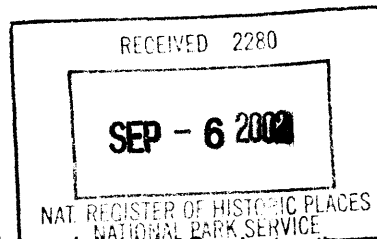


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1152

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Gunnison River Bridge I

other names/site number CDOT No. J-09-C; 5GN3321

2. Location

street & number US Highway 50 Service Road at milepost 155.41 [N/A] not for publication

city or town Gunnison [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Gunnison code 051 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Georgina Cantigliu State Historic Preservation Officer August 21, 2002
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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
[] See continuation sheet.

Walter H. Ball Signature of the Keeper 8/15/02 Date of Action

Gunnison River Bridge I
Name of Property

Gunnison County, Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Highway Bridges in Colorado

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Steel, rigid-connected Pratt through
truss

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____
walls _____
roof _____
other Steel _____
Concrete _____
Asphalt _____

Narrative Description

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

Gunnison River Bridge I
Name of Property

Gunnison County, Colorado
County/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.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- 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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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 or 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 Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Engineering

Periods of Significance

1927-1952

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Colorado Department of Highways

American Bridge Company

Lambie-Bate Construction Company

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Colorado Dept. of Transportation

Gunnison River Bridge I
Name of Property

Gunnison County, Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 329880 4266540
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and Clay Fraser, principal

organization Colorado Historical Society and Fraser Design date May 21, 2002

street & number 1300 Broadway telephone 303-866-4681

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80203

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Colorado Department of Transportation

street & number 4201 E. Arkansas Avenue telephone _____

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80222

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 listings. 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.*)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

Location: US Highway 50 Service Road at milepost 155.41, west side of Gunnison

Setting: Over Gunnison River overflow

Structure length: 129 feet

Structure width: 21 feet

Roadway width: 20 feet

Main span number: 1

Main span length: 125 feet

Superstructure: Steel, rigid-connected Pratt through truss

Substructure: Concrete abutments and wingwalls

Floor/decking: Concrete deck with asphalt overlay

Other features: Upper chord – 2 channels with cover plate and lacing

Lower chord – 4 angles with batten plates

Vertical – 2 channels with lacing

Diagonal – 4 angles with batten plates

Floor beams and stringers – steel I beam

Steel lattice guardrails

Colorado Highway Department endpost plates

Erected: 1927

Designer: Colorado Department of Highways

Fabricator: American Bridge Company

Contractor: Lambie-Bate Construction Company

Alterations: None

**United States Department of the Interior
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Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 8 Page 2

SIGNIFICANCE

The 1927 Gunnison River Bridge I on US Highway 50 Service Road at milepost 155.41, on the west side of Gunnison, meets the registration requirements under Criterion A in the area of Transportation and under Criterion C in the area of Engineering as set forth in the *Highway Bridges in Colorado*, Multiple Property Documentation Form. The period of significance begins in 1927 with the completion of the bridge and extends through its historic use to 1952, a date fifty-years-of-age in keeping with National Register criteria.

One of the first roads established by the Highway Commission in 1910 ran from Gunnison to Montrose and westward to the Utah state line. Designated State Primary Road No. 20, its 140 mile length was then exceeded by only one other state road. With the designation of a state highway system in 1922, Primary Road 20 was incorporated into State Highway 6, which extended across the state from Holly to Grand Junction. In 1925, it became part of US Highway 50, and the Colorado Highway Department (CHD) finished several miles of road construction between Gunnison and Sapinero under Federal Aid Project 258-A.

Early in 1926, CHD engineers produced drawings for additional road construction on the highway at the western edge of Gunnison. Funded as Federal Aid Project 258-B, the new project included gravel surfacing of 2 3/4 miles of road and the construction of two steel bridges over the Gunnison River. In February, CHD solicited competitive bids and in March awarded the contract to the Lambie-Bate Construction Company of Denver, the low bidder at \$65,374. Later that spring, the contractors began excavating for the substructure of the two bridges. They drove the timber piles, built the reinforced concrete abutments and erected trusses that had been fabricated by the American Bridge Company. By August, the project was listed as 60 percent complete. For some reason Lambie-Bate was delayed in finishing the work, and CHD did not list the project as complete until July 1927. Since their completion, Gunnison River Bridges I & II have carried traffic on US Highway 50 in essentially unaltered condition. The bridges are important as integral and well preserved parts of one of the state's most important early highways.

Engineering

Gunnison River Bridge I is technologically significant as one of the last remaining examples of what was once a mainstay structural type. The earliest Pratts featured pinned connections in what was known as the "American style" of truss assembly. Concurrent with the development of more portable riveting equipment, the switch from pinned connections to the inherently stronger riveted connections for vehicular trusses occurred after 1910 in Colorado. CHD relied heavily on rigid-connected Pratt trusses in both through and pony form for its medium and long span bridges. CHD erected dozens of Pratts throughout the state in the 1921s and 1930s. Subsequent attrition has devastated their numbers, however, until today only the two

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Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 8 Page 3

Gunnison River Bridges, the Timpas Bridge in Otero County, and the Hardwick Bridge in Garfield County remain from the CHD roster of Pratt through trusses.

Thomas and Caleb Pratt patented their truss design in 1844, and it ultimately become the most popular truss configuration in 19th century America. Its design was characterized by upper chords and vertical members acting in compression and lower chords and diagonals that acted in tension. The Pratt's parallel chords and equal panel lengths resulted in standardized sizes for the verticals, diagonals, and chord members, making fabrication and assembly relatively easy. In the highly competitive bridge manufacturing industry, in which efficiency equated with profit, Pratt trusses received almost universal use. "The Pratt truss is the type most commonly used in America for spans under two hundred and fifty feet in length," noted bridge engineer J.A.L. Waddell wrote in 1916. "Its advantages are simplicity, economy of metal, and suitability for connecting to the floor and lateral systems." Virtually all of the major regional fabricators manufactured Pratt trusses and marketed them extensively to Colorado's counties in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

At the time Gunnison River Bridges I & II were designed CHD had just updated its standards for long span steel bridges to conform with requirements established by the US Bureau of Public Roads. For the twin spans at Gunnison, CHD employed its new standard 125 foot through truss. The structures featured eight panel rigid connected Pratt configurations with 20 foot wide roadways, supported by concrete abutments with angled wingwalls. The inclined endposts and upper chords of each truss consisted of two back-to-back channels, covered by a continuous plate on top and joined by strap lacing beneath. The verticals were similarly configured, with two back-to-back channels laced together by metal straps. The lower chords consisted of back-to-back channels with batten plates. The diagonals were made up of two angles with batten plates. Field bolted to the verticals were I-beam floor beams, which carried smaller I-beam stringers, which in turn carried the concrete deck. The portal and interior struts were A-frames made up of paired single members. Each truss was supported on all four corners by built-up steel bearing shoes, with fixed bearings on one end and rocking bearings on the other.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 9 Page 4

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"Highway News and Notes on Work in the Field." *Colorado Highways* 5:3, March 1926.

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Second Biennial Report of the State Highway Commission. Denver: Smith-Brooks Printing Company, 1912.

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Waddell, J.A.L. *Bridge Engineering*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1916.

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Continuation Sheet**

Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

Section number 10 Page 5

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The bridge is located on US Highway 50 Service Road at milepost 155.41. The boundaries of this nomination consist of a rectangle of land 10 feet out in each direction from the footprint of the bridge.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nomination includes all the land directly and historically associated with the bridge.

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-2:

Name of Property: Gunnison River Bridge I
Location: Gunnison County, Colorado
Photographer: Clayton Fraser
Date of Photographs: September 1998
Negatives: Colorado Department of Transportation

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 View to northeast of roadway
- 2 View to east through bridge

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Gunnison River Bridge I
Gunnison County, Colorado
Highway Bridges in Colorado, MPS

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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Gunnison Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

