissioners offered the job of building four of the bridges, including this one, to Mayer Brothers of Mankato. The firm accepted, for a total payment of \$4,317 (\$975 lower than the lowest of the original ten bids).

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

"MNDOT Structure Inventory," for Br. L-5659, 1983.

Blue Earth County, Board of Commissioners minutes, Book F, pp. 461, 465, 471, 477, 479.

The Improvement Bulletin, Mayer Bros. advertisements in most 1895 issues.

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A 15 420410 4875370  
 Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of a rectangle, 73 feet long and 18 feet wide, whose verticies coincide with the outside corners of the bridge abutments at each end of the bridge, and includes only bridge superstructure and substructure.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Because the bridge is located on a public road, there are no legal boundary lines for the ends of the bridge. Therefore, these boundaries are drawn to encompass only the superstructure and substructure of the bridge itself.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Dale Martin, Historian  
 organization Renewable Technologies, Inc. date July, 1988  
 street & number P. O. Box 4113 telephone (406) 782-2386  
 city or town Butte state Montana zip code 59702