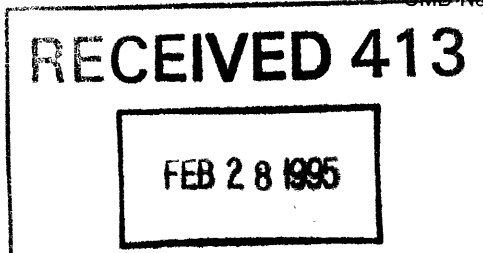


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. **INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION** 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 Humboldt River Bridge

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number North Bridge St. not for publication

city or town Winnemucca vicinity

state Nevada code NV county Humboldt code 013 zip code 89445

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.)

Ronald M. Jones SHPO 2/23/95
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 commenting 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): _____

for
Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper
Entered in the National Register 3/30/95 Date of Action

Humboldt River Bridge
Name of Property

Humboldt County, NV.
County and 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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

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.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: road-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: concrete arch-deck bridge

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls CONCRETE

roof

other ASPHALT

Narrative Description

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

Humboldt River Bridge
Name of Property

Humboldt County, NV
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 1	4 3 17 9 10 10	4 15 3 16 2 10 10
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

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 Pansilee Larson, Curator

organization North Central Nevada Historical Society date September 1994

street & number P.O. Box 819 telephone 702-623-2912

city or town Winnemucca state NV zip code 89445

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 City of Winnemucca

street & number 90 W. 4th St. telephone _____

city or town Winnemucca state NV zip code 89445

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.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ENGINEERING

Period of Significance

1910-1944

Significant Dates

1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

George S. Nickerson

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 # _____

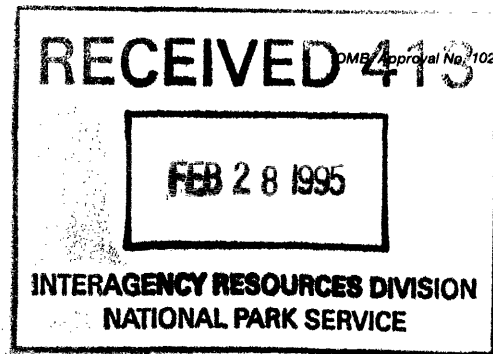
Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet



Section number 7 Page 1

Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV

Description

The Humboldt River Bridge, built in Winnemucca in 1910, is one of only two extant concrete arch-deck bridges in the state of Nevada. It was the first reinforced concrete, arch-deck bridge erected in Humboldt County. The Reno Construction Company of Reno, Nevada, constructed the bridge under the supervision of engineer George S. Nickerson, who designed the structure. With its erection, the bridge became the most important crossing of the Humboldt River in the county as it served as the gateway to Paradise Valley, the Quinn River Valley, Kings River, all of northern Humboldt County, and parts of southern Oregon and Idaho.

The bridge crosses the river which runs through the north part of Winnemucca. Bridge Street runs south across the bridge from the Union Pacific (originally the Western Pacific) railyards, through the center of town, to the Southern Pacific Railroad (originally the Central Pacific) at the south edge of town. The structure is 130 feet long with a roadway thirty-one feet wide. Its two flattened arches gracefully span the river and are supported by one central rectangular pier. The pattern of the wood forms, which held the concrete in place as it dried, are still visible on the underside of the bridge.

Originally, the deck of the bridge had two four-foot-wide sidewalks on either side of the twenty-three-foot roadway; these have been removed to provide more space for traffic lanes. A very low reinforced concrete curb ran along both edges of the deck; it has mostly deteriorated along the north length of the bridge. Three square concrete piers, about three feet in height, flanked the two ends of the bridge; they also rose above the deck at the central point of the bridge where it is supported by the central pier in the river. The two end piers along the north length of the bridge are no longer there. Two rows of pipes supported by vertical metal supports run between the low piers along the edge of the roadway. These pipes are not original to the structure, but follow the appearance of the original railings. Water pipes run along the outer edge of the roadbed.

The bridge is in poor condition, but it retains a substantial degree of integrity. Its setting at the north end of the old commercial district in Winnemucca continues to reflect its purpose as a river crossing connecting the north part of town to the rest of the town.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
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**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV****Statement of Significance**

Built in 1910, the Humboldt River Bridge is significant under Criterion A for its association with the early twentieth-century expansion of Winnemucca as well as for its contribution to improved transportation from northern Humboldt County into the town. It is also significant under Criterion C as one of two remaining examples of early reinforced concrete bridges in the state of Nevada.

Historical background and significance (Criterion A):

In 1850 Winnemucca was just a ferry crossing on the Humboldt River with a toll house and a few outbuildings. In 1867 Louis and Theophile Lay and Frank Baud built a cottonwood pole toll bridge 100 yards downstream from the ferry crossing. They established a saloon and hotel which remain today as the Winnemucca Hotel.¹ The bridge was designated "French Bridge" by Humboldt County's first surveyor, William Epler, because the settlers on the river were from France. After Baud died, Louis Lay deeded his interest in the bridge over to Theophile who in turn sold the toll bridge to the county in 1871 for \$2000.²

Construction of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1868 through the south end of Winnemucca encouraged more traffic over the bridge. Wagon trains from northern Humboldt County ranches brought their heavy loads to the railroad for sale in Winnemucca and points beyond. Winnemucca's location on the railroad made it a commercial center for cattle, sheep, and grains. The sagebrush road leading from the bridge across the town to the railroad became a thoroughfare which evolved into the main street named Bridge Street. Consequently, the commercial area of Winnemucca developed north-south along Bridge Street and east-west along the railroad. By the early twentieth century this road traffic had increased. The wood bridge continued to serve its purpose, providing transportation across the Humboldt into Winnemucca, until the great flood of 1910 damaged its abutments. This heavy damage required the Humboldt County Commissioners to put out a bid for the construction of a new and modern bridge.

¹Martin Stupich, "Winnemucca, Humboldt County," Historic Report for the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (Carson City, Nevada: 1982), 6.

²Deed. Humboldt County Records. Book 17, p. 558.

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Section number 8 Page 3

**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV**

Statement of Significance (continued)

On June 6, 1910, Humboldt County awarded the contract for the new bridge and culverts across the river to the Reno Construction Company which presented the lowest bid of \$14,469. The company presented plans and specifications for a reinforced concrete arch bridge and two reinforced concrete culverts in the levee. Reno Construction was required to file a bond for the performance of the contract guaranteeing the bridge against failure for one year after completion under a load of 2,500 pounds per lineal foot of bridge.³ Reno Construction also won the contract for the construction of the reinforced concrete retaining walls connecting the new bridge and culverts.⁴

After work began, the builders found it necessary to drive a larger amount of piling into the river bed. Despite this minor setback, the last arch was turned on Thanksgiving Day and on December 6, 1910, the work was nearly completed. Upon completion, a sixteen-by-seventeen-inch white bronze tablet made in San Francisco was placed on the bridge bearing the following inscription:

ERECTED
1910
William Blattner
Charles W. McDeid
Hi Stoker
County Commissioners
Reno Construction Co.
Builders
George S. Nickerson
Engineer

George S. Nickerson (1858-1926), who lived in Sacramento, was a prominent civil engineer in northern California. He was born in New York, came west as a young man, and settled

³Minutes, Humboldt County Commissioners, Book I, June 6, 1910, p. 138.

⁴"Reno Construction Company Gets Contract," Humboldt Star, October 10, 1910, p.1.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4

**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV**

Statement of Significance (continued)

in Oregon. He practiced law at Klamath Falls, Oregon, for ten years before leaving the bar for engineering. Nickerson worked on a number of successful engineering projects. He served as the engineer for the North Fork Ditch and as the consulting engineer for the Snow Mountain Aqueduct and the Southern Eel River-Putah Creek Water Sheds, a source of water supply for San Francisco and other Bay Area cities.⁵ He was a member of many professional organizations including the American Society of Engineers and the Sacramento Rotary Club. Nickerson was also a Mason, and was affiliated with the Shriners and the Knights Templar. By August 4, 1910, having been appointed supervising engineer of construction by the Humboldt County Commissioners, the well-known civil and mining engineer was busy making preliminary surveys for the concrete bridge which was to span the Humboldt River.⁶

Not only did the construction of the new bridge coincide with commercial and residential development on the south side of the river, but it also followed shortly after the construction of the Western Pacific Railroad which ran through Humboldt County on the north bank of the Humboldt River. The c.1910 Mission-style depot stood near the north end of the bridge until it was demolished in the 1980s. The bridge provided convenient access to the railroad from the main part of town. In 1917 Winnemucca, formally under the control and custody of the county, became incorporated. A resolution was passed and adopted to deliver all money and personal and real property to the City of Winnemucca. Thus the bridge became city property.⁷

In 1936-37 the Melarkey Street Bridge was built about 100 yards to the west of the Humboldt River Bridge to carry the new U.S. Highway 95 across the river. This new bridge and road changed traffic patterns through Winnemucca. Bridge Street no longer served as the major artery for traffic going north or south, having been bypassed by U.S. 95. However, the 1910 bridge remained an important crossing for pedestrians and vehicles

⁵California Room, California State Library, card file: qc628.1 N6h.

⁶"Supervising Engineer of the New Bridge," Humboldt Star, August 4, 1910, p.1.

⁷Minutes, Humboldt County Commissioners, Book K, November 5, 1917, p. 103.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV**

Statement of Significance (continued)

traversing to the Western Pacific Railroad and its operations. Lack of maintenance over the years has led to exterior deterioration, but the bridge survived one of the last floods in 1984 which washed out the Melarkey Street Bridge.

The 1910 Humboldt River Bridge remains an important reminder of the early twentieth-century development of Winnemucca, particularly because its relationship to the commercial buildings of Bridge Street, just to the south, is still readily apparent. In addition, it endures as part of the Idaho Trail, the major north-south artery through Humboldt County from the Oregon border to the Southern Pacific Railroad in Winnemucca. The Humboldt River today meanders in a picturesque manner through the town and the Humboldt River Bridge, with its graceful arches, should once again be one of the most historically scenic sites in the town.

Early example of a reinforced concrete bridge in Nevada (Criterion C):

The Humboldt River Bridge is one of only two extant reinforced concrete arch-deck bridges remaining in the state of Nevada. The other bridge is the Virginia Street Bridge (1905) spanning the Truckee River in Reno. These two bridges represent early uses of reinforced concrete in the state.

The use of reinforced concrete became popular in the mid-nineteenth century as a building material for its great compressive and tensile strength. Developed first by Joseph Lambot of France, and later by his countrymen, Francois Monier and Francois Hennebique, reinforced concrete gradually became popular as a strong construction material for walls, beams, and columns. Some experimentation with the material occurred in the eastern United States in the late nineteenth century, but many later innovations took place in California, especially around San Francisco at the turn of the century.⁸

Engineer Ernest L. Ransome designed the first reinforced concrete bridge in the United States, the Alvord Lake Bridge, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park in 1889. Other

⁸John Snyder and Steve Mikesell, "The Consulting Engineer and Early Concrete Bridges in California," Concrete International 16:5 (May 1994): 40-41.

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8,9 Page 6

Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV

Statement of Significance (continued)

California engineers continued to work with the material, building numerous bridges that remain today. John B. Leonard became northern California's foremost designer of reinforced concrete bridges after Ransome. His first bridge, the Virginia Street Bridge, is one of his masterpieces, especially for the "gracefully proportioned arch ring [that] springs to a remarkably thin section at the crown."⁹ The bridge remains standing today and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. George S. Nickerson, the designer of the Humboldt River Bridge in Winnemucca, was a contemporary of Leonard and part of the group of California engineers who promoted the use of reinforced concrete for bridge construction.

Although the Humboldt River Bridge is not as elegant as either of the Reno bridges, it is architecturally significant as a very early type of reinforced concrete bridge. Its continued use spanning the Humboldt River in Winnemucca makes it a resource for those who wish to study this type of construction. In addition, its uniqueness in the state of Nevada makes it eligible for listing in the National Register.

Bibliography

Assessment Roll. Humboldt County. Book B. November 8, 1867, p. 447.

"At Work on New Bridge." Humboldt Star. August 10, 1910, p.1.

"Bridge Culverts Nearly Finished." Humboldt Star. September 28, 1910, p.1.

"Commissioners Are In Session," Humboldt Star, May 2, 1910, p.1.

"Completing the Fills at New Bridge." Humboldt Star. January 27, 1911, p.1.

"Completing New Bridge and Retaining Wall." Humboldt Star. March 29, 1911, p.1.

⁹Snyder and Mikesell, "The Consulting Engineer," 41.

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Section number 9 Page 7

Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV

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"Contractors Start Local Bridge Work." Humboldt Star. August 1, 1910, p.1.

Deed. Humboldt County Records. Book 17, p. 558.

"Expert Inspects New Bridge." The Silver State. February 4, 1911, p.1.

"Humboldt River a Surging Sea." Humboldt Star. March 4, 1910, p.1.

Knight, Kenneth C. and T.H. Turner. An Inventory of Nevada's Historic Bridges. Nevada Department of Transportation, Roadside Development and Environmental Services Division. Carson City, Nevada, 1988.

"Making Good Progress On Bridge and Culvert Work." Humboldt Star. October 12, 1910, p.1.

"Mighty Flood Coming Down the Humboldt." Humboldt Star. March 2, 1910. p.1.

Minutes. Humboldt County Commissioners. Book I. June 6, 1910, p. 138.

Minutes. Humboldt County Commissioners. Book K. November 5, 1917, p. 103.

"New Bridge Absolute Need -- Old Structure Out of Date." Humboldt Star. March 24, 1909, p.1.

"New Bridge Practically Completed." The Silver State. December 6, 1910, p.1.

"New Bridge To Be Built Here." Humboldt Star. February 9, 1910, p.1.

"New Bridge Will Soon Be Completed." Humboldt Star. November 23, 1910, p.1.

"Old Bridge in Bad Condition," Humboldt Star. March 28, 1910, p. 1.

"Plans for Western Pacific Passenger Depot." Humboldt Star. October 8, 1909, p.1.

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Section number 9 Page 8

**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV**

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- "Rapid Progress in Bridge Work." Humboldt Star. September 26, 1910, p.1.
- "Removing Forms From New County Bridge." Humboldt Star. February 8, 1911, p.1.
- "Reno Construction Company Gets Contract." Humboldt Star. October 10, 1910, p. 1.
- "Reno Construction Company Submits Lowest Bid," The Silver State, May 3, 1910, p. 1.
- "Reno Firm Gets Bridge Contract." Humboldt Star. May 4, 1910, p.1.
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- Snyder, John and Steve Mikesell. "The Consulting Engineer and Early Concrete Bridges in California." Concrete International 16:5 (May 1994): 28-44.
- Stupich, Martin. "Winnemucca, Humboldt County." Historical Report for the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office. Carson City, Nevada. 1982.
- "Supervising Engineer of the New Bridge." Humboldt Star. August 4, 1910, p.1.
- "Temporary Bridge Submerged." The Silver State. January 31, 1911, p.1.
- "Western Pacific Rapidly Approaching Completion." Humboldt Star. February 5, 1909, p. 1.
- "Winnemucca To Be Passenger Division Point on Western Pacific." Humboldt Star. November 25, 1910, p.1.
- "Work Now Progressing Rapidly on Bridge." Humboldt Star. November 2, 1910, p.1.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 9

**Humboldt River Bridge
Humboldt County, NV**

Verbal boundary description

The property is a rectangular bridge, thirty-one feet wide and 130 feet long. The bridge stretches from the southern boundary of the Western Pacific Railroad property, the bridge's north end, 130 feet to its south end on Bridge Street.

Verbal boundary justification

The nominated structure includes the entire property historically associated with the bridge.