NPS Form 10-900a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section _____ Page ___

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09001183 **Date Listed: 1/4/2010**

Scenic Bridge	Mineral	MT
Property Name	County	State

Montana's Historic Steel Truss Bridges MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
	1/4/2010

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Classification:
The *Number of Contributing Properties Previously Listed* should read: 0
[This refers only to resources within the nominated boundaries of this property not to other bridge locations associated with the MPS context.]

These clarifications were confirmed with the MT SHPO office.

DISTRIBUTION:
National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1183

NOV 20 2009

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

Historic name Scenic Bridge

Other names/site number 24MN304, MDT No. L31012000+08001

2. Location

street & number Milepost 0 on old US Highway 10 West ☐ not for publication

city of town Four miles east of Tarkio ☒ vicinity

State Montana code MT county Mineral code 061 zip code 59872

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

__ national __ statewide __x__ local

Mark F. Baumler — 11/12/2009

Signature of certifying official — Date

SHPO — Montana State Historic Preservation Office

Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official — Date

Title — State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
✓ entered in the National Register	for Carol D. Shull	1/4/2010
___ determined eligible for the National Register		
___ determined not eligible for the National Register		
___ removed from the National Register		
___ other (explain:)		

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [ ] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [X] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal
- [ ] private

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box)

- [ ] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [X] structure
- [ ] building(s)
- [ ] object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
1		structures
		Objects
		buildings
1	0	**Total**

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

Montana's Historic Steel Truss Bridges

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

9

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/Road-related (vehicular)=
Bridge

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/Road-related (vehicular)=
Bridge

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Pratt Deck Truss

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Steel, Concrete
walls:
roof:
other: Steel, concrete, asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Scenic Bridge consists of one contributing structure: a riveted Pratt deck truss that was constructed in 1928. The bridge consists of three spans resting on reinforced concrete abutments and piers. It is 421 feet in length and 25 feet wide. There are four steel stringer approach spans. The bridge crosses the Clark Fork River on an old alignment of US Highway 10 about four miles east of the community of Tarkio near the mouth of the Alberton Gorge. The bridge retains integrity of workmanship, design, and feeling and the setting has not significantly changed since the structure's construction in the late 1920s. It was the last deck truss bridge of this design built by the Montana Highway Department.

Narrative Description

The Scenic Bridge is located in the Clark Fork River valley of northwestern Montana. The bridge crosses the Clark's Fork about four miles east of Tarkio and ten miles west of Alberton in Mineral County. The bridge is located in the magnificent Alberton Gorge. The gorge is a deep, rock-bounded notch cut into Belt Supergoup sedimentary rocks between Alberton and Tarkio. The gorge is composed of Precambrian Belt Supergroup sediments deposited more than 1.5 billion years ago. Nearby Interstate 90 is situated atop the old valley floor where it widens out to form a long narrow valley between the Bitterroot mountains and the Nine Mile Divide. The valley is grassy and is bordered by dense stands of conifer trees. The rolling terrain is now utilized primarily for cattle grazing and some hay production. The bridge carries old US Highway 10 across the Clark Fork River. Although bypassed by Interstate 15 in 1960, it continues to provide a crossing for local residents and the hordes of anglers, rafters, and kayakers who utilize this area.[1]

The Scenic Bridge is a seven-span, riveted steel Pratt deck truss structure. Four of the spans are steel stringer approach spans. The bridge rests on concrete abutments and piers. The bridge is 421 feet long and consists of four 19-foot steel stringer approach spans, two 77-foot deck truss spans, and a 191-foot steel deck truss main span. The bridge is 25 feet wide with a roadway width of 24 feet. Located in the spectacular Alberton Gorge of western Montana, the deck of the bridge is situated about 104 feet above the average level of the Clark Fork River. A Milwaukee Road Railroad bridge passes 15 feet above one of the 77-foot span of the Scenic Bridge further adding to the picturesque appearance of the bridge in a spectacular river gorge. The substructure of the bridge consists of two reinforced concrete open hammerhead-type abutments and six reinforced concrete piers . All are solid structures with two extended cylindrical caps upon which the trusses rest. Each pier consists of two concrete columns connected by a concrete web wall. Each pier has a cylindrical extended cap.

The bottom chords of the deck truss spans are riveted channel sections with batten plates, while the upper chords are laced channel sections with batten plates. The vertical end posts of each span are laced channel sections. All other vertical posts and the diagonal members are riveted angle sections. The vertical posts on the end spans are shorter to give the deck truss a chamfered appearance. The lateral bracing system of each span consists of two lateral struts comprised of laced angle sections with crossed angle section sway braces riveted to the vertical posts by steel gusset plates. The deck is supported by riveted trapezoidal steel I-beam floor beams located at each of the panel points. Five lines of steel I-beam stringers are riveted by angle sections to each floor beam for a total of four sets of stringers on the span (total 20 I-beam stringers.). The deck overhangs the floor beams by 2 feet 6 inches. The deck consists of concrete slabs that are 7½ inches thick. Raised concrete curbs flank the deck. The curbs are 8 inches wide and raised 10 inches above the level of the deck. The ends of the main span rest on cast steel rocker bearings bolted to the caps of Piers Nos. 2 and 3. Steel W-beam guardrails flank the deck.

Each of the four approach spans are 19 feet in length and consist of six lines of steel I-beam stringers riveted to the floor beams. Each of the floor beams are 4 feet deep and support concrete slab decks. The decks are flanked by steel W-beam guardrails mounted on steel I-beam posts.

The Montana Highway Department originally designed the Scenic Bridge with an 18-foot width. The bridge had 136 sections (68 sections on each side) of 6 foot 2 inch x 2 inch steel lattice-type guardrails. In August 1951, the Commission

[1] David Alt and Donald W. Hyndman, *Roadside Geology of Montana*, (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1991), 72.

widened the bridge to its existing 22-foot width and removed the original guardrails. It replaced them with double-coursed timber guardrails mounted on the bridge's original steel riveted angle section posts. In 1965, the Commission removed those rails and installed the existing steel W-beam-type guardrails. The original angle section steel mounting posts were removed and replaced with the existing steel I-beam posts.

Integrity

Other than routine maintenance and the replacement of the original guardrails in the 1960s, there have been no substantial changes to the Scenic Bridge since its construction in 1928. The bridge is the standard riveted Pratt deck truss design developed by Montana State Highway Department bridge engineers in the 1920s. This particular design was adapted for this specific site and the constraints of both the Alberton Gorge and the Milwaukee Road Railroad. This type of deck truss was constructed by the highway department only in the 1920s and is one of two remaining examples in the state. With the exception of the guardrails, all of the structural components and features common to the design are present on the bridge and are unchanged. The bridge retains its distinctive deck truss configuration, singular piers, and concrete deck. Other than the construction of Interstate 90 in the 1960s, the setting of the bridge site has not significantly changed. The surrounding area is still used for agricultural and recreational purposes. The Scenic Bridge retains all its essential elements of design, workmanship, and materials. It appears and functions as it did in 1928 as an important crossing of the Clark Fork River in western Montana.

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)

- [X] 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.
- [X] 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 owed 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Engineering

Transportation

Period of Significance

1928-1959

Significant Dates

1928

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Montana Highway Department

William P. Roscoe Company

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance for this structure is 1928 to 1959. That period encompasses its construction and the time it was an important component of US Highway 10 in western Montana.

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of signficance and applicable criteria)

The Scenic Bridge was associated with the development of US Highway 10 through western Montana as not only a commercial route, but also as a scenic route to draw tourists to the area. The bridge is located in a spectacular river gorge immediately beneath a Milwaukee Road Railroad structure. Because of its location and picturesque qualities, local promoters christened it the "Scenic Bridge" as a way to advertise the area's natural beauty. The bridge was one of four riveted Pratt deck truss bridges built by the Montana Highway Commission between 1928 and 1932. All four were located in river canyons on heavily traveled highways. Although altered in 1951 and 1965, the bridge is an excellent example of the type and one of the most well-known bridges in Montana. It can be listed on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C.

Narrative Statement of Significance (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

The Scenic Bridge is an excellent example of a multi-span riveted steel Pratt deck truss bridge. The bridge was built from standardized designs developed by the Montana Highway Department about 1927 specifically for this bridge. During the 1920s, the highway commission utilized riveted Pratt deck trusses at gorge crossings because of their strength in such situations, their durability as a vehicular structure, and because they were relatively easy to construct. Despite this, however, the highway department only built riveted Pratt deck trusses during the 1920s; they were superceded by more aesthetically pleasing and durable riveted Warren trusses during the 1930s. The Scenic Bridge is exemplary of the design and representative of the highway department's bridge-building programs during the 1920s. The bridge is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of its association with the department's bridge-building boom from 1915 to 1928 and because it is indicative of the way bridges were built in the Treasure State during that period. Unlike earlier bridges, Mineral County did not participate in the funding of this structure – it was financed totally through federal funds and state matching monies. The bridge was also an important component of the State's program to improve important Federal Aid highways in the 1910s and 1920s. The bridge was an important component of US Highway 10, the primary east-west route through Montana. It was also significant to local businessmen and residents who saw the Scenic Bridge as an opportunity to not only improve their economies, but also as a boon to tourism in Mineral County and a chance to show-off one of Montana's scenic wonders, the Alberton Gorge.

The Scenic Bridge is also eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because it is an intact example of the type of standardized riveted Pratt deck truss that the Montana Highway Department built in Montana from 1928 to 1932. The Scenic Bridge provided the model for the Yellowstone River at Gardiner (24PA790) in 1930 and the Cyr Bridge (24MN305) in 1932. The highway department utilized the design at narrow gorge crossings on primary routes in the Treasure State. The design was particularly adaptable to different crossing conditions and was easy to build and affordable to the State government. Structural modifications have been made to the bridge to compensate for changing traffic demands, but the basic appearance of the bridge and its structural components are unchanged. The bridge retains its historic appearance and configuration with all of its original structural components and features intact.

Engineering Significance

Although the Montana Highway Department standardized the use of riveted Warren trusses on the state's roads in 1915, it wasn't until 1927 that it developed a deck truss design that could be adapted to different geographic conditions. Instead of utilizing the Warren truss, the state's bridge designers developed a design based on the Pratt truss, a style that had largely fallen out of favor by 1915. Pratt trusses seemed best suited to narrow gorge crossings that required unique adaptations to succeed. The highway department designed and built only four Pratt deck trusses between 1928 and 1932 before improvements in steel fabrication methods and the desire for aesthetically pleasing structures caused a change among bridge designers that resulted in a different style Warren deck truss design. Three of the four deck truss bridges built by the highway department between 1928 and 1932 (Scenic Bridge, Yellowstone River Bridge at Gardiner,

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

(see Continuation Pages)

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 #_____
_X_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # MT-122

Primary location of additional data:

___State Historic Preservation Office
_X_ Other State agency
___Federal agency
___Local government
___University
___Other
Name of repository: **Montana Department of Transportation**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2
(do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	11	678142 (NAD 27)	5209853 (NAD 27)	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary for the Scenic Bridge measures 421 x 25 feet. The boundary encompasses the bridge and its approaches on both sides of the Clark Fork River. The boundary is centered on the bridge.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Boundaries for the Scenic Bridge are drawn to encompass the bridge spans, its immediate approaches and that portion of the Clark Fork River spanned by the bridge. The width is increased beyond the measurements of the structure to include the piers and abutments.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jon Axline/Historian
organization Montana Department of Transportation date May 13, 2009
street & number 2701 Prospect Avenue telephone (406) 444-6258
city or town Helena state Montana zip code 59620-1001
e-mail jaxline@mt.gov

and the nearby Cyr Bridge) were nearly identical in design and in site conditions. Deck truss bridges were never built in great numbers in Montana and the style remains a rare and visually pleasing steel bridge design.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

The old Mullan Road, improved somewhat by the county and railroad for automobile traffic, functioned as the primary east-west route between Missoula and Lookout Pass in western Montana. The road generally paralleled the Milwaukee Road tracks with deviations caused by the development of new timber and agricultural areas or by the construction of the Northern Pacific's Coeur d'Alene branch in 1890. The construction of the railroad resulted in Missoula County building two new bridges across the Clark Fork – one at Cyr and the other about 300 feet southwest of the existing Scenic Bridge. Both were multi-span timber through truss structures built sometime after 1891, probably by bridge-builder O. E. Peppard of Missoula. The old bridge was located about 100 feet below the lip of the gorge a few feet above the average water level of the Clark Fork. The bridge was reached by steep approach roads at either end of the bridge that made sharp 90 degree curves to access the structure. The precipitous approaches, sharp "S" curves and narrow bridge reportedly "filled motorists with fear" when used. At its annual meeting at Hunters Hot Springs in 1914, the Yellowstone Trail Association (YTA) decided to extend the Yellowstone Trail westward from Livingston to the Pacific coast at Seattle. It was not until its 1915 meeting, however, that the YTA determined that the route of the road west of Missoula would incorporate the old Mullan Road – except for the four mile stretch between the bridges at Cyr and near Tarkio Flats. Thus, the Mullan Road, now a county-maintained component of the Yellowstone Trail, saw renewed activity as an automobile route.[2]

In 1917, newly created Mineral County sought to realign the Yellowstone Trail between the communities of Alberton and the county seat of Superior. The realignment would bypass the two dangerous bridges across the Clark Fork. Indeed, a Montana Council of Defense report in May, 1917 stated that the Cyr bridge was "not considered safe for any load" and that the county had condemned the structure. Consequently, in 1917, Mineral County voters approved a bond issue to construct new bridges at Alberton and Superior. Both structures were completed in early 1918 and the new connecting road completed in the spring of that year. For an unknown reason, however, the county commissioners, State Highway Commission, and federal Bureau of Public Roads (BPR) began plans to relocate the Yellowstone Trail near its original alignment on the north side of the river in 1925. To that end, the State Highway Commission designed two new steel deck truss bridges to span the Clark Fork in the narrow Alberton Gorge near the railroad stations of Cyr and Tarkio. The new alignment closely followed the route of the Milwaukee Road.[3]

In early 1926, the Mineral County Commissioners condemned the bridge near Cyr and called for a special bond election to raise matching money to construct a new bridge across the river. The election succeeded by only eighteen votes. State Highway Commission Bridge Engineer Walter P. Wesch designed a 7-span riveted Pratt deck truss to span the crossing in the gorge. On June 24, 1927, the Montana State Highway Commission let the contract to the William P. Roscoe Company of Billings. The Highway Commission estimated the cost of construction at $73,856.42, but Roscoe underbid the estimate by $6,714.22, submitting a proposal for $67,142.20. Work began on the bridge in the late summer of 1927. Because of problems with the foundation of the bridge, the cost of the structure eventually rose to more than $85,000 to complete. The difference between the contractor's estimate and the final cost was made up through State Highway Commission force account. Roscoe completed the structure in early May 1928.[4]

(please see Continuation Pages)

[2] R. A. Phillips, "Road Report: Yellowstone Trail Road from Ashmore, Mineral County to Alberton" (10 May 1917), Montana Historical Society, Helena, Montana, 1; "'Scenic' Bridge to Open This Sunday," *The Mineral Independent*, 10 May 1928; Harold A. Meeks, *On the Road to Yellowstone: The Yellowstone Trail and American Highways, 1900 – 1930*, (Missoula: Pictorial Histories, 2000), 123.

[3] Roberta Carkeek Cheney, *Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names*, (Missoula: Mountain Press, 1990), 186; Phillips, Road Report, 1; Jon Axline, *"Conveniences Sorely Needed:" Montana's Historic Highway Bridges, 1860-1956*, (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 2005), 74-75.

[4] The *Mineral Independent*, 10 May 1928; Bridge Plans: Cyr Bridge, Mineral County, Over Clark's Fork of Columbia River. Drawing No. 414. On file at the Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana; Montana State Highway Commission Minutes, Book 3, 175, 178 (June 24, 1927); Phillips, "Road Report," np; Axline, *Conveniences Sorely Needed*, 74-75.

Business leaders and promoters realized that the new bridge was important to the economy of eastern Mineral County. On 8 May 1928, representatives from Superior and Alberton and the county commissioners met at the bridge site to plan a celebration for the official opening of the structure. The committee suggested names for the new bridge, including "Cyr" and "Fish Creek," but settled on "Scenic Bridge," deeming it a "very appropriate distinction." The designation, the men hoped, would cash in on the tourism potential in the picturesque canyon of the deck truss structure. The meeting organizers made plans for a celebration on 13 May to officially christen the bridge and open it to traffic.[5]

When the day arrived, over 1,000 people attended the grand opening of the Scenic Bridge. Superior resident Eugene Harpole presided over the festivities, which included sporting events, a picnic, and music provided by Missoula's Legion Drum Corps. The local chambers of commerce furnished ice cream and coffee to the celebrants, who were asked to bring their own picnic lunches. Keynote speaker Howard Toole, a Missoula attorney spoke to the crowd from the west end of the structure. The *Mineral Independent* reported:

> The old "Cyr bridge" is a thing of memory. It has served its purpose and given way to a modern structure, a structure which fills the tourist with joy instead of fear, and which affords a wonderful display of scenic beauty. It is estimated that thousands of dollars worth of Kodak film will be exposed from that particular bridge, and cars are now stopped and their occupants view the surroundings.

The newspaper concluded the Scenic Bridge was "one of the finest bridges in Montana, and outside cities, perhaps one of the most beautiful in the west."[6]

Located on newly designated U.S. Highway 10, the Scenic Bridge was situated about 15 feet below the Milwaukee Road's deck girder bridge built in 1907. Historic photographs of the site show automobiles on the Scenic Bridge with the Milwaukee's famed Route of the Hiawatha passenger train crossing the railroad bridge above. By 1950, however, increasing traffic demands placed on the Scenic Bridge compelled the Montana Highway Department to program a project to widen the structure and install new, more crash resistant guardrails on the bridge. Unlike its structural duplicate deck truss bridge (24MN305) near the Cyr railroad station five miles to the east (which had concrete guardrails with semi-elliptically arched openings), the Scenic Bridge was constructed with steel lattice rails to provide an unobstructed view of the canyon. In June, 1951, the Commission awarded a $31,806 contract to Spokane contractors John Hansen and A. L. Parr to remove the old railings and replace them with double-coursed timber guardrails identical to those attached timber bridges throughout Montana. The engineers were also able to widen the bridge from its original 18-feet width to 24 feet without significantly changing the appearance of the structure. The timber guardrails remained on the bridge until 1965, when the Commission replaced them with the existing steel W-type guardrails mounted on steel I-beam posts. The Scenic Bridge served as an important component of US 10 until it was bypassed by Interstate 90 in 1982. The bridge currently serves local traffic and provides access to the Clark Fork for thousands of recreationalists each year.[7]

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[5] *The Mineral Independent*, 10 May 1928.

[6] The Mineral Independent, 10 May 1928; Axline, *Conveniences Sorely Needed*, 75-76.

[7] The Scenic Bridge is the only deck truss bridge in Montana with a restricted overhead clearance. State Highway Commission Minutes, Book 11, 304, 305 (13 June 1951); Bridge Plans, Cyr Bridge; Bridge Log (1994), Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana; Bridge Inspection Files, Structure No. L31012000+08001 (1979-2003). On file at the Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana; Contract and Bond: Federal Aid Project No. FI-233(2), Unit 2. On file at the Montana Department of Transportation, Helena, Montana.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

(See continuation pages)

William P. Roscoe Company

Few men have had as big an impact on Montana's construction industry as William P. Roscoe. For thirty years from 1926 to 1956, Roscoe built more bridges in Montana than any other contractor employed by the Montana Highway Department. Although he specialized in the construction of large steel bridges, Roscoe also built reinforced concrete and timber bridges all over the state. Bridges built by his company include the Missouri River Bridge near Wolf Creek, and Yellowstone River bridges at Reed Point, Forsyth, and Glendive.[8]

Born in Wadena, Minnesota in February, 1886, William P. Roscoe dropped out of school in 1902 and worked in South Dakota as a cowboy for several years. In 1905, he returned to Minnesota and went to work for William and Arthur Hewett's Security Bridge Company. Unlike Montana's bridge engineers, who learned their trade in colleges and universities, the state's most successful bridge contractors learned their craft in the field from other bridge-builders. Roscoe went to work for the Hewetts as a laborer. Within a few years, he worked his way up to foreman and, by October, 1915, was the company's vice president when the Hewetts moved Security's headquarters to Billings. Roscoe continued his association with the Security Bridge Company until 1925, when he formed the W. P. Roscoe Company in Billings. William and Arthur Hewett dissolved the Security Bridge Company in 1926.[9]

During his thirty year career, the Roscoe company built bridges throughout Montana and was one of only contractors from which the highway department bridge engineers sought advice on construction problems. Bill Roscoe died in 1956. Soon after his death, Roscoe's family reorganized the company and formed Roscoe Steel and Culvert Company. Although the company no longer builds bridges, it still provides components for steel bridges in Montana and the United States.[10]

[8] Axline, *Conveniences Sorely Needed*, 113-114.
[9] Tom Stout, *Montana: Its Story and Biography*, Volume 2 (Chicago: American Historical Society, 1921), 221-222; Quivik, *Historic Bridges*, 43.
[10] Interview with Jim Roscoe by author, April 2004; Quivik, *Historic Bridges*, 43.

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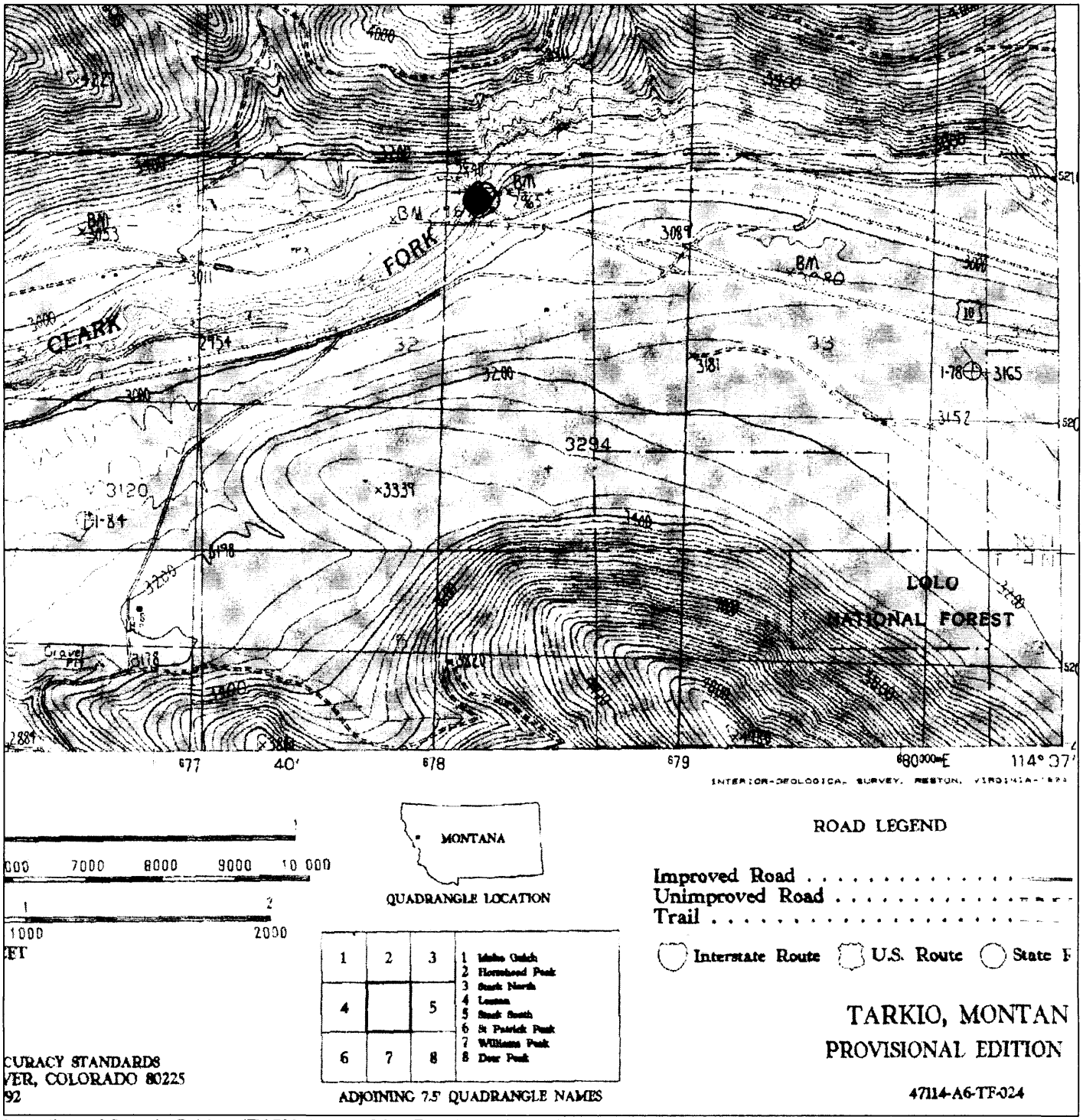
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property: Scenic Bridge (24MN304)

County and State: Mineral County, Montana

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
Montana's Historic Steel Truss Bridges

Section number 10 Page 1



Location of Scenic Bridge (T15N R24W S32, Tarkio 7.5' quadrangle map, 1999)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property: Scenic Bridge

County and State: Mineral County, Montana

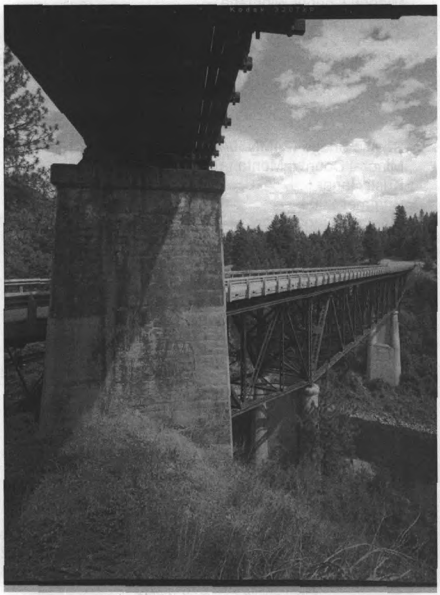
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)
Montana's Historic Steel Truss Bridges

Name:	Scenic Bridge (24MN304)
County and State:	Mineral County, Montana
Photographer:	Kristi Hager
Date of Photograph:	Summer 2004
Location of original negative:	Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.
Description and view of camera:	Scenic Bridge. East profile and pier. View to the northwest.
Photograph:	0001

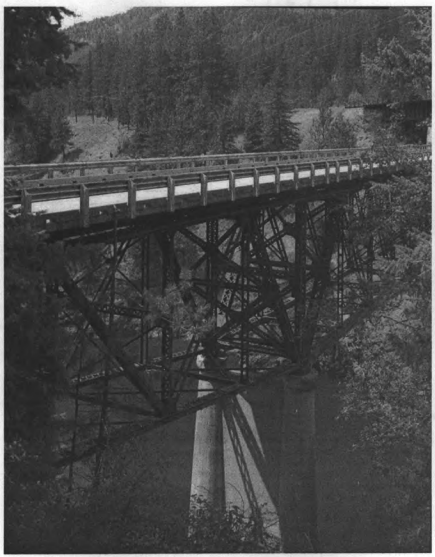
Name:	Scenic Bridge (24MN304)
County and State:	Mineral County, Montana
Photographer:	Kristi Hager
Date of Photograph:	Summer 2004
Location of original negative:	Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.
Description and view of camera:	Scenic Bridge. West profile. View to the southeast.
Photograph:	0002

Name:	Scenic Bridge (24MN304)
County and State:	Mineral County, Montana
Photographer:	Kristi Hager
Date of Photograph:	Summer 2004
Location of original negative:	Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.
Description and view of camera:	Scenic Bridge. South portal. View to the north.
Photograph:	0003

Name:	Scenic Bridge (24MN304)
County and State:	Mineral County, Montana
Photographer:	Unknown
Date of Photograph:	May 2008
Location of original negative:	Montana Department of Transportation. Helena, Montana.
Description and view of camera:	Scenic Bridge. Bridge dedication celebration, May 1928. View to the southeast.
Photograph:	0004



Photograph 0001. Scenic Bridge. East profile and pier. View to the northwest.



Photograph 0002. Scenic Bridge. West profile. View to the southeast.

Photograph 0003. Scenic Bridge. South portal. View to the north.

Photograph 0004. Scenic Bridge. Dedication ceremony, May 1928. View to the southeast.