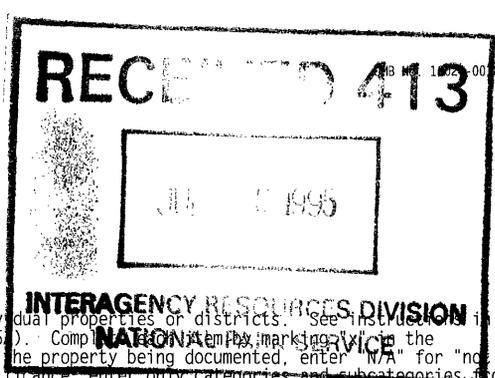


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Form (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete this form by marking 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 Rockville Bridge  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Bridge Street N/A not for publication  
city or town Rockville N/A vicinity  
state Utah code UT county Washington code 053 zip code 84763

### 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     nationally     statewide X locally. (    See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 6/27/95  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation  
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 this 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:)  
\_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] 8.4.95  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Rockville Bridge  
Name of Property

Rockville, Washington County, Utah  
City, 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	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____ 1 _____	_____	structures
_____	_____	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**

N/A

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: bridge

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: bridge

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other Steel, Concrete, Asphalt

### Narrative Description

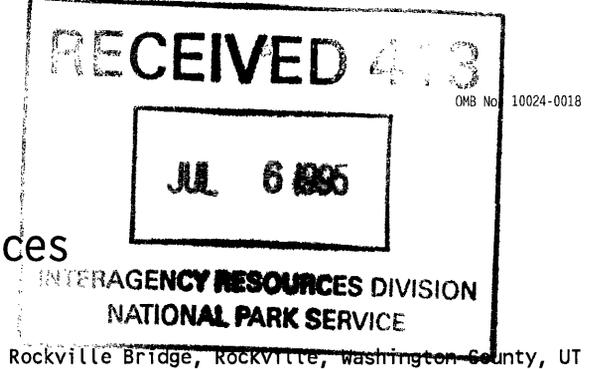
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1



## Narrative Description

The Rockville Bridge was constructed in 1924 and carries a country road (called Bridge Road) just south of Highway 9, across the east fork of the Virgin River on the south side of Rockville, Utah. This 217-foot rigid-connected Parker through truss bridge consists of twelve panels in a single span steel truss supported by concrete abutments. A network of struts and braces connects the top chords for structural support. The asphalt covered concrete deck carries a 25 ton capacity for a single lane of traffic.

A builder's plate mounted on the Northwest corner of the bridge states the following:

VIRGIN RIVER  
Bridge Built for the  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE 1924  
Minneapolis Steel & Machinery Co. Fabricators  
C.F. Dinsmore Co. Erectors

The structural and historical integrity of the bridge have been exceptionally well preserved, with no major alterations to date.

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet

Rockville Bridge  
Name of Property

Rockville, Washington County, Utah  
City, County, and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all 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

OTHER: tourism

#### Period of Significance

1924-1928

#### Significant Dates

1924

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

C.F. Dinsmore Co.

Minneapolis Steel & Machinery Co.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

### 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: \_\_\_\_\_

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 2

Rockville Bridge, Rockville, Washington County, UT

## Narrative Statement of Significance

Constructed in 1924, the Rockville Bridge is architecturally and historically significant. The bridge incorporates distinctive characteristics in its method of construction and is the only surviving example of a rigid Parker through truss type bridge in the state of Utah.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is one of the most technologically significant transportation spans in the state. In addition to its architectural significance, the Rockville Bridge is historically significant in the region. As the first direct link between Zion National Park and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, the bridge was built in response to and then contributed to the development of tourism in the area. The Rockville Bridge retains its historic design, material, workmanship, setting, and association.<sup>2</sup>

National parks of Southern Utah and Northern Arizona (including Bryce Canyon, Cedar Breaks, the Grand Canyon, Pipe Springs, and Zion National Park) have been very popular among tourists since their discovery by Arizona and Utah settlers in the mid 19th century. In the early 20th century, more people became aware of the parks as a result of a campaign by the Union Pacific Railroad to market the regional parks.<sup>3</sup> Automobile traffic increased throughout the 1910s, and visitors to the region demanded better accessibility to the area.<sup>4</sup> By 1920, when Zion Canyon was officially dedicated as a National Park, local residents and tourists placed heavy pressure on government officials at all levels to develop improved transportation routes and other services in the region.<sup>5</sup>

In the 1920s, the National Park service allocated resources to developing automobile loop-tours that allowed tourists to visit multiple parks in the area without backtracking their routes. The construction of the Rockville Bridge allowed such a circular route to be established from Zion National Park to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.<sup>6</sup> This popular route directed traffic from Zion National Park south

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<sup>1</sup>A similar bridge, the Jensen Bridge (located in Northeastern Utah) was demolished in 1994. Utah Department of Transportation, "Structure Inventory and Appraisal," 1994.

<sup>2</sup>The town of Rockville was founded in 1862 by Mormon Pioneers who were sent to the area by Mormon Church Leader Brigham Young to raise cotton. Rockville grew slowly as climatic hardship and isolation discouraged the early settlers. Other than an increase in automobile traffic, the completion of the Rockville Bridge had minor impact on the town.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior & the National Park Service, "Highways in Harmony: a Southwest Circle Tour Roads and Bridges," n.d., 8.

<sup>4</sup>Until the 1916 Federal Highway Act, limited funding and technology restricted the development of good-quality roads. Road building and maintenance was considered to be the responsibility of county crews, who traversed earthen roads with inefficient horse-drawn, split-log drags that levelled the surface until hard rains and narrow wheeled wagons rutted them again. After funding was allocated by the Federal Highway Act, state and federal agencies began to replace many of the pioneer roads with modern, surfaced highways designed to withstand the region's burgeoning automobile traffic. U.S. Dept of the Interior, 7.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, 8.

<sup>6</sup>Previously, the trip required backtracking 30 miles to Hurricane, Utah.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 3

Rockville Bridge, Rockville, Washington County, UT

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through Rockville to Pipe Spring National Monument (Arizona) and the Grand Canyon. In the 1920s, the Rockville Bridge was an essential link in this concentrated network of national parks. In 1926, daily bus service transported tourists over the Rockville Bridge in a loop tour from Zion National Park south to the Grand Canyon and then north again to Bryce Canyon.<sup>7</sup>

Between 1924 and 1928, the Rockville bridge provided the primary automobile route from Utah's National Parks to the Grand Canyon. This period of significance is derived from the original construction date of the bridge (1924) until the construction of the Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway and tunnel in 1928.<sup>8</sup> The more direct and popular Mt. Carmel route carried traffic east along Highway 9 to Pine Creek and Kanab before heading south to the Grand Canyon. In addition to providing a shorter route to the Grand Canyon, this reliable new highway was easier for drivers to maneuver during inclement weather.<sup>9</sup>

The Rockville Bridge was designed by the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads for the National Park Service. C.F. Dinsmore, an Ogden bridge contractor, erected the bridge on site from prefabricated steel components manufactured by the Minneapolis Steel & Machinery Company.<sup>10</sup> The construction of the Rockville Bridge is summarized in local newspaper articles (Washington County News) published between April and December, 1924:

*April 24, 1924:*

"Virgin Bridge Awaits Move by Arizona - Until Arizona approves of her portion of the Short Creek route between Hurricane and Fredonia as part of her federal aid road system, the national park system is not eager to build the proposed bridge across the Virgin River at Rockville, for which appropriation was made by the last congress. There is some danger that the appropriation will lapse as a consequence, and the matter has been called to the attention of the Utah congressional delegation by [Utah] Governor Mabey."

*May 8, 1924:*

"Bridge at Rockville to be Built at Once - Director Stephen Mather of the National Park Service has directed that the contract be let and construction work begin at once on the bridge over the Virgin River near Rockville. The state road commission received this word April 30."

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<sup>7</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, 12.

<sup>8</sup>The Zion-Mt. Carmel Highway and Tunnel was included in the "Multiple Resources for Zion National Park" National Register Nomination in 1987.

<sup>9</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, 14-15.

<sup>10</sup>Utah Department of Transportation, "Structure Inventory and Appraisal," 1994.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 4

Rockville Bridge, Rockville, Washington County, UT

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*October 13, 1924:*

"Steel is now being laid across the new bridge which will be completed in the near future."

*December 25, 1924:*

"Mr. Dinsmore of the Dinsmore Construction Company and a number of workmen arrived here Friday. Work on the new bridge is progressing finely."

*December 25, 1924:*

"The new steel bridge spanning the Virgin River at Rockville, erected at a cost of \$42,000, will shorten the road from Zion National Park to Grand Canyon by 30 miles. Rockville celebrated the bridge opening on the 13th inst."

Metal truss bridges began to replace American wood bridges in the early 1840s; they were the most popular designs between 1850 and 1925. Most of the designs called for the use of many small pieces or members to make a long truss that provided the necessary length and strength. These pieces were commonly manufactured off-site by steel companies and then shipped by railroad to the site where local contractors assembled the bridges. These early metal bridges were of two basic types: Pratt and Warren. The Parker truss, a variation of the Pratt truss, was routinely used for bridges that spanned 40-200 feet.<sup>11</sup> Only two such bridges were constructed in Utah, however: the Rockville Bridge and the Jensen Bridge (demolished in 1994), which crossed the Green River in Uintah county.<sup>12</sup>

The Rockville Bridge is an important architectural and historical resource in Utah. Because it is the only remaining Parker through truss bridge in Utah, the Rockville Bridge holds exceptional technological significance. In addition, the Rockville Bridge was a vital transportation link between Utah and Arizona scenic wonders between 1924 and 1928. The bridge bears a significant contribution to the broad patterns of historical development in the region. Although it no longer carries main traffic over the Virgin River to the Grand Canyon, the Rockville Bridge, today a National Park Service "Scenic Backway," continues to function in place with no major alterations to date. The bridge retains outstanding historic integrity.

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<sup>11</sup>Historic American Engineering Record, "Truss Bridges," in HAER Publication II-1, 177.

<sup>12</sup>Utah Department of Transportation, "Structure Inventory and Appraisal". The Jensen Bridge was documented by the Historic American Engineering Record in 1991 (HAER No. UT-50).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 5

Rockville Bridge, Rockville, Washington County, UT

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## Bibliography

Historic American Engineering Record. "Truss Bridges," Publication TI-1, n.d.

"Report of the State Road Commission." Public Documents. Salt Lake City: State of Utah, 1923.

Under Dixie Sun. A History of Washington County. Washington County Chapter of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers.

U.S. Dept of the Interior and the National Park Service. "Highways in Harmony: Southwest Circle Tour, Roads and Bridges." Washington, DC: National Park Service, n.d.

"Utah Historic Bridge Inventory Data, Rockville Bridge." Utah Department of Transportation.

Washington County News. April-December, 1924.

Woodbury, Angus M. "A History of Southern Utah and its National Parks." Utah Historical Quarterly. 12 (October 1944).

Rockville Bridge  
Name of Property

Rockville, Washington County, Utah  
City, County, and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreege of property less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/2 3/1/9/0/6/0 4/1/1/4/1/7/0  
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

C / / / / / / / / / / /

D / / / / / / / / / / /

**Verbal Boundary Description**

SE 1/4 of NW 1/4 of SE 1/4 of SE 1/4, T42S, S1, R11W.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries include the parcel of land that has historically been, and continues to be associated with the Rockville Bridge.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Mary Troutman/Preservation Intern; Coby Jordan, Researcher

organization Utah State Historic Preservation Office

date June 1995

street & number 300 Rio Grande

telephone (801) 533-3500

city or town Salt Lake City

state UT zip code 84101-1182

**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/or 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**

name Washington County Commission; c/o Gayle Alred, Commission Chair

street & number 197 E. Tabernacle

telephone (801) 634-5700

city or town St. George

state UT zip code 84770

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. PHOTOS Page 6

Rockville Bridge, Rockville, Washington County, UT

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## Common Label Information:

1. Rockville Bridge
2. Rockville, Washington County, Utah
3. Photographer: Roger Roper
4. Date: April 1995
5. Negative on file at Utah SHPO.

## Photo No. 1:

Northeast elevation of bridge. Camera facing southwest.

## Photo No. 2:

Northeast elevation of bridge. Camera facing southwest.