

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Damascus Gymnasium

other name/site number: VB0028

2. Location

street & number: State Highway 285

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Damascus

vicinity: N/A

state: AR

county: Van Buren

code: AR 141

zip code: 72212

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

 buildings

 sites

 structures

 objects

1

0 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Public Schools in the Arkansas Ozarks, 1920-1940

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. _____ See continuation sheet.

Cathryn L. Byrd
Signature of certifying official

7-14-92
Date

Arkansas Historic Preservation Program
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

~~Entered in the~~
National Register

☒ 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): _____

Melvin Byers 9/4/92

for Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

=====

6. Function or Use

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Historic: EDUCATION

Sub: Gymnasium

Current: VACANT/NOT IN USE

Sub: N/A

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Craftsman

Other Description: N/A_____

Materials: foundation Concrete_____ roof Metal_____
walls WOOD/Weatherboard other N/A_____

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria: A_____

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A_____

Areas of Significance: EDUCATION_____
SOCIAL HISTORY_____

Period(s) of Significance: 1933-1940_____

Significant Dates: N/A_____

Significant Person(s): N/A_____

Cultural Affiliation: N/A_____

Architect/Builder: Works Progress Administration_____

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Summary

The Damascus Gymnasium is a Craftsman-style, single-story structure with a two-story clerestory constructed in 1933 by the WPA. A metal, gable-on-hip roof with single-story shed roofs at the eastern and western elevations covers the weatherboard-clad frame walls. The entire structure is supported by a continuous cast-concrete foundation. The gymnasium features Craftsman exposed rafters and ornamental brackets, two interior brick chimneys, and a central, projecting gable roof porch.

Elaboration

A central, projecting gable roof porch signifies the eastern or front elevation. The porch is composed of a raised concrete deck and two wood posts, which support the flush, horizontal board pediment. The deck is accessed by five concrete steps, and entry is gained by two single-leaf wood doors. The eastern elevation is fenestrated by six, symmetrically arranged stationary windows that are placed just below the eaves. The clerestory consists of seven identical windows that are likewise symmetrical.

The southern elevation contains two raised, single-leaf door entrances, both of which are covered by metal shed roofs supported by brackets. The western shed roof bay is accessed by a modern folding overhead door. The clerestory is lighted by three symmetrical one-over-one, double-hung doors. Two brackets support each shed roof at its intersection with the clerestory.

The western elevation is composed of two six-over-six, double-hung windows near each corner and two raised, single-leaf door entrances placed between the two groups of windows. The clerestory is fenestrated by four stationary windows. The northern elevation is identical to the southern elevation except the eastern shed-roof covered entrance is missing.

The building is currently unoccupied.

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Damascus Gymnasium

The Damascus School District in southern Van Buren County was established in 1910, and in 1926 the Damascus High School consolidated with the nearby community of Southside to establish the Southside Consolidated System. Following the recommendations of the 1928 Department of Education study, Van Buren County "caught the spirit" of school consolidation in the early 1930's. New teacher certification standards were established for the county's districts required college training for the first time, and graduation standards were raised for the district's students. Despite vociferous opposition from a few county superintendents, during the early years of the decade all districts with fewer than 350 pupils were consolidated, and the number of school districts in Van Buren County fell from 92 to 40.

Damascus was suffering economically in 1933, a result of both the national depression and the local re-routing of Highway 65 that year that bypassed the community's original downtown. The establishment of a CCC camp to the east of town later that year helped to resuscitate the local economy somewhat; the town's population is reported to have "doubled in just a few days" as families moved to the area to work in the camp or establish new businesses. Local citizens donated money to ensure that the Damascus High School remained open during these trying times, and in 1933 the Works Progress Administration provided funding to construct a gymnasium adjacent to the school to accommodate the school's popular basketball team.¹

The Damascus Gymnasium, constructed during the period covered by the historic context *The Evolution of the Public School System in the Arkansas Ozarks, 1920-1940*, is a representative example of a large wood frame school building constructed for a rural school district. Its documented construction by the W.P.A. and its use during this period as a local school building clearly identify it with this historic context and with this property type. It is significant locally under Criterion A through its direct associations with both the history of the evolution of the public school system in the Ozark Mountain region of the state during this period and the W.P.A.

¹A History of Van Buren County (Conway, AR: Red River Press, 1976), 76.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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See "Public Schools in the Arkansas Ozarks, 1920-1940" Multiple Property Form, Section H.

___ See continuation sheet.

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- X State historic preservation office
- _ Other state agency
- _ Federal agency
- _ Local government
- _ University
- _ Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	<u>15</u>	<u>553600</u>	<u>3913750</u>	B	___	_____	_____
C	___	_____	_____	D	___	_____	_____

___ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: ___ See continuation sheet.

Beginning at a point located on the northern edge of State Highway 285 formed by its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the gymnasium's eastern elevation and located 25 feet to the east thereof, proceed along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the gymnasium's northern elevation; thence proceed westerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with a perpendicular line running parallel to the gymnasium's western elevation; thence proceed southerly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to its intersection with a perpendicular line running along the northern edge of State Highway 285; thence proceed easterly along said line for a distance of approximately 200 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification: ___ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes both the historic resource and all the surrounding property known to have been historically associated therewith that retains its integrity.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Patrick Zollner, National Register Historian

Organization: Arkansas Historic Preservation Program Date: July 2, 1992

Street & Number: 225 E. Markham, Suite 300 Telephone: (501) 324-9346

City or Town: Little Rock State: AR ZIP: 72201

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Public Schools in the Ozarks MPS
ARKANSAS

Date Listed

COVER Substantive Review

92001115	Aggie Hall	9/4/92
92001113	Aggie Workshop	9/4/92
92001098	Agriculture Building--University of Arkansas, Fayetteville	9/4/92
92001125	Alco School	9/4/92
92001203	Bergman High School	9/10/92
92001214	Berryville Agriculture Building	9/10/92
92001215	Berryville Gymnasium	9/10/92
92001178	Boswell School Substantive Review	9/4/92
92001112	Bruno School Building	9/4/92
92001128	Buford School Building Substantive Review	9/4/92
92001099	Business Administration Building--University of Arkansas, Fayetteville	9/4/92
92001194	Cafeteria Building--Cleveland School	9/10/92
92001200	Calico Rock Home Economics Building	9/10/92
92001213	Caraway Hall--Arkansas Tech University	9/10/92
92001217	Cedarville School Building	9/10/92
92001206	Center Valley Well House	9/10/92
92001100	Chemistry Building--University of Arkansas, Fayetteville	9/4/92
92001101	Chi Omega Greek Theatre--University of Arkansas, Fayetteville	9/4/92
92001202	Clarksville High School Building No. 1	9/10/92
92001123	Coal Gap School	9/4/92
92001122	Damascus Gymnasium	9/4/92
92001118	Dodson Memorial Building	9/4/92
92001121	Durham School	9/4/92
92001192	Enterprise School	9/10/92
92001110	Eros School Building	9/4/92
92001205	Everton School	9/10/92
92001116	Fairview School Building	9/4/92
92001120	Fishback School	9/4/92
92001212	Girls' Domestic Science and Arts Building--Arkansas Tech University Substantive Review	9/4/92
92001196	Guy High School Gymnasium	9/10/92
92001197	Guy Home Economics Building	9/10/92
92001114	Hirst--Mathew Hall	9/4/92
92001102	Home Economics Building--University of Arkansas, Fayetteville	9/4/92
92001210	Hughes Hall--Arkansas Tech University Substantive Review	9/4/92
92001106	Jamestown School	9/4/92

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Damascus Gymnasium

MULTIPLE NAME: Public Schools in the Ozarks MPS

STATE & COUNTY: ARKANSAS, Van Buren

DATE RECEIVED: 7/28/92 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/14/92
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/30/92 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/11/92
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 92001122

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/4/92 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____
REVIEWER _____
DISCIPLINE _____
DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

___summary paragraph
___completeness
___clarity
___applicable criteria
___justification of areas checked
___relating significance to the resource
___context
___relationship of integrity to significance
___justification of exception
___other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



DAMASCUS GYMNASIUM

DAMASCUS, VAN BUREN Co., ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY K. STORY

JANUARY, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT ANPP

VIEW FROM SOUTH



DAMASCUS GYMNASIUM

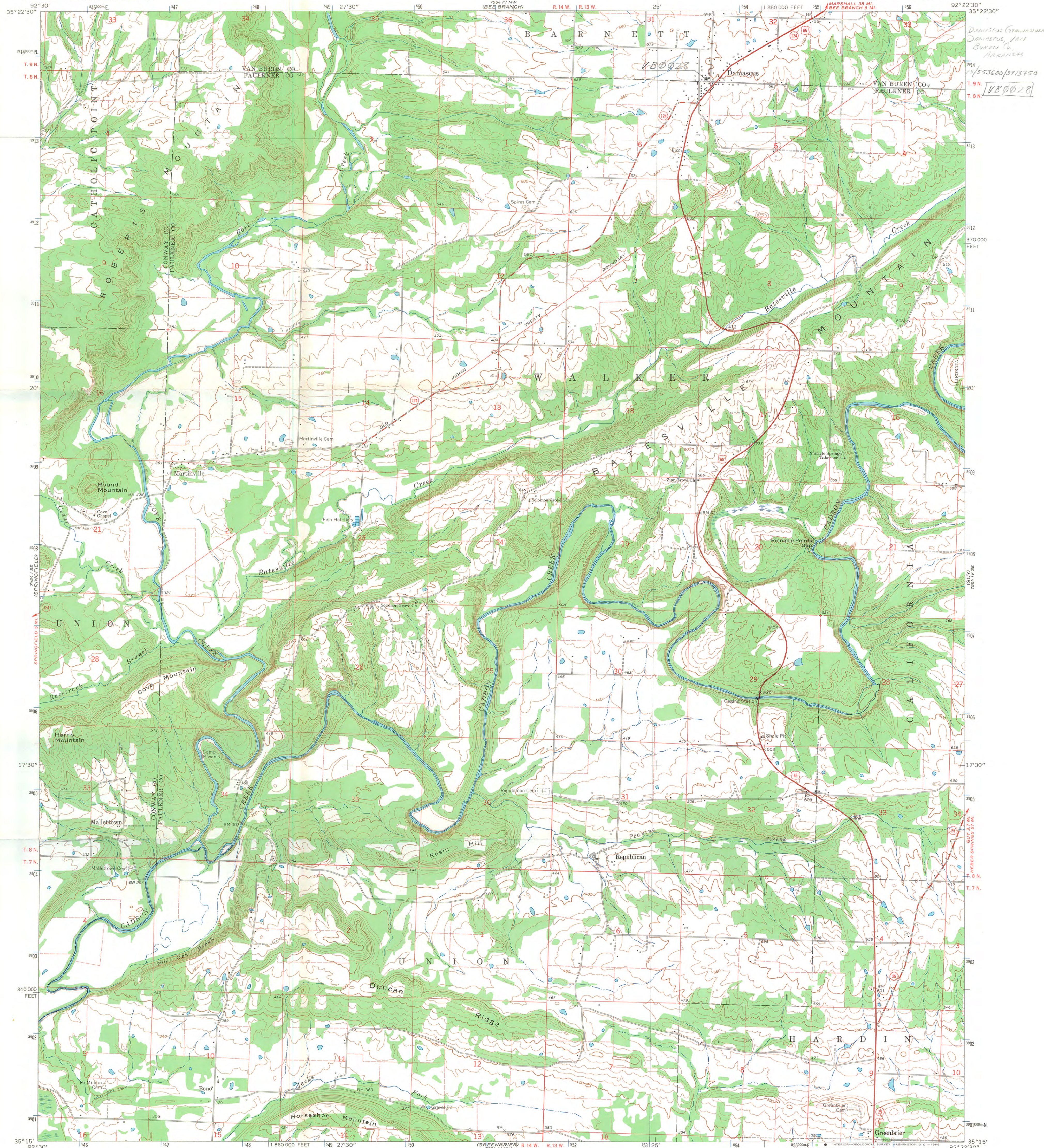
DAMASCUS, VAN BUREN CO., ARKANSAS

PHOTOGRAPHED BY K. STORY

JANUARY, 1990

NEGATIVE ON FILE AT ARPA

VIEW FROM NORTH



Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial
photographs taken 1958. Field checked 1961
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Arkansas coordinate system, north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 15, shown in blue
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

UTM GRID AND 1961 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1:24,000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225 OR WASHINGTON, D.C. 20242
AND BY THE ARKANSAS GEOLOGICAL COMMISSION, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———
U.S. Route ——— State Route ———

DAMASCUS, ARK.
SW/4 BEE BRANCH 15' QUADRANGLE
N3515—W9222.5/7.5

1961
AMS 7554 IV SW—SERIES V884