HABS/HAER INVENTORY

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Washington, DC 20240

1. SITE I.D. NO

2. NAME(S) OF STRUCTURE
Wheeler Bridge RG07
Bridge over Rio Grande River

5. ORIGINAL USE
roadway bridge

7. CLASSIFICATION
BT&A: TRUSS: WOOD 7600

9. RATING
local

10. DATE
1924

3. SITE ADDRESS (STREET & NO)
Private road over Rio Grande River
3.8 miles east of Del Norte
NW¼ S2, T39N, R6E

6. PRESENT USE
roadway bridge

8. UTM ZONE 13 EASTING 386320 NORTHING 4168450

11. REGION
RMRO

4. CITY/VICINITY
Del Norte vicinity

COUNTY
Rio Grande

STATE
Colorado

SCALE 1:24 1:62.5 OTHER

QUAD NAME Del Norte

12. OWNER/ADMIN ADDRESS
Raymond Poage Del Norte Colorado 81132

13. DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION DATE(S), PHYSICAL DIMENSIONS, MATERIALS, MAJOR ALTERATIONS, EXTANT EQUIPMENT, AND IMPORTANT BUILDERS, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, ETC.

Rigid-connected, 3-panel timber/steel Howe pony truss

span number:	2	end/top chrd:	10x10 timber
span length:	55'0"	bottom chord:	10x10 timber
overall length:	114'0"	vertical:	round steel rod
roadway width :	12'4"	diagonal:	6x6 timber
		flr./decking:	timber decking and stringers over 4x10 floor beams
		substructure:	masonry abutments and log crib pier

After heavy spring flooding washed the earlier bridge away, this two-span timber truss was erected in 1924 on the existing abutments to serve the Wheeler (now Poage) Ranch. It and its predecessor were patternned after the early timber/iron State Bridge over the Rio Grande near Wagon Wheel Gap - a two-span combination truss erected in 1899 by the Pueblo Bridge Company. This bridge features a classic Howe configuration, with diagonal compression members and vertical tension rods; it is well-crafted, with Roman numerals carved into the timbers for assembly and stone ashlar abutments. On a private ranch road, it carries light traffic and is today in fair condition, with some weathering and deterioration of the timbers.

14. CONDITION ☐ EXCELLENT ☐ GOOD ■ FAIR ☐ DETERIORATED ☐ RUINS

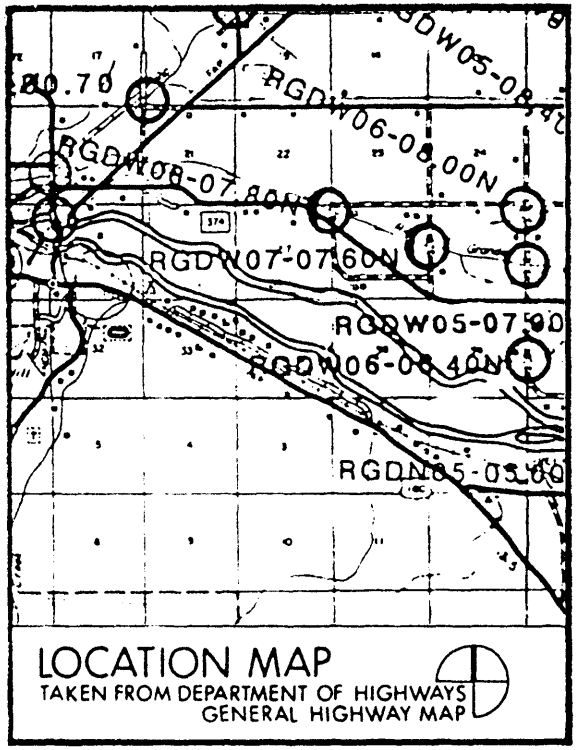
15. DANGER OF DEMOLITION? (SPECIFY THREAT) ☐ YES ■ NO ☐ UNKNOWN

16. SIGNIFICANCE AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE: Engineering

The Howe pony truss was, with the king- and queenpost trusses, the most commonly erected early timber vehicular truss form. Once well-represented at crossings across Colorado, all but two known examples have been replaced (the other: RB13), and only one Howe through is still standing in the state (EA15). The longer and older of the two Howe ponies, the Wheeler Bridge is a well-constructed and well-preserved late example of this archaic bridge form and is one of the last of what was once a common vehicular span type.

GPO : 1982 0 - 383-339

17. PHOTOS AND SKETCH MAP OF LOCATION



18. LOCATED IN AN HISTORIC DISTRICT? ☐ YES ■ NO ☐ NAME

19. PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY ■ YES, LIMITED ☐ YES, UNLIMITED ☐ NO ☐ UNKNOWN

20. EXISTING SURVEYS ☐ NR ☐ NHL ☐ HABS ☐ HAER-1 ☐ HAER ☐ NPS ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL ☐ OTHER

21. REFERENCES—HISTORICAL REFERENCES, PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND/OR OTHER

Raymond Poage. Oral interview with Clayton Fraser, 15 March 1984. Poage owns the bridge and the ranch on which it is located.

Ralph Off. Oral interview with Clayton Fraser, 15 March 1984. Off owns the adjacent ranch.

Fred Olne, Rio Grande County Road Supervisor. Oral interview with Clayton Fraser, 10 January 1984.

Vertical files of the State Engineer. Colorado Department of Highways, Denver Colorado.

Field inspection by Clayton Fraser, 4 January 1984.

22. INVENTORIED BY	AFFILIATION	DATE
Clayton Fraser and Carl Hallberg	Fraserdesign Loveland Colorado	15 March 1984